

WELCOME

We welcome you to this beautiful church in the heart of the city; this cathedral is the seat of the Bishop of Chester and the core of a Christian community that has worshipped and worked here for over 1100 years. It is a place where the mission of the church to proclaim God's love is central, and your welcome presence here for worship helps to strengthen this vital act of witness.

During the service the congregation are invited to pray the words in **Bold Type**. An induction loop system is in operation: hearing aids should be switched to the 'T' position. Please ensure that all mobile telephones and devices are silenced before the service begins.

ABOUT THIS SERVICE

Choral Evensong has been at the heart of the Cathedral's worship since the Reformation and is still offered to God on a daily basis. The canticles are sung by the choir and the congregation are invited to participate throughout in thoughtful prayer, allowing the music to soothe, transform and draw us closer to the presence of God. The congregation are invited to respond in the spoken parts of the liturgy: the reciting of the Creed and the Lord's Prayer, as well as singing the hymns.

Today we especially welcome Revd Dr Joe Kennedy to be commissioned as Rural Dean of Birkenhead and Revd David Vestergaard to be commissioned as Rural Dean of Wirral North.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Very Revd Dr Tim Stratford, Dean of Chester, offers some words of welcome and introduction

THE OFFICE OF EVENSONG

THE PRECES AND RESPONSES

Canon Jeremy Dussek, Precentor and the choir sing

○ Lord, open thou our lips.

And our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

○ God, make speed to save us.

○ 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.

All sit

PSALM 59

- 1 Deliver me from mine enemies, O God :
defend me from them that rise up against me.
- 2 ○ deliver me from the wicked doers :
and save me from the blood-thirsty men.
- 3 For lo, they lie waiting for my soul :
the mighty men are gathered against me, without any offence or fault of me,
- 4 They run and prepare themselves without my fault : ○ Lord.
arise thou therefore to help me, and behold.
- 5 Stand up, O Lord God of hosts, thou God of Israel, to visit all the heathen :
and be not merciful unto them that offend of malicious wickedness.
- 6 They go to and fro in the evening :
they grin like a dog, and run about through the city.
- 7 Behold, they speak with their mouth, and swords are in their lips :
for who doth hear?
- 8 But thou, O Lord, shalt have them in derision :
and thou shalt laugh all the heathen to scorn.
- 9 My strength will I ascribe unto thee :
for thou art the God of my refuge.
- 10 God sheweth me his goodness plenteously :
and God shall let me see my desire upon mine enemies.

11 Slay them not, lest my people forget it :
 but scatter them abroad among the people, and put them down, O Lord, our
 12 For the sin of their mouth, and for the words of their lips, defence.
 they shall be taken in their pride :
 and why? their preaching is of cursing and lies.
 13 Consume them in thy wrath, consume them, that they may perish :
 and know that it is God that ruleth in Jacob, and unto the ends of the world.
 14 And in the evening they will return :
 grin like a dog, and will go about the city.
 15 They will run here and there for meat :
 and grudge if they be not satisfied.
 16 As for me, I will sing of thy power, and will praise thy mercy betimes in the
 for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble. morning :
 17 Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing :
 for thou, O God, art my refuge, and my merciful God.

PSALM 60

1 O God, thou hast cast us out, and scattered us abroad :
 thou hast also been displeased; O turn thee unto us again.
 2 Thou hast moved the land, and divided it :
 heal the sores thereof, for it shaketh.
 3 Thou hast shewed thy people heavy things :
 thou hast given us a drink of deadly wine.
 4 Thou hast given a token for such as fear thee :
 that they may triumph because of the truth.
 5 Therefore were thy beloved delivered :
 help me with thy right hand, and hear me.
 6 God hath spoken in his holiness, I will rejoyce, and divide Sichem :
 and mete out the valley of Succoth.
 7 Gilead is mine, and Manasses is mine :
 Ephraim also is the strength of my head; Judah is my law-giver;
 8 Moab is my wash-pot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe :
 Philistia, be thou glad of me.
 9 Who will lead me into the strong city :
 who will bring me into Edom?
 10 Hast not thou cast us out, O God :
 wilt not thou, O God, go out with our hosts?
 11 O be thou our help in trouble :
 for vain is the help of man.
 12 Through God will we do great acts :
 for it is he that shall tread down our enemies.

PSALM 61

- 1 Hear my crying, O God :
give ear unto my prayer.
- 2 From the ends of the earth will I call upon thee:
when my heart is in heaviness.
- 3 O set me up upon the rock that is higher than I:
for thou hast been my hope, and a strong tower for me against the enemy.
- 4 I will dwell in thy tabernacle for ever :
and my trust shall be under the covering of thy wings.
- 5 For thou, O Lord, hast heard my desires :
and hast given an heritage unto those that fear thy Name.
- 6 Thou shalt grant the King a long life :
that his years may endure throughout all generations.
- 7 He shall dwell before God for ever : O prepare thy loving mercy and
faithfulness, that they may preserve him.
- 8 So will I always sing praise unto thy Name :
that I may daily perform my vows

All 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.

All sit

THE FIRST LESSON

read by Revd Dr Joe Kennedy, Vicar of Oxton

The first lesson is taken from prophet Isaiah, Chapter 41 beginning at the 14th verse

Do not fear, you worm Jacob, you insect Israel! I will help you, says the Lord; your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel. Now, I will make of you a threshing-sledge, sharp, new, and having teeth; you shall thresh the mountains and crush them, and you shall make the hills like chaff. You shall winnow them and the wind shall carry them away, and the tempest shall scatter them. Then you shall rejoice in the Lord; in the Holy One of Israel you shall glory. When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue is parched with thirst, I the Lord will answer them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers on the bare heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will put in the wilderness the cedar, the acacia, the myrtle, and the olive; I will set in the desert the cypress, the plane and the pine together, so that all may see and know, all may consider and understand, that the hand of the Lord has done this, the Holy One of Israel has created it.

Here ends the first lesson.

All 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.

All sit

THE SECOND LESSON

read by Revd David Vestergaard, Rector of Bebington

The second lesson is taken from the Gospel according to St John, Chapter I beginning at the ninth verse.

The next day he saw Jesus coming towards him and declared, 'Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, "After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me." I myself did not know him; but I came baptising with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel.' And John testified, 'I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptise with water said to me, "He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptises with the Holy Spirit." And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God.'

Here ends the second lesson.

All 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.

Remain standing

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

The Canon Precentor and Choir sing

The Lord be with you.
And with thy spirit.

All sit or kneel

Let us pray.
Lord have mercy upon us.
Christ have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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. 8

SUFFRAGES

- Lord, shew thy mercy upon us.
And grant us thy salvation.
- Lord, save the Queen.
And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.
Endue thy Ministers with righteousness.
And make thy chosen people joyful.
- Lord, save thy people.
And bless thine inheritance.
- Give peace in our time, ○ Lord.
Because there is none other that fighteth for us,
but only thou, ○ God.
- God, make clean our hearts within us.
And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.

COLLECT FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY

○ Lord, we beseech thee mercifully to receive the prayers of thy people which call upon thee; and grant that they may both perceive and know what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

COLLECT FOR PEACE

○ 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.

COLLECT FOR AID AGAINST ALL PERILS

Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, ○ 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.

ANTHEM

Ante luciferum genitus

Jacob Handl

**THE COMMISSIONING OF
THE REVD DR JOE KENNEDY
AS RURAL DEAN OF BIRKENHEAD
AND
THE REVD DAVID VESTERGAARD
AS RURAL DEAN OF WIRRAL NORTH**

The rural dean-elects are presented to Bishop Mark

Bishop Mark, on behalf of the Deanery of Birkenhead, I present to you Joe Kennedy to be commissioned as Rural Dean of our deanery.

Bishop Mark, on behalf of the Deanery of Wirral North, I present to you David Vestergaard to be commissioned as Rural Dean of our deanery.

Bishop Mark says

Thank you for your presentation.

Archdeacon Mike, before I commission Joe and David, I ask that you outline the duties of a Rural Dean.

Archdeacon Mike says

From early times, bishops have chosen wise and respected priests to share with them in the pastoral care of the clergy and the general oversight of the parishes.

Joe, David, in order that we may know your mind, you must make the declarations we put to you.

He then turns to Joe and David, and asks the them following:

Will you care for the people of your deaneries, offering your leadership, support and encouragement for the welfare and witness of God's Church?

With the help of God, I will.

Will you promote friendship and mutual responsibility among the clergy, the lay-workers and their families in your deaneries, so that, empowered by God, their gifts may be exercised and their needs recognized?

With the help of God, I will.

Will you work with faith and imagination alongside those who hold office in your deanery to take forward the mission of the church and strengthen our common life?

With the help of God, I will.

Together with other Rural Deans, the Archdeacons, Bishops and officers of the diocese, will you keep before you the vision of the church as the Body of Christ, and work for the unity of God's people in your deanery and diocese?

With the help of God, I will.

May God who has given you the will to undertake all these things, give you also the strength to perform them; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Bishop Mark addresses the congregation

My brothers and sisters, you have heard the responsibilities that belong to a Rural Dean and Joe and David's willingness to undertake them.

Is it now your will that they be commissioned?

It is.

Will you continually pray for them?

We will.

Will you uphold and encourage them in their ministry?

We will.

He then reads the commissions

Joe, I commission you as Rural Dean of the Deanery of Birkenhead.

Receive this charge which is both yours and mine, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

David, I commission you as Rural Dean of the Deanery of Wirral North.

Receive this charge which is both yours and mine, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Bishop Mark blesses the Rural Deans, saying

The Lord give you courage, wisdom and strength to do his will:
and the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
rest upon you and remain with you always.
Amen.

THE INTERCESSIONS

Dean Tim leads the intercessions; at the end, all say

**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.**

BLESSING

Bishop Mark says

The Spirit of truth lead you into all truth,
give you grace to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
and strengthen you to proclaim the word and works of God;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you, now and always. **Amen.**

ORGAN VOLUNTARY