



DURHAM
CATHEDRAL

Evensong

on

The Second Sunday Before Lent

Sexagesima

*sung by Durham Cathedral Choir
and the College Choirs of Durham University*

Sunday 8 February 2026

3.30 p.m.



Welcome to Durham Cathedral

*Inspired by our saints, Cuthbert and Bede,
the mission of Durham Cathedral
is to offer everyone the opportunity
to encounter God and know God's love in Jesus Christ.*

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At 3.20 p.m., the Dean greets the Mayor of Durham and Chair of Durham County Council who are escorted to their seats.

At 3.25 p.m., all stand as the Dean greets HM Deputy Lieutenant, Professor John Anstee, and escorts him to his seat—after which everyone resumes their seats.

At 3.30 p.m., all stand at the entry of the Choir, the Chaplains and Heads of Colleges, the Vice-Chancellor and Warden, and the cathedral ministers

During the opening hymn, the Dean escorts the Vice-Chancellor and Warden to her official seat in the Cathedral

Hymn

Angel-voices ever singing
Round thy throne of light,
Angel-harps for ever ringing,
Rest not day nor night;
Thousands only live to bless thee
And confess thee
Lord of might.

Thou who art beyond the farthest
Mortal eye can scan,
Can it be that thou regardest
Songs of sinful man?
Can we know that thou art near us,
And wilt hear us?
Yea, we can.

For we know that thou rejoicest
O'er each work of thine;
Thou didst ears and hands and voices
For thy praise design;
Craftsman's art and music's measure
For thy pleasure
All combine.

In thy house, great God, we offer
Of thine own to thee,
And for thine acceptance proffer
All unworthily
Hearts and minds and hands and voices
In our choicest
Psalmody.

Honour, glory, might and merit
Thine shall ever be,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
Blessed Trinity.
Of the best which thou hast given
Earth and heaven
Render thee.

Francis Pott

ANGEL VOICES, Edwin George Monk

Welcome and Introduction

*The Very Reverend Dr Philip Plyming
Dean of Durham*

Preces

Thomas Tomkins

Cantor O Lord, open thou our lips.
Choir 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.

Please sit

O praise the Lord of heaven :
 praise him in the height.
Praise him, all ye angels of his :
 praise him, all his host.
Praise him, sun and moon :
 praise him, all ye stars and light.
Praise him, all ye heavens :
 and ye waters that are above the heavens.
Let them praise the Name of the Lord :
 for he spake the word, and they were made;
 he commanded, and they were created.
He hath made them fast for ever and ever :
 he hath given them a law which shall not be broken.
Praise the Lord upon earth :
 ye dragons, and all deeps;
Fire and hail, snow and vapours :
 wind and storm, fulfilling his word;
Mountains and all hills :
 fruitful trees and all cedars;
Beasts and all cattle :
 worms and feathered fowls;
Kings of the earth and all people :
 princes and all judges of the world;
Young men and maidens, old men and children,
 praise the Name of the Lord :
 for his Name only is excellent,
 and his praise above heaven and earth.
He shall exalt the horn of his people;
 all his saints shall praise him :
 even the children of Israel,
 even the people that serveth him.

Please stand

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.

Please sit

First Lesson

Wisdom 6: 1-21

read by Professor Karen O'Brien

Vice-Chancellor and Warden, Durham University

The LORD created me at the beginning of his work,
the first of his acts of long ago.
Ages ago I was set up,
at the first, before the beginning of the earth.
When there were no depths I was brought forth,
when there were no springs abounding with water.
Before the mountains had been shaped,
before the hills, I was brought forth—
when he had not yet made earth and fields,
or the world's first bits of soil.
When he established the heavens, I was there,
when he drew a circle on the face of the deep,
when he made firm the skies above,
when he established the fountains of the deep,
when he assigned to the sea its limit,
so that the waters might not transgress his command,
when he marked out the foundations of the earth,
then I was beside him, like a master worker;
and I was daily his delight,
rejoicing before him always,
rejoicing in his inhabited world
and delighting in the human race.

After a short silence, all stand with the Choir

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.

Please sit

Second Lesson

Revelation 4

*read by Oliver Kurt, Undergraduate
Hatfield College, Durham University*

After this I looked, and there in heaven a door stood open! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, 'Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.' At once I was in the spirit, and there in heaven stood a throne, with one seated on the throne! And the one seated there looks like jasper and cornelian, and around the throne is a rainbow that looks like an emerald. Around the throne are twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones are twenty-four elders, dressed in white robes, with golden crowns on their heads. Coming from the throne are flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and in front of the throne burn seven flaming torches, which are the seven spirits of God; and in front of the throne there is something like a sea of glass, like crystal.

Around the throne, and on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with a face like a human face, and the fourth living creature like a flying eagle. And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and inside. Day and night without ceasing they sing,

'Holy, holy, holy,
the Lord God the Almighty,
who was and is and is to come.'

And whenever the living creatures give glory and honour and thanks to the one who is seated on the throne, who lives for ever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall before the one who is seated on the throne and worship the one who lives for ever and ever; they cast their crowns before the throne, singing,

'You are worthy, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honour and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they existed and were created.'

After a short silence, all stand with the Choir

Nunc dimittis

Hugh Blair in B minor

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.

Please face east

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, Responses and Collects

Thomas Tomkins

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

Please kneel

Cantor Let us pray.

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

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.

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.

The Collect for Sexagesima

O Lord God,
who seest that we put not our trust in any thing that we do:
Mercifully grant that by thy power
we may be defended against all adversity;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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.

Please sit

Anthem Let all mortal flesh keep silence *sung by the choirs*

Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and stand with fear and trembling,
and lift itself above all earthly thought. For the King of kings and
Lord of lords, Christ our God, cometh forth to be our oblation, and to
be given for food to the faithful. Before him come the choirs of
angels, with every principality and power; the cherubim with many
eyes, and winged seraphim, who veil their faces as they shout
exultingly the hymn: Alleluia!

The Liturgy of St James

Edward Bairstow

Prayers and the Grace

*The Reverend Canon Gavin Wort
University Lead Chaplain*

Let us pray.

Please kneel or remain seated for the prayers

**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.**

Sermon

*The Reverend Canon Michael Hampel
Vice-Dean and Precentor, Durham Cathedral*

Please stand to sing the hymn

**Hymn How shall I sing that majesty
 Which angels do admire?
 Let dust in dust and silence lie;
 Sing, sing, ye heavenly choir.
 Thousands of thousands stand around
 Thy throne, O God most high;
 Ten thousand times ten thousand sound
 Thy praise; but who am I?**

Thy brightness unto them appears,
 Whilst I thy footsteps trace;
A sound of God comes to my ears,
 But they behold thy face.
They sing because thou art their Sun;
 Lord, send a beam on me;
For where heaven is but once begun
 There alleluias be.

Enlighten with faith's light my heart,
 Inflame it with love's fire;
Then shall I sing and bear a part
 With that celestial choir.
I shall, I fear, be dark and cold,
 With all my fire and light;
Yet when thou dost accept their gold,
 Lord, treasure up my mite.

How great a being, Lord, is thine,
 Which doth all beings keep!
Thy knowledge is the only line
 To sound so vast a deep:
Thou art a sea without a shore,
 A sun without a sphere;
Thy time is now and evermore,
 Thy place is everywhere.

John Mason

COE FEN, Ken Naylor

The Blessing

Dean	The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.
Choir	Amen.

Voluntary St Patrick's Breastplate from Sonata No 4 'Celtica' Op 153
Charles Villiers Stanford

Students who have sung in the choirs this evening are welcome to come to drinks in the Deanery after this service.

Student Tuesday

Students are welcome to attend Evensong any time but we extend a particular welcome to students at Evensong on Tuesdays. The next gathering is Tuesday 10 February and, after the service, we will offer food and drink with a chance to engage with each other and with the cathedral clergy in a variety of locations and occasionally with other activities too. We hope to build up a good community of students who worship regularly with us. Evensong on Tuesday starts at 5.30 p.m. and lasts about 40 minutes. Food will be served at 6.15 p.m. and people will be free to go any time.

Community Gathering: Sunday 15 February at 11.30 a.m.

Following our first community gathering last November, our next such gathering will be on Sunday 15 February—this time at 11.30 a.m. in the Nave, in place of the said service of Morning Prayer which would have taken place then. It's a time for members of the worshipping community to enjoy fellowship with one another, and also to engage directly with the clergy who serve here at the Cathedral. After the meeting, we will go to the Prior's Hall for soup and a roll. All regular worshippers are welcome. Just turn up.

Baptism and Confirmation at Durham Cathedral

During Lent, we will be preparing candidates for baptism and confirmation at the Easter Liturgy on Sunday 5 April, a magnificent service which begins at 5.00 a.m., at which the Bishop of Jarrow will preside. Preparation classes for adults will be offered on Sundays during Lent at 11.30 a.m. in the Galilee Chapel. The first class will be on Sunday 22 February 2026. Children will be prepared via Junior Church. If you would like to be baptised and/or confirmed, please sign-up for these classes by contacting: daniel.parkinson@durhamcathedral.co.uk

Durham Cathedral Lent Course 2026: *Giving Thanks*

Lent is traditionally a precious opportunity for Christians to go deeper in faith and the life of prayer. This coming Lent at Durham Cathedral we will be running a Lent Course to explore one of the gems of the *Book of Common Prayer*, the prayer of General Thanksgiving, using a book specially written by the Dean, Philip Plyming. Copies of Philip's book are available to buy at the Cathedral Shop, and from other booksellers.

All members of our worshipping community are invited to join one of four groups which will be meeting weekly during Lent to read and discuss *Giving Thanks* (two chapters per week). We hope this will be a great opportunity not simply to learn more about the life of prayer, but also to get to know each other better, and learn from one another. No specialist knowledge is required.

Led by fellow members of the worshipping community, there will be groups on Tuesday mornings (central Durham), Wednesday afternoons (Cathedral), Wednesday evenings (central Durham), and on Zoom.

To find out more, and to indicate which groups you would be able to join, please scan the QR code or email Martha Stewart on eadean@durhamcathedral.co.uk for a link to the form.



Greece 2026 – Pilgrimage in the Steps of St Paul

As part of Durham Cathedral's commitment to growing pilgrimage, we are planning a pilgrimage to Greece from 7-16 October 2026, tracing the second missionary journey of the apostle Paul. This will be led by our Dean, Philip Plyming, who has researched and taught on Paul for over 20 years, and will be for Durham Cathedral and Friends. Bookings are open and spaces are limited to 45 people. A brochure can be obtained by emailing eadean@durhamcathedral.co.uk

ENCOUNTER!

Encountering God through the Creative Arts

A series of discussions for Lent 2026 at Durham Cathedral with leading figures in the world of the creative arts in conversation with Michael Hampel, Vice-Dean and Precentor of Durham Cathedral. Sundays at 4.30 p.m. for approximately half an hour:

Sunday 22 February—Jolyon Mitchell on film

The Reverend Professor Jolyon Mitchell is Principal of St John's College, Durham University, former producer and journalist with BBC World Service, who has served on international film juries at Venice, Cannes and Berlin

Sunday 1 March—Catherine Fox on literature

Catherine Fox is an author, and senior lecturer in Creative Writing at Manchester Metropolitan University

Sunday 8 March—Greg Doran on theatre

Sir Gregory Doran is former Artistic Director of the Royal Shakespeare Company

Sunday 15 March—Peter Taylor on television

Peter Taylor, LVO, is Head of Operations at BBC Studios and oversees the broadcasts of major national events such as Elizabeth II's funeral service and Charles III's Coronation

Sunday 22 March—Mel Howse on art

Mel Howse is an award-winning artist and architectural enameller who created the Illumination Window in the North Quire Aisle at Durham Cathedral

Sunday 29 March—James MacMillan on music

Sir James MacMillan, CBE, is a conductor and composer of sacred choral and orchestral music

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*The Cathedral Office, The College, Durham DH1 3EH—Tel: (0191) 386 4266
enquiries@durhamcathedral.co.uk www.durhamcathedral.co.uk*

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