

SAINT THOMAS CHURCH

In the City of New York FESTAL EVENSONG ORDER OF SERVICE

Please switch off all cellular telephones and pagers.

We begin Evensong with all standing for the entrance of the Choir and Clergy.

Please remain standing and join in the singing of any opening Hymn.

Please remain standing as the Officiant and Choir sing prayers.

Priest: O Lord, open thou our lips.

Choir: And our mouth shall show forth thy praise.

Priest: O God, make speed to save us.

Choir: 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.

Please be seated while the Choir sings the appointed Psalm or Psalms.

*Please remain seated for the First Lesson and stand for the Office hymn and for the **Magnificat***

MY SOUL doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior. 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 for the Second Lesson and for the **Nunc dimittis***

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 stand and join in the singing of the Creed:

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.

Priest: The Lord be with you.

Choir: And with thy spirit.

Priest: Let us pray.

Please kneel while prayers are sung.

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

OUR FATHER, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Priest: O Lord, show thy mercy upon us;

Choir: And grant us thy salvation.

Priest: O Lord, save the State;

Choir: And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.

Priest: Endue thy ministers with righteousness;

Choir: And make thy chosen people joyful.

Priest: O Lord, save thy people;

Choir: And bless thine inheritance.

Priest: Give peace in our time, O Lord;

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

Priest: O God, make clean our hearts within us;

Choir: And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.

After the Collect of the Day, the Priest sings these Evening Collects:

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 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 Savior. 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 Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Please be seated for the Greetings and the Anthem.

Please kneel for the final Collect and the Grace.

Please stand to join in the singing of any final Hymn, and remain standing for the departure of the Choir and Clergy.

Festal Evensong

If you are not accustomed to our Service, which is only one among many possible ways of worship, these notes may be useful. Our aim here is to offer beauty in stone and song to God, the giver of all beauty and goodness. Based on the Services held daily in the medieval Church, Evensong as arranged in the Book of Common Prayer of the Anglican Church has been sung regularly in our Church since the Sixteenth Century, the Tudor age in England, with only a few breaks (during the Commonwealth in the Seventeenth Century). Here the music is sung by the Choir. You are asked to join silently in the Service while they sing the prayers and other music which they have practiced with care. But we all join the Choir in singing the Creed; in adding Amen to the other said prayers; and in singing Hymns. Because we maintain this tradition of Evensong, you will find that we use in this Service the old forms of the prayers and scriptural readings.

After the introduction to the Service, the Choir recites the appointed Psalms. We can think about the Psalms, the hymn book of the Temple at Jerusalem, as our Lord Jesus Christ did when he used them; the words will be found in the middle of the Prayer Book. The Lesson from the Old Testament follows. It is read from the Lectern in the English of the Authorized Version (1611). While the altar is censed, the Choir sings Magnificat, the song of the Blessed Virgin Mary when the promises of the Old Testament came true (Luke 1). Incense was used in the worship of ancient Israel, especially at the Tent of Meeting in the Temple of Jerusalem, as evidenced throughout the Old Testament. Incense is a sign of prayer and of blessing (“Let my prayer be set forth in thy sight as the incense ...” – Ps. 141:2.) In the New Testament, the Book of Revelation indicates the use of incense (“the prayers of all the saints”) in heaven, and many biblical scholars believe Saint John’s vision reflects the usage of the early Church on earth (see Rev. 8:3-4.) Incense has been an integral part of the Catholic liturgy of the Church, both Eastern and Western, from the earliest times, and of the High Anglican tradition since the seventeenth century, which was renewed by the Oxford Movement (1833-45).

The Lesson from the New Testament proclaims the good news of Jesus Christ, and is followed by Nunc dimittis, the song of Simeon when he had seen our Lord in the Temple at Jerusalem (Luke 2). The Service Leaflet will show you which musician composed this setting of Magnificat and Nunc dimittis.

All then stand, facing the altar used at the Holy Eucharist, and other reminders of the life of our Lord Jesus Christ. We sing together the Apostles’ Creed, the expression of the faith of those who, generation by generation in the Christian Church, respond to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, crucified and alive.

Prayers are then sung by the Priest and the Choir. They end with the “Collects” which collect our thoughts. A Hymn, Sermon and Anthem may follow. The Anthem is usually a meditation on a text in the Bible or in the old Prayer Books. The words of the Anthem (including a translation if the words are Latin) will be found in the Service Leaflet.

Please remember to give generously when the Offering is collected, specially if you have enjoyed this opportunity of joining in the offering of beauty in worship.

PLEASE LEAVE THIS CARD IN THE PEW
