

ORDER OF SERVICE

All stand. During the Hymn the choir and clergy process to places in Quire and the Sacrarium

A soloist sings

ONCE in royal David's city
stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby
in a manger for his bed:
Mary was that Mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little Child.

The choir sings

He came down to earth from heaven
who is God and Lord of all,
and his shelter was a stable,
and his cradle was a stall;
with the poor, and mean, and lowly,
lived on earth our Saviour holy.

All sing

And through all his wondrous childhood
day by day like us he grew,
he was little, weak, and helpless,
tears and smiles like us he knew:
and he feeleth for our sadness,
and he shareth in our gladness.

And our eyes at last shall see him
through his own redeeming love,
for that Child so dear and gentle,
is our Lord in heaven above:
and he leads his children on
to the place where he is gone.

Not in that poor lowly stable,
with the oxen standing by,
we shall see him; but in heaven,
set at God's right hand on high;
Where like stars his children crowned
all in white shall wait around.

*Henry Gauntlett (1805–76)
harmonised by Arthur Henry Mann (1850–1929)
arranged by David Willcocks (1919–2015)*

Cecil Alexander (1818–95)

All remain standing. The Very Reverend Dr David Hoyle KCVO MBE, Dean of Westminster, welcomes the congregation, concluding with the Prayer

ETERNAL God, in the stillness of this night you sent your almighty Word to pierce the world's darkness with the light of salvation: give to the earth the peace that we long for and fill our hearts with the joy of heaven; through our Saviour, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

All sit and extinguish candles

Gregory Porter sings

Do You Hear What I Hear?

*Gloria Shayne (1923–2008)
and Noël Regney (1922–2002)
arranged by Simon Haw (b 1965)*

Michelle Dockery reads Reflections on Empathy and Kindness

All stand to sing the Hymn

O COME, all ye faithful,
joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold him
born the King of angels:
*O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!*

God of God,
Light of Light,
lo! he abhors not
the Virgin's womb;
Very God,
begotten, not created:

Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens
of heaven above;
'Glory to God
in the highest':

Adeste fideles
attributed to John Wade (1711–86)
arranged by David Willcocks

attributed to John Wade

All sit

The choir sings the Carol

IN the stillness of a church where candles glow,
In the softness of a fall of fresh white snow,
In the brightness of the stars that shine this night,
In the calmness of a pool of healing light,
In the clearness of a choir that softly sings,
In the oneness of a hush of angels' wings,
In the mildness of a night by stable bare,
In the quietness of a lull near cradle fair,
There's a patience as we wait for a new morn,
And the presence of a child soon to be born.

Sally Beamish (b 1956)

Katrina Shepherd (dates unknown)

His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales reads the first Lesson

THE people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness — on them light has shined. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onwards and for evermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Isaiah 9: 2, 6–7

Thanks be to God.

JP Cooper, together with The Soul Sanctuary Choir, sings

O Holy Night

Adolphe Adam (1803–56)

arranged by Simon Haw

Richard E. Grant reads an extract from A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens (1812–70)

The choir sings the Carol, as soloists from The Royal Ballet and students from The Royal Ballet School perform

GREEN for the ivy that grows by the wall,
GWhite for the mistletoe that hangs in the hall;
Red for the berries that shine in the snow,
Orange and yellow for morning's first glow.

These are the colours of Christmas:

Let them shine all over the earth;

These are the colours of happiness:

The joy of a baby's new birth.

Blue for the robe of his mother so mild,

Gold for the precious gifts they brought to the child;

Silver the starlight to shine through your sleep;

And a rainbow for the sweet dreams you will keep.

*The Colours of Christmas
John Rutter (b 1945)*

John Rutter

Paloma Faith sings

This Christmas

Donny Hathaway (1945–79)

arranged by Simon Haw

A film is played: Nature at Christmas

Sophie Okonedo CBE reads The Kindness of Trees by Jackie Kay (b 1961). Piano music composed and performed by Rosey Chan

The choir sings the Carol

GOING through the hills on a night all starry
On the way to Bethlehem,
Far away I heard a shepherd boy piping
On the way to Bethlehem.

*Angels in the sky brought this message nigh:
'Dance and sing for joy that Christ the new-born King is
come to bring us peace on earth, and he's lying
cradled there at Bethlehem.'*

'Tell me, shepherd boy piping tunes so merrily
On the way to Bethlehem,
Who will hear your tunes on these hills so lonely
On the way to Bethlehem?'

*Angels in the sky brought this message nigh:
'Dance and sing for joy that Christ the new-born King is
come to bring us peace on earth, and he's lying
cradled there at Bethlehem.'*

'None may hear my pipes on these hills so lonely
On the way to Bethlehem;
But a King will hear me play sweet lullabies
When I get to Bethlehem.'

*Angels in the sky came down from on high,
Hovered o'er the manger where the babe was lying
cradled in the arms of his mother Mary,
sleeping now at Bethlehem.*

'Where is this new King, shepherd boy piping merrily,
Is he there at Bethlehem?'

'I will find him soon by the star shining brightly
In the sky o'er Bethlehem.'

*Angels in the sky brought this message nigh:
'Dance and sing for joy that Christ the new-born King is
come to bring us peace on earth, and he's lying
cradled there at Bethlehem.'*

'May I come with you, shepherd boy piping merrily,
Come with you to Bethlehem?
Pay my homage too at the new King's cradle,
Is it far to Bethlehem?'

*Angels in the sky brought this message nigh:
'Dance and sing for joy that Christ the infant King is
born this night in lowly stable yonder,
Born for you at Bethlehem.'*

Shepherd's Pipe Carol
John Rutter

John Rutter

Adam Peaty OBE reads the second Lesson

IN that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

'Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.'

So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

Luke 2: 8–16

Thanks be to God.

A film is played: The Joy of Togetherness

All stand to sing the Hymn, led by the Sankofa Songsters

The choir sings **A**WAY in a manger, no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;
the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

All sing The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
and stay by my bedside till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay
close by me for ever, and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
and fit us for heaven, to live with thee there.

William Kirkpatrick (1838–1921)
arranged by James O'Donnell (b 1961)
Organist of Westminster Abbey 2000–22

American, 19th century

All sit

The Dean gives a Reflection

The Dean leads the prayers, during which candles are lit around the crib. At the conclusion of the prayers, all say

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.

The congregation's candles are lit

Olivia Dean sings

The Christmas Song

*Robert Wells (1922–98)
and Mel Tormé (1925–99)
arranged by Simon Haw*

All stand. The Dean pronounces the Blessing

MAY the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the perseverance of the wise men, the obedience of Joseph and Mary, and the peace of the Christ-child be yours this Christmas; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

All sing the Hymn

HARK! the herald angels sing
glory to the new-born King;
peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled:
joyful all ye nations rise,
join the triumph of the skies,
with th'angelic host proclaim,
Christ is born in Bethlehem.
*Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King.*

Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of a Virgin's womb:
veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
hail th'incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel:

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
risen with healing in his wings;
mild he lays his glory by,
born that man no more may die,
born to raise the sons of earth,
born to give them second birth:
*Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King.*

*Felix Mendelssohn (1809–47)
arranged by Christopher Robinson (b 1936)*

Charles Wesley (1707–88)

The clergy and choir, together with Members of The Royal Family, depart

Music after the service

Carillon-Sortie

Henri Mulet (1878–1967)

The congregation's candles are extinguished

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