YORK MINSTER

The Cathedral & Metropolitical Church of St Peter in York

CHORAL EVENSONG
on the Sunday next before Advent

including J S Bach's Cantata BWV 140
Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme

Sunday 22nd November 2026
at 4.00 pm

Welcome

A warm welcome to York Minster for this service of Choral Evensong which includes, as the anthem, J S Bach's Cantata *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme*.

Wachet auf is one of Bach's best-known church cantatas, composed originally for the Twenty-Seventh Sunday after Trinity, probably in 1731. It is based around Philipp Nicolai's hymn, familiar in its English translation as *Sleepers wake*, with three movements constructed around the chorale melody. The remaining movements set, in recitative and aria (duet), texts by Nicolai which draw heavily on Biblical 'bridegroom' imagery, which in places paraphrase verses from the Song of Songs. The Cantata's main Biblical focus, though, is the parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins (Matthew 25.1–13) in which the reader is warned of the need to be watchful for the Second Coming of the Lord. Hence the work provides an admirable preparation for the approaching season of Advent, and there is a long-standing custom that *Wachet auf* is sung in York Minster on the afternoon of the Sunday Next before Advent.

Information about this Service







- This service is being live-streamed, but care is taken to focus on the clergy and choir and not the congregation. For licensing and safeguarding reasons, please do not record this service on your own devices.
- The Chapter of York Minster is committed to the safeguarding and protection of children, young people, and vulnerable adults. If you therefore have any concerns about the welfare of a child, a young person or a vulnerable adult, or about the behaviour of someone in relation to safeguarding, please do not hesitate to contact our Safeguarding Officer, Caroline Wood: Tel: 01904 559542, Mobile: 07843 339980, Email: carolinew@yorkminster.org. If you believe someone is at immediate risk of harm, please call the emergency services on 999.
- Please follow the directions of the stewards. Where "Sit" or "Stand" are indicated, these are given simply as a guide. Throughout the service please feel free to adopt the posture that is most comfortable for you.
- Please join in saying together the words printed in **bold** type and in singing the hymn.
- We are grateful for all who give to support the mission and ministry of York Minster. You can offer a gift, or set up regular giving, by using the following QR code. 10% of all giving received during this service will be given to charities York Minster supports – HOPE Africa, a charity initiated by our companion link dioceses in SA; St Philip's Church Outreach Project in East Hull, providing food, warmth and community to one of the most deprived areas in both the Diocese of York and the UK; and a number of charities who work locally with homeless people in the City of York. Thank you for all you are able to give.
- Donations can be made via or regular giving set-up through the Parish Giving Scheme by following this QR code or calling 0333 002 1271.

Order of Service

A bell is rung and prayers are sung.

Introit

O nata lux de lumine Jesu Redemptor saeculi,
dignare clemens supplicum laudes precesque sumere.

Qui carne quondam contegi dignatus es pro perditis,
nos membra confer effici tui beati corporis.

O Light born of light, Jesu Redeemer of the world:
deign in mercy to hear the prayers and praises of those who kneel before you.

You who once deigned to take flesh for the sake of those who were lost:
make us members of your blessed body.

Words Tenth-century Latin ♦ *Music* Thomas Tallis (*c* 1505–1585)

Stand when the choir enters the Quire.

Preces

Cantor O Lord, open thou our lips;
Choir And our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

Cantor 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.

Music William Byrd (*c* 1540–1623)

Sit for the singing of the psalm but stand for the Gloria.

Psalmody

The Lord is King, and hath put on glorious apparel ♦
the Lord hath put on his apparel, and girded himself with strength.

He hath made the round world so sure ♦
that it cannot be moved.

Ever since the world began hath thy seat been prepared ♦
thou art from everlasting.

The floods are risen, O Lord, the floods have lift up their voice ♦
the floods lift up their waves.

The waves of the sea are mighty, and rage horribly ♦
but yet the Lord, who dwelleth on high, is mightier.

Thy testimonies, O Lord, are very sure ♦
holiness becometh thine house for ever.

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.

Psalm 93

Sit.

First Lesson

The First Lesson is taken from the Book of the Song of Solomon.

Set me as a seal upon your heart,
as a seal upon your arm;
for love is strong as death,
passion fierce as the grave.
Its flashes are flashes of fire,
a raging flame.
Many waters cannot quench love,
neither can floods drown it.
If one offered for love
all the wealth of one's house,
it would be utterly scorned.

Here ends the First Lesson.

Song of Solomon 8.6–7

Stand.

Magnificat

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.

Words Luke 1. 46–55
Music The Second Service, William Byrd (*c* 1540–1623)

Sit.

Second Lesson

The Second Lesson is taken from the Gospel of Matthew.

The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'

Here ends the Second Lesson.

Matthew 28.16–20

Stand.

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.

Words Luke 2. 29–32
Music The Second Service, William Byrd (*c* 1540–1623)

Remain standing and turn to face east.

The Apostles' 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.

The Lesser Litany and Responses

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

Cantor Let us pray.

Kneel or sit.

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.

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

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

Cantor Endue thy Ministers with righteousness.
Choir And make thy chosen people joyful.

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

Cantor Give peace in our time, O Lord.
Choir Because there is none other that fighteth for us,
but only thou, O God.

Cantor O God, make clean our hearts within us.
Choir And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.

The Collects

Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may of thee be plenteously rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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.

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.

Music William Byrd

Sit.

Anthem

Cantata: Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme (J S Bach)

Chorus

Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme	*Wake up, cries the watchmen's voice*
der Wächter sehr hoch auf der Zinne,	*high up on the battlements,*
wach auf, du Stadt Jerusalem!	*wake up, city of Jerusalem!*
Mitternacht heißt diese Stunde;	*This is the midnight hour;*
sie rufen uns mit hellem Munde:	*they call to us with ringing voices:*
Wo seid ihr klugen Jungfrauen?	*Where are you, wise virgins?*
Wohlauf, der Bräutgam kommt;	*Make haste, the bridegroom comes;*
steht auf, die Lampen nehmt!	*rise up, and take your lamps!*
Alleluja!	*Alleluia!*
Macht euch bereit zu der Hochzeit,	*Prepare yourselves for the wedding,*
ihr müsset ihm entgegen gehn!	*you must set out to meet him.*

Recitative (Tenor)

Er kommt, der Bräut´gam kommt!	*He comes, the bridegroom comes!*
Ihr Töchter Zions, kommt heraus,	*Go forth, O daughters of Zion,*
sein Ausgang eilet aus der Höhe	*the daystar hastens from on high*
in euer Mutter Haus.	*into your mother's house.*
Der Bräut´gam kommt, der einem Rehe	*The bridegroom comes, like a roe*
und jungen Hirschen gleich	*or a young hart*
auf denen Hügeln springt	*skipping upon the hills*
und euch das Mahl der Hochzeit bringt.	*and bringing you the wedding feast.*
Wacht auf, ermuntert euch!	*Awaken, be of good cheer,*
den Bräut´gam zu empfangen!	*to welcome the bridegroom here!*
Dort, sehet, kommt er hergegangen.	*There, see, behold him coming!*

Aria (Duet: Soprano and Bass)

Seele: Wann kommst du, mein Heil?	Soul: *When wilt thou come, my salvation?*
Jesus: Ich komme, dein Teil.	Jesus: *I am coming,* [*to be*] *a part of you.*
Seele: Ich warte mit brennendem Öle.	Soul: *I wait, my lamp lit with burning oil.*
Jesus: Ich öffne den Saal,	Jesus: *I open the hall,*
Seele: eröffne den Saal—	Soul: *open the hall—*
Beide: zum himmlischen Mahl!	Both: *for the heavenly feast!*
Seele: Komm, Jesu!	Soul: *Come, Jesus!*
Jesus: Ich komme, liebliche Seele.	Jesus: *I come, beloved soul!*

Chorale

Zion hört die Wächter singen,	*Zion hears the watchmen singing,*
das Herz tut ihr vor Freuden springen,	*her heart leaps for joy,*
sie wachet und steht eilend auf.	*she wakens and rises with haste.*
Ihr Freund kommt vom Himmel prächtig,	*Her friend descends from heaven in splendour,*
von Gnaden stark, von Wahrheit mächtig,	*strong in mercy, mighty in truth,*
ihr Licht wird hell, ihr Stern geht auf.	*her light grows bright, her star ascends.*
Nun komm, du werte Kron´,	*Come, now, thou worthy crown,*
Herr Jesu, Gottes Sohn.	*Lord Jesus, the Son of God!*
Hosianna!	*Hosanna!*
Wir folgen all zum Freudensaal	*We shall all follow to the hall of rejoicing*
und halten mit das Abendmahl.	*and join the Lord's Supper.*

Recitative (Bass)

So geh herein zu mir,
du mir erwählte Braut!
Ich habe mich mit dir
von Ewigkeit vertraut.
Dich will ich auf mein Herz,
auf meinen Arm gleich wie ein Siegel setzen
und dein betrübtes Aug´ ergötzen.
Vergiß, o Seele, nun
die Angst, den Schmerz,
den du erdulden müssen;
auf meiner Linken sollst du ruhn,
und meine Rechte soll dich küssen.

So, enter in to me,
You, my chosen bride!
I have wedded myself to you
for all eternity.
I would set you on my heart
and on my arm as a seal
and gladden once more your troubled eye.
Forget now, O soul
the fear and grief
you have had to bear;
on my left hand shall you rest,
and my right hand shall embrace you.

Aria (Duet: Soprano and Bass)

Seele: Mein Freund ist mein!
Jesus: Und ich bin dein!
Beide: Die Liebe soll nichts scheiden.
Seele: Ich will mit dir,
Jesus: Du sollst mit mir,
Both: in Himmels Rosen weiden,
da Freude die Fülle,
da Wonne wird sein.

Soul: *My friend is mine,*
Jesus: *and I am his!*
Both: *Nothing shall divide this love.*
Soul: *You shall partake with me*
Jesus: *I shall partake with thee*
Both: *of heaven's rosy pastures,*
where there will be joy in abundance,
and bliss.

Chorale

Gloria sei dir gesungen
mit Menschen und mit englischen Zungen,
mit Harfen und mit Zymbeln schon.
Von zwölf Perlen sind die Pforten
an deiner Stadt; wir sind mit Konsorten
der Engel hoch um deinen Thron.
Kein Aug´ hat je gespürt,
kein Ohr hat je gehört solche Freude.
Des sind wir froh, i-o, i-o!
Ewig in dulci jubilo.

Glory now be sung to thee
with tongues of angels and mankind,
with harps and with cymbals.
The portals are made of twelve pearls,
in thy city we are consorts
of the angels high about thy throne.
No eye has ever seen,
no ear has ever heard such joy.
Therefore we are glad, io, io!
Eternally in dulci jubilo.

Remain seated.

Reflection

Stand.

Hymn



1. Lo, he comes with clouds descending,
   once for favoured sinners slain;
thousand thousand saints attending
   swell the triumph of his train:
Alleluya! Alleluya! Alleluya!
   God appears, on earth to reign.

2. Every eye shall now behold him
   robed in dreadful majesty;
those who set at nought and sold him,
   pierced and nailed him to the tree,
deeply wailing, deeply wailing, deeply wailing,
   shall the true Messiah see.

3. Those dear tokens of his passion
   still his dazzling body bears,
cause of endless exultation
   to his ransomed worshippers:
with what rapture, with what rapture, with what rapture,
   gaze we on those glorious scars!

4. Yea, Amen! let all adore thee,
   high on thine eternal throne;
Saviour, take the power and glory;
   claim the kingdom for thine own:
O come quickly! O come quickly! O come quickly!
   Alleluya! Come, Lord, come!

Words NEH 9, Charles Wesley (1707–1788)
Tune HELMSLEY, NEH 9, melody attributed to Thomas Olivers (1725–1799) in *Select Hymns with Tunes Annext* (second edition, 1765)
edited by John Wesley (1703–1791)

Remain standing.

The Blessing

Remain as quiet as possible as the choir processes out and sings the final prayer; this is followed by the orchestral voluntary which concludes the service.

Orchestral Voluntary

Overture (Orchestral Suite No 1), BWV 1066 J S Bach (1685–1750)

There will be an opportunity to make a donation to support the music, ministry and mission of York Minster as you leave.

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