

ST EDMUND HALL

Choral Evensong

First Sunday of Lent



‘Wonder and Repentance’

Speaker: Professor Jeff Tseng, Chapel Fellow

21 February 2021

5.30 pm

Evensong in our time: Epiphany and Lent during lockdown

Evensong is one of the Church of England's ancient services. It provides an open and generous space for quiet and reflection, for song and speech and prayer, as it draws from biblical readings, canticles, and the Church's long tradition of hymns.

Our Evensong series this term, 'Wonder and...', takes its cue from the seasons in the Church year. We begin in the season of Epiphany, a time for reflecting on the wonders of God: great events in the life of Christ, the marvels of nature, the miracle of divine activity among the saints of the past and among us today. We will also enter the season of Lent before long, when Christians have typically reflected on 'going back to basics': thinking afresh about faith, hope, love, and other fundamentals; returning to disciplines of prayer, fasting, and charity.

This all takes place in the context of lockdown and illness, with its isolation, frustrations, sadness, difficulties, and many strange qualities. The Psalmist in exile said, 'How can we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?' Perhaps we feel the same. How can we still wonder, still believe, amid these crushing realities? Perhaps Epiphany and Lent have something to teach us. We shall find out together.

*We are nearly all on Zoom. We invite everyone to join in, as they are able, by listening attentively to the choir, readers, and ministers, and by saying together (on mute) those prayers that are marked in **bold**: the Lord's Prayer, the Grace, and the Amens. We would encourage you to sing along, too (on mute).*

Zoom link at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87112377996?pwd=bm9zMWZreEl4M1RiK2toOXNvNW9aZz09>

Cover image: Stained glass detail of Christ's Temptation in the Desert, St Joseph's Institution, Singapore. [Photo](#) by Fr. Lawrence Lew, O.P.

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

SENTENCE (ISAIAH 55:6-7):

‘Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.’

The chaplain offers words of welcome, followed by 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 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:**

**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 Jesus 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.**

The chaplain declares the **ABSOLUTION:**

ALMIGHTY God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he may turn from his wickedness, and live; and hath given power, and commandment, to his Ministers, to declare and pronounce to his people, being penitent, the Absolution and Remission of their sins: He pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel.

Wherefore let us beseech him to grant us true repentance, and his Holy Spirit, that those things may please him, which we do at this present; and that the rest of our life hereafter may be pure, and holy; so that at the last we may come to his eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

The chaplain and choir sing the **PRECES & RESPONSES:**

Choir: O Lord, open thou our lips,
and our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

Choir: O God make speed to save us.
O Lord, make haste to help us.

Choir: 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.

Choir: Praise ye the Lord.
The Lord's name be praised.

Music: Plainsong

The choir sings **PSALM 51:1-7 (MISERERE MEI, DEUS):**

- 1 Have mercy upon me, O God, after thy great goodness :
according to the multitude of thy mercies do away mine offences.
- 2 Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness :
and cleanse me from my sin.
- 3 For I acknowledge my faults :
and my sin is ever before me.
- 4 Against thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight :
that thou mightest be justified in thy saying,
and clear when thou art judged.
- 5 Behold, I was shapen in wickedness :
and in sin hath my mother conceived me.
- 6 But lo, thou requirest truth in the inward parts:
and shalt make me to understand wisdom secretly.
- 7 Thou shalt purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean :
thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

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.

Music: Thomas Morley (1557-1602), adapted

The **FIRST LESSON** (ISAIAH 6:1-8):

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. And one called to another and said:

‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;
the whole earth is full of his glory.’

The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. And I said: ‘Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!’

Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. The seraph touched my mouth with it and said: ‘Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out.’ Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?’ And I said, ‘Here am I; send me!’

The choir sings the **MAGNIFICAT** (LUKE 1:46-55):

+ 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 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.

Music: Philip Moore (1943-), Plainsong with faburdens

The **SECOND LESSON** (ROMANS 8:18-25):

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

The **NUNC DIMITTIS** (LUKE 2:29-32):

+ 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.

Music: Plainsong, Tonus peregrinus

The **APOSTLES' CREED**:

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.**

The LESSER LITANY:

The Lord be with you.
Choir: And with thy spirit.
Let us pray.
Lord, have mercy upon us.
Choir: Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

Our Father,
All: **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.**

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

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

Endue thy ministers with righteousness.
Choir: And make thy chosen people joyful.

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

Give peace in our time, O Lord.

Choir: Because there is none other that fighteth for us,
but only thou, O God.

O God, make clean our hearts within us.

Choir: And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.

COLLECT OF THE DAY:

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who hatest nothing that thou hast made, and dost forgive the sins of all them that are penitent: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we worthily lamenting our sins, and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Choir: Amen.

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.

Choir: Amen.

COLLECT FOR AID AGAINST 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.

Choir: Amen.

Music: Plainsong

The ADDRESS

“Wonder and Repentance”
Prof Jeff Tseng, Chapel Fellow

The INTERCESSIONS may include this response:

Lord, in thy mercy
All: **hear our prayer.**

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.**

The Chaplain gives NOTICES and the choir then sings the Hymn O FOR A CLOSER WALK WITH GOD (NEH 414):

O for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame;
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb!

Return, O holy Dove, return,
Sweet messenger of rest;
I hate the sins that made thee mourn,
And drove thee from my breast.

The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be,
Help me to tear it from thy throne,
And worship only thee.

So shall my walk be close with God,
Calm and serene my frame;
So purer light shall mark the road
That leads me to the Lamb.

Words: William Cowper (1731-1800)
Music: *Caithness*, Scottish Psalter (1635)

The **BLESSING**

The **ORGAN VOLUNTARY**

The **COLLECTIONS** this term will go to the charity Shelter, providing relief to those hit hardest by the Covid-19 outbreak. We invite all who can to give generously.

Chapel Activities Online

Evening Prayer, Monday-Thursday (6pm)

Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87112377996?pwd=bm9zMWZreEl4M1RiK2toOXNvNW9aZz09>

Credo, Wednesdays (4:30pm)

A short enquirers' course for those preparing for baptism or confirmation, and those interested in learning more about Christian faith. Please contact the Chaplain if you're interested in joining.

Night Prayer at Nine, led by Oxford chaplaincies and the University Church

Every night at 9pm except Saturday. Broadcast from the University Church's [Facebook page](#).