



ELY CATHEDRAL

FESTAL EVENSONG
with Carols

Christmas Day 2025

4pm



We are delighted to welcome you to Ely Cathedral and to this service of Festal Evensong.

Today's service is livestreamed and can be viewed on the Cathedral YouTube page or via our website. If you would prefer to sit out of sight of the cameras, please ask a steward to direct you.

There is an Induction Loop in both the Choir and the Presbytery, for those using a hearing aid, and large copies of the service sheet are available on request.

Photography or video recording are not permitted at this service. Please ensure your mobile phone is off or on silent mode throughout the service.

CCLI licence holder number 152256

When the bell rings, please stand

HYMN

The procession gathers at the crib



1 Choir only

*A great and mighty wonder,
A full and holy cure!
The Virgin bears the Infant
With virgin honour pure.*

*Repeat the hymn again!
'To God on high be glory,
And peace on earth to men!'*

2 Choir only

*The Word becomes incarnate
And yet remains on high!
And Cherubim sing anthems
To shepherds from the sky:*

*Repeat the hymn again!
'To God on high be glory,
And peace on earth to men!'*

The Dean To you, O Christ, Word of the Father,
 we offer our lowly prayers and humble thanks;
 for love of our human race
 you most wonderfully chose to be born of Mary,
 and to take our nature as nevermore to lay it by;
 so that we might be born again by your Spirit
 and restored in the image of God; to whom, one blessed Trinity,
 be given all honour, might, majesty and power,
 now and for ever. **Amen.**

3 All

While thus they sing your Monarch,
 Those bright angelic bands,
 Rejoice, ye vales and mountains,
 Ye oceans clap your hands.

Repeat the hymn again!
'To God on high be glory,
And peace on earth to men!'

4

Since all he comes to ransom,
 By all be he adored,
 The Infant born in Beth'lem,
 The Saviour and the Lord.

Repeat the hymn again!
'To God on high be glory,
And peace on earth to men!'

5

And idol forms shall perish,
 And error shall decay,
 And Christ shall wield his sceptre,
 Our Lord and God for ay.

Repeat the hymn again!
'To God on high be glory,
And peace on earth to men!'

Words: Greek, St. Germanus c.634–732 tr. John Mason Neale 1818–1866
 Music: *Es Ist Ein' Ros' Entsprungen* NEH 21
 German Carol Melody, Harmonised by Michael Praetorius 1571–1621

WELCOME

Cantor	O Lord, open thou our lips.
Choir	And our mouth shall show forth thy praise.
Cantor	O God, make speed to save us.
Choir	O Lord, make haste to help us.
Cantor	Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
Choir	As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.
Cantor	Praise ye the Lord.
Choir	The Lord's Name be praised.

Music: Philip Radcliffe 1905–1986

PSALM 8 *Please sit
sung by the choir*

- 1 O Lord our Governor, how excellent is thy Name in all the world :
thou that hast set thy glory above the heavens!
- 2 Out of the mouth of very babes and sucklings hast thou ordained
strength, because of thine enemies :
that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.
- 3 For I will consider thy heavens, even the works of thy fingers :
the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained.
- 4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him :
and the son of man, that thou visitest him?
- 5 Thou madest him lower than the angels :
to crown him with glory and worship.
- 6 Thou makest him to have dominion of the works of thy hands :
and thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet;
- 7 All sheep and oxen : yea, and the beasts of the field;
- 8 The fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea:
and whatsoever walketh through the paths of the seas.
- 9 O Lord our Governor : how excellent is thy Name in all the world!

Please stand for the Gloria

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.

FIRST LESSON *Please sit*
Isaiah 65.17-25

I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice for ever in what I am creating; for I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy, and its people as a delight. I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and delight in my people; no more shall the sound of weeping be heard in it, or the cry of distress. No more shall there be in it an infant that lives but a few days, or an old person who does not live out a lifetime; for one who dies at a hundred years will be considered a youth, and one who falls short of a hundred will be considered accursed. They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen

shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, or bear children for calamity; for they shall be offspring blessed by the Lord and their descendants as well. Before they call I will answer, while they are yet speaking I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox; but the serpent - its food shall be dust! They shall not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, says the Lord.

For the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

OFFICE HYMN 104 *sung by the choir. Please stand*

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1
From east to west, from shore to shore,
Let every heart awake and sing
The holy Child whom Mary bore,
The Christ, the everlasting King. | 4
She bowed her to the angel's word
Declaring what the Father willed,
And suddenly the promised Lord
That pure and hallowed temple filled. |
| 2
Behold, the world's creator wears
The form and fashion of a slave,
Our very flesh our Maker shares,
His fallen creature, man, to save. | 5
He shrank not from the oxen's stall,
He lay within the manger-bed,
And he whose bounty feedeth all,
At Mary's breast himself was fed. |
| 3
For this how wondrously he wrought!
A maiden, in her lowly place,
Became, in ways beyond all thought,
The chosen vessel of his grace. | 6
And while the angels in the sky
Sang praise above the silent field,
To shepherds poor, the Lord most high,
The one great Shepherd was revealed. |
| 7
All glory for that blessed morn
To God the Father ever be,
All praise to thee, O Virgin-born,
And praise, blest Spirit, unto thee. Amen. | |

Words: *Caelius Sedulius* c 450, tr John Ellerton 1826-93
Music: plainsong melody *A solis ortus cardine*

MAGNIFICAT

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.

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.

Words: Luke 1.46-55
Music: *Service in D* Sir Herbert Brewer 1865-1928

SECOND LESSON *Please sit* Philippians 2.5-11

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death - even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

For the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

NUNC DIMITTIS *Please stand*

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.

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.

Words: Luke 2.29-32
Music: *Service in D* Sir Herbert Brewer 1865-1928

APOSTLES' CREED

Please remain standing and turn to face the altar

Cantor I believe in God:
**All 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 choir sings the responses

Cantor The Lord be with you.
Choir And with thy spirit.
Cantor Let us pray.

Please sit

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

The choir sings the Lord's Prayer

Cantor O Lord, shew thy mercy upon us.
Choir And grant us thy salvation.

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

Cantor Endue thy Ministers with righteousness.
Choir And make thy chosen people joyful.

Cantor O Lord, save thy people.
Choir And bless thine inheritance.

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

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

Cantor Almighty God, who hast given us thy only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin: grant that we, being regenerate and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit; through Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

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.

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.

Music: Philip Radcliffe 1905-1986

ANTHEM *Please sit*

In dulci jubilo,
Let us our homage shew:
Our heart's joy reclineth
In praesepio;
And like a bright star shineth
Matris in gremio,
Alpha es et O!

O Jesu parvule!
I yearn for thee alway!
Hear me, I beseech thee,
O puer optime;
My praying let it reach thee,
O princeps gloriae.
Trahe me post te.

O patris caritas!
O Nati lenitas!
Deeply were we stained.
Per nostra criminal;
But thou hast for us gained
Coelorum gaudia,
O that we were there!

Ubi sunt gaudia,
If that they be, that be not there?
There are Angels singing
Nova cantica;
And there the bells are ringing
In Regis curia.
O that we were there!

In dulci jubilo
Let us our homage shew:
Our heart's joy reclineth
In praesepio;
And like a bright star shineth
Matris in gremio,
Alpha es et O!

Words: translated from the German by R.L. Pearsall 1795-1856
Music: melody from Klug's *Geistliche Lieder* 1533, arranged by Philip Moore b. 1943

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION *Please sit*
The Prayers conclude with the Grace

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all evermore.
Amen.**

CAROL *Please stand*

1 All

Unto us is born a Son,
King of quires supernal:
See on earth his life begun,
Of lords the Lord eternal,
Of lords the Lord eternal.

3 Lower voices

This did Herod sore affray,
And grievously bewilder,
So he gave the word to slay,
And slew the little childer,
And slew the little childer.

2

Christ, from heav'n descending low,
Comes on earth a stranger;
Ox and ass their owner know,
Becradled in a manger,
Becradled in a manger.

4 Upper voices

Of his love and mercy mild
This the Christmas story;
And O that Mary's gentle Child
Might lead us up to glory,
Might lead us up to glory!

5 All

O and A, and A and O,
Cum cantibus in choro,
Let our merry organ go,
Benedicamus Domino.
Benedicamus Domino.

Words: Latin, Prudentius 348-413 Tr R F Davis 1866-1937
Music: *Divinum Mysterium* NEH 33 Melody from *Piae Cantiones Theoderici Petri Nylandensis* 1582
Descant by David Willcocks 1919-2015

May He who by his Incarnation
gathered into one things earthly and heavenly,
fill you with the sweetness of inward peace and goodwill,
and the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

ORGAN Final from Symphony No. 1 - Louis Vierne

A retiring collection is taken in support of the following charities:



Ely Baby Bank is a charity that receives donations of baby-related items which are then sorted and displayed for families to freely select according to their needs. The charity also provides infant formula and nappies. The service is accessible to all members of the community and is offered entirely free of charge.

www.elybabybank.com Registered Charity No. 1214413



The Mothers' Union is a women-led, international Christian movement dedicated to ending poverty,

violence and social injustice in communities in the UK and around the world. MU has four million members across over eighty countries and celebrates its 150th anniversary in 2026. We will be donating to the Ely Diocesan fund.

www.mothersunion.org Registered Charity No. 240531



The Friends of the Holy Land funds a mixture of sustainable and immediate relief work in the West Bank, Gaza, Israel and Jordan. It works in partnership with

key Christian denominations in its mission to secure a resilient and enduring community in the region.

www.friendsoftheholyland.org.uk Registered Charity No. 1202568

CATHEDRAL CHOIR AUDITIONS

Do you know a child who could be singing in the Cathedral Choir next Christmas? We have spaces in Year 2-5: all choristers gain a generous 40% fee discount at King's Ely, an unrivalled musical education, and invaluable life-skills. Potential (rather than experience) is key, and we warmly invite boys and girls for an informal sing at any time in the new year, before auditions on Saturday 28 February.

For more information visit our website or email music@elycathedral.org

Sunday 28 December

10.30am Sung Eucharist

4pm Come and Sing Carols

Be part of the choir for an afternoon of favourite carols. This annual service is led by local singers and any other singers who happen to be visiting Ely and who would like to join them. Assemble under the Octagon at 2.15pm to rehearse.

The carol choices are selected from books 1 and 2 of Carols for Choirs. Some copies will be available to borrow on the day, but we have to rely on most people bringing their own books. All welcome.

Sunday 4 January

The Epiphany

10.30am Sung Eucharist

4pm Evensong

Saturday 10 January

5.30pm Choral Evensong

with Benjamin Britten's *Ceremony of Carols*

Sunday 18 January

10.30am Sung Eucharist

4pm Epiphanytide Procession

Sunday 1 February

The Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas)

10.30am Choral Mattins

6pm Candlelit Sung Eucharist

Canon Jim Garrard RIP

The Funeral Service for Canon Garrard will take place in the Cathedral on Friday 9 January at 11.30am.

David Stazicker RIP

A Memorial Service for David Stazicker will be held in the Cathedral on Monday 26 January at 2.30pm.

May they rest in peace and rise in glory

**THE CHAPTER
AND CATHEDRAL COMMUNITY
WISH YOU
A VERY HAPPY AND JOYFUL CHRISTMAS**



Illustration: Debbie Bellaby