



ELY CATHEDRAL

Choral Evensong

Broadcast live on BBC Radio 3

*Ninian, Bishop of Galloway,
Apostle to the Picts, c.432*

Wednesday 16 September 2026
3pm



*We are delighted to welcome you to Ely Cathedral
and to this service of Choral Evensong, broadcast live on BBC Radio 3.*

In today's service we commemorate Arthur Wills (1926-2020), Director of Music at Ely Cathedral from 1958 to 1990. Much of the music in the service was written by Arthur, and the anthem is by Sidney Campbell, another former Organist of Ely, under whom Arthur worked as Assistant Organist. Arthur's 100th birthday would have fallen on Saturday 19 September, when we will further celebrate with the Former Choristers' Reunion, Festal Evensong at 5.30pm and a recital of Arthur's organ works given by Ely organists past and present at 7.00pm.

Please kindly ensure that your mobile phones and other devices are switched off.

CCLI licence holder number 152256

*The choir will process in at 2.50pm. When the bell rings, please stand.
When all are seated, we keep silence until the service begins.*

INTROIT

To the Most High Trinity, God one in substance, being one Godhead,
Equal Glory, coeternal Majesty: Even to Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
Who maketh the whole world subject to his Law.
May the blessed God-head of the Father, The Son
and the bountiful Spirit bestow on us his grace:
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost:
Honour, might, and power and empire be unto the Trinity in Unity,
To the Unity in Trinity: throughout the everlasting ages.
To the Trinity be everlasting Light; To the Unity be perpetual glory
Throughout the everlasting ages.

Words: Traditional
Music: Arthur Wills

WELCOME

Precentor O Lord, open thou our lips.
Choir And our mouth shall show forth thy praise.
Precentor O God, make speed to save us.
Choir O Lord, make haste to help us.
Precentor 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.
Precentor Praise ye the Lord.
Choir The Lord's name be praised.

Music: Arthur Wills

PSALM 82

- 1 God standeth in the congregation of princes :
he is a Judge among gods.
- 2 How long will ye give wrong judgement :
and accept the persons of the ungodly?
- 3 Defend the poor and fatherless :
see that such as are in need and necessity have right.
- 4 Deliver the outcast and poor :
save them from the hand of the ungodly.
- 5 They will not be learned nor understand,
but walk on still in darkness :
all the foundations of the earth are out of course.
- 6 I have said, Ye are gods :
and ye are all the children of the most Highest.
- 7 But ye shall die like men : and fall like one of the princes.
- 8 Arise, O God, and judge thou the earth :
for thou shalt take all heathen to thine inheritance.

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.

PSALM 83

- 1 Hold not thy tongue, O God, keep not still silence :
refrain not thyself, O God.
- 2 For lo, thine enemies make a murmuring :
and they that hate thee have lift up their head.
- 3 They have imagined craftily against thy people :
and taken counsel against thy secret ones.
- 4 They have said, Come, and let us root them out,
that they be no more a people :
and that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.
- 5 For they have cast their heads together with one consent :
and are confederate against thee;
- 6 The tabernacles of the Edomites, and the Ismaelites :
the Moabites and Hagarenes;
- 7 Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek :
the Philistines, with them that dwell at Tyre.
- 8 Assur also is joined with them :
and have holpen the children of Lot.

- 9 But do thou to them as unto the Madianites :
unto Sisera, and unto Jabin at the brook of Kison;
10 Who perished at Endor : and became as the dung of the earth.
11 Make them and their princes like Oreb and Zeb :
yea, make all their princes like as Zeba and Salmana;
12 Who say, Let us take to ourselves : the houses of God in possession.
13 O my God, make them like unto a wheel :
and as the stubble before the wind;
14 Like as the fire that burneth up the wood :
and as the flame that consumeth the mountains.
15 Persecute them even so with thy tempest :
and make them afraid with thy storm.
16 Make their faces ashamed, O Lord : that they may seek thy Name.
17 Let them be confounded and vexed ever more and more :
let them be put to shame, and perish.
18 And they shall know that thou, whose Name is Jehovah :
art only the most Highest over all the earth.

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.

PSALM 84

- 1 O how amiable are thy dwellings : thou Lord of hosts!
2 My soul hath a desire and longing to enter into the courts of the
Lord : my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.
3 Yea, the sparrow hath found her an house,
and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young :
even thy altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.
4 Blessed are they that dwell in thy house :
they will be alway praising thee.
5 Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee :
in whose heart are thy ways.
6 Who going through the vale of misery use it for a well :
and the pools are filled with water.
7 They will go from strength to strength :
and unto the God of gods appeareth every one of them in Sion.
8 O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer : hearken, O God of Jacob.
9 Behold, O God our defender :
and look upon the face of thine Anointed.
10 For one day in thy courts : is better than a thousand.
11 I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God :
than to dwell in the tents of ungodliness.

- 12 For the Lord God is a light and defence :
the Lord will give grace and worship,
and no good thing shall he withhold from them that live a godly life.
13 O Lord God of hosts :
blessed is the man that putteth his trust in thee.

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.

PSALM 85

- 1 Lord, thou art become gracious unto thy land :
thou hast turned away the captivity of Jacob.
2 Thou hast forgiven the offence of thy people :
and covered all their sins.
3 Thou hast taken away all thy displeasure :
and turned thyself from thy wrathful indignation.
4 Turn us then, O God our Saviour : and let thine anger cease from us.
5 Wilt thou be displeased at us for ever :
and wilt thou stretch out thy wrath from one generation to another?
6 Wilt thou not turn again, and quicken us :
that thy people may rejoice in thee?
7 Shew us thy mercy, O Lord : and grant us thy salvation.
8 I will hearken what the Lord God will say concerning me :
for he shall speak peace unto his people,
and to his saints, that they turn not again.
9 For his salvation is nigh them that fear him :
that glory may dwell in our land.
10 Mercy and truth are met together :
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.
11 Truth shall flourish out of the earth :
and righteousness hath looked down from heaven.
12 Yea, the Lord shall shew loving-kindness :
and our land shall give her increase.
13 Righteousness shall go before him :
and he shall direct his going in the way.

Please stand for the final 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.

When the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, (fame due to the name of the Lord), she came to test him with hard questions. She came to Jerusalem with a very great retinue, with camels bearing spices, and very much gold, and precious stones; and when she came to Solomon, she told him all that was on her mind. Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing hidden from the king that he could not explain to her. When the queen of Sheba had observed all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, the food of his table, the seating of his officials, and the attendance of his servants, their clothing, his valets, and his burnt-offerings that he offered at the house of the Lord, there was no more spirit in her.

So she said to the king, 'The report was true that I heard in my own land of your accomplishments and of your wisdom, but I did not believe the reports until I came and my own eyes had seen it. Not even half had been told me; your wisdom and prosperity far surpass the report that I had heard. Happy are your wives! Happy are these your servants, who continually attend you and hear your wisdom! Blessed be the Lord your God, who has delighted in you and set you on the throne of Israel! Because the Lord loved Israel for ever, he has made you king to execute justice and righteousness.' Then she gave the king one hundred and twenty talents of gold, a great quantity of spices, and precious stones; never again did spices come in such quantity as that which the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

Here endeth the Lesson.

OFFICE HYMN 308 *sung by the choir. Please stand*

Father, we praise you that your holy servant,
Steadfastly following Christ our Lord and saviour,
Now in your kingdom shares with all the faithful
Vision of glory.

Filled with the Spirit, by his earthly labours,
Brought to your people healing and compassion;
Raising the fallen, reconciling sinners,
Gladly he served them.

By this example, prayer and self-denial,
Preaching, and teaching, showing forth the gospel,
Gave men and women knowledge of your mercy
And loving-kindness.

Joyful thanksgiving now we bring before you,
Singing with gladness of his life and witness,
Pledging ourselves to follow in the footsteps
Of Christ, his master.

Glory to you, the Father unbegotten,
Glory to Christ, the Son of God incarnate,
And Holy Spirit, fountain of all goodness,
Trinity blessed.

Words: Sisters of the Love of God
Music: *Iste Confessor* mode ii

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 on Plainsong Tones* Arthur Wills

SECOND LESSON *Please sit* Acts 17.1-15

After Paul and Silas had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three sabbath days argued with them from the scriptures, explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Messiah to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, 'This is the Messiah, Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you.' Some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a great many of the devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women. But the Jews became jealous, and with the help of some ruffians in the market-places they formed a mob and set the city in an uproar. While they were searching for Paul and Silas to bring them out to the assembly, they attacked Jason's house.

When they could not find them, they dragged Jason and some believers before the city authorities, shouting, 'These people who have been turning the world upside down have come here also, and Jason has entertained them as guests. They are all acting contrary to the decrees of the emperor, saying that there is another king named Jesus.' The people and the city officials were disturbed when they heard this, and after they had taken bail from Jason and the others, they let them go.

That very night the believers sent Paul and Silas off to Beroea; and when they arrived, they went to the Jewish synagogue. These Jews were more receptive than those in Thessalonica, for they welcomed the message very eagerly and examined the scriptures every day to see whether these things were so. Many of them therefore believed, including not a few Greek women and men of high standing. But when the Jews of Thessalonica learned that the word of God had been proclaimed by Paul in Beroea as well, they came there too, to stir up and incite the crowds. Then the believers immediately sent Paul away to the coast, but Silas and Timothy remained behind. Those who conducted Paul brought him as far as Athens; and after receiving instructions to have Silas and Timothy join him as soon as possible, they left him.

Here endeth the Lesson.

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 on Plainsong Tones* Arthur Wills

APOSTLES' CREED *Please remain standing*

Precentor 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 Lesser Litany and Responses

Precentor The Lord be with you.
Choir And with thy spirit.
Precentor 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

Precentor O Lord, shew thy mercy upon us.
Choir And grant us thy salvation.
Precentor O Lord, save the King.
Choir And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.
Precentor Endue thy Ministers with righteousness.
Choir And make thy chosen people joyful.
Precentor O Lord, save thy people.
Choir And bless thine inheritance.
Precentor Give peace in our time, O Lord.
Choir Because there is none other that fighteth for us,
but only thou, O God.
Precentor O God, make clean our hearts within us.
Choir And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.

Precentor Almighty and everlasting God, who didst call thy servant
Ninian to preach the gospel to the people of northern Britain:
raise up, we beseech thee, in this and every land, heralds and
evangelists of thy kingdom, that thy Church may make known
the immeasurable riches of thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ.
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: Arthur Wills

ANTHEM *Please sit*

Sing we merrily unto God our strength,
Make a cheerful noise unto the God of Jacob.
Take the Psalm, bring hither the Tabret,
The merry Harp with the Lute.
Blow up the Trumpet in the new Moon,
Even in the time appointed, and upon our solemn feast day:
For this was made a statute for Israel, and a Law of the God of Jacob.
Alleluia!

Words: from Psalm 81
Music: Sidney Campbell 1909-1974 *Organist of Ely Cathedral 1949-1953*

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION *The prayers end 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.**

HYMN *please stand*



1

Ye holy angels bright,
Who wait at God's right hand,
Or through the realms of light
Fly at your Lord's command,
Assist our song,
For else the theme
Too high doth seem
For mortal tongue.

3

Ye saints, who toil below,
Adore your heavenly King,
And onward as ye go
Some joyful anthem sing;
Take what he gives
And praise him still,
Through good and ill,
Who ever lives!

2

Ye blessed souls at rest,
Who ran this earthly race,
And now, from sin released,
Behold the Saviour's face,
God's praises sound,
As in his sight
With sweet delight
Ye do abound.

4

My soul, bear thou thy part,
Triumph in God above,
And with a well-tuned heart
Sing thou the songs of love;
Let all thy days
Till life shall end,
Whate'er he send,
Be filled with praise.

Words: Richard Baxter 1615-1691 and others
Music: *Darwall's 148th* NEH 475 John Darwall 1731-1789
Descant: Arthur Wills

BLESSING

ORGAN Postlude - Arthur Wills

*Please remain seated for the organ voluntary which will be broadcast in full
and refrain from applauding at the end.*

