

Westminster Abbey



A National Scout Service of
Celebration and Thanksgiving



Friday 23rd February 2024
Noon

HISTORICAL NOTE

Following the death of The Chief Scout of the World, The Lord Baden-Powell OM GCMG GCVO KCB DL, in 1941, a memorial stone was unveiled in Westminster Abbey on 23rd April 1947. From then until 1955, Scouting Headquarters staff and some members held an annual wreathlaying and a small service in the Abbey. In 1957, the centenary of Baden-Powell's birth, the service was attended by members of the Royal Family. In years thereafter it was referred to as a Service of Thanksgiving, and became a much bigger celebration.

From 1959 onwards, the service was held on the nearest Saturday to 22nd February and from 1978, following the death of Lady Baden-Powell GBE the previous year, this annual service changed in style and name to a joint celebration of Thinking Day and Founder's Day. In 1981, a memorial was dedicated to Lord and Lady Baden-Powell in Westminster Abbey. In 2011, the arrangements for the service were reviewed and changed in the light of increasing local opportunities to celebrate these special occasions. The current arrangement nevertheless maintains the tradition of the annual service at Westminster Abbey, now known as the National Scout Service of Celebration and Thanksgiving and focuses on thanking the adult volunteer leaders and supporters for their service and dedication.



WESTMINSTER ABBEY

We cannot say with certainty when Westminster Abbey was founded, but we know that around the year 960, Benedictine monks settled on the marshy north bank of the Thames, in a place called Thorney Island. In the mid 11th century, the Anglo-Saxon King Edward established his palace there and became an enthusiastic patron of the monks. He built an entirely new church for them, which was consecrated on 28th December 1065, and then became the King's own burial place in January 1066. Later that year, William the Conqueror defeated King Harold at the Battle of Hastings and made his way to London. He was crowned in Westminster Abbey on Christmas Day and a further 38 coronations have taken place within the Abbey's walls in the subsequent centuries.

After the canonisation of King Edward as St Edward the Confessor in 1161, the Abbey became a place of pilgrimage. With a royal residence and the principal seat of government alongside it, the monastery developed into one of the most important and influential religious houses in medieval England. In 1245, King Henry III resolved to rebuild the Abbey church in the Gothic style and to provide a magnificent new shrine for the Confessor's remains. After 15 years, the eastern portion of the church, its side chapels, and the two transepts, were complete. Numerous craftsmen worked to decorate the interior with stained glass, paintings, and sculpture of the finest quality. On 13th October 1269, 750 years ago, the church was consecrated, and St Edward's remains were transferred to their new shrine, east of the high altar, where they remain to this day.

After his death in 1272, Henry III's own tomb was placed near to the shrine and was joined in due course by the tombs of several of his successors. Among them was Richard II, under whom construction of the Gothic Abbey resumed in the latter part of the 14th century. Owing to a decision to continue the work in the original architectural style, the whole building has a remarkable unity of design, even though the very west end of the nave was not finally vaulted until the early 1500s. The western towers intended by the medieval masons remained unfinished, barely rising above the level of the vault of the nave, and were only finally completed (to a design of Nicholas Hawksmoor) in 1745.

The early 16th century also saw the construction of the new Lady Chapel of King Henry VII at the Abbey's east end. It was consecrated in 1516, and the fan-vaulted interior is one of the architectural glories of the Abbey. Within its walls are the tombs of Henry VII himself and of Queen Elizabeth I, Mary Queen of Scots, and many other members of the Tudor, Stuart, and Hanoverian royal houses.

The Benedictine monastery was dissolved in 1540. A period of change and uncertainty followed, but in May 1560, Queen Elizabeth I established the Abbey by royal charter as 'the Collegiate Church of St Peter'. The new foundation consisted of a dean and twelve prebendaries (canons), minor canons, and additional lay officers. It was charged with two main duties: to continue the tradition of daily worship (for which a musical foundation of organist, choristers, and singing men was provided) and to maintain a school for the education of forty 'Queen's Scholars'. Abbey and School flourished as a single institution until the Public Schools Act of 1868 made the School independent of the Dean and Chapter (though a close association between the two remains).

The arrival of Arthur Penrhyn Stanley as Dean in 1864 brought new vigour to the Abbey's life. He wrote extensively about its history, gave permission for the burial of national figures such as Dickens and Livingstone, and did much to establish the idea of the Abbey as a place in which every citizen of the nation and Empire had a share. In particular, Stanley saw the nation's history reflected in the Abbey's monuments and memorials. In monastic times, burials in the church were limited to royalty and to a few highly favoured nobles and churchmen. After the Reformation, the side chapels, transepts, and nave began to be filled with tombs and memorials. Today, there are around 600 monuments and memorials, which seem to fill almost every available space. They add to the rich historical and artistic interest of the Abbey, which is now a leading visitor attraction, visited by more than one million people each year.

In the aftermath of the First World War, and particularly with the burial of the Unknown Warrior in November 1920, the Abbey acquired a wider role as the setting for occasions of national celebration or sorrow. Not least among these were coronations with their pomp and pageantry; the weddings of Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother, and of The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh; The Prince and Princess of Wales, and a developing tradition of special services, some of which, such as the Commonwealth Observance and the Battle of Britain Service, are now a regular part of the Abbey's calendar.

This rich and varied mission, firmly rooted in the Abbey's long history but always responding to changing and current needs, continues to place Westminster Abbey at the very centre of the nation's life.

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

The service is conducted by The Very Reverend David Hoyle KCVO MBE, Dean of Westminster.

The service is sung by the Westminster Abbey Special Service Choir, conducted by Andrew Nethsingha, Organist and Master of the Choristers.

The organ is played by Peter Holder, Sub-Organist.

Before the service Carolyn Craig, Organ Scholar, plays

Prelude Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)
in B minor BWV 544i

Andante espressivo Florence Price (1887–1953)
from Organ Sonata no 1

Light in Darkness Kerensa Briggs (b 1991)

First Flight Cecilia McDowall (b 1951)

Scherzetto Percy Whitlock (1903–46)
from Organ Sonata in C minor

Honorary Alderman Frances Blois, representing The Right Worshipful The Lord Mayor of Westminster, Councillor Patricia McAllister, is received. Presentations are made and she is conducted to her seat. All stand and then sit.

ORDER OF SERVICE

All stand. The choir sings the Introit

IF ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may bide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth.

Thomas Tallis (c 1505–85)

John 14: 15–17a

All sing the Hymn, during which the choir and clergy move to their places in Quire and the Sacrarium, and flags are presented at the High Altar



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! 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 440 NEH
Praxis pietatis melica 1668

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

All remain standing. The Very Reverend David Hoyle KCVO MBE, Dean of Westminster, gives the Bidding

WE gather where nation and Commonwealth meet to give thanks for our common life. In this house where oaths are taken and promises made, this house of memory and meaning, we celebrate the life and work of all who are involved with Scouting. We give thanks for the tireless enthusiasm and dedication of volunteers and for the joy and hope we see in young people. We have all been entrusted with great gifts, we pray now that Scouts may have the grace to use those gifts in the service of our common life. May God encourage and sustain all those involved in Scouting, and may they so flourish that they are an encouragement to all around them.

All sit. Ayesha Karim, UK Youth Lead, gives a Testimony

The choir sings the Anthem

CLAP your hands together, all ye people;
O sing unto God with the voice of melody.
For the Lord is high, and to be feared,
he is the great King upon all the earth.
He shall subdue the people under us,
and the nations under our feet.
He shall choose out an heritage for us,
even the worship of Jacob, whom he loved.

God is gone up with a merry noise,
and the Lord with the sound of the trumpet.
O sing praises, sing praises unto our God;
O sing praises, sing praises unto the Lord, our King.
For God is the King of all the earth;
sing ye praises with the understanding.

God reigneth over the heathen;
God sitteth upon his holy seat.
For God, which is highly exalted,
doth defend the earth, as it were with a shield.

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.

Orlando Gibbons (1583–1625)
Organist of Westminster Abbey 1623–25

Psalm 47: 1–8, 9b

Francesca Thackray, Scout, reads the first Reading

LEADERSHIP is the keynote to success - but leadership is difficult to define, and leaders are difficult to find. I have frequently stated that anyone 'can be a commander, and a trained person may often make an instructor; but a leader is more like the poet'.

There are four essential points to look for in a leader:

1. They must have wholehearted faith and belief in the rightness of their cause.
2. They must have a cheery, energetic personality, with sympathy and friendly understanding of their followers.
3. They must have confidence in themselves through knowing their job.
4. What they preach, they must themselves practise.

The essential of leadership might, in telegraphic brevity, be summed up as 'comradeship and competence'.

The Scouter from Outlook
Robert Baden-Powell (1857–1941)

All stand to sing the Hymn



NOW as I start upon my chosen way,
In all I do, my thoughts, my work, my play,
Grant, as I promise, Courage new for me
To be the best, the best that I can be.

Help me to keep my Honour shining bright,
May I be Loyal in the hardest fight.
Let me be able for my Task, and then,
To earn a place among my fellow men.

Open mine eyes to see things as I should,
That I may do my daily turn of good,
Let me be ready, waiting for each need,
To keep me clean in thought, and word and deed.

So as I journey on my chosen way,
In all I do, my thoughts, my work, my play,
Grant, as I promise, Courage new for me
To be the best, the best that I can be.

*The Scout Hymn 16 LC
Ralph Reader*

Ralph Reader (1903–82)

All sit. Luke Paterson, Assistant Beaver Scout Leader, reads the second Reading

WHEN Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:
'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
'Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
'Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.
'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

'Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.
'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.
'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
'You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot. You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

Matthew 5: 1-9; 13-14

Thanks be to God.

The Right Reverend Stephen Lake, Bishop of Salisbury and Vice President of Dorset Scouts, gives the Address

The choir sings the Anthem

THE spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me
to preach the gospel to the poor:
he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted,
to preach deliverance to the captives,
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to preach the acceptable year of the Lord;
to give unto them that mourn a garland for ashes,
the oil of joy for mourning,
the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness,
that they might be called trees of righteousness,
the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.
For as the earth bringeth forth her bud,
and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to
spring forth,
so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise
to spring forth before all the nations;
as the earth bringeth forth her bud.

*from The Apostles Op 49
Edward Elgar (1857-1934)*

Isaiah 61: 1-3, 11

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

In the power of the Spirit, and in union with Christ, let us pray to the Father.

All kneel or remain seated. Saim Raza, Explorer Scout, says

WE give thanks to God for our founder Robert Baden-Powell: for his visionary ambition and dedication towards Scouting, and his commitment to helping young people develop and grow.

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Georgina Horwich, Scout Network Member, says

WE give thanks to God for all who have inspired and encouraged us within the Scouting movement: for those who have been influential in our lives and who have helped us to become the people and leaders we are.

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Saim Raza says

WE give thanks for Scouting around the world: for the joy of friendship between Scouts of different nations; for all that strengthens the bond we share.

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Georgina Horwich says

LET us pray for those parts of the world where there is conflict, persecution and suffering: for greater freedom and understanding; for all serving the cause of peace and justice; for Scouts serving in places of challenge and danger.

Lord, in your mercy

hear our prayer.

Saim Raza says

LET us pray for those who are called to leadership within our movement: for vision, imagination, and inspiration to continue the work of our founder; that they may encourage those committed to their care, and raise up leaders for the future.

Lord, in your mercy

hear our prayer.

Georgina Horwich says

LET us pray that Scouts may continue to be a force for good in this world: that we may always do our best to serve our communities, to care for the earth, to foster cohesion where there is division, to influence change, and build resilience.

Lord, in your mercy

hear our prayer.

The Sacrist concludes

All these our prayers and praises let us now present before our heavenly Father, in the words our Saviour Christ has 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.

Rob Mason, UK Youth Team member, thanks adult volunteers for their service in developing young Scouts

All stand to sing the Hymn



GUIDE me, O thou great Redeemer,
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty;
hold me with thy powerful hand:
Bread of heaven,
feed me till I want no more.

Open now the crystal fountain
whence the healing stream doth flow;
let the fiery cloudy pillar
lead me all my journey through:
strong Deliverer,
be thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,
bid my anxious fears subside;
Death of death, and hell's Destruction,
land me safe on Canaan's side:
songs of praises
I will ever give to thee.

Cwm Rhondda 368 NEH
John Hughes (1873–1932)

Arglwydd, arwain trwy'r anialwch
William Williams (1717–91)
translated by Peter Williams (1727–96) and others

All remain standing. The Scouts, led by Carl UK Chief Volunteer, renew their Promise

The Dean pronounces the Blessing

GO forth into the world in peace; be of good courage; hold fast that which is good; render to no-one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honour all people; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit; 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

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.

All remain standing as the clergy and choir move to the west end of the church

Music after the service

Celebration

Cecilia McDowall (b 1951)

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

The Abbey bells are rung