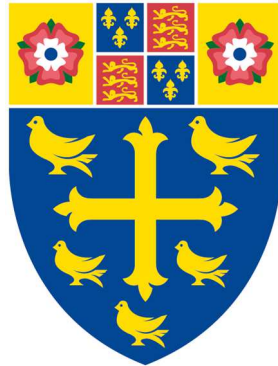


Westminster Abbey



The Commonwealth Day Service of Celebration



ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY

Monday 11th March 2024
2.45 pm

The whole of the church is served by a hearing loop. Users should turn their hearing aid to the setting marked T.

The service will be broadcast live on BBC One.

Members of the congregation are requested kindly to refrain from using private cameras, video, or sound recording equipment. Please ensure that mobile telephones and other electronic devices are switched off.

The service is sung by the Choir of Westminster Abbey, directed by Andrew Nethsingha, Organist and Master of the Choristers. The organ is played by Peter Holder, Sub-Organist.

The State Trumpeters of the Household Cavalry are directed by Corporal of Horse Kate Sandford. The Fanfare Team, from the Central Band of the Royal Air Force, is directed by Wing Commander Richard Murray, Principal Director of Music.

Before the service Eternal Taal perform outside the Great West Door.

Matthew Jorysz, Assistant Organist, plays

Rhosymedre *Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)*

Prelude and Fugue *David Farquhar (1928–2007)*

Voices of the World *Iain Farrington (b 1977)*

The Trinity Laban Conservatoire Ensemble, Junior Department, directed by Dan Miller, performs

A Jamaican Celebration *Adrianna Forbes-Dorant (b 2006)*

Meguru *arranged by Russel Robertson (b 1952)*

The Jones Boys *arranged by Ben Atherton (b 2008)*

Pokarekare Ana *arranged by Andrew Carter (b 1939)*

Nani and Nana *Sundar Popo (1943–2000)*
arranged by Cole Lam (b 2007)

Thank you for the Music *arranged by Jerry Estes (b 1955)*

The Keel Row *arranged by John Rutter (b 1945)*

Sing *Judith Weir (b 1954)*
from The Song Sung True

Somebody to Love *arranged by Roger Emerson (b 1950)*

Kenek kenek-lah udang *arranged by Dan Miller (b 1981)*

A Commonwealth Music Relay *arranged by Cole Lam (b 2007), Siri Hedge (b 2007),
Jahfari Hazelwood (b 2005), James Brew (b 2006),
Jacob Abela (b 2006), and Ajiri Ikede (b 2009)*

The Sub-Organist plays

Meditation on Brother James's Air *Harold Darke (1888–1976)*

THE PROCESSION OF HONOURED GUESTS AND PARTICIPANTS

THE FOUR LOYAL SOCIETIES

Honorary Steward

Princess Zahra Aga Khan
*Representing the Vice President
Royal Commonwealth Society*

John Steel KC
*Chairman
The Victoria League
for Commonwealth Friendship*

Helen Prince
*Chairman
Royal Over-Seas League*

Miles Young
*Chairman
English-Speaking Union*

THE REPRESENTATIVES OF FAITH COMMUNITIES

Verger

*Representing
Liberal Judaism*
Rabbi Charley Baginsky

*Representing the
Baha'i Community*
Mrs Padideh Sabeti

*Representing the
Zoroastrian Community*
Mr Malcolm Deboo

*Representing the
Buddhist Community*
The Venerable
Bogoda Seelawimala

*Representing the
Sunni Muslim Community*
Imam Monawar Hussain MBE DL

*Representing the
Sikh Community*
Lord Singh of Wimbledon CBE

Representing Orthodox Judaism
Rabbi Jason Kleiman

*Representing Jewish
Reform Synagogues*
Rabbi Debbie Young-Somers

*Representing the
Hindu Community*
Mrs Trupti Patel

*Representing the
Jain Community*
Mr Vinay Shah

*Representing the Shi'a
Muslim Community*
Maulana Sayed Ali Abbas Razawi

THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CHURCHES

Verger

The Church of Scotland
The Reverend William McLaren

The Methodist Church
The Reverend Tony Miles

The Roman Catholic Church
Fr Brian O'Mahony

The Pentecostal Church
Ms Shermara Fletcher

The Syriac Orthodox Church
His Eminence Archbishop
Athanasius Toma Dawod

The Armenian Orthodox Church
His Grace Bishop Hovakim

The Greek Orthodox Church
Archimandrite
Nephton Tsimalis

The Coptic Orthodox Church
His Eminence
Archbishop Angaelos

The Right Honourable The Lord Mayor of London, Michael Mainelli, is received by the Dean and Chapter of Westminster. Presentations are made and he is conducted to his seat.

The High Sheriff of Greater London, Ina De, is received. Presentations are made and she is conducted to her seat.

His Excellency The High Commissioner of Rwanda to the United Kingdom, Johnston Busingye, representing the Commonwealth Chair-in-Office, is received. Presentations are made and he is conducted to his seat.

His Excellency The President of Malta, The Honourable Dr George Vella KOM, is received. Presentations are made and he is conducted to his seat.

The Right Honourable Angela Rayner MP, Deputy Leader of His Majesty's Most Loyal Opposition, is received. Presentations are made and she is conducted to her seat.

The Right Honourable Oliver Dowden CBE MP, Deputy Prime Minister of The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and The Right Honourable The Lord Cameron of Chipping Norton, Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Affairs, are received. Presentations are made and they are conducted to their seats.

The Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor of Westminster, Councillor Patricia McAllister, arrives and is conducted to her seat. All stand and then sit.

His Royal Highness The Duke of Kent is received and he is conducted to his seat.

Their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester are received. Presentations are made.

Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal is received. Presentations are made.

Their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh are received. Presentations are made.

All stand.

His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales is received. Presentations are made.

A fanfare is sounded.

Her Majesty The Queen is received. Presentations are made.

THE PROCESSION

Beadle

The Choir of Westminster Abbey

The King's Almsmen

The Cross of Westminster and Lights

The Minor Canons

The Receiver General

High Bailiff

High Steward

Canons' Verger

The Canons of Westminster

The Commonwealth of Nations Flag

The Chief Honorary Steward

The Executive Chair of the Royal Commonwealth Society

The Secretary-General of the Commonwealth of Nations

The Dean's Verger

The Dean of Westminster

Mace

His Royal Highness

The Prince of Wales

Her Majesty

The Queen

Her Royal Highness

The Duchess of Edinburgh

His Royal Highness

The Duke of Edinburgh

Her Royal Highness

The Princess Royal

Her Royal Highness

The Duchess of Gloucester

His Royal Highness

The Duke of Gloucester

ORDER OF SERVICE

All sing

GOD save our gracious King,
Long live our noble King,
God save The King.
Send him victorious,
happy and glorious,
long to reign over us:
God save The King.

arranged by Gordon Jacob (1895–1984)

All sing the Hymn, during which the Procession and flags of all the Commonwealth nations move through the Abbey to places in Quire, Lantern, and Sacrarium



PRAISE to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation;
O my soul, praise him, for he is thy health and salvation:
come ye who hear,
brothers and sisters draw near,
praise him in glad adoration.

Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things so wondrously reigneth,
shelters thee under his wings, yea, so gently sustaineth:
hast thou not seen
all that is needful hath been
granted in what he ordaineth?

Praise to the Lord, who doth prosper thy work, and defend thee;
surely his goodness and mercy here daily attend thee;
ponder anew
all the Almighty can do,
he who with love doth befriend thee.

Praise to the Lord, who, when tempests their warfare are waging,
who, when the elements madly around thee are raging,
biddeth them cease,
turneth their fury to peace,
whirlwinds and waters assuaging.

Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore him!
All that hath life and breath come now with praises before him!
Let the Amen
sound from his people again:
gladly for ay we adore him.

Lobe den Herren
Praxis pietatis melica 1668
arranged by James O'Donnell (b 1961),
Organist of Westminster Abbey (2000–22)

Lobe den Herren, den mächtigen König der Ehren
Joachim Neander (1650–80)
translated by Catherine Winkworth (1827–78)

The Very Reverend Dr David Hoyle KCVO MBE, Dean of Westminster, gives the Bidding

WE gather, in this house of prayer and place of coronation to rejoice in our common life. We are God's people in a Commonwealth of Nations which now celebrates its seventy-fifth year. As different nations we can reflect on values of mutual respect, shared dignity and a commitment to the service of others. We rejoice in the love and affection that binds us in unity and gives us resilience and strength.

Looking back on seventy-five years of shared endeavour, we look forward with hope born out of the knowledge that our work together can build a community confident in its diversity yet still committed to peace and human flourishing. We pray for one another and for our King. Confident in God's grace we will gather the richness and range of our lives into the shared offering of a common people with one hope under God.

All sit. The choir sings the Anthem

CLAP your hands, all ye people;
O shout unto God with the voice of triumph.
For the Lord most high is terrible;
he is a great King over all the earth.

God is gone up with a shout,
the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.
Sing praises to God;
sing praises unto our King.
For God is the King of all the earth;
sing ye praises every one that hath understanding.

God reigneth over the heathen;
God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness.

Sing praises unto our King; sing praises.

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)

Psalm 47: 1–2, 5–8

The Ghetto Kids perform

Lise Honsinger, Chief Operating Officer, Notpla, The Earthshot Prize winner 2022, gives a Reflection

Calum Scott and Jacob Portelli perform Lighthouse

His Excellency Johnston Busingye, High Commissioner of Rwanda, reads the Lesson

MY brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing.

If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you. But ask in faith, never doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind; for the doubter, being double-minded and unstable in every way, must not expect to receive anything from the Lord.

Blessed is anyone who endures temptation. Such a one has stood the test and will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.

Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. In fulfilment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like.

James 1: 2–8; 12; 17–18; 22–24

Thanks to be God.

All stand to sing the Hymn



FATHER, hear the prayer we offer:
not for ease that prayer shall be,
but for strength that we may ever
live our lives courageously.

Not for ever in green pastures
do we ask our way to be;
but the steep and rugged pathway
may we tread rejoicingly.

Not for ever by still waters
would we idly rest and stay;
but would smite the living fountains
from the rocks along our way.

Be our strength in hours of weakness,
in our wanderings be our guide;
through endeavour, failure, danger,
Father, be thou at our side.

*Sussex
traditional English melody*

*Aspiration after Psalm 23
Love Maria Willis (1824–1908)*

All sit. A recording is played of His Majesty The King's Commonwealth Message

The choir sings the Anthem

BE thou my vision, O Lord of my heart,
be all else but naught to me, save that thou art,
be thou my best thought in the day and the night,
both waking and sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, be thou my true word,
be thou ever with me, and I with thee, Lord;
be thou my great Father, and I thy true son,
be thou in me dwelling, and I with thee one.

Be thou and thou only the first in my heart,
O Sovereign of heaven, my treasure thou art.

Great Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be thou my vision, O Ruler of all.

Bob Chilcott (b 1955)

*Irish, c 8th century
translated by Mary Byrne (1880–1931)*

The Reverend Robert Latham, Minor Canon and Sacrist, introduces the prayers

Let us pray for the Commonwealth of Nations, and give thanks to God for his blessings.

All remain seated or kneel.

HEAVENLY Father, hear our prayers for every nation represented among us; for their leaders and peoples; that we might care for our common home, celebrate our diversity, and live together in unity, fellowship, and peace; that in this 75th year of the Commonwealth the work of generations may be blessed in its continuance.

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

Fr Brian O'Mahoney, Sub-Dean of Westminster Cathedral, says

HEAR our prayers for those suffering as a consequence of war and terrorism; those stricken by natural disaster; for the peoples of Israel, Palestine and Ukraine; for all in danger or distress today; for those working for the relief of suffering and the promotion of peace and justice.

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

The Reverend Tony Miles, Superintendent Minister, Methodist Central Hall Westminster, says

HEAR our prayers for the young people of our Commonwealth; that through friendship, shared values, creativity and resilience, they may meet every challenge and opportunity to serve the common good; for the flourishing of generations to come in prosperity and peace.

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

The Right Reverend Anthony Ball, Canon in Residence, says

HEAR our prayers for His Majesty The King, the Head of the Commonwealth; that our bonds of affection may remain strong, and our commitment to service be lifelong and steadfast.

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

Let us pray in the words that Jesus taught us:

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.

All sit. Spencer Klymyshyn plays

Prelude in G flat major Op 16 no 3

Aleksandr Scriabin (1872–1915)

Sir Ben Okri OBE reads Transcending History

All stand for The Act of Affirmation. The Right Honourable Baroness Scotland of Asthal KC, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth of Nations, says

IN this 75th year of the Commonwealth of Nations, let us now stand to pledge ourselves afresh to uphold and serve the values and fellowship of our unique association.

We affirm that every person possesses unique worth and dignity.

We affirm our desire for peace among all peoples and nations, and our belief in justice for everyone, everywhere.

We affirm our respect for the natural world, and that we will be stewards of the earth by working together to care for every part of it.

We affirm our support for all young people in every part of our Commonwealth and, in honouring their ingenuity and imagination, we affirm our belief that the future success of the Commonwealth rests with them.

Joining together in kinship, affinity and unity, we celebrate the precious diversity of thought, culture, tradition and experience across our family of nations, and we build on shared inheritances.

We reiterate our commitment to the values of the Commonwealth Charter, both as an expression of our ideals and aspirations, and as a framework for common action. Through our Commonwealth connection we see each other, hear each other, learn from one another, and co-operate with mutual respect and goodwill to deliver a resilient common future for all our communities and nations.

All respond

We affirm our belief in the Commonwealth as a powerful influence for good in the world, and pledge ourselves to its service, now and for the future.

All sit. Isabella Moore and Benson Wilson perform Tofa Mai Feleni

All stand to sing the Hymn during which the flags of the Commonwealth nations leave the Abbey



HE who would valiant be
'gainst all disaster,
let him in constancy
follow the Master.
There's no discouragement
shall make him once relent
his first avowed intent
to be a pilgrim.

Whoso beset him round
with dismal stories,
do but themselves confound—
his strength the more is.
No foes shall stay his might,
though he with giants fight:
he will make good his right
to be a pilgrim.

Since, Lord, though dost defend
us with thy Spirit,
we know we at the end
shall life inherit.
Then fancies flee away!
I'll fear not what men say,
I'll labour night and day
to be a pilgrim.

Monk's Gate
adapted from an English folk song
arranged by James O'Donnell

Percy Dearmer (1867–1936), Canon of Westminster
after *The Pilgrim's Progress John Bunyan (1628–88)*

All remain standing. The Dean introduces the Blessings

With friends who represent some of the many communities of faith, let us now seek a blessing upon the Commonwealth, in all its diversity.

Mrs Trupti Patel says

ॐ सर्वेषां स्वस्तिर्भवतु ।
ॐ सर्वेषां शान्तिर्भवतु ।
सर्वेषां पूर्णभवतु ।
सर्वेषां मङ्गलंभवतु ।
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

*May there be Well-Being in All,
May there be Peace in All,
May there be Fulfilment in All,
May there be Auspiciousness in All,
Om Peace, Peace, Peace.*

On behalf of the Hindu community, may the Commonwealth be blessed.

Rabbi Debbie Young-Somers says

IN the Torah, our sacred text, our ancestors are not presented as infallible paragons of virtue who never fail, but as flawed leaders who learn and grow as they journey; in the book of Proverbs we are told:

כִּי שִׁבַע יִפֹּל צַדִּיק וְקָם
*Seven times the righteous
person falls and gets up*

The tasks ahead require our resilience. When we stumble, the support of one another will make getting up even easier.

On behalf of the Jewish community, may the Commonwealth be blessed.

Mr Vinay Shah says

THE fifth century Jain scripture, the Tattvārtha Sūtra by Acharya Umasvati, reflects our belief that every living being, from a plant to a human, has a soul, and we cannot live independently of other souls.

The text contains the aphorism *Parasparopagraho Jīvānām*. This is translated as *Souls render service to one another*, which means that all life is bound together by mutual support and interdependence.

On behalf of the Jain community may the Commonwealth be blessed.

Maulana Sayed Ali Abbas Razawi says

FROM The Holy Qur'an:

God does not burden a soul beyond what it can bear.

Hold fast to God's rope all together, do not split into factions. Remember God's favour to you... persevere, and be more steadfast, be prepared, always be mindful of God, so that you may prosper.

The Holy Qur'ān (2: 286 & 3:103/200)

On behalf of the Muslim community may the Commonwealth be blessed.

The Dean pronounces the final blessing

GOD grant to the living grace; to the departed rest; to the Church, The King, the Commonwealth, and all people, peace and concord; and to us sinners life everlasting; 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 clergy and choir, Her Majesty The Queen, and Members of the Royal Family depart the Abbey church

Music after the service

Obangiji

Fela Sowande (1905–87)

Members of the congregation are requested kindly to remain in their seats until directed to move by the Honorary Stewards

There will be a retiring collection for the Commonwealth Clean Oceans Campaign

UN Sustainable Development Goal 14 highlights 'plastic is the most harmful type of ocean pollution.' This is particularly important for the Commonwealth since nearly half of its members are Small Island Developing States.

The Royal Commonwealth Society's Commonwealth Clean Oceans Campaign brings together young volunteers from Commonwealth countries to raise awareness of this issue and to help clean up the beaches, rivers and oceans by preventing 1 million tonnes of plastics from entering our waterways.

www.royalcwsociety.org/oceans