

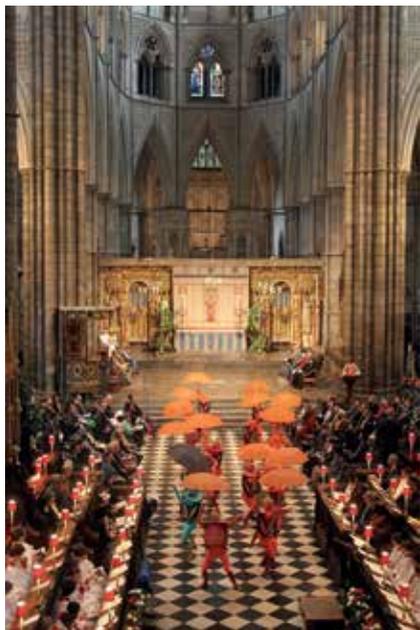


An Observance for Commonwealth Day 2015

In the presence of Her Majesty The Queen
His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh
His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales
Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Cornwall
His Royal Highness The Duke of Cambridge
Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Cambridge

Monday 9th March 2015 at 3.15 pm

A Young Commonwealth
The Commonwealth theme for 2015



The Abbey is served by a hearing loop. Users should turn their hearing aids to the setting marked T.

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

It is my great pleasure, as Chairman of the Council of Commonwealth Societies, to welcome you to this very special event.

In a deeply disturbed and uneasy world, the Commonwealth family assembles once again at Westminster Abbey to celebrate and give thanks for our unity, friendship, shared purpose and values.

With half of the Commonwealth's peoples being under twenty-five, this is the family and the network in which tomorrow meets today, in which the aspiring young who are the future come together with those who have built the past and the present.

Today there are forces and trends at work more powerful than any single government that are binding together the young people of all Commonwealth countries as never before—and in ways which would have astounded their forbears. A new kind of Commonwealth is emerging.

Instantaneous contact, and constant and open communication unite schoolchildren and students, professional people of all kinds, sportsmen and women in every field, entrepreneurs, ideas and investors, artists and authors, faiths and friends in a daily conversation and worldwide association the like of which exists nowhere else.

A common language, with its own internal laws and underlying attitudes, binds together almost a third of humankind, when so many other pressures are driving nations and faiths apart.

Our Commonwealth Day Observance at Westminster Abbey, in the presence of the Head of the Commonwealth, Her Majesty The Queen, His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh, and other members of the Royal Family, allows us to reflect on both what has been achieved and the essential role the Commonwealth can play in the future. The Observance event now reaches out as never before and is matched by ceremonies, services and flag displays across the towns and cities of the United Kingdom, as well as in many great cities across the Commonwealth, as a further reminder of our common family purpose and of what together we can achieve.



The Right Honourable The Lord Howell of Guildford
Chairman of the Council of Commonwealth Societies

The modern Commonwealth helps provide young people with an opportunity to be the best we can be.

As Commonwealth young people, we celebrate our unity and diversity and hopes for the future of our Commonwealth by promoting the core values that bind us together as a family of nations.

Young people in the Commonwealth number some 1.2 billion, making the current generation the largest we have ever seen. There is no doubt that young people are vital partners in their countries' progress and architects of future prosperity for our Commonwealth family of nations.

2015 is a significant year for young people in the Commonwealth. Under the theme 'A Young Commonwealth', the year has been dedicated to young people. It is also a crucial year for people and planet, when the world will renew its sustainable development agenda. We, the young people, must play our role centre stage and participate meaningfully in every process of decision making and implementation.

The Commonwealth Youth Council provides a platform for co-ordinating, harmonising, and supporting youth development work in the Commonwealth. Today, young people speak with one voice. We call for young people's needs and perspectives to be prioritised, and for a specific aim for youth participation and development in the new sustainable development goals.

As we celebrate Commonwealth Day, this is also the occasion to reflect on the millions of young people out there who are struggling to earn a living, striving to acquire a quality education, and craving for a better life. We have a responsibility to help make their lives better. We have to go beyond talk and year themes and take real action to end poverty, insecurity, and discrimination amongst young people.

We are delighted that young people are seen as partners and the bedrock for a prosperous Commonwealth.



Ahmed Adamu
Chairperson, Commonwealth Youth Council

A Young Commonwealth

What is the Commonwealth?

The Commonwealth is a voluntary association of fifty-three independent and equal sovereign states. It is home to 2.2 billion citizens. The Commonwealth includes some of the world's largest, smallest, richest and poorest countries, spanning five regions. Thirty-one of its members are small states, many of them island nations.

What is the Commonwealth theme?

Every year, the Commonwealth chooses a theme to provide a focus for its activities. The theme is celebrated throughout the year, with special events taking place during Commonwealth Week, including the Commonwealth Day Observance.

What does 'A Young Commonwealth' mean?

People aged twenty-nine years or under account for the majority of the Commonwealth's population, and play a vital role at the heart of sustainable development and democracy. 'A Young Commonwealth' recognises the capacity, contribution and potential of young people, particularly in 2015 when the world will define a new global development framework.

The Commonwealth is also a family of dynamic countries at the forefront of innovation, growth and contributing towards global value. As a diverse and increasingly connected global network, we bring fresh perspectives and new ideas. We will always remain a contemporary and young Commonwealth.



Before the Observance

The Commonwealth Festival Choir and Orchestra, under the direction of Graham Dinnage and Dr James Ross, perform:

Child of Tomorrow Lin Marsh (b 1950)
arranged by Alan Mofti

Waiting for the Rainbow Natalie Lu, Ibukun Odunoren,
Michelle Amuah, and Sophie Sakol*
words by Niyi Osundare (b 1947)
and Christina Rossetti (1830–94)
arranged by Lucie Treacher

Who Guides the Swallow? Connie Price, Durga Ganesh,
Fatoumata Jarra, and Stephanie Edwards*
words by Vivienne Cox
arranged by Alan Mofti

World in Union music by Gustav Holst (1874–1934)
words by Charlie Skarbek (b 1953)
arranged by Alan Mofti and Graham Dinnage
(written for the 1991 Rugby World Cup)

* denotes songs composed by young people aged between twelve and eighteen years

The Commonwealth Festival Orchestra plays:

Andante from Horn Concerto in E flat κ 417 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–91)

Capriol Suite Peter Warlock (1894–1930)
i Basse-Dance
ii Pavane
iii Tordion
iv Bransles
v Pieds-en-l'air
vi Mattachins (Sword Dance)

Jeremy Woodside, Organ Scholar, plays:

Plymouth Suite Percy Whitlock (1903–1946)
i Allegro risoluto
ii Lantana
iii Chanty
iv Salix
v Toccata

Siyahamba from Three Global Songs John Behnke (b 1953)

Medallists from the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games, representing England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, process through the Nave.

Before the Observance

Canada			United Kingdom
New Zealand			Australia
India			South Africa
Sri Lanka			Pakistan
Malaysia			Ghana
Cyprus			Nigeria
Tanzania			Sierra Leone
Trinidad and Tobago			Jamaica
Kenya			Uganda
Malta			Malawi
Singapore			Zambia
Lesotho			Guyana
Barbados			Botswana
Swaziland			Mauritius
Tonga			Nauru
Fiji Islands			Samoa
The Bahamas			Bangladesh
Papua New Guinea			Grenada
Solomon Islands			Seychelles
Dominica			Tuvalu
Kiribati			Saint Lucia
Belize			Saint Vincent and The Grenadines
Antigua and Barbuda			Vanuatu
Saint Christopher and Nevis			Maldives
Namibia			Brunei Darussalam
Mozambique			Cameroon
			Rwanda

The Procession of Flags

The flags of the member countries are carried in the order determined by the date of membership (when read from right to left).

The Procession of Honoured Guests and Participants

An Honorary Steward



The Chair of the Royal Commonwealth Society
Ms Claire Whitaker



Council Member of the Victoria League for Commonwealth Friendship
Mrs Nicola Downer AM



The Chairman of the Royal Over-Seas League
Sir Anthony Figgis KCVO CMG



The Chairman of the English-Speaking Union
The Right Honourable The Lord Boateng

The Representatives of the Faith Communities

A Verger



*The Representative of
Reform Judaism*
Rabbi Debbie Young-Somers

*The Representative of the
Muslim Community*
Shaykh Ibrahim Mogra



*The Representative of the
Zoroastrian Community*
Mr Malcolm M Deboo



*The Representative of the
Jain Community*
Dr Natubhai Shah



The Representative of the Sikh Community
The Lord Singh of Wimbledon CBE



*The Representative of the
Bahá'í Community*
Mr Patrick O'Mara

*The Representative of the
Buddhist Community*
The Venerable Bogoda Seelawimala



*The Representative of the
Hindu Community*
Mrs Trupti Patel



*The Representative of
Liberal Judaism*
Rabbi Dr Andrew Goldstein

The Procession of Honoured Guests and Participants

The Representatives of the Christian Churches

A Verger



Church of Scotland
The Reverend Andrea Price



Westminster Cathedral
Canon Christopher Tuckwell

Methodist Central Hall
The Reverend Martin Turner



Coptic Orthodox Church
His Grace Bishop Angaelos



Orthodox
His Eminence Archbishop Gregorios
of Thyateira and Great Britain



The Observance

Their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge are received. Presentations are made. All remain seated.

Their Royal Highnesses The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall are received. Presentations are made. All remain seated.

A fanfare is sounded. All stand.

Her Majesty The Queen and His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh are received. Presentations are made.

All sing

The National Anthem

God save our gracious Queen,
long live our noble Queen,
God save The Queen.
Send her victorious,
happy and glorious,
long to reign over us:
God save The Queen.

The Procession forms and moves through the Nave and the South Quire Aisle, into the Lantern, Sacrarium, and Quire.

The Observance

All remain standing to sing

The Hymn



Praise, my soul, the King of heaven;
to his feet thy tribute bring.
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
who like me his praise should sing?
Praise him! Praise him!
Praise the everlasting King.

Praise him for his grace and favour
to our fathers in distress;
praise him still the same for ever,
slow to chide, and swift to bless.
Praise him! Praise him!
Glorious in his faithfulness.

Father-like, he tends and spares us;
well our feeble frame he knows;
in his hands he gently bears us,
rescues us from all our foes.
Praise him! Praise him!
Widely as his mercy flows.

Angels, help us to adore him;
ye behold him face to face;
sun and moon, bow down before him;
dwellers all in time and space.
Praise him! Praise him!
Praise with us the God of grace.

Praise, my soul 436 NEH
John Goss (1800–80)

Henry Lyte (1793–1847)
after Psalm 103

The Observance

The Order of the Procession



The Observance

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

The Bidding

On behalf of the Dean and Chapter, I welcome you warmly to Westminster Abbey, this place of faith at the heart of our nation and Commonwealth.

United by ties of friendship, we gather representing a rich diversity of faiths. Our theme is 'A Young Commonwealth', so we shall give thanks for young people with their many gifts and pray that they may be blessed and a blessing.

In the words of Jesus, let us rejoice in God's gracious rule:

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.

The Observance

The Commonwealth Day Message 2015 *from Her Majesty The Queen, Head of the Commonwealth*

One simple lesson from history is that when people come together to talk, to exchange ideas and to develop common goals, wonderful things can happen. So many of the world's greatest technological and industrial achievements have begun as partnerships between families, countries, and even continents. But, as we are often reminded, the opposite can also be true. When common goals fall apart, so does the exchange of ideas. And if people no longer trust or understand each other, the talking will soon stop, too.

In the Commonwealth, we are a group of fifty-three nations of dramatically different sizes and climates. But over the years, drawing on our shared history, we have seen and acted upon the huge advantages of mutual co-operation and understanding, for the benefit of our countries and the people who live in them.

Not only are there tremendous rewards for this co-operation, but through dialogue we protect ourselves against the dangers that can so easily arise from a failure to talk or to see the other person's point of view.

Indeed, it seems to me that now, in the second decade of the twenty-first century, what we share through being members of the Commonwealth is more important and worthy of protection than perhaps at any other time in the Commonwealth's existence. We are guardians of a precious flame, and it is our duty not only to keep it burning brightly, but to keep it replenished for the decades ahead.

With this in mind, I think it apt that on this day we celebrate 'A Young Commonwealth' and all that it has to offer. As a concept that is unique in human history, the Commonwealth can only flourish if its ideas and ideals continue to be young and fresh and relevant to all generations.

The youthfulness and vitality that motivate our collective endeavours were seen in abundance last year in Glasgow. They will be seen again in a few months' time, when Young Leaders from islands and continents gather to make new friendships and to work on exciting initiatives that can help to build a safer world for future generations. And last November in India, talented young scientists from universities and research institutes conferred with eminent professors and pioneers of discovery at the Commonwealth Science Conference, where together they shared thoughts on insights and inventions that promise a more sustainable future.

These are stirring examples of what is meant by 'A Young Commonwealth'. It is a globally diverse and inclusive community that opens up new possibilities for development through trust and encouragement. Commonwealth Day provides each of us, as members of this worldwide family, with a chance to recommit ourselves to upholding the values of the Commonwealth Charter.

It has the power to enrich us all, but, just as importantly in an uncertain world, it gives us a good reason to keep talking.

Elizabeth R.

The Observance

All remain seated. In the Nave, dancedigital and The Commonwealth Festival Orchestra perform:

Maltugandata UK

Thomas Carr
choreographed by Sarah Ndagire
specially commissioned for this service

A Reflection

by

The Honourable Dr Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury
Speaker of the Parliament of Bangladesh
from the Great Pulpit

Sharanya Manivanna reads from the Sacrarium Steps

Gathering

Where were you when
the world began
to sing to you again?

One day when you had
stopped looking, she
gathered together
all the benedictions
that were your due

and decanted them
into the wild reservoir
of your life.

There were golden orb weavers
there, and calypso orchids. And graceful
monarchs who lifted their painted wings

as though the miracle of their
being weighed nothing.

The world was singing again,
an eloquence of omens.
Some of us were listening.
All of us were standing, still.

And I thought I saw you there,
at the cusp of new meaning.
You were unfurling like an atlas moth.
You were spinning like a compass rose.

And I held my hands out to you
and said, precious one,
did you ever think we'd get here?
Precious one—*listen*—we are still here.

Sharanya Manivanna (b 1985)

The Observance

All remain seated. The Choir sings

Jubilate Deo

O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands: serve the Lord with gladness, and come before his presence with a song.
Be ye sure that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
O go your way into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and speak good of his Name.
For the Lord is gracious, his mercy is everlasting: and his truth endureth from generation to generation.

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.

Benjamin Britten (1913–76) in E flat

Psalm 100

A Reflection

by

PJ Cole

Executive Director, Lifeline Nehemiah Projects
and Queen's Young Leader
from the Nave Pulpit

All remain seated. In the Lantern, The Soil performs

We Are One (Celebrate Humanity)

*Celebrate humanity,
and when you love, love unconditionally.
Better world begins with a smile;
go out there and give it a try.*

I pray that
as soon as you hear this song
you'll feel a wave of love,
and that you'll reach out
and spread love like a soaring dove—
that pure love that comes from above;
without peace, love and happiness we won't survive.

May the good Lord
continue to bless you
and those around you;
know that he loves you—
that's why we say
we will never be apart
if we find it in our hearts to...

The Observance

*Celebrate humanity,
and when you love, love unconditionally.
Better world begins with a smile;
go out there and give it a try.*

Peace, love, happiness is what we need.

Calling all the nations
and everyone from different races:
stand up and make some changes
for a better human nation.

Show compassion; lend a hand;
it might not be easy, but I know you can.
Divided we fall, but together we all stand—
love thy neighbour; treat him like your brother.

Phila nawe ngob'ixesha li futshane
ncuma nawe ngoba uyazi wena umhle
masibambaneni, sinnedaneni
masithandaneni...

*Live because life is short;
smile because you're beautiful.
Let us love and support one another...*

Because (we are one)...

*Celebrate humanity,
and when you love, love unconditionally.
Better world begins with a smile;
go out there and give it a try.*

*Buhlebendalo Mda
Ntsika Ngxanga
Luphindo Ngxanga*

*Published by The Soil Music Publishing
and Active Music Publishing*

All remain seated. Barkha Mossae, Queen's Young Leader, reads from the Great Lectern

Isaiah 40: 27–31

Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, 'My way is hidden from the Lord, and my right is disregarded by my God'? Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless. Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

The Observance

All stand to sing

The Hymn



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, thou 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 372 NEH
adapted from a traditional English melody
by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)

John Bunyan (1628–88)

The Observance

All sit for

A Reflection

by

Kailash Satyarthi

Children's rights advocate and Nobel Peace Laureate
from the Great Pulpit

All remain seated. The Choir sings

The Anthem

When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that
you have ordained,
what is man, that you should be mindful of him; the son of man, that you should seek
him out?

You have made him little lower than the angels and crown him with glory and honour.
You have given him dominion over the works of your hands and put all things under
his feet.

O Lord our governor, how glorious is your name in all the world.

Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will
never enter it.

I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall ever be in my mouth.

My soul shall glory in the Lord; let the humble hear and be glad.

O magnify the Lord with me; let us exalt his name together.

I sought the Lord and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears.

Truly I tell you.

*Judith Weir (b 1954)
Master of The Queen's Music
specially commissioned for this service*

Psalm 8: 4–7, 10; St Mark 10: 15; Psalm 34: 1–4

The Observance

All remain seated or kneel for

The Prayers

The Reverend Martin Turner, representative of the Methodist Church, says:

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, your Son Jesus Christ shared the life of an earthly family, and grew in favour and wisdom; form the character of our young people with the virtues of compassion and courage, that each may grow in their own vocation, and serve the needs of those around them; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Dr Natubhai Shah, representative of the Jain community, says:

Non-violence and reverence for all life, equality, friendship to all and malice to none, pluralism and spiritual democracy, mutual co-operation for the welfare of all, including animals and environment, forgiveness, and peace and calmness of the self are the Jain values advocated by Mahavira, reviver of Jainism, 2,600 years ago.

The vision of the Commonwealth is to create peace and prosperity for all its members, respect for the diverse culture and communities, sustainable development, and equality. 'Let us pray Jain values and its motto 'Live and Help to Live' may be a guiding principle for the Commonwealth's actions.

Rabbi Debbie Young-Somers, representative of Reform Judaism, says:

The prophet Joel predicted that the old would dream dreams, and the young would see visions. As we celebrate the young of our Commonwealth community, we pray we might be true to this ideal. May we work towards creating a Commonwealth that raises our young secure and blessed enough to see visions, and confident enough to pursue them. May our older people be comfortable and happy enough to dream dreams, having seen their own visions for a better world come to fruition. As the Talmud says: 'May we trust in generations past and yet to be, and may our vision be on a straight path before us.'

Shaykh Ibrahim Mogra, representative of the Muslim community, says:

O Lord! You are Peace, from you is peace: you are blessed, O Sustainer! You are Most High, O One of majesty and nobility! You created us from one man and one woman. Had it been your will, you would have made us all the same, but you made us into nations and tribes so that we may know each other. O magnificent Creator! Enable us to respect the diversity you have created. Join together our hearts, free us from fear, hunger, disease, and war. O loving Creator! We ask you to answer our prayer through your grace and your mercy. **Amen.**

The Observance

The Lord Singh of Wimbledon CBE, representative of the Sikh community, says:

Sikh teachings emphasise commonalities between our different faiths. In the following verse, Guru Gobind Singh reminds us not to let superficial differences deflect us from serving the one God of us all:

God is in the temple as He is in the mosque
God is in the Hindu worship as He is in the Muslim prayer
Despite superficial differences, we are all one;
The one Lord made us all.

from Akal Ustat

Young people today increasingly accept this belief in the oneness of our human family, and have much to contribute to promoting this understanding in the Commonwealth and in the wider world.

Malcolm M Deboo, representative of the Zoroastrian community, says:

For sustainable development and democracy to thrive, corruption must be rooted out. Emphasis must be on truth and righteousness, so there can be good governance, transparency and accountability. Herodotus observed that the young Zoroastrians in ancient Persia were always taught to speak the truth and be righteous; therefore the very first prayer they were taught to recite by the age of two was:

'Ashem vohū vahistem asti ushtā asti; ushtā ahmāi hyat ashāi vahishtāi ashem.'

'Truth and righteousness is good. It is the best. It is happiness. It is happiness to whosoever promotes righteousness as the highest truth.'

The Reverend Andrea Price, representative of the Church of Scotland, says:

Almighty God, give us wisdom to perceive you, intellect to understand you, diligence to seek you, patience to wait for you, eyes to behold you, a heart to meditate upon you, and a life to proclaim you, through the power of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

St Benedict (c 480–542)

The Observance

All stand for

The Act of Affirmation to the Commonwealth

The Secretary-General says:

We affirm that every person possesses unique worth and dignity. We affirm our respect for nature, and that we will be stewards of the earth by caring for every part of it, and for it as a whole. We affirm our belief in justice for everyone, and peace between peoples and nations.

Joining together as members of one worldwide family, we celebrate the ties of friendship and the spirit of innovation that encourage us as 'A Young Commonwealth' to create just and peaceful societies, to work for sustainable development and inclusive social progress, to advance democracy, and to build growth and prosperity in which all citizens can share.

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

All sing

The Hymn



Now thank we all our God,
with heart and hands and voices,
who wondrous things hath done,
in whom his world rejoices;
who from our mother's arms
hath blessed us on our way
with countless gifts of love,
and still is ours to-day.

The Observance

O may this bounteous God
through all our life be near us,
with ever joyful hearts
and blessed peace to cheer us;
and keep us in his grace,
and guide us when perplexed,
and free us from all ills
in this world and the next.

All praise and thanks to God
the Father now be given,
the Son, and him who reigns
with them in highest heaven,
the One eternal God,
whom earth and heaven adore;
for thus it was, is now,
and shall be evermore. Amen.

*Nun danket 413 NEH
from Johann Crüger's Praxis pietatis melica c 1647*

*German, Martin Rinkart (1586–1649)
translated by Catherine Winkworth (1827–78)*

All remain standing. The Dean pronounces

The Blessing

Unto God's gracious mercy and protection we commit you. The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you, and give you peace; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Music after the service:

Final from Symphonie I

Louis Vierne (1870–1937)

Members of the congregation are asked to remain in their places until invited to move by the Stewards. Those in the Nave will be asked to leave by the Great West Door; those seated in the Lantern and Transepts should leave by the North Door.

A retiring collection will be taken for SLWT.

Retiring Collection



SLWT

'SLWT has been working tirelessly throughout the Ebola epidemic to protect and support some of the most vulnerable members of society in Sierra Leone. At the start of the epidemic, SLWT's activities focused on preventative measures, providing personal protective equipment to doctors, and hand-washing facilities to densely populated urban communities. SLWT also worked with the local "okada riders" (motorcycle riders) to protect them and their passengers from getting infected through the innovative introduction of plastic raincoats.

As the epidemic continued to rage, SLWT played an important role in recruiting medical staff and delivering cultural awareness training to the NHS volunteers prior to their deployment. Thankfully, the Ebola epidemic is slowly coming under control; however, in its wake, Ebola has left a devastating legacy as thousands of children have become orphans. SLWT is catering for the food and health monitoring needs of Ebola orphans under the age of five who are in the care of guardians and caretakers unable to cover the additional cost to the household, but who are willing to provide a new home for these children. With the re-opening of schools in Sierra Leone, SLWT will resume its work providing educational scholarships and mentoring support to schoolgirls who, as a group, have been very badly affected by the outbreak, with there being a risk of many of these girls not returning to school.'

*Yvonne Aki-Sawyer
Director of Planning for the National Ebola Response*

Speakers in order of appearance



The Honourable Dr Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury

The Honourable Dr Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury is the first female Speaker of the Parliament of Bangladesh. She is

Chairperson of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

Dr Chaudhury has considerable Commonwealth experience. She was involved in the implementation of the Commonwealth Gender Plan of Action and held the Commonwealth Gender Chair for two years. Under her leadership, Bangladesh hosted the tenth Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers' Meeting in 2013, and when Minister for Women and Children, she promoted gender equality and contributed to the formulation of major policy and legislation, including the National Women's Development Policy, and the Children's Policy & Domestic Violence (Prevention & Protection) Act.

As a Commonwealth Scholar, she was awarded a Ph D in Law from the University of Essex in 2000, and an Honorary Doctorate was conferred on her by her Alma Mater in 2014.

Dr Chaudhury was awarded the Asia Society's Humanitarian Services Award in 2010 for her role in preventing violence against women, and she has been a practicing Advocate of the Bangladesh Supreme Court since 2009.



Sharanya Manivannan

Sharanya Manivannan's first book of poems, *Witchcraft*, was described in *The Straits Times*, Singapore, as 'sensuous and spiritual, delicate and dangerous and as full as the moon

reflected in a knife'. Her fiction, poetry and essays have been widely published internationally, and she has appeared at literary festivals and readings in India, Singapore, Germany, Australia, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the United Kingdom, including Southbank Centre's Poetry Parnassus in 2012.

Sharanya is the recipient of a Lavanya Sankaran Fellowship and an Elle Fiction Award. She wrote a column, 'The Venus Flytrap', for the *The New Indian Express* between 2008 and 2011.

Sharanya was born in India in 1985 and grew up in Sri Lanka and Malaysia; she has lived in Chennai since 2007.

Speakers



PJ Cole

PJ trains and mobilises community leaders in Sierra Leone.

PJ grew up in West Africa, displaced by the civil wars in Sierra Leone and Liberia. He came to the UK to study law in 2006, spending time supporting vulnerable young people. In 2012, he was asked to restructure Lifeline Nehemiah Projects, the school and home for ex-child soldiers, established by his late father in Sierra Leone.

Directed by PJ and in partnership with Lifeline Network International, he now oversees four schools, vocational training, a safe-home, and a programme equipping vulnerable young people to lead communities.

PJ is currently at the forefront of the Ebola fight. His team sits on the National Ebola Response Committee, and leads community education and mobilisation programmes, providing food and psycho-social support to quarantined families. PJ's organisation is now housing Ebola orphans, and his team has built an Ebola Treatment Unit in its neighbourhood, in partnership with Medair.

PJ is a Queen's Young Leader. The Queen's Young Leaders Programme is a new initiative established by The Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust in partnership with Comic Relief and the Royal Commonwealth Society, in recognition of The Queen's lifetime of service to the Commonwealth.



Barkha Mossae

Born and raised on the island of Mauritius, Barkha is an advocate for the sustainable development of small island states.

Having survived a serious accident at the age of ten, Barkha is determined to ensure that her actions make a difference. In 2011, she graduated from the University of Manchester, where she gained valuable experience working for an outreach programme aimed at the homeless people of Manchester. Following her graduation, Barkha launched a capacity-building project to harness the power of social media for sustainable development. She recently joined the Mauritian Foreign Service.

Barkha is part of the British Council Global Changemakers programme, and the World Economic Forum's Global Shapers Community. Through the latter, she helped launch Seeing Blue, a project designed to raise awareness on ocean matters.

Currently, Barkha is studying for her Master's in Environment, Politics and Development at SOAS, having been awarded the Mo Ibrahim Foundation Scholarship. Barkha hopes that this will help her increase the scope of her advocacy for sustainable development and the sustainable use of our oceans.

Barkha is one of the first ever Queen's Young Leaders. The Queen's Young Leaders Programme is a new initiative established by The Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust in partnership with Comic Relief and the Royal Commonwealth Society, in recognition of The Queen's lifetime of service to the Commonwealth.

Speakers



Kailash Satyarthi

Kailash Satyarthi is an international children's rights activist and a pioneer in the fight against illiteracy and the exploitation of children. In 1980, he

gave up his career and founded the Save the Childhood Movement, which has since rescued over 80,000 children from bondage, trafficking and exploitative labour.

In 1998, Satyarthi organised the Global March Against Child Labour. This spanned 103 countries, and involved 7.2 million people and 20,000 civil society organisations. It led to the International Labour Organization's Convention 182 for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour. Today, the March is the largest movement of civil society organisations and teachers united in their goal to end child labour, and to promote education for all children.

Satyarthi also initiated the Global Campaign for Education, the world's largest education campaign coalition. In India, he successfully spearheaded a movement to make education a Constitutional provision, paving the way for the 2009 Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act. In 2013, his efforts led to the definition and criminalisation in the Indian criminal justice system of people trafficking.

Kailash Satyarthi has received numerous awards, including the 1995 Robert F Kennedy Human Rights Award, the Heroes Acting to End Modern Day Slavery award by the US State Department in 2007, and the 2009 Defenders of Democracy Award. Most recently, he was awarded the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize alongside Malala Yousafzai.



His Excellency Kamalesh Sharma

Kamalesh Sharma has been Commonwealth Secretary-General since 2008.

A career diplomat, Mr Sharma had previously served as India's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom and was the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General to Timor Leste.

As India's Ambassador to the UN in Geneva and New York, he was spokesperson for developing countries in the Uruguay Trade Round and was closely involved in the development of the Monterrey Consensus and Millennium Development Goals. He is Chancellor Emeritus of Queen's University, Belfast.

Performers in order of appearance

The Commonwealth Resounds!



In 2015, The Commonwealth Resounds! (TCR) celebrates its tenth anniversary. TCR devises and implements collaborations between musicians worldwide. It was created for the 2005 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) with encouragement from Her Majesty The Queen, The Commonwealth Secretariat, The Commonwealth Foundation, The Royal Commonwealth Society, and Malta's Minister for Culture and Sport.

TCR offers professional expertise in classical and cross-cultural performance, event management, and pan-Commonwealth educational projects: it has run major cultural projects at every CHOGM since 2005 and has promoted numerous UK events.

TCR is delighted to be returning to Malta for CHOGM 2015.

Two of its principal ensembles are the Commonwealth Festival Choir and the Commonwealth Festival Orchestra.

The Commonwealth Festival Choir

The Commonwealth Festival Choir, conducted by Graham Dinnage, is a joint project between the Bermondsey Harris Academy, the Apollo Youth Choir, and the Purcell School for Young Musicians. It is supported generously by Lord and Lady Harris, and the Gatwick Area Community Trust.

The Commonwealth Festival Orchestra



The Commonwealth Festival Orchestra (CFO), conducted by Dr James Ross, comprises some of the most outstanding young musicians from all over the world. These include members of the Royal College of Music Junior Department and the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, and pupils from Chetham's School of Music, Manchester.

The CFO has performed at every CHOGM since 2007, including the first orchestral concert at Colombo's Nelum Pokuna Theatre in 2013 in partnership with the Symphony Orchestra of Sri Lanka and the Royal Over-Seas League, and at the 2013 Commonwealth Observance.

dancedigital

dancedigital serves as a hub for catalysing creative development and exchange in digital dance practice.

The organisation's national and international programmes seek to expand the potential of performances, choreography, and community engagement.

dancedigital runs a youth programme fostering the dance potential of young people from across Hertfordshire. It is grateful for the support of Hertfordshire's Music Education Hub, which has supported this special project led by Sarah Ndagire, which draws together music and dance elements from both Maltese and Ugandan culture.

Performers

Sarah Ndagire

Born in Uganda, Sarah Ndagire, a London-based singer-songwriter and dancer travels around the world sharing the culture of her homeland, 'the pearl of Africa'. Her work brings out the true soul of an African: the joy, sorrow, pain, determination, intelligence, and perseverance.

The Choir of Westminster Abbey



The Choir of Westminster Abbey is renowned worldwide as one of the finest choirs of its type. Since its establishment as a choral foundation of boys and men in the fourteenth century, it has played a central role both in the daily choral services in the Abbey, and in the many royal, state, and national occasions which take place there. Notable recent events have included services to mark the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War and to celebrate the life and work of Nelson Mandela, both of which were televised nationally.

In addition to fulfilling its liturgical responsibilities, the Choir undertakes a varied programme of broadcasts, recordings, and concerts, both in the United Kingdom and overseas. Recent years have seen visits to Australia, the Far East, Russia, Hungary, Spain, and Italy, and in October 2014 the Choir completed a major tour of the United States. Under the direction of Organist and Master of the Choristers James O'Donnell, the Choir has also released a series of critically acclaimed CDs on the Hyperion label.

The Choir is directed on this occasion by Daniel Cook, Sub-Organist, and the organ is played by Martin Ford, Assistant Organist.

The Soil

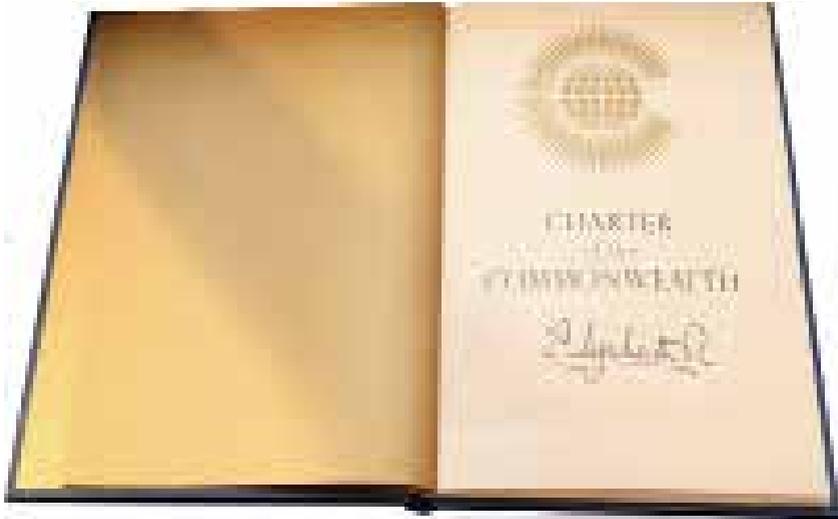


This multi award-winning, three-member a cappella group from Soweto combines a dazzling mix of musical styles including township jazz, hip hop, Afro-Pop and Afro-Soul.

The Soil's music is underpinned by a great rhythmic vocal bass line and beat-boxing (from Luphindo Ngxanga, aka Master P), while the other two singers (Buhlebendalo Mda, aka Buhle, and Ntsika Fana Ngxanga, aka Da FanArtistic) provide the choral and polyphonic top lines.

The Soil has toured the African continent, and internationally to New York, Russia, China and the UK. Both of The Soil's albums—the eponymous debut album and the recently released album titled *Nostalgic Moments*—have gone platinum.

The Commonwealth Charter



In 2013, Her Majesty The Queen, Head of the Commonwealth, signed the Commonwealth Charter.

The Charter brings together the values and aspirations which unite the Commonwealth—democracy, human rights, and the rule of law—in a single, accessible document.

The Charter expresses the commitment of member states to the development of free and democratic societies and the promotion of peace and prosperity to improve the lives of all peoples of the Commonwealth.

The Charter also acknowledges the role of civil society in supporting the goals and values of the Commonwealth.

Behind the Scenes

The Commonwealth Mace



The Mace, carried by Julius James Shirima, Africa Region Winner of the Commonwealth Youth Award 2015, goes before Her Majesty The Queen. It was a gift of the Royal Anniversary Trust to The Queen in

her role as Head of the Commonwealth, on the fortieth anniversary of her accession to the throne.

The Mace is used on special Commonwealth occasions, including the Commonwealth Day celebrations in London, and at biennial Heads of Government Meetings.

Flowers



The striking flowers you see around the Abbey have been prepared by the National Association of Flower Arrangement Societies under the direction of Jane Rowton-Lee.

Flag-bearers

The flag-bearers have been recruited with the support of the High Commissions in London, who each nominate a flag-bearer from their own country usually resident in the United Kingdom. The Commonwealth flag is accompanied by an escort of Brownies from the United Kingdom.

The Council of Commonwealth Societies (CCS)

The CCS is a group of organisations which promotes the value of Commonwealth Day and seeks to raise the profile of the modern Commonwealth. The CCS gratefully acknowledges the financial support of its member organisations:

- Association of Commonwealth Universities
- Commonwealth Countries League
- Commonwealth Education Trust
- Commonwealth Foundation
- Commonwealth Local Government Forum
- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (International Secretariat)
- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (UK)
- Commonwealth Secretariat
- Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation
- Corona Worldwide
- English Speaking Union
- Foreign & Commonwealth Office
- Goodenough College
- Pacific Islands Society
- Royal Commonwealth Society
- Royal Over-Seas League
- Victoria League for Commonwealth Friendship
- West India Committee

With thanks to:



Founded in 1886, the Commonwealth Education Trust advances primary and secondary education across the Commonwealth by working with international partners to undertake research, implement innovative strategies, create high quality resources, and invest in the education sector. Poetry has the power to inspire teachers and make a positive contribution to language and literacy development. The Trust is pleased to have sponsored Sharanya Manivannan to write and perform the poem for today's Observance.



The Commonwealth Games Federation aims to inspire Commonwealth Athletes to drive the ambition and power of all Commonwealth Citizens through sport. In September 2015, our focus moves to 'A Young Commonwealth', as we celebrate the Fifth Commonwealth Youth Games, hosted by Samoa. Following a hugely successful festival of sport and culture in Glasgow in 2014, the next Commonwealth Games takes place in Gold Coast, Australia, in 2018.



The Soil is supported as part of the SA Season in the UK. SA-UK Seasons 2014 & 2015 is a partnership between the South African Department of Arts & Culture and the British Council.



British Airways (BA) is the UK's largest international scheduled airline and one of the world's leading global premium airlines. Operating one of the most extensive international scheduled airline networks, together with codeshare and franchise partners, BA flies to more than 400 destinations worldwide. BA's vision is to be the most admired airline. British Airways is also proud to support communities in the countries in which it operates via its community investment programme.

With thanks to:



Henley Media Group is a specialist publishing and events company. Over the last decade, it has worked with the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Commonwealth Business Council, and the Royal Commonwealth Society to help catalyse trade, investment, and sustainable development across the Commonwealth. Henley Media Group is delighted to assist with printing this Order of Service and to launch *The Ministers Reference Book: Commonwealth 2015*.



The Queen's Young Leaders



The Queen's Young Leaders Programme has been established by The Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust in collaboration with its partners Comic Relief and the Royal Commonwealth Society. In honour of Her Majesty The Queen's lifetime of service to the Commonwealth, the Programme aims to discover, celebrate and support exceptional young people from every Commonwealth nation; those who have transformed their own lives and have the ability to make a positive impact on their communities.

On 07 July 2014, on behalf of Her Majesty The Queen, Their Royal Highnesses The Duke of Cambridge and Prince Harry launched the search for the Commonwealth's Queen's Young Leaders.

The Programme aims to generate new and exciting opportunities for young people to enable them to reach their full potential. We want to see young people step up as leaders and to be empowered to take forward their work to improve the lives of many others within the Commonwealth.

Guided by the values and principles of the Commonwealth Charter, the Programme has two parts:

- Awards will be given to 60 young people aged 18–29 each year for the next four years from all backgrounds, from all walks of life and from all Commonwealth countries. The awards will recognise and celebrate the achievements of a diverse group of young people, and support them to reach their potential and create real change in their lives and in the lives of those around them.
- Grants will be given to organisations in selected Commonwealth countries that can demonstrate they are improving the lives of young people. The grants will enable organisations to help young people to gain access to new skills, employment and enterprise opportunities, and empower young people to participate in decisions affecting their lives.

The first 60 Queen's Young Leaders were announced in January this year, some of whom you will have heard from today.





THE QUEEN'S COMMONWEALTH ESSAY COMPETITION 2015

Run by the Royal Commonwealth Society since 1883, the Commonwealth Essay Competition is the world's largest schools' international writing competition and is open to all young people aged eighteen and under. In 2015, the competition was renamed 'The Queen's Commonwealth Essay Competition', in honour of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's role as both Head of the Commonwealth and Patron of the Royal Commonwealth Society.

The competition gives young people, from diverse backgrounds, a platform to express their views and concerns about the world and important issues like gender inequality, child labour and universal education. Past winners include authors, journalists, politicians and academics, including Lee Hsien Loong, the Prime Minister of Singapore, and writer Elspeth Huxley.

The 2015 competition invites young people to submit essays relating to this year's theme, 'A Young Commonwealth'. The closing date for entries is 1st May 2015. Further information can be found at www.thercs.org/youth.

The Queen's Commonwealth Essay Competition 2015 is run by the Royal Commonwealth Society, in partnership with Cambridge University Press.



THE ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS



THE ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY

The Royal Commonwealth Society (RCS) is a network of individuals and organisations committed to improving the lives and prospects of Commonwealth citizens across the world. Founded in 1868, it is non-partisan, is independent of governments and is supported by public generosity. The Society engages with its youth, civil society, business and governmental networks to address issues that matter to the citizens of the Commonwealth. Its primary focus is the promotion of young people throughout the Commonwealth.

The Royal Commonwealth Society is constituted by Royal Charter and is a registered charity (no 226748) in England and Wales.

Photographs from this event are available from www.picturepartnership.co.uk