



THE CATHEDRAL AND METROPOLITICAL CHURCH OF CHRIST, CANTERBURY

Choral Evensong

with Licensing of Readers



Sunday 27th September 2026

5.30pm

Quire

Welcome to Canterbury Cathedral for this Service

Readers are theologically trained licensed lay ministers; they are ministers of the Word with a passion for sharing the Gospel. All sorts of people are called to Reader ministry because disciples of Jesus come from all walks of life.

The Office of Reader is a voluntary lay ministry within the Church of England that is nationally recognised and licensed under canon law. Readers are also known as Licensed Lay Ministers (LLM).

There are currently around 110 active Readers in our diocese. Readers play a vital role in the public ministry of the Church by leading worship, teaching and preaching, as well as being engaged in outreach to the wider community.

As local lay theologians Readers offer a ministry that is church-focused, community facing, and world-affirming. They work collaboratively in ministry teams alongside clergy and other lay colleagues.

Livestreaming

This service will be livestreamed and you may be seen on camera, although we will not deliberately take any close-ups of the congregation.

By attending you agree to be seen in this way.

If you have any concerns please speak to a member of the clergy.



As part of our commitment to the care of the environment in our world, this Order of Service is printed on unbleached 100% recycled paper



Please ensure that mobile phones are switched off. No form of visual or sound recording, or any form of photography, is permitted during Services. Thank you for your co-operation.



An induction loop system for the hard of hearing is installed in the Cathedral. Hearing aid users should adjust their aid to T.



Large print orders of service are available from the stewards and virgers. Please ask.

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The Book of Common Prayer (1662)

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Those to be admitted and licensed as a Reader

Russell Anderson	Headcorn and the Suttons (Weald Deanery)
Natalie Croft	Maidstone St Luke (Maidstone Deanery)
Chris Knight	St Peter-in-Thamet (Thanet Deanery)
Kevin Moon	Calehill with Westwell (Ashford Deanery)
Henrik Schoenefeldt	Blean (Canterbury Deanery)

Those Readers to receive a new licence

Sarah Emanuel	Benenden and Sandhurst (Weald Deanery)
Roxane Lee-Affonso	Canterbury St Martin and St Paul (Canterbury Deanery)
Mark Newman	Whitstable (Reculver Deanery) from the Diocese of Rochester

Those Readers to be remembered in memoriam:

Anne McVittie
John Morrison
Lindsey Pannell

Some questions to ponder...

Where am I noticing God at work in my own life or in the wider world?
Who can I tell about this?

What might God be asking of me?
Who can I talk to about this?

Is God calling me?

ORDER OF SERVICE

Order of the Procession

Cross and Lights

The Choir

Virger

Existing Readers

Representative of St Augustine's College of Theology

Warden of Readers

Supporting clergy and incumbents

Archdeacons

The Chapter

Virger

The Dean

The Bishop

The Bishop's Chaplain

Readers to be licensed

Readers to be admitted and licensed

All stand as the choir and clergy enter the Quire as we sing



Lord, you give the great commission:
 "Heal the sick and preach the Word."
 Lest the Church neglect its mission,
 and the Gospel go unheard,
 help us witness to your purpose
 with renewed integrity;
 with the Spirit's gifts empower us
 for the work of ministry.

²Lord, you call us to your service:
 "In my name baptize and teach."
 That the world may trust your promise,
 life abundant meant for each,
 give us all new fervour, draw us
 closer in community;
 with the Spirit's gifts empower us
 for the work of ministry.

³Lord, you make the common holy:
 "This my body, this my blood."
 Let us all, for earth's true glory,
 daily lift life heavenward,
 asking that the world around us
 share your children's liberty;
 with the Spirit's gifts empower us
 for the work of ministry.

⁴Lord, you show us love's true measure:
 "Father, what they do, forgive."
 Yet we hoard as private treasure
 all that you so freely give.
 May your care and mercy lead us
 to a just society;
 with the Spirit's gifts empower us
 for the work of ministry.

⁵Lord, you bless with words assuring:
 "I am with you to the end."
 Faith and hope and love restoring,
 may we serve as you intend,
 and, amid the cares that claim us,
 hold in mind eternity;
 with the Spirit's gifts empower us
 for the work of ministry.

Words: Jeffrey W Rowthorn (b. 1934)

Tune: ABBOT'S LEIGH

AM 499

A welcome is offered

The Precentor and choir sing the **Preces**

O Lord, open thou our lips
and our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

O God, make speed to save us.
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.

Music: William Byrd (c. 1540-1623)

Sit as the choir sings

Psalm 124

If the Lord himself had not been on our side, now may Israel say :
if the Lord himself had not been on our side, when men rose up against us;

They had swallowed us up quick :
when they were so wrathfully displeased at us.

Yea, the waters had drowned us :
and the stream had gone over our soul.

The deep waters of the proud :
had gone even over our soul.

But praised be the Lord :
who hath not given us over for a prey unto their teeth.

Our soul is escaped even as a bird out of the snare of the fowler :
the snare is broken, and we are delivered.

Our help standeth in the Name of the Lord :
who hath made heaven and earth.

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.

Sit

Reading

John 15.5-17

Read by Derek Kirkaldie, Reader and Diocesan LLM Course Tutor

I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered,

thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

All stand as the choir sings

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.

Music: Herbert Howells (1892-1983), Collegium Sancti Joannis Cantabrigiense

Sit

Homily

The Bishop of Dover

The Admission and Licensing of Readers

The congregation remains seated, the candidates come forward and stand in front of the Bishop before the High Altar.

The Bishop says

My brothers and sisters, God has called us into the fellowship of the universal Church.

As members of his body, Christ calls us to minister together in his name and, according to our gifts, to be instruments of his love in the world.

Readers are called to a ministry of the word, preaching and teaching, inspiring others to follow the way of Christ, and calling them to share in the good news of the kingdom.

They are called to a liturgical ministry, leading worship, proclaiming the gospel story and helping God's people to greet their living Lord, so that they may worship him, praise him and live by his commands.

The Warden says

Bishop Rose, I present to you these persons who have satisfactorily completed their training.

They have made the Declaration of Assent and the declaration of obedience to the Archbishop.

They are people of Christian character, well versed in the Holy Scriptures and in the doctrines of our faith.

They have been sufficiently well prepared for the duties of the office.

I recommend that they be both admitted to the office of Reader and licensed to their deaneries under the nomination of their incumbents.

The Bishop turns to the candidates and says

In order that we may be satisfied that you are ready to begin the ministry of a Reader, you must now answer the questions we put to you.

Do you believe that God is calling you to this ministry?

I do so believe.

Will you be faithful in leading the people of God in worship, and in preaching the word to them?

By the grace of God, I will.

Will you be diligent in prayer, in reading Holy Scripture, and in all studies that will deepen your faith and fit you to bear witness to the truth of the gospel?

By the grace of God, I will.

Will you endeavour to fashion your life according to the way of Christ?

By the grace of God, I will.

Will you promote unity, peace and love in the Church and in the world, and especially among those whom you serve?

By the grace of God, I will.

Will you work closely with your colleagues in ministry and encourage the gifts of others?

By the grace of God, I will.

The supporting priests stand and the Bishop asks them

Will you work closely with your new Readers and encourage them to use their gifts and develop their ministry?

We will.

Will you commend them to the people amongst whom they will minister?

We will.

The candidates turn and face the congregation.

The congregation stands.

The Bishop says to the congregation

Brothers and sisters, these candidates have been chosen for the office of Reader. Will you uphold and encourage them in their ministry?

We will.

Will you continue to pray for them?

We will.

All sit

The Bishop greets the candidates and presents them with a Bible, their certificate of admission and licence saying

*N, I admit you as a Reader in the Church, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.***

When all have received their Bibles, certificates and licences the Bishop continues

You have received these books as a sign that we admit you as a Reader in the Church. Speak God's word to his people, build them up in his truth, and serve them in his name.

Receive authority to exercise the office of Reader in this diocese. May the Lord be with you in all your work and ministry from this day onwards. **Amen.**

We welcome you as ministers of God's word.

May the word of Christ dwell in you richly.

The newly admitted Readers return to their places where their Parish Priest place their scarf upon them.

The Readers to be issued a new licence stand before the Bishop, the Warden commends them to the Bishop, who then presents the new licence saying

Receive authority to exercise the office of Reader in this diocese. May the Lord be with you in all your work and ministry from this day onwards. **Amen.**

All Readers stand as the Bishop says

My brothers and sisters, in the name of the Church I thank you for your faithful ministry as Readers. I pray God's continuing blessing upon you and invite you to renew your commitment to the ministry entrusted to you.

Readers respond together saying

God our Father, we offer our lives to do your work in your Church and in the world. Help us by your Holy Spirit to hear more clearly your call to deeper commitment to your service, and give us grace to respond with gladness; for the glory of Christ our Lord. Amen.

The congregation applauds all the Readers

The congregation remains seated as the choir sings

Anthem

Michael, Archangel of the King of Kings, give ear to our voices.
We acknowledge thee to be the Prince of the citizens of heaven:
And at thy prayer God sends his angles unto men,
That the enemy with cunning craft shall not prevail
To do the hurt he craves to weary men.
Yea, thou hast the dominion of perpetual Paradise,
And ever do the angels honour thee.
Thou wast seen in the Temple of God. A censer of gold in thy hands,
And the smoke of it fragrant with spices rose up till it came before God.
Thou with strong hand didst smite the cruel dragon
And many souls didst rescue from his jaws.
Then was there a great silence in heaven, and a thousand though saying
Glory to the Lord King.
Hear us, Michael, hear us greatest angel.
Come down a little from thy high seat to bring us the strength of God.
And the lightning of his mercy.
And do thou, Gabriel, lay low our foes, and thou, Raphael, heal our sick.
Purge our disease, heal our sick, ease our pain,
And give us to share of the joys of the blessed.

*Words: Latin, Alcuin (c. 735-804)
translated: Helen Waddell (1889-1965)*

Music: Herbert Howells (1892-1983)

Sit or Kneel

Prayers *led by the Precentor, concluding with*

**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.
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Stand to sing



Hope of our calling: hope through courage won;
By those who dared to share all Christ had done.
Saints of today, Christ's banner now unfurled,
We bring his gospel to a waiting world.

²Hope of our calling: hope with strength empowered,
Inspired by all that we have seen and heard;
This call is ours, for we are chosen too,
To live for God in all we say and do.

³Hope of our calling: hope with grace outpoured,
From death's despair the gift of life restored;
Our call to serve, to wash each others' feet,
To bring Christ's healing touch to all we meet.

⁴Hope of our calling: hope by faith made bold;
To sow God's righteousness throughout the world;
Bring peace from conflict, fruitfulness from weeds,
The kingdom's harvest from a mustard seed.

⁵Hope of our calling: Spirit-filled, unbound,
Old joys remembered and new purpose found,
Our call refreshed by sacrament and word,
We go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Words: Ally Barrett (b. 1975)

Tune: WOODLANDS

AM 493, Tune 394

Remain standing for

The Blessing

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 always.

Amen.

All remain standing as the procession departs

Organ Voluntary

Cross and Lights
The Bishop
The newly admitted and licensed Readers
The Existing Readers
The Warden of Readers
The Bishop's Chaplain

Virger
Representative of St Augustine's College of Theology
Supporting clergy and incumbents

The Choir

Archdeacons
The Chapter
Virger
The Dean

A retiring collection is made for Readers' Ministry in the Diocese