



St Edmundsbury
Cathedral



The Order for Choral Evensong

A collection is normally taken during the final hymn on Saturdays and Sundays.

If you are a UK taxpayer, please use the Gift Aid envelope provided. This enables the Cathedral to claim from HM Government an additional sum on top of your donation, at no further cost to you.

Alternatively, you may like to use one of the contactless donation points in the Cathedral.

Please turn off your mobile phone. Please do not take any photographs or make any video or sound recordings. This is in order to help you concentrate on the service and not to distract others.



*For reasons of Safeguarding and Data Protection, members of the public are **not permitted to take photographs or video recordings** during services and events.*

***Please note that this service is normally livestreamed.** Photographs, video or livestream footage in which you may appear **could be used by the Cathedral at any time in the public domain including social media.** If you do not want to appear in this, please inform a warden or vergier.*

***Instructions about posture in the service are for guidance only** and those who prefer not to stand or kneel, or who cannot, should do as is most comfortable for them.*

Please leave this booklet here for others to use.

Choral Evensong at the Cathedral

Welcome to St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Suffolk's Cathedral, for this service of Choral Evensong.

By attending Evensong you are joining a form of prayer which has been used, largely unchanged, in churches and cathedrals since 1549. You are immersing yourself in a stream of Christian worship which combines the ancient monastic 'hours' of Vespers and Compline into one service for use at the end of the day. This service, then, forms a prayerful link with the Benedictine monastery on this site, established over 1000 years ago, which housed the shrine of Saint Edmund, ninth-century King of the East Angles. We use texts and music which will have been familiar to the many pilgrims and monastics of the time, and to Christians ever since.

The words used at Evensong are drawn almost entirely from the Bible. They reflect every human emotion, and touch the deepest longings of our hearts – thanksgiving, joy, sadness and anger. The form of service is taken from the Book of Common Prayer of 1662. It was not written in Latin, but in English, which was modern then, but may now seem old-fashioned. We still use those words today because it helps us to remember that we are part of something that has endured for centuries, and will continue when we are no longer here.

For nearly five hundred years, English cathedrals have maintained the tradition of setting most of the service to music, including the psalms and canticles, some of the prayers, and special anthems on biblical and religious themes. Most of the service is led by the choir and the canons (the priests who live and work at the Cathedral). Although the congregation is mostly silent throughout the service, that does not mean that you are not taking part in the worship. This time of quiet and rest is a gift; an opportunity to step out of the busyness of life and encounter God in a new way. You are invited to relax and let yourself be carried by the music and the words you hear.

Know that in this service, and in all our worship at St Edmundsbury Cathedral, we seek to be touched, healed and transformed by God's heart of love for each and every human soul and for the world and its peoples.

The Order of Service

Choral Evensong is sung by the Choristers and/or Adults of St Edmundsbury Cathedral Choir, the St Edmundsbury Singers, the Cathedral Youth Choir or a visiting choir.

All stand as the choir and clergy enter.

Please remain standing for

The Welcome

On weekdays the service normally begins with the sung *Opening Responses* on page 6.

On Sundays the service continues as below.

Everyone is invited to join in singing

The Hymn

All remain standing for

The Invitation to Confession

These, or some other words of introduction, are used.

Beloved, we are come together in the presence of almighty God and of the whole company of heaven to offer unto him through our Lord Jesus Christ our worship and praise and thanksgiving; to make confession of our sins; to pray, as well for others as for ourselves, that we may know more truly the greatness of God's love and shew forth in our lives the fruits of his grace; and to ask on behalf of all peoples such things as their well-being doth require [additional, seasonal wording, may be added here].

Wherefore let us kneel in silence, and remember God's presence with us now.

All kneel

The Confession

All **Almighty and most merciful Father;
we have erred and strayed from thy ways
like lost sheep.
We have followed too much
the devices and desires of our own hearts.
We have offended against thy holy laws.
We have left undone those things
which we ought to have done;
and we have done those things
which we ought not to have done;
and there is no health in us.
But thou, O Lord,
have mercy upon us, miserable offenders;
spare thou them, O God, which confess their faults,
restore thou them that are penitent,
according to thy promises declared unto mankind
in Christ Jesu our Lord:
and grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake,
that we may hereafter live a godly,
righteous, and sober life,
to the glory of thy holy name. Amen.**

God's forgiveness is proclaimed in the words of

The Absolution

All are invited to join in saying

The Lord's Prayer

All **Our Father,
which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy Name;
Thy kingdom come;
Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive them that trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power, and the glory,
For ever and ever. Amen.**

All stand as the Officiant and choir sing

The Opening Responses

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.

All sit as the choir sings

The Psalmody

The choir sings the Psalm(s) of the day. You may follow the text of the Psalms towards the back of the Book of Common Prayer.

At the end of the Psalm(s), all 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.

All sit for

The Old Testament Reading

All stand as the choir sings

The Magnificat or Song of Mary

The Magnificat is the Church's prayer of praise and hope for the world, spoken by the Blessed Virgin Mary. After being told by the Angel Gabriel that she would become the mother of Jesus, Mary visited her cousin Elizabeth who was also expecting a child. The words come from St Luke's Gospel [1.46–55].

It may be sung in English, as below, or in another language.

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

 For he hath regarded:
 the lowliness of his hand-maiden.

 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 shewed 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.

All sit for

The New Testament Reading

All stand as the choir sings

The Nunc Dimittis or Song of Simeon

The text of the Nunc Dimittis is found in St Luke's Gospel [2.29–32]. These words are a prayer spoken by faithful Simeon, who was guided by the Holy Spirit into the Temple at the moment when Mary and Joseph had brought the infant Jesus to be presented there. It had been revealed to Simeon that he would not die before seeing the Saviour. When he saw Jesus, he knew that God's promise had come true: Jesus was the Light of the World.

The musical setting of the Nunc Dimittis is normally by the same composer as the Magnificat.

Choir 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.

All remain standing and turn to face the High Altar to say

The Apostles' Creed

The sun rises in the east, so we turn east to represent Christians' belief that God is the source of light and life. The Apostles' Creed is a summary of the Christian faith dating from the fourth century.

All **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.**

All remain standing as the Officiant and choir sing

The Lord be with you.

And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

All kneel as the Officiant and choir sing

The Lesser Litany

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

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, in earth as it is in
heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our
trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And
lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. Amen.

The Responses

O Lord, shew 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.

Three or four Collects are sung. Collects are special prayers which gather, or 'collect', our hopes and desires. The Collect of the Day changes according to the season or day – and there may be two on occasions – but the last two Collects are the same each day.

The Collect(s) of the Day

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.

All sit as the choir sings

The Anthem

The choir sings words from Scripture or other religious texts, set to music by composers from all over the world.

All remain seated for

The Rule of Saint Benedict

A reading from the Rule of Saint Benedict, the 'father of western monasticism', normally follows the anthem. The Rule, written in Latin in the sixth century, ordered the life of the former Abbey of St Edmund. It has deep scriptural roots and gentle realism, and has remained foundational for Christian spirituality and life in every age and culture.

All kneel or sit for

The Prayers of Intercession

Prayers of thanksgiving and intercession are offered for the church, the world and its peoples.

The prayers conclude with

The Grace

**All 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.**

On weekdays, the service ends here. All stand as choir and clergy depart.

On Sundays and on some other occasions, all stand to sing

The Hymn

All remain standing and turn to face the altar for

The Blessing

All remain standing as the choir and clergy depart and the organist plays

The Organ Voluntary

You are invited to stay and listen to the organ voluntary or to leave the Cathedral quietly.

The Choirs at St Edmundsbury Cathedral

The Cathedral is home to a number of choirs.

The **Cathedral Choir**, which sings for the majority of services, consists of boy and girl choristers together with adult singers. The Choristers attend a wide range of schools around Bury St Edmunds and come to the Cathedral several times a week to rehearse and sing for services. The boys and girls mainly sing separately, sharing out the services on an equal basis, but come together for important occasions such as Christmas and Easter.

The Cathedral Choristers normally sing for Choral Evensong on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays. The adults of the Cathedral Choir consist of professional Vicars Choral, volunteer Lay Clerks, and at least one Choral Scholar.

The **St Edmundsbury Singers** is a voluntary choir for women's voices. They normally sing for Choral Evensong every other Wednesday, and combine with the Cathedral Choir Adults for a number of other services and occasions throughout the year.

The **Cathedral Youth Choir** is for teenage singers and normally sings for Choral Evensong every other Wednesday in alternation with the St Edmundsbury Singers. This choir specialises in unaccompanied music, and many Cathedral Choristers go on to join its ranks once they have left the Cathedral Choir.

Occasionally, the **Edmund Consort** sings for certain special services such as weddings and funerals. This group is drawn from the Adults of the Cathedral Choir and professional sopranos.

Outside of term time, services at the Cathedral are often sung by visiting choirs from around the country and overseas.

For more information about any of these choirs, or to express an interest in joining, please contact the Director of Music at dom@stedscathedral.org.



Our weekly pattern of worship:

Monday		Thursday	
8.30 am	Morning Prayer	8.30 am	Morning Prayer
9.00 am	Eucharist	12.30 pm	Meditation + Eucharist
5.30 pm	Evening Prayer	5.30 pm	Choral Evensong
Tuesday		Friday	
8.30 am	Morning Prayer	8.00 am	Eucharist
12.30 pm	Eucharist	8.30 am	Morning Prayer
2.00 pm	Together on Tuesday*	10.00 am	Diddy Disciples
5.30 pm	Choral Evensong	5.30 pm	Choral Evensong
Wednesday		Saturday	
8.30 am	Morning Prayer	8.45 am	Morning Prayer
1.00 pm	BCP Eucharist	9.00 am	Eucharist
5.30 pm	Choral Evensong	3.30 pm	Evening Prayer / Choral Evensong

*One service per month, usually on the second Tuesday. This service is a short Eucharist designed for those who find a traditional service difficult, and is dementia-friendly.

Sunday

8.00 am	Holy Communion
9.00 am	All-Age Eucharist
10.30 am	Sung Eucharist
3.30 pm	Choral Evensong

Please note that the above is our normal pattern of services.

For up-to-date information about service times and events, please visit our website:

stedscathedral.org

St Edmundsbury Cathedral



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