

# Westminster Abbey



## The Metropolitan Police Carol Service



Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2018  
6.00 pm

## HISTORICAL NOTE

For many people Christmas only really begins once they have attended their first Carol Service. Singing familiar carols in a frosty, candle-lit church is a feature of the season that only seems to grow in popularity. Yet this is a tradition that is barely 100 years old. The first service of carols and lessons at King's College, Cambridge, took place in 1918, when the then Dean, Eric Milner-White, adapted a pattern first instituted by Bishop E W Benson for Truro Cathedral in 1880. Milner-White's Bidding Prayer, prompting us to 'hear again the message of the angels', and to remember especially in this season 'those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore, and in a greater light' is a matchless piece of liturgical writing, powerfully evoking the mystery and the wonder of the festival.

Much older is the tradition of the Christmas crib, of which a fine example is displayed each year before the Quire Screen in the Abbey. The first 'presepe' was set up, it is said, in Italy by none other than St Francis of Assisi, a good 30 years before this current Abbey began its construction. In a less literate age, ordinary people could see and contemplate an event that took place in a far distant time and place; an event having significance for them, and indeed for people of every era and every nation. When we stand before the crib we are in Bethlehem, and Bethlehem is now.

The Abbey's crib figures date from the 1960s and were made in Oberammergau. While most of the figures are carved in lime wood, the ox and ass were made from roof-timbers replaced during the mid-twentieth century restoration of the Abbey. The Kings, appropriately, do not make an appearance until the Feast of the Epiphany, but they too are tied closely to this building. One clearly represents St Edward the Confessor (whose Shrine lies behind the High Altar screen) offering a ring, and the others perhaps Richard II and Henry IV? If so, where else could such deadly rivals in life be brought together other than around the manger, where, we are assured, earth and heaven, God and humanity, are finally reconciled?

It is said that most English Christmas traditions owe more to Charles Dickens (buried in the Abbey) and Queen Victoria than to earlier ages. Certainly Christmas trees were an idea imported from Germany by the Prince Consort, and the Royal patronage of this tradition continues in Her Majesty's gracious gift of two trees from the Royal Estates, displayed in the Abbey this evening.

While the traditions of Christmas may prove to be relatively recent, they point to a story that is not only ancient, but, it is believed, emerges from beyond time. The mystery of the Word made flesh (St John 1: 14), God becoming fully human, is a wonder that the Church invites us to contemplate, and which never ceases to offer fresh insights into the nature and purpose of our existence, and what it might mean to be fully human.

Welcome, all Wonders in one sight!  
Eternity shut in a span.  
Summer in winter, day in night,  
Heaven in earth, and God in man.  
Great little one, whose all-embracing birth  
Lifts earth to heaven, stoops heaven to earth.

*Richard Crashaw (1613–49)*



# ORDER OF SERVICE

*All stand to sing*

## THE HYMN

*during which the choir moves from the Sacramentum to the Great West Door*

*The choir 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.

*All sing*

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.

For he is our childhood's pattern,  
day by day like us he grew,  
he was little, weak, and helpless,  
tears and smiles like us he knew;  
and he feelth 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;  
when like stars his children crowned  
all in white shall wait around.

*All remain standing. The Very Reverend Dr John Hall, Dean of Westminster, gives*

## THE BIDDING

**B**ROTHERS and sisters in Christ, on behalf of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster I welcome you to Westminster Abbey.

We have come together as the family of God, in our Father's presence, to celebrate the great festival of Christmas. In this service we hear and receive the good news of the birth of Christ and we offer to God our thanksgiving in the joyful singing of carols. As we gather together in the name of Christ, we pray for the world he came to save: for the Church, that it may be enabled in our generation to surrender anew to God's holy wisdom, and bear the good news of God's love to a needy world; for the world, which is already Christ's, that all its peoples may recognise their responsibility for its future, and may be inspired by the message of Christmas to work together for the establishment of justice, freedom, and peace everywhere; and for all in special need: the sick, the anxious, the lonely, the fearful, and the bereaved; that the peace and light of the Christ-child may bring hope and healing to all who sit in darkness.

*Silence is kept.*

Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal, through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and ever. **Amen.**

*All sit. The choir sings*

## THE ANTHEM

**A**DAM lay ybounden,  
Bounden in a bond;  
Four thousand winter  
Thought he not too long.

And all was for an apple,  
An apple that he took,  
As clerkes finden  
Written in their book.

Ne had the apple taken been,  
The apple taken been,  
Ne had never our lady  
A been heavene queen.

Blessed be the time  
That apple taken was,  
Therefore we moun singen  
Deo gracias. *To God be thanks.*

*Boris Ord (1897–1961)*

*anonymous*

*Chief Superintendent Ade Adelekan, OCU Commander, Violent Crime Taskforce, reads from the Nave Pulpit*

## THE FIRST LESSON

**A**DAM and Eve heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, 'Where are you?' He said, 'I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.' He said, 'Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?' The man said, 'The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate.' Then the Lord God said to the woman, 'What is this that you have done?' The woman said, 'The serpent tricked me, and I ate.' The Lord God said to the serpent, 'Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all wild creatures; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life.'

*Genesis 3: 8–14*

*All stand to sing*

## THE HYMN

*during which the Procession moves to the Quire Screen*

**G**OD rest you merry, gentlemen,  
let nothing you dismay,  
for Jesus Christ our Saviour  
was born upon this day,  
to save us all from Satan's power  
when we were gone astray:  
*O tidings of comfort and joy.*

From God our heavenly Father  
a blessed Angel came,  
and unto certain shepherds  
brought tidings of the same,  
how that in Bethlehem was born  
the Son of God by name:  
*O tidings of comfort and joy.*

But when to Bethlehem they came  
whereat this infant lay,  
they found him in a manger,  
where oxen feed on hay;  
his mother Mary kneeling  
unto the Lord did pray:  
*O tidings of comfort and joy.*

Now to the Lord sing praises  
all you within this place,  
and with true love and brotherhood  
each other now embrace;  
this holy tide of Christmas  
all other doth deface:  
*O tidings of comfort and joy.*

*traditional*  
*arranged by David Willcocks (1919–2015)*

*anonymous*

THE SECOND LESSON

**A**RISE, shine; for your light has come,  
and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

For darkness shall cover the earth,

and thick darkness the peoples;

but the Lord will arise upon you,

and his glory will appear over you.

Nations shall come to your light,

and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

Lift up your eyes and look around;

they all gather together, they come to you;

your sons shall come from far away,

and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms.

Then you shall see and be radiant;

your heart shall thrill and rejoice,

because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you,

the wealth of the nations shall come to you.

A multitude of camels shall cover you,

the young camels of Midian and Ephah;

all those from Sheba shall come.

They shall bring gold and frankincense,

and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.

The sun shall no longer be

your light by day,

nor for brightness shall the moon

give light to you by night;

but the Lord will be your everlasting light,

and your God will be your glory.

*The choir sings*

### THE ANTHEM

**A** SPOTLESS Rose is blowing,  
Sprung from a tender root,  
Of ancient seers' foreshowing,  
Of Jesse promised fruit;  
Its fairest bud unfolds to light  
Amid the cold, cold winter,  
And in the dark midnight.

The Rose which I am singing,  
Whereof Isaiah said,  
Is from its sweet root springing  
In Mary, purest Maid;  
For through our God's great love and might  
The Blessed Babe she bare us  
In a cold, cold winter's night.

*Herbert Howells (1892–1983)*

*anonymous 14<sup>th</sup> century  
translated by Catherine Winkworth (1827–78)*

*Andrew Parker, Director General, MI5, reads from the Great Lectern*

### THE THIRD LESSON

**I**N the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.' Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

*St Luke 1: 26–38*

*All stand to sing*

## THE HYMN

*during which the Procession moves to places in Quire and the Sacrarium*

**O** LITTLE town of Bethlehem,  
how still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
the silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth  
the everlasting light;  
the hopes and fears of all the years  
are met in thee tonight.

O morning stars, together  
proclaim the holy birth,  
and praises sing to God the King,  
and peace to men on earth;  
for Christ is born of Mary;  
and, gathered all above,  
while mortals sleep, the angels keep  
their watch of wond'ring love.

*traditional English melody*  
*descant by Thomas Armstrong (1898–1994)*

*The choir sings*

How silently, how silently,  
the wondrous gift is giv'n!  
So God imparts to human hearts  
the blessings of his heav'n.  
No ear may hear his coming;  
but in this world of sin,  
where meek souls will receive him, still  
the dear Christ enters in.

*All sing*

O holy Child of Bethlehem,  
descend to us, we pray;  
cast out our sin, and enter in,  
be born in us to-day.  
We hear the Christmas angels  
the great glad tidings tell:  
O come to us, abide with us,  
our Lord Emmanuel.

*Phillips Brooks (1835–93)*

*All sit. Cressida Dick CBE QPM, Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, reads from the Great Lectern*

## THE FOURTH LESSON

**N**OW the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: 'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel', which means, 'God is with us.'

*St Matthew 1: 18–23*

*The choir sings*

## THE ANTHEM

**D**ORMI, Jesu! Mater ridet  
quae tam dulcem somnum videt.  
Dormi, Jesu! Blandule!

Si non dormis, mater plorat.  
Inter fila cantans orat,  
blande, veni, somnule.

*Sleep, Jesu! The mother laughs  
who sees such sweet sleep.  
Sleep, Jesu! O gentle one!*

*If you do not sleep, the mother weeps.  
As she weaves she prays singing  
gently: come and sleep.*

Sleep, sweet babe! my cares beguiling:  
Mother sits beside thee smiling;  
Sleep, my darling, tenderly!

*John Rutter (b 1945)*

*anonymous, from a print of the Virgin Mary, Germany  
and in translation by Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772–1834)*

## THE ADDRESS

*by*

The Right Reverend and Right Honourable  
Dame Sarah Mullally DBE  
*Bishop of London*

*The choir sings*

## THE ANTHEM

**T**OMORROW shall be my dancing day:  
I would my true love did so chance  
To see the legend of my play,  
To call my true love to my dance:  
Sing O my love;  
This have I done for my true love.

Then was I born of a virgin pure,  
Of her I took fleshly substance;  
Thus was I knit to man's nature,  
To call my true love to my dance:  
Sing O my love;  
This have I done for my true love.

In a manger laid and wrapped I was,  
So very poor, this was my chance,  
Betwixt an ox and a silly poor ass,  
To call my true love to my dance:  
Sing O my love;  
This have I done for my true love.

Then afterwards baptised I was;  
The Holy Ghost on me did glance,  
My Father's voice heard from above  
To call my true love to my dance:  
Sing O my love;  
This have I done for my true love.

*John Gardner (1917–2011)*

*traditional*

*The Reverend Jonathan Osborne, Senior Chaplain, Metropolitan Police Service, and Priest Vicar, Westminster Abbey, introduces*

## THE PRAYERS

Let us pray that the grace of God may bring hope to all.

*All kneel or remain seated*

*Joanna Bliault, Forensic Accountant, Organised Crime Command, says*

**L**ET us pray for the Lord's blessing on the work of the Metropolitan Police Service; for the faithful discharge of our duties; and for those with whom we work in the Greater London area: that the rights of all may be defended, the innocent may be protected, and offenders may be brought to account.

Lord, hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

*Arabella Hyde, Met Operations, says*

**L**ET us pray for peace and unity within and between the boroughs that we serve; for a joyful recognition of the God-given diversity of community life; and for a deeper recognition of our mutual dependence one upon another: that our celebration of Christmas may be joyful and peaceful.

Lord, hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

*Inspector Peter Shaw, Hackney Borough, says*

**L**ET us pray that we may rejoice in each other's gifts and talents; for generosity in our judgments; for grace to forgive and to seek forgiveness; and for courage to stand by one another in times of stress and conflict: that we may do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly in God's sight.

Lord, hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

*Inspector Richard Coss, Royalty and Specialist Protection, says*

**L**ET us pray for the Prime Minister, the Home Secretary, and all ministers of the Crown; for the Mayor of London; for those responsible for our protection and security in Parliament and within the Metropolitan area; and for those who respond first in moments of crisis: that the bonds of peace and goodwill within this city may be strengthened by our vigilance.

Lord, hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

*Acting Detective Sergeant Loy Hartwell, Learning and Development OCU, says*

**L**ET us pray for the spirit of wisdom and understanding; that we shall judge not simply by what our eyes see or decide by what our ears hear, but with righteousness and equity: that we may resist that which is wrong and uphold that which is right.

Lord, hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

*Sue Kilbey, Personal Assistant to Assistant Commissioner Helen Ball, says*

**L**ET us pray for all who find this season of the year difficult; for those who have suffered injury in the course of their duties; for all who are without food or shelter at this time of plenty; for victims of terror, disaster, and crime; for the sick, the sad, and all who live with painful memories of loss and bereavement; and for those who have died during the past year in the service and protection of others: that the light of Christ may shine in their darkness.

Lord, hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

*The Senior Chaplain concludes*

**F**ATHER of all, you have declared your love to all peoples by the birth of the holy Child at Bethlehem: help us to welcome him with gladness and make room for him in our daily lives, so that we may live at peace with you and in goodwill with all; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Let us present our prayers and praises before our heavenly Father in the words our Saviour Christ has taught us:

**O**UR 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 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:  
*O come, let us adore him,*  
*O come, let us adore him,*  
*O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!*

See how the shepherds,  
summoned to his cradle,  
leaving their flocks, draw nigh with lowly fear;  
we too will thither  
bend our joyful footsteps:  
*O come, let us adore him,*  
*O come, let us adore him,*  
*O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!*

Sing, choirs of angels,  
sing in exultation,  
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;  
'Glory to God  
in the highest':  
*O come, let us adore him,*  
*O come, let us adore him,*  
*O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!*

*All remain standing. The Right Reverend Stephen Cottrell, Bishop of Chelmsford, reads from the Nave Lectern*

## THE FIFTH LESSON

**I**N the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

*St John 1: 1-14*

*All remain standing. The choir sings*

## THE ANTHEM

**O**N Christmas night all Christians sing,  
To hear the news the angels bring,  
News of great joy, news of great mirth,  
News of our merciful King's birth.

Then why should men on earth be so sad,  
Since our Redeemer made us glad,  
When from our sin he set us free,  
All for to gain our liberty?

When sin departs before his grace,  
Then life and health come in its place;  
Angels and men with joy may sing  
All for to see the new-born King.

All out of darkness we have light,  
Which made the angels sing this night:  
'Glory to God and peace to men,  
Now and for evermore. Amen'.

Sussex Carol  
*traditional English melody, arranged by Philip Ledger*

*traditional*

*All remain standing. The Dean says*

## THE COLLECT

Let us pray.

**O** GOD, who makest us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of thy only Son, Jesus Christ: grant that, as we joyfully receive him as our redeemer, so we may with sure confidence behold him, when he shall come to be our judge; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. **Amen.**

*The Dean pronounces*

## THE BLESSING

**M**AY 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 remain standing to sing*

## THE HYMN

**H**ARK! 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.

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

*Charles Wesley (1707–88)*

*All remain standing as the Procession moves to the west end of the Abbey Church*

*Music after the service*

*Final from Symphonie I*

*Louis Vierne (1870–1937)*

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

*A retiring collection will be taken in aid of the Metropolitan Police Benevolent Fund*