



GLOUCESTER
CATHEDRAL

Solemn Evensong of Easter Day

Sunday, 5 April 2026

3.00 p.m.

The Quire

Safeguarding

Gloucester Cathedral is committed to being a **safe** and **welcoming** place for **all**. The care and protection of children, young people and adults involved in the life of the Cathedral is everyone's responsibility.

If someone is in immediate danger, contact the police on 999.

If you have safeguarding concern as a member of the Cathedral Congregation please contact our Congregation Safeguarding Officer, Gill Brook, safeguarding@gloucestercathedral.org.uk or a member of the clergy, clergy@gloucestercathedral.org.uk



Please turn off any mobile devices.



For safeguarding, photography and videography are not permitted during services.



An induction loop is available for those using hearing aids. Please turn your hearing aid to the 'T' position.



Large print booklets are available on request. Please ask a steward.

Welcome

Welcome to Gloucester Cathedral. There has been a place of worship on this site for over 1,300 years. Today, we join with the generations of people who have gone before us and with the whole company of heaven in the worship of God.

Evensong originates from the daily cycle of prayers offered in ancient monasteries, which is how Gloucester Cathedral began its life. For two millennia, Christians have been offering daily worship to God and this service is just a small part of the eternal round of worship, which is never silent and will never die away. This is a beautiful and mysterious service. Beautiful because of the poetry of the words and the glory of the music; mysterious because, for a moment, we are transported from our daily lives and are caught up in heaven's song.

Evensong is drawn entirely from the Bible and it tells the story of God's saving love. The first main element is the **psalmody**. These beautiful poems express the whole range of human experience; perhaps the words capture something of what you or someone you know is feeling. The **First Lesson** is taken from the Old Testament, which explores God's relationship with his covenanted people, through history, law and prophecy. **The Magnificat** is then sung by the choir. This is Mary's response to the Angel Gabriel's news that she will bear Christ. The words are an expression of the fulfilment of God's promise in the Old Testament to bring justice, freedom, and peace to all through Christ. The **Second Lesson** is taken from the New Testament and explores the life of Jesus and his earliest followers, as they came to understand the fulfilment of God's promises. **The Nunc Dimittis**, the song of Simeon, an old man who met the infant Jesus, completes the story told in this service of God's salvation: he tells us that we can be at peace because the Light has come. The **Creed** is our opportunity to declare our faith in the story we have just heard. Then, in confidence, we come to God in prayer, knowing that God will hear us. These take the form of some sung prayers, followed by an opportunity to bring our particular prayers to God.

Do not worry if at first you do not understand what is happening. Like dropping in on a conversation that has already begun, you will tune in to what is going on. Simply settle yourself into this beautiful place and allow the words and music to enfold you.

*The service is sung by the Foundation Choir of Gloucester Cathedral
Directed by Adrian Partington, Director of Music*

The organ is played by Jonathan Hope, Assistant Director of Music

*The setting of the Canticles is
EVENING SERVICE IN C MAJOR by C. V. Stanford*

The Preces and Responses are set to music by Thomas Tomkins

ORDER OF SERVICE

¶ *The congregation is invited to join in the words printed in **bold**.*

¶ *At 3.00 p.m., the congregation stands for the procession.*

Introit

The choir sings

Haec dies quam fecit Dominus:
exultemus et laetemur in ea,
alleluia.

*This is the day which the Lord hath made:
let us be glad and rejoice therein.
Alleluia.*

*Words, Psalm 118.24
Music, Willam Byrd c.1540-1623*

The Preces and Responses

The Canon Precentor and choir sing

O Lord, open thou our lips.

And our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

O God, make speed to save us.

O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son : and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be :

world without end. Amen.

Praise ye the Lord.

The Lord's Name be praised.

The Bidding

The Dean introduces the service

Beloved in Christ, we gather together on this day to celebrate with great joy the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead.

Today, the powers of death have been defeated; today, our sorrow is turned into dancing; today, the way to eternal life stands open.

Therefore, let us rejoice and make this Cathedral Church glad with our hymns, anthems, and psalms of praise.

Let us pray.

Be present, O risen Lord, in this thy Church's Easter praise; that her anthems of joy and her proclamation of thy victory may worthily celebrate both the mystery of thy redeeming love and the majesty of thy eternal glory; through Jesus Christ thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

The Office Hymn

¶ *The congregation remains standing to sing*



**The Lamb's high banquet we await
In snow-white robes of royal state,
And now, the Red Sea's channel past,
To Christ our Prince we sing at last.**

**Upon the altar of the cross
His body has redeemed our loss,
And tasting of his precious blood,
Our life is hid with Christ in God.**

**That Paschal eve God's arm was bared,
The devastating angel spared;
By strength of hand our hosts went free
From Pharaoh's ruthless tyranny.**

**Now Christ our Passover is slain,
The Lamb of God that knows no stain,
And he, the true unleavened bread,
Is truly our oblation made.**

**Maker of all, to thee we pray,
Fulfil in us thy joy today;
When death assails, grant, Lord, that we
May share thy Paschal victory.**

**To thee who, dead, again dost live,
All glory, Lord, thy people give,
All glory to the Father be
And Spirit blest, eternally. Amen.**

*Words, 7th century Latin
tr., J. M. Neale 1818-66*

Tune, DEUS TUORUM MILITUM; Grenoble Church Melody

¶ *The congregation sits.*

The Psalmody

Psalm 66: *Jubilate Deo*

1. O be joyful in God, all ye lands :
sing praises unto the honour of his Name,
make his praise to be glorious.
2. Say unto God, O how wonderful art thou in thy works :
through the greatness of thy power
shall thine enemies be found liars unto thee.
3. For all the world shall worship thee : sing of thee, and praise thy Name.
4. O come hither, and behold the works of God :
how wonderful he is in his doing toward the children of men.
5. He turned the sea into dry land :
so that they went through the water on foot;
there did we rejoice thereof.
6. He ruleth with his power for ever; his eyes behold the people :
and such as will not believe shall not be able to exalt themselves.
7. O praise our God, ye people :
and make the voice of his praise to be heard;
8. Who holdeth our soul in life : and suffereth not our feet to slip.
9. For thou, O God, hast proved us :
thou also hast tried us, like as silver is tried.
10. Thou broughtest us into the snare : and laidest trouble upon our loins.
11. Thou sufferedst men to ride over our heads :
we went through fire and water,
and thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.

¶ *The congregation stands.*

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son :
and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be :
world without end. Amen.

¶ *The congregation sits.*

The First Lesson

The first lesson is written in the third chapter of the Song of Solomon, beginning at the second verse.

The author expresses a passionate, unwavering love, which searches relentlessly for the beloved, cherishing their union, and declaring that true love is unquenchable, and beyond all material worth.

‘I will rise now and go about the city,
in the streets and in the squares;
I will seek him whom my soul loves.’
I sought him, but found him not.
The sentinels found me,
as they went about in the city.
‘Have you seen him whom my soul loves?’
Scarcely had I passed them,
when I found him whom my soul loves.
I held him, and would not let him go
until I brought him into my mother’s house,
and into the chamber of her that conceived me.
I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
by the gazelles or the wild does:
do not stir up or awaken love
until it is ready!

3.2-5

Here ends the First Lesson.

Magnificat

¶ *The congregation stands.*

The choir sings

My soul doth magnify the Lord :
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

For he hath regarded :
the lowliness of his handmaiden.

For behold from henceforth :
all generations shall call me blessed.

For he that is mighty hath magnified me :
and holy is his Name.

And his mercy is on them that fear him :
throughout all generations.

He hath showed strength with his arm :
he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

He hath put down the mighty from their seat :
and hath exalted the humble and meek.

He hath filled the hungry with good things :
and the rich he hath sent empty away.

He remembering his mercy :
hath holpen his servant Israel;

As he promised to our forefathers :
Abraham and his seed for ever.

Luke 1.46-55

Glory be to the Father and to the Son :
and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be :
world without end. Amen.

¶ *The congregation sits.*

The Second Lesson

The second lesson is written in the twentieth chapter of the Holy Gospel according to St John, beginning at the eleventh verse.

Mary Magdalene encounters the risen Jesus and is sent to announce the resurrection to the disciples.

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping?' She said to them, 'They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.' When she had said this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? For whom are you looking?' Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, 'Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.' Jesus said to her, 'Mary!' She turned and said to him in Hebrew, 'Rabbouni!' (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, 'Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." ' Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord'; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

John 20.11-18

Here ends the Second Lesson.

Nunc Dimittis

¶ *The congregation stands.*

The choir sings

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace :
according to thy word.

For mine eyes have seen :
thy salvation,

Which thou hast prepared :
before the face of all people;

To be a light to lighten the Gentiles :
and to be the glory of thy people Israel.

Luke 2.29-32

Glory be to the Father and to the Son :
and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be :
world without end. Amen.

The Apostles' Creed

¶ *The congregation faces east towards the altar and says*

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried, He descended into hell; The third day he rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; The holy Catholic Church; The Communion of Saints; The Forgiveness of sins; The Resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Preces and Responses

The Canon Precentor and choir sing

The Lord be with you
and with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

¶ *The congregation sits or kneels.*

Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive our debts, As we forgive our debtors; And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil: for Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory. Amen.

O Lord, show thy mercy upon us.
And grant us thy salvation.

O Lord, save the King.
And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.

Endue thy ministers with righteousness.
And make thy chosen people joyful.
O Lord, save thy people.
And bless thine inheritance.

Give peace in our time, O Lord.
*Because there is none other that fighteth for us,
but only thou, O God.*

O God, make clean our hearts within us.
And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.

The Collect appointed for the Day

Almighty God, who through thine only-begotten Son Jesus Christ hast overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life; We humbly beseech thee, that as by thy special grace preventing us thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

The Collect for Peace

O God, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed: Give unto thy servants that peace which the world cannot give; that both our hearts may be set to obey thy commandments, and also that by thee we being defended from the fear of our enemies may pass our time in rest and quietness; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour. *Amen.*

The Collect for Aid against all Perils

Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord; and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

The Conclusion

¶ *The congregation stands and the Dean says*
Let us go forth in peace.

¶ *All process to the Great West Door, singing*



**1. Come, ye faithful, raise the strain
of triumphant gladness!
God hath brought his Israel
into joy from sadness;
Loosed from Pharaoh's bitter yoke
Jacob's sons and daughters;
Led them with unmoistened foot
through the Red Sea waters.**

**2. 'Tis the spring of souls to-day;
Christ hath burst his prison,
and from three days' sleep in death,
as a sun hath risen:
all the winter of our sins,
long and dark, is flying
from his light, to whom we give
laud and praise undying.**

**3. Now the queen of seasons, bright
with the day of splendour,
with the royal feast of feasts,
comes its joy to render;
comes to glad Jerusalem,
who with true affection
welcomes in unwearied strains
Jesu's resurrection.**

**4. Alleluia now we cry
to our King immortal,
who triumphant burst the bars
of the tomb's dark portal;
Alleluia, with the Son
God the Father praising;
Alleluia yet again
to the Spirit raising.**

*Words, St John of Damascus d.c.754
tr. J. M. Neale 1818-66*

*Tune, AVE VIRGO VIRGINUM; melody from J. Horn's
Gesangbuch Nuremburg 1544*

¶ *The congregation gathers at the foot of the West Steps for the blessing*
God, who through the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, has given us the victory, give you joy and peace in your faith; and the blessing of God Almighty, + the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, come down upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Anthem

The choir sings

This joyful Eastertide, away with sin and sorrow.
My Love, the Crucified, hath sprung to life this morrow.
*Had Christ, that once was slain, ne'er burst his three day prison,
Our faith had been in vain: but now hath Christ arisen.*

My flesh in hope shall rest, and for a season slumber:
Till trump from east to west shall wake the dead in number.

Death's flood hath lost his chill, since Jesus crossed the river:
Lover of souls, from ill my passing soul deliver.

*Words, George Ratcliffe Woodward 1848-1934
Music, Vruuchten, Dirk Rafaelsz Camphuysen 1586-1627*

Acclamation

Alleluia. Christ is risen.
He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
**He has given us new life and hope.
He has raised Jesus from the dead.**

God has claimed us as his own.
**He has brought us out of darkness.
He has made us light to the world.**

Alleluia. Christ is risen.
He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

The organist plays

Finale from Organ Symphony No.6, Op.42 No.2 C. M. Widor 1844-1937



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