

The Temple Church

Wednesday 18 March 2026

CHORAL EVENSONG, 6.00 p.m.

For St Patrick's Day

Welcome to this service. It is a pleasure for all of us at the Temple Church that you are here this evening. We follow the services of the Book of Common Prayer (1662). The public-address system has a loop-facility. If you wear a hearing-aid, please turn its setting to T.

ORGAN PRELUDE

Prelude in E flat

Sir Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924)

All stand at the entrance of the choir.

INTROIT

Christ be with me, Christ within me
Christ behind me, Christ before me
Christ beside me, Christ to win me
Christ to comfort and restore me.
Christ above me, Christ beneath me
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger.
Christ in hearts of all that love me.
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.

Music: Sir John Rutter (b. 1945)

Words: A prayer of St Patrick

HYMN

**Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart,
Be all else but naught to me, save that thou art,
Be thou my best thought in the day and the night,
Both waking and sleeping, thy presence my light.**

**Be thou my wisdom, be thou my true word
Be thou ever with me, and I with thee, Lord,
Be thou my great Father, and I thy true son,
Be thou in me dwelling, and I with thee one.**

**Be thou my breastplate, my sword for the fight,
Be thou my whole armour, be thou my true might,
Be thou my soul's shelter, be thou my strong tower,
O raise thou me heavenward, great Power of my power.**

**Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise;
Be thou mine inheritance now and always,
Be thou and thou only the first in my heart,
O Sovereign of heaven, my treasure thou art.**

**High King of Heaven, thou heaven's bright Sun,
O grant me its joys after vict'ry is won,
Great Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be thou my vision, O Ruler of all.**

Music: Slane (Irish)
Words: Ancient Irish Hymn, c. 8th century tr. Mary Bryne (1880-1931)
versified, Eleanor Hull (1860-1935)

All sit for:

THE BIDDING PRAYER

Be amazed, all you people great and small who fear God! You well-educated people in authority, listen carefully. Who was it who called one as foolish as I am out from the midst of those who are wise and experienced in law and powerful in speech? If I am among the most despised, yet he inspired me, before others, so that I would faithfully serve the nations with awe and reverence and without blame: the nations to whom the love of Christ brought me. This was his gift to me: that I would spend my life, if I were worthy of it, serving them in truth and with humility to the end.

St Patrick, *Confessio* 13

We give heartfelt thanks to God for the island of Ireland and all her people; for the beauty of the land; for the rich history and culture of Ireland; for her cities and villages, for her industries and farms, and above all, this evening, for all those who serve there the administration of the law. We pray for the continued prosperity of Ireland, for her links with England, Wales, Scotland and all our friends on the Continent of Europe.

Patrick longed to go back to Britain, and to revisit Gaul:

But I am bound in the Spirit, who assures me that if I were to do this, I would be held guilty. And I fear, also, to lose the work which I began – not so much I as Christ the Lord, who told me to come here to be with the people of Ireland for the rest of my life. May the Lord will it, and protect me from every wrong path!

St Patrick, *Confessio* 43

We give thanks for St Patrick's calling and for his loyalty to God's will, for his love of Ireland and her people, and for the love that Ireland still, to this day, inspires in all her children.

We join our own prayers with St Patrick's and with the prayers of all those in Ireland who through 1,500 years have come to faith, in the words that Jesus himself has taught us:

The Lord's Prayer will be read in Irish.

Ár nAthair, atá ar neamh,
Go naofar d'ainm,
Go dtaga do ríocht,
Go ndéantar do thoil ar an dtalamh,
Mar a ndéantar ar neamh.
Ár n-arán laethúil, tabhair dúinn inniu;
Agus maith dúinn ár bhfiacha,
Mar a mhaithimidne dár bhféichúina féin.
Agus ná lig sinn i gcathú,
Ach saor sinn ó olc.
Áiméan.

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: For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, For ever and ever. Amen.

All stand at 'Glory be to the Father'

RESPONSES

PSALM 116. 11-16

What reward shall I give unto the Lord:

for all the benefits that he hath done unto me?

I will receive the cup of salvation: and call upon the Name of the Lord.

I will pay my vows now in the presence of all his people:

right dear in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.

Behold, O Lord, how that I am thy servant:

I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid; thou hast broken my bonds in sunder.

I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving:

and will call upon the Name of the Lord.

I will pay my vows unto the Lord, in the sight of all his people:
in the courts of the Lord's house, even in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem.
Praise the Lord.
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.

All sit.

THE FIRST LESSON
Isaiah 52. 7-10

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!

Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion.

Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

All stand.

MAGNIFICAT (*Wood in E flat, no. 2*)

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.

All sit.

THE SECOND LESSON
1 Thessalonians 2. 1-13

For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain. For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile: But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts. For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God is witness: Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.

But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us. For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God. Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe: As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

All stand.

NUNC DIMITTIS (*Wood in E flat, no. 2*)

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.

All remain standing, and in the tradition of the Temple Church turn east to say together:

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 Catholick Church; The Communion of Saints; The Forgiveness of sins; The Resurrection of the body, And the Life everlasting. Amen.

All kneel or sit at 'Lord have mercy upon us.....'

RESPONSES AND COLLECTS

O God, by whose providence the blessed Patrick was chosen to be the apostle of the Irish; that thus the people of Hibernia might be made children of the Most High by the laver of regeneration: Grant, we beseech thee, that by his intercession we may hasten without delay to the paths of justice and of truth, through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that we, who for our evil deeds do worthily deserve to be punished, by the comfort of thy grace may mercifully be relieved; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

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. *Amen.*

All sit.

ANTHEM

Beati quorum via integra est:
qui ambulant in lege Domini.

*Blessed are they whose way is pure:
who walk in the law of the Lord.*

Music: Sir Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924)
Words: Psalm 119. 1

All kneel or remain sitting when the priest says: 'Let us pray'

PRAYERS

Ag Criost An Siol, Ag Criost and Fomhar
I n-lothlainn De, go dtugtar Sinn.
Ag Criost an Mhuir, ag Criost an t-iasc
I lionta De go gcastar sinn.
O fhas go h-aois, is o aois go bas
Do dha laimh a Chriost anall tharainn.
O bhas go críoch, ní críoch ach athfhas
I bParrthas na nGrast go rabhaimid.

*With Christ of the seed, with Christ of the harvest
In the granary of God, may we be taken.
With Christ of the sea, with Christ of the fishes,
In the lines of God may we be entwined.
From growth to age and from age to death
Your two hands, O Christ, hither draw us.
From death to the end, not the end, but all eternity
In paradise of the blessed may we reside.*

Words: Irish Traditional

All stand.

HYMN

**I bind unto myself today
The strong name of the Trinity
By invocation of the same,
The Three in One and One in Three.**

Choir only Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me.

Choir only Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.

**I bind unto myself the name,
The strong name of the Trinity
By invocation of the same,
The Three in One and One in Three,
Of whom all nature hath creation,
Eternal Father, Spirit, Word.
Praise to the Lord of my salvation;
Salvation is of Christ the Lord!**

Music: 'St Patrick's Breastplate', arr. Stanford
Words: Ascribed to St Patrick, tr. Mrs C. F. Alexander

The hymn's Old Irish text is preserved in the Liber Hymnorum (Trinity College, Dublin, late 11th century), a collection of 40 hymns – some ascribed to the great saints of the 5th-8th centuries – with an explanatory preface to each. Of this hymn we read: 'Saint Patrick sang this when an ambush was laid against his coming by Loegaire, that he might not go to Tara to sow the faith. And then it appeared before those lying in ambush that Saint Patrick and his monks were wild deer with a fawn following them.'

H. H. Dickinson, Dean of the Chapel Royal at Dublin Castle, commissioned Mrs Alexander to translate the hymn; within a week she sent him her translation. Cecil Frances Alexander (Dublin 1818 –1895) also wrote 'All Things bright and beautiful', 'There is a green Hill far away' and 'Once in royal David's City.'

THE BLESSING

IRISH BLESSING

May the road rise to meet you
May the wind be ever at you back
May the sun shine warm upon your face
And the rain fall soft upon your fields
And until we meet again
May God hold you in the palm of his hand.

Music: Bob Chilcott (b. 1955)
Words: Irish traditional

All are invited to sit after the departure of the Choir and Clergy for

THE ORGAN VOLUNTARY

Prelude in G

Sir Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924)

We warmly invite you to join us for a glass of wine in the Round Church after the service. A small donation to help cover our costs is greatly appreciated. Thank you!

COLLECTION

There will be a retiring collection.

If you would prefer to donate online the Church has a Just Giving page. For donations this way, kindly scan the QR code below. Thank you for your support of the Church!



CONFIRMATION

Our annual celebratory service of Baptism, Confirmation and Choral Communion will take place on Sunday 19 July at 11.15am. If you, your children or grandchildren are considering Confirmation this year, the Revd Griffith-Jones will be delighted to hear from you.

Master@templechurch.com

KEEPING IN TOUCH

If you would like to join our mailing list and be among the first to hear of our special services and events, you will find cards at the South Door exit. Kindly write your name and email address on a card and leave it in the bowl provided.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Please refrain from all filming, recording and photography during the service. Thank you.

SAFEGUARDING

If you have any concerns about safeguarding, the Safeguarding Officer can be contacted confidentially at safeguarding@templechurch.com or via 020 7427 5650.