

Choral Evensong

Saturday, 15th August, 2026

The Feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary



Welcome to this service of Choral Evensong, led by Donald Parr, Cathedral Lay Reader.

This evening we welcome the choir of Saint Stephen's Church, Canterbury, directed by Stephen Barker.

The responses are those by Richard Ayleward (1626-1669).

*We encourage our visitors to take photographs of our beautiful cathedral,
but please no photography during the service.*

If you would like to access the loop system, please speak to one of the vergers.

Introit

Mother of God, here I stand now praying,
Before this icon of your radiant brightness,
Not praying to be saved from a battlefield,
Not giving thanks, nor seeking forgiveness
For the sins of my soul, nor for all the souls.
Numb, joyless and desolate on earth,
But for her alone, whom I wholly give you.

Words by Mikhail Lermontov (1814-1841)

Music by John Taverner (1944-2013)

Psalms 132

1. Lord, remember David ♦
and all his trouble;
2. How he swore unto the Lord ♦
and vowed a vow unto the Almighty God of Jacob;
3. I will not come within the tabernacle of mine house ♦
nor climb up into my bed;
4. I will not suffer mine eyes to sleep, nor mine eye-lids to slumber ♦
neither the temples of my head to take any rest;
5. Until I find out a place for the temple of the Lord ♦
an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob.

6. Lo, we heard of the same at Ephrata ♦
and found it in the wood.
7. We will go into his tabernacle ♦
and fall low on our knees before his footstool.
8. Arise, O Lord, into thy resting-place ♦
thou, and the ark of thy strength.
9. Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness ♦
and let thy saints sing with joyfulness.
10. For thy servant David's sake ♦
turn not away the presence of thine Anointed.
11. The Lord hath made a faithful oath unto David ♦
and he shall not shrink from it;
12. Of the fruit of thy body ♦
shall I set upon thy seat.
13. If thy children will keep my covenant,
and my testimonies that I shall learn them ♦
their children also shall sit upon thy seat for evermore.
14. For the Lord hath chosen Sion to be an habitation for himself ♦
he hath longed for her.
15. This shall be my rest for ever ♦
here will I dwell, for I have a delight therein.
16. I will bless her victuals with increase ♦
and will satisfy her poor with bread.
17. I will deck her priests with health ♦
and her saints shall rejoice and sing.
18. There shall I make the horn of David to flourish ♦
I have ordained a lantern for mine Anointed.
19. As for his enemies, I shall clothe them with shame ♦
but upon himself shall his crown flourish.

The First Lesson

¹ I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys. ²As a lily among brambles, so is my love among maidens. ³As an apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among young men. With great delight I sat in his shadow, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. ⁴He brought me to the banqueting house, and his intention toward me was love. ⁵Sustain me with raisins, refresh me with apples; for I am faint with love. ⁶O that his left hand were under my head, and that his right hand embraced me! ⁷I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the gazelles or the wild does: do not stir up or awaken love until it is ready!

Song of Solomon 2:1-7

The Magnificat

Evening Service in B Flat Major by Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924)

The Second Lesson

⁶ So when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?' ⁷He replied, 'It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' ⁹When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰While he was going and they were gazing up towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. ¹¹They said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.' ¹² Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. ¹³When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. ¹⁴All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

Acts 1:6-14

The Nunc Dimittis

Evening Service in B Flat Major by Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924)

The Collect of the Day

Almighty God, who didst look upon the lowliness of the Blessed Virgin Mary and didst choose her to be the mother of thy only Son: grant that we who are redeemed by his blood may share with her in the glory of thine eternal kingdom; through Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

The Anthem

Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum;
benedicta tu in mulieribus,
et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesus.
Sancta Maria, Mater Dei,
ora pro nobis peccatoribus,
nunc et in hora mortis nostrae. Amen.

*Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee;
blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.*

Music by Simon Lindley (1948-2025)

The Hymn

**Sing we of the blessed Mother
who received the angel's word,
and obedient to his summons
bore in love the infant Lord;
sing we of the joys of Mary
at whose breast that child was fed
who is Son of God eternal
and the everlasting Bread.**

**Sing we, too, of Mary's sorrows,
of the sword that pierced her through,
when beneath the cross of Jesus
she his weight of suffering knew,
looked upon her Son and Saviour
reigning high on Calvary's tree,
saw the price of man's redemption
paid to set the sinner free.**

**Sing again the joys of Mary
when she saw the risen Lord,
and in prayer with Christ's apostles,
waited on his promised word:
from on high the blazing glory
of the Spirit's presence came,
heavenly breath of God's own being,
manifest through wind and flame.**

**Sing the chiefest joy of Mary
when on earth her work was done,
and the Lord of all creation
brought her to his heavenly home:
Virgin Mother, Mary blessèd,
raised on high and crowned with grace,
may your Son, the world's redeemer,
grant us all to see his face.**

*Words by G.B. Timms (1910-1997)
Tune CP 418 ABBOT'S LEIGH by Cyril Taylor (1907-1991)*

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Daily Services at the Cathedral:

Regular services at the Cathedral follow this pattern. For special services and up-to-date information about one-off cancellations of the services below, please check the calendar on the Cathedral website:
<https://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/full-calendar>

Monday - Friday

8:30 – 9:00am: *Morning Prayer & Holy Communion*

12 – 12:10pm: *The Litany of Reconciliation*

(followed on Thursdays by BCP Holy Communion)

4 – 4:30pm: *Evening Prayer*

(or Wednesday and Thursday during school terms: Choral Evensong, 5:15 - 6pm)

Saturday

12 – 12:10pm: *The Litany of Reconciliation*

Sunday

10:30 – 11:45am: *The Cathedral Eucharist*

4 – 5pm: *Choral Evensong*