

CHORAL EVENSONG

Sunday, December 14, 2025

Today’s organ voluntaries set the familiar Advent chorales in contrasting musical styles. Bach embellishes each phrase of *Savior of the Nations, Come* melody with ornaments, supported by an accompaniment which hints at the chorale (*vorimitation*) and is grounded by a walking bass. Diemer’s declamatory *Wake, Awake, for Night is Flying* at times favors quartal harmonies and rousing harmonic trajectories. Howells writes about his post-war canticles for King’s College, Cambridge: “... if I made a setting of the Magnificat, the mighty should be put down from their seat without a brute force which would deny this canticle’s feminine association. Equally, that in the Nunc dimittis, the tenor’s domination should characterize the gentle Simeon. Only the Gloria should raise its voice. The Magnificat opens with upper voices (suitably representing Mary) singing in an almost recitative-like way. [...] The ‘Gloria’, surely amongst the most ecstatic utterances we possess, does indeed raise its voice in the manner of a true doxology.” Yet another German hymn (*Es ist ein Ros entsprungen*) appears today in Howell’s *A Spotless Rose* and, similar to his canticles, distinguishes the prophet Isaiah’s words with a baritone solo. MacMillan similarly treats Isaiah’s text, but with a duet “of wide intervals—sixths and sevenths—evoking the struggle of a people walking in darkness” (Owain Park).

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Organ Voluntary Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland, BWV 659 J. S. Bach (1685–1750)

Introit O Radiant Dawn James MacMillan

O Radiant Dawn, Splendor of eternal Light, Sun of Justice:
Come, shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.
Isaiah had prophesied, The people who walked in darkness have seen the great light
upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone. Amen.

—Advent O-Antiphon 8 & Isaiah 9:2

*Opening Responses Gabriel Jackson

Psalmody Psalm 146 Plainsong

First Lesson | Isaiah 35:1-10

*Canticle Magnificat (Collegium Regale) Herbert Howells (1892–1983)

*All rise as able

Second Lesson | James 5:7-10

*Canticle Nunc dimittis (Collegium Regale) H. Howells

*The Apostles’ Creed

Responses G. Jackson

Collect of the Day

O Lord Jesu Christ, who at thy first coming didst send thy messenger to prepare thy way before thee:
Grant that the ministers and stewards of thy mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready thy way,
by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at thy second coming to judge the
world we may be found an acceptable people in thy sight, who livest and reignest with the Father and the
Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Anthem A Spotless Rose H. Howells

A spotless rose is blowing, Sprung from a tender root, Of ancient seers foreshowing, Of Jesse promised fruit; Its fairest bud unfolds to light Amid the cold, cold winter, And in the dark midnight.	The rose which I am singing, Whereof Isaiah said, Is from its sweet root springing In Mary purest maid; For through our God’s great love and might, The Blessed Babe she bare us In a cold, cold winter’s night.
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—Anonymous, 14th century

*Hymn | UMH 214 Savior of the Nations, Come NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND

Organ Voluntary Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme Emma Lou Diemer (1927–2024)

TODAY IN WORSHIP

Officiant	Lisa FischbeckPriest Associate, St. Philip’s Episcopal Church
Lector	Linda SanyikaDivinity ’26
Musicians	Duke Chapel Evensong SingersChoir
	Philip CaveConductor-in-Residence, Duke University Chapel
	David LimOrgan Scholar, Duke University Chapel

The next service of Choral Evensong will be on Sunday, January 11, 2026, at 4:00 p.m.