



All Saints Church, Oakham

The Lesser and the Greater Light

***Choral Evensong to celebrate the life and
work of Rev. John Louis Petit***

October 5th 2025 6.00pm

***Organised in association with an Exhibition of
Petit's pictures at Rutland County Museum
from August 23rd to October 4th 2025***

John Louis Petit

John Louis Petit (1801-68) was a leading writer and speaker about ecclesiastical architecture, and an extraordinary watercolour artist. His East Midlands paintings have been the subject of a recent exhibition at Rutland County Museum. In his day church architecture and restoration were intensely debated topics. Petit was the leading opponent of the neo-Gothic of the time, and a pioneer of preserving old buildings against destructive restoration well before that became accepted.

He was also an Anglican clergyman, ordained deacon in 1825 and priest in 1826, both at Lichfield Cathedral. He served two curacies – the first from 1825 to 1828 at St. Michael's Lichfield and the second from 1828 to 1832 at Bradfield in Essex. He then retired from parish ministry to concentrate on his artistic and architectural interests. He remained a priest however, and was much interested in the theological developments of the mid-19th century – in particular the revelations of the earth and astronomical sciences. At his death he left a long unfinished poem *The Lesser and the Greater Light*. that was a meditation on the relationship between theology and science, which was edited and published by his sister. This poem has many contemporary echoes and reveals that Petit was a serious theological thinker.

The order for Choral Evensong

*Please join in with the hymns throughout the service and all the responses in **bold**.*

The opening and confession

Choir introit

O Lord, increase our faith

Henry Loosemore (1607-1670)

Please stand to sing the Opening Hymn.

1. All creatures of our God and King,
lift up your voice and with us sing,
Alleluia, alleluia!

Thou burning sun with golden beam,
Thou silver moon with softer gleam:

*O praise him, O praise him,
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*

2. Thou rushing wind that art so strong,
ye clouds that sail in heaven along,
O praise him, alleluia!

Thou rising morn, in praise rejoice;
ye lights of evening, find a voice:

3. And all ye that are of tender heart,
forgiving others, take your part,
O sing ye, alleluia!

Ye who long pain and sorrow bear,
praise God and on him cast your care:

4. Let all things their creator bless,
and worship him in humbleness;
O praise him, alleluia!
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,
and praise the Spirit, Three in One:

*Words: William Henry Draper (1855-1933)
based on St Francis of Assisi (1182-1226)*

*Music: Lasst Uns Erfreuen, melody from an Easter hymn
in Geistliche Kirchengesang Cologne 1623,*

Please sit or kneel for the Confession and Absolution.

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit : a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. *Psalms 51.17*

Dearly beloved brethren, the Scripture moveth us in sundry places to acknowledge and confess our manifold sins and wickedness; and that we should not dissemble nor cloke them before the face of Almighty God our heavenly Father; but confess them with an humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart; to the end that we may obtain forgiveness of the same, by his infinite goodness and mercy. And although we ought at all times humbly to acknowledge our sins before God; yet ought we most chiefly so to do, when we assemble and meet together to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received at his hands, to set forth his most worthy praise, to hear his most holy Word, and to ask those things which are requisite and necessary, as well for the body as the soul. Wherefore I pray and beseech you, as many as are here present, to accompany me with a pure heart and humble voice unto the throne of the heavenly grace, saying with me:

**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, And there is no health in us: But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us miserable offenders; Spare thou them, O God, which confess their faults, Restore thou them that are penitent, According to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesu 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.

Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he may turn from his wickedness, and live; and hath given power, and commandment, to his Ministers, to declare and pronounce to his people, being penitent, the Absolution and Remission of their sins: He pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel. Wherefore let us beseech him to grant us true repentance, and his Holy Spirit, that those things may please him, which we do at this present; and that the rest of our life hereafter may be pure, and holy; so that at the last we may come to his eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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

Cantor O Lord, open thou our lips.

Choir And our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

Cantor O God, make speed to save us.

Choir O Lord, make haste to help us.

All stand

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.

The Word of God

Please sit for the psalm, readings and canticles.

Psalm 104 *verses 1 to 13 will be sung by the choir.*

1 Praise the Lord, O my soul : O Lord my God, thou art become exceeding glorious; thou art clothed with majesty and honour.

2 Thou deckest thyself with light as it were with a garment : and spreadest out the heavens like a curtain.

3 Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters : and maketh the clouds his chariot, and walketh upon the wings of the wind.

4 He maketh his angels spirits : and his ministers a flaming fire.

5 He laid the foundations of the earth : that it never should move at any time.

6 Thou coveredst it with the deep like as with a garment : the waters stand in the hills.

7 At thy rebuke they flee : at the voice of thy thunder they are afraid.

8 They go up as high as the hills, and down to the valleys beneath : even unto the place which thou hast appointed for them.

9 Thou hast set them their bounds which they shall not pass : neither turn again to cover the earth.

10 He sendeth the springs into the rivers : which run among the hills.

11 All beasts of the field drink thereof : and the wild asses quench their thirst.

12 Beside them shall the fowls of the air have their habitation : and sing among the branches.

13 He watereth the hills from above : the earth is filled with the fruit of thy works.

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.

The Old Testament reading

Job 38.1-18

Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind:

‘Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?

Gird up your loins like a man,

I will question you, and you shall declare to me.

‘Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?

Tell me, if you have understanding.

Who determined its measurements—surely you know!

Or who stretched the line upon it?

On what were its bases sunk,

or who laid its cornerstone

when the morning stars sang together

and all the heavenly beings shouted for joy?

‘Or who shut in the sea with doors

when it burst out from the womb?—

when I made the clouds its garment,

and thick darkness its swaddling band,

and prescribed bounds for it,

and set bars and doors,

and said, “Thus far shall you come, and no farther,

and here shall your proud waves be stopped”?

‘Have you commanded the morning since your days began,

and caused the dawn to know its place,

so that it might take hold of the skirts of the earth,

and the wicked be shaken out of it?

It is changed like clay under the seal,

and it is dyed like a garment.

Light is withheld from the wicked,

and their uplifted arm is broken.

'Have you entered into the springs of the sea,
or walked in the recesses of the deep?
Have the gates of death been revealed to you,
or have you seen the gates of deep darkness?
Have you comprehended the expanse of the earth?
Declare, if you know all this.'

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God

*The choir will sing the **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.

The New Testament reading

St John 12.1-3

Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God



Bethany and the Dead Sea. From The Greater and the Lesser Light, 1869. Prepared for publication by Emma Petit and Philip Delamotte from a sketch by John Louis Petit.

*The choir will sing the **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.

*Please stand to say 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 Catholick Church; The Communion of Saints; The Forgiveness of sins; The Resurrection of the body, And the Life everlasting. Amen.

The prayers

The Lord be with you.

All **And with thy spirit.**

Let us pray.

Please sit or kneel.

Choir Lord, have mercy upon us.
 Christ, have mercy upon us.
 Lord, have mercy upon us.

Cantor 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.

Cantor O Lord, shew thy mercy upon us.

Choir And grant us thy salvation.

Cantor O Lord, save the King.

Choir And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.

Cantor Endue thy Ministers with righteousness.

Choir And make thy chosen people joyful.

Cantor O Lord, save thy people.

Choir And bless thine inheritance.

Cantor Give peace in our time, O Lord.

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

Cantor O God, make clean our hearts within us.

Choir And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.

Collect for the Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

Merciful God, you have prepared for those who love you such good things as pass our understanding; pour into our hearts such love toward you that, loving you above all things, we may obtain your promises which exceed all that we can desire; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The evening collects

O 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.

Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O 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

Give us the wings of faith *Sir Ernest Bullock (1890-1979)*

A prayer for the King

O Lord, our heavenly Father, high and mighty, King of kings, Lord of lords, the only Ruler of princes, who dost from thy throne behold all the dwellers upon earth: Most heartily we beseech thee with thy favour to behold our most gracious Sovereign Lord, King CHARLES; and so replenish him with the grace of thy Holy Spirit, that he may alway incline to thy will, and walk in thy way. Endue him plenteously with heavenly gifts; grant him in health and wealth long to live; strengthen him that he may vanquish and overcome all his enemies; and finally after this life he may attain everlasting joy and felicity; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A prayer for the Archbishop of Canterbury designate

Almighty and everlasting God, the only worker of great marvels, send down upon your servant Sarah, called to be Archbishop of Canterbury, and all who are committed to her care, the spirit of your saving grace, and that they may please you, pour upon them the continual dew of your blessing. Grant this, O Lord, for the honour of our advocate and mediator, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

A Collect or for all Conditions of men

O God, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, we humbly beseech thee for all sorts and conditions of men; that thou wouldest be pleased to make thy ways known unto them, thy saving health unto all nations. More especially we pray for the good estate of the Catholick Church; that it may be so guided and governed by thy good Spirit, that all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life. Finally we commend to thy fatherly

goodness all those, who are any ways afflicted or distressed in mind, body, or estate; that it may please thee to comfort and relieve them, according to their several necessities, giving them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions. And this we beg for Jesus Christ his sake. **Amen.**

A prayer of Saint John Chrysostom

Almighty God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto thee; and dost promise that when two or three are gathered together in thy Name thou wilt grant their requests: Fulfil now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants, as may be most expedient for them; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting. **Amen.**

The grace

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. **Amen.**

Please stand to sing the Hymn.

1. Of the Father's love begotten,
ere the worlds began to be,
he is Alpha and Omega,
he the source, the ending he,
of the things that are, that have been,
and that future years shall see,
evermore and evermore.

2. At his word the worlds were framèd;
he commanded, it was done:
heav'n and earth and depth of ocean,
in their threefold order one;
all that sees the moon's soft radiance,
all that breathes beneath the sun,
evermore and evermore.

3. He was found in human fashion,
Death and sorrow here to know,
That the race of Adam's children,
Doomed by law to endless woe,
May not henceforth die and perish
in the dreadful gulf below—
evermore and evermore.

4. O that birth forever blessèd
when the Virgin, full of grace
by the Holy Ghost conceiving,
bore the Saviour of our race,
and the babe, the world's Redeemer,
first revealed his sacred face—
evermore and evermore.

5. O ye heights of heav'n adore him!
Angel hosts his praises sing!
All dominions bow before him
and exalt our God and King.
Let no tongue on earth be silent,
every voice in concert ring—
evermore and evermore.

6. Christ! to thee with God the Father,
and O Holy Ghost, to thee,
hymn and chant and high thanksgiving,
and unwearied praises be,
honour, glory and dominion,
and eternal victory—
evermore and evermore. Amen

*Corde natus ex parentis Aurelius Prudentius (380-c.142);
Translator J. M. Neale. Tune -Divinum Mysterium*

The Lesser and the Greater Light

Please sit for a reading from The Lesser and the Greater Light.

God's ways are not the ways of man ; yet still
A voice, apart from reason and from will,
Assures our inmost spirit that they must,
However dark their course, be wise and just.
But whence is our conviction ? How, in sooth,
Shape we the forms of wisdom, justice, truth ?
On what ideal standard can we frame
Their perfect type ? or are they but a name ?
Surely some sense, mysterious, undefined,
Pervades the deep recesses of the mind,-
A nameless impulse, which may faintly teach
Truths that elude the grasp, or rise beyond the reach :
A hidden spark of heavenly origin,
Not wholly quench'd, when first intruding sin
The Maker's image shatter'd and defaced,
Marr'd the bright scene, and laid our Eden waste.
'Twere hard to say, of objects given to sight,
Why this offends, and that affords delight ;

And harmony, proportion, beauty, rest
On some obscure, inexplicable test,
Which, when we strive to grasp the crumbling soil,
Sinks from the tread, and baffles all our toil .
So heavenly things, but for a heaven- born sense
Fix'd in the soul we know not how or whence,
Would baffle reason's keen intelligence . '
That one great truth-on which all truths depend,
Their essence, their beginning, and their end
How could she trace, or, offer'd, comprehend ?
A God's existence ?-Not the marvels stored
By boundless wisdom in creation's hoard ;
Not nature, ruled by firm abiding laws,
Not miracle, which bids their action pause
Before the mandate of a mightier cause ;
Not history's record, echoing back the cry,
Through nations borne, of ancient prophecy ;
Not all the cloud of witnesses combined
To prove the truth, and stamp it on the mind,
Could make it felt, believed, and rightly known,
Did human reason stand unaided and alone.....
' Twas Reason's delegated task and gift
The mingled mass to analyse and sift ;
Each part to weigh, ' and with discerning skill
To trace its influence for good or ill ;
To range convergent elements, to draw
From scatter'd facts a comprehensive law ;
And build with proofs display'd on either hand
A firm foundation on which truth shall stand .
But if from earthly confines she would rise
Unchain'd, and hold communion with the skies,
Her claim of homage she must cast aside,

And take a mightier spirit for her guide .
[And] through the gloom in thrilling tones are heard
Man's conscious heart and God's unerring word
Sharp as the touch of penetrating steel,
That word through all our spirit's depth we feel...

*Please sit for the **Address***

*Please stand to sing the closing **hymn**.*

1. Thou, whose almighty word
chaos and darkness heard,
and took their flight;
hear us, we humbly pray,
and where the gospel-day
sheds not its glorious ray,
let there be light.
2. Thou, who didst come to bring
on thy redeeming wing
healing and sight,
health to the sick in mind,
sight to the inly blind,
O now to all mankind
let there be light.
3. Spirit of truth and love,
life-giving, holy Dove,
speed forth thy flight;
move on the water's face,
bearing the lamp of grace,
and in earth's darkest place
let there be light.

4. Holy and blessed Three,
glorious Trinity,
 Wisdom, Love, Might;
boundless as ocean's tide
rolling in fullest pride,
through the earth far and wide
 let there be light.

Words: John Marriott (1780-1825)
Music: Moscow, Felice de Giardini (1716-1796)

The Blessing

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord: And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you and remain with you always.

Amen.

You are invited for drinks and light refreshments in the Lady Chapel after the service.

No collection is taken during the service, but if you would like to make a donation to the church, there is a plate at the back of the church and a machine that accepts debit and credit cards. In the pews you will find envelopes that can be used if you wish to Gift Aid your donation.

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THE LESSER AND THE
GREATER LIGHT.

BY THE LATE

REV. J. L. PETIT, M.A., F.S.A.

EDITED BY HIS SISTER.

"The world by wisdom knew not God."—1 Cor. i. 21.



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