Choral Evensong is the service of Evening Prayer with choral music. It is sung in cathedrals and in colleges and churches with choral foundations on a more or less daily basis, and in many parish churches around the world. The Prayer Book of 1662 established the pattern for Choral Evensong which remains in common usage throughout the worldwide Anglican communion. It is this same format which is sung this evening at Peachtree Road.

Since earliest Christian times, the need to mark the passing of time with prayer has been recognized. The monastic cycle of prayer began in the desert with Anthony in the fourth century and continues to this day. By the Reformation, Vespers had become an elaborate musical celebration in the evening. The English Reformation demanded that the vernacular be the language of worship and resulted in the liturgical simplicity of Thomas Cranmer’s services of Morning and Evening Prayer. The provision of music for this structure and these words was the task worship. Choral Evensong is the quintessence of such worship. Following the trail of these composers have come numerous others Wesley, Stanford, Howells, Sowerby, and Tippett are just a few of the well known names who have been inspired to write music for this service. The canon of music for Evensong continues to grow, with composers from around the world contributing to it.

Unlike the Eucharist, which follows the movement of the Church calendar, and unlike private prayer, which follows the events of our lives, the daily office follows its own rhythm. The readings are done “in course,” and are not specifically chosen to make a particular point, and the canticles (Magnificat and Nunc dimittis) are the same each day. As such, the office provides an objective aspect to our worship and a rhythm to spirituality as a whole.

Dating from the time of the temple in Jerusalem, the choral recitation of the psalms remains one of the oldest forms of worship. By listening and following along with the Psalm, we join with the people of God who waited for the coming of the Kingdom of God. After the Psalm, the first lesson is read. The choir then sings the Magnificat, the song that the Blessed Virgin Mary sang in joyful response to the announcement that she would be the mother of our Lord. In this song, all the hopes of the people of God are recounted and Mary proclaims that, in the Incarnation, God has acted and fulfilled all that he promised. We then hear part of the record of that fulfillment when the second lesson, from the New Testament, is read. Following this reading is the Nunc dimittis, the song of the aged Simeon which acknowledges the salvation of all nations in Christ Jesus.

In most liturgies, we, the worshipers, must do two things: speak with our lips, and meditate with our hearts. Choral Evensong is one of the rare occasions when the congregation is able to focus solely on the latter, allowing the prayers and praises sung by the choir to be those of the entire faith community, and particularly, of this parish.

Organ Recitalist

Originally from Greenville, SC, Caroline Robinson is an active performing organist and church musician. In July 2020, she assumed the post of Associate Organist-Choirmaster at the Cathedral of St. Philip in Atlanta. There, under the direction of Canon Dale Adelmann, she shares organ playing and accompanying responsibilities with Artist-in-Residence Jack Mitchener and she leads the RSCM-based Chorister program.

Caroline has been featured as a solo recitalist in many venues across the United States, including New York City churches St. Thomas Fifth Avenue, St. John the Divine, Trinity Church Wall Street, and St. Patrick’s Cathedral; Church of the Advent in Boston, MA and Harvard Memorial Church, Cambridge; and Kansas City’s the Kauffman Center. Her playing has been broadcast on American Public Media’s “Pipedreams”, “Pipedreams LIVE!”, and Philadelphia-based public radio station 90.1 WRTI’s Wanamaker Organ Hour. She has been a featured performer at OHS conventions (2015, 2016, and 2018) and AGO Regional Conventions (2015, Pittsburgh; 2019, Myrtle Beach).

Caroline is the Second Prize Winner of the National Young Artists Competition in Organ Performance (NYACOP), held as part of the 2018 AGO Convention in Kansas City. Caroline holds First Prize from the 11th annual Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival (2008) and from the 10th annual West Chester University Organ Competition (2010). She was a semifinalist in the 2014 Dublin International Organ Competition.

Caroline completed her undergraduate work at the Curtis Institute of Music, where she studied with Alan Morrison. Aided by a grant from the J. William Fulbright fellowship fund, Caroline studied at the Conservatoire à Rayonnement Régional de Toulouse with Michel Bouvard and Jan Willem Jansen (organ) and Yasuko Bouvard (harpischord). Caroline holds a Master of Music in Organ Performance and Literature from the Eastman School of Music, where she studied with David Higgs, and she is currently in the final stages of her doctoral studies at the same institution. Upon finishing doctoral coursework at Eastman, Caroline received the Performer’s Certificate for demonstration of high performing ability. She also earned the Advanced Teaching Certificate in Theory Pedagogy following four semesters of theory instruction to undergraduates.
Choral Evensong
The Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost
1 November 2020

4:30 p.m. - Prelude
5:00 p.m. - Solemn Evensong

Service Participants:
- Caroline Robinson, Guest Organist
- Rev. Elizabeth Byrd, Associate Minister
- Scott H. Atchison, Director of Music and Organist
- Oliver Brett, Associate Organist and Choirmaster
- Peachtree Road Staff Singers
- Peachtree Carillon
- Dan Beale, cantor

Program
Caroline Robinson, organ

Praeludium in G Major
Nicolaus Bruhns
(1665-1697)

Two Chorale Preludes on Jesu, meine Zuversicht (Jesus, my sure defense)
Gottfried August Homilius
(1714-1785)

Nimrod from Enigma Variations
Edward Elgar
(1857-1934)

Allegro, Symphonie No. 6 in G minor
Charles-Marie Widor
(1844-1937)
The Minister pronounces Evening Sentences and invites the people to make a General Confession

Minister: Let us humbly confess our sins unto Almighty God.
Minister and People: Almighty and most merciful Father, we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep, we have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts, we have offended against thy holy laws, we have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, spare thou those who confess their faults, restore thou those who are penitent, according to thy promises declared unto mankind, in Christ Jesus our Lord; and grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake; that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous and sober life, to the glory of thy holy name. Amen.

Minister: The Almighty and merciful Lord grant you absolution and remission of all your sins, true repentance, amendment of life, and the grace and consolation of his Holy Spirit. Amen.

Sung by the Officiant and Choir

The Invitatory and Psalter

Preces Richard Ayleward (1626-1669)

Cantor: O Lord, open thou our lips.
Choir: And our mouth shall show forth thy praise.
Cantor: O God, make speed to save us.
Choir: O Lord, make haste to help us.
Cantor: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.
Choir: As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be:
world without end. Amen.
Cantor: Praise ye the Lord.
Choir: The Lord’s name be praised.
O how amiable are thy dwellings
thou Lord of hosts!

My soul hath a desire and longing to enter into the courts of the Lord
my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.

Yea, the sparrow hath found her an house,
and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young
even thy altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.

Blessed are they that dwell in thy house
they will be alway praising thee.

Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee
in whose heart are thy ways.

Who going through the vale of misery use it for a well
and the pools are filled with water.

They will go from strength to strength
and unto the God of gods appeareth every one of them in Sion.

O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer
hearken, O God of Jacob.

Behold, O God our defender
and look upon the face of thine Anointed.

For one day in thy courts
is better than a thousand.

I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God
than to dwell in the tents of ungodliness.

For the Lord God is a light and defence:
the Lord will give grace and worship, and no good thing shall he
withhold from them that live a godly life.

O Lord God of hosts
blessed is the man that putteth his trust in thee.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Song:
And to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be:
World without end. Amen.
The Lessons

A reading from Revelation 21:1-6a

The people stand

Magnificat (Collegium Regale)  
Herbert Howells  
(1892-1983)

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, forever.

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.

Luke 1:46-55

A reading from John 11:32-44

The people sit

A reading from John 11:32-44

The people stand

Nunc dimittis (Collegium Regale)  
Herbert Howells  
(1892-1983)

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.

Luke 2:29-32

William Green, tenor
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 Prayers

Officiant  The Lord be with you.
Choir      And with thy spirit.
Officiant  Let us pray.

The people sit  Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ have mercy upon us.
                Lord, have mercy upon us.

Officiant  Our Father
Choir      Which art in heaven, Hallow’st 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 those who trespass against us.
           And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil. Amen.
The Suffrages

O Lord, show thy mercy upon us.

And grant us thy salvation.

O Lord, save the State.

And mercifully hear us when we call upon Thee.

Endue thy ministers with righteousness.

And make thy chosen people joyful.

O Lord, save thy people.

And bless thine inheritance.

Give peace in our time, O Lord.

Because there is none other that fighteth for us, but only thou, O God.

O God, make clean our hearts within us.

And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.

The Collects

At the Offertory, Anthem

O light divine, O blessed light most glorious, O shadowless light, O sun without a sphere, O pure radiance, eternal and unmade; give ear to us, your children, who worship and adore You, O Lord shine Your light on us. Hear us sing to You. Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Hosts, heaven and earth are full of Your glory. Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto You, and unto the Lamb forever and ever.

Text: adapted from Isaiah 6:3, Revelation 5:13
Music: Charles Beaudrot (b. 1951)
The Benediction

Words: St. 1, Reginald Heber, 1827; st. 2, Frederick Lucian Hosmer, 1912 (Gen. 1:1-15)
Music: Trad. Welsh melody; harm. by Luther Orlando Emerson, 1906

The Retiring Procession