

PLAINSONG VESPERS

The ancient service of Vespers is held by candlelight. This service is the Evening Office and its character is one of thanksgiving.

Vespers consists of psalms, canticles, hymns and other prayers, which are sung to plainsong by members of the choir. At St Michael's, Vespers concludes with a twenty-minute period of silent meditation and prayer.

Vespers is a time of great beauty, solemnity and tranquility. Through a mixture of music and silence individuals are free to form their own private thoughts and prayers, and to experience the presence of Spirit towards the end of the day.



The format of Vespers, or the Evening Office is as follows:

- ▣ opening versicle
- ▣ a hymn, composed by the Church
- ▣ two psalms, or parts of psalms with a scriptural canticle. This consists of two psalms, or one psalm divided into two parts, and a scriptural canticle taken from the New Testament.
- ▣ a short passage from scripture
- ▣ a responsory, typically a verse of scripture, but sometimes liturgical poetry
- ▣ a canticle taken from the Gospel of Luke: the Canticle of Mary (Magnificat)
- ▣ intercessions, composed by the Church
- ▣ the Lord's Prayer
- ▣ the concluding prayer, composed by the Church
- ▣ a blessing given by the priest or deacon leading Evening Prayer, or in the absence of clergy and in individual recitation, a short concluding versicle

