

Westminster Abbey



A Service

to mark the opening of the Legal Year
in England and Wales

Monday 2nd October 2023

11.30 am

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 Dr David Hoyle MBE, Dean of Westminster.

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

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

Music before the service

*Fantasia Super Komm,
heiliger Geist BWV 651*

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

ORDER OF SERVICE

All stand for the Procession.

All sit when the Lord Chancellor, the Lady Chief Justice, the Heads of Divisions, and the Justices of the Supreme Court have taken their seats.

The remaining members of the procession enter, taking their seats upon reaching their places.

All stand as the clergy and choir move to places in Quire and the Sacrarium.

All remain standing. The choir sings the Introit

FOR the beauty of the earth,
For the beauty of the skies,
For the love which from our birth
Over and around us lies,
*Lord of all, to thee we raise
This our joyful hymn of praise.*

For the beauty of each hour
Of the day and of the night,
Hill and vale and tree and flower,
Sun and moon and stars of light,

For the joy of human love,
Brother, sister, parent, child,
Friends on earth and friends above,
For all gentle thoughts and mild,

For each perfect gift of thine,
To our race so freely given,
Graces human and divine,
Flowers of earth and buds of heaven,
*Lord of all, to thee we raise
This our joyful hymn of praise.*

John Rutter (b 1945)

Folliott Pierpoint (1835–1917)

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

AT the beginning of the legal year, we gather in the presence of almighty God, who is the judge of all and who knows the secrets of our hearts, to renew our commitment to the service of the Crown and to all manner of people that we may, together, do right.

We acknowledge a shared high calling, a common commitment to a justice that all can recognize, done without fear or favour, affection or ill will. So we seek God's strength and guidance that we might remain true to our calling; informed, wise, and just.

We pray for The Right Honourable Alex Chalk KC MP, the Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice, for The Right Honourable Dame Sue Carr, Lady Chief Justice of England and Wales; and for all who make and administer the law, both in the United Kingdom and in the other legal jurisdictions represented here today.

In this holy place we ask God to sustain us in our life and work, to grant us humility and sound judgment, to forgive our errors, and to inspire our service. Through us and in us, may the words of the prophet find fulfilment and justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

Now let us pray for the coming of God's kingdom on earth, saying, as Jesus taught us:

OUR Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

All sit

The Right Honourable Alex Chalk KC MP, Lord Chancellor, and Secretary of State for Justice, reads the First Reading

DOES not wisdom call,
and does not understanding raise her voice?
On the heights, beside the way, at the crossroads she takes her stand;
beside the gates in front of the town,
at the entrance of the portals she cries out:
'To you, O people, I call, and my cry is to all that live.
O simple ones, learn prudence;
acquire intelligence, you who lack it.
Hear, for I will speak noble things,
and from my lips will come what is right;
for my mouth will utter truth;
wickedness is an abomination to my lips.
All the words of my mouth are righteous;
there is nothing twisted or crooked in them.
They are all straight to one who understands
and right to those who find knowledge.
Take my instruction instead of silver,
and knowledge rather than choice gold;
for wisdom is better than jewels,
and all that you may desire cannot compare with her.
I, wisdom, live with prudence,
and I attain knowledge and discretion.
The fear of the Lord is hatred of evil.
Pride and arrogance and the way of evil
and perverted speech I hate.
I have good advice and sound wisdom; I have insight, I have strength.
By me kings reign, and rulers decree what is just;
by me rulers rule,
and nobles, all who govern rightly.
I love those who love me,
and those who seek me diligently find me.'

Proverbs 8: 1–17

Thanks be to God.

The choir sings the Psalm

TEACH me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes :
and I shall keep it unto the end.

Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law :
yea, I shall keep it with my whole heart.

Make me to go in the path of thy commandments :
for therein is my desire.

Incline my heart unto thy testimonies :
and not to covetousness.

O turn away mine eyes, lest they behold vanity :
and quicken thou me in thy way.

O stablish thy word in thy servant :
that I may fear thee.

Take away the rebuke that I am afraid of :
for thy judgements are good.

Behold, my delight is in thy commandments :
O quicken me in thy righteousness.

Let thy loving mercy come also unto me, O Lord :
even thy salvation, according unto thy word.

So shall I make answer unto my blasphemers :
for my trust is in thy word.

O take not the word of thy truth utterly out of my mouth :
for my hope is in thy judgements.

So shall I always keep thy law :
yea, for ever and ever.

And I will walk at liberty :
for I seek thy commandments.

I will speak of thy testimonies also, even before kings :
and will not be ashamed.

And my delight shall be in thy commandments :
which I have loved.

My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have
loved :

and my study shall be in thy statutes.

The Right Honourable Dame Sue Carr DBE, Lady Chief Justice of England and Wales, reads the Second Reading

REJOICE in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

Philippians 4: 4–9

Thanks be to God.

All stand to sing the Hymn



LOVE Divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heaven, to earth come down,
fix in us thy humble dwelling,
all thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesu, thou art all compassion,
pure unbounded love thou art;
visit us with thy salvation,
enter every trembling heart.

Come, almighty to deliver,
let us all thy life receive;
suddenly return, and never,
never more thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
serve thee as thy hosts above,
pray, and praise thee, without ceasing,
glory in thy perfect love.

Finish then thy new creation,
pure and spotless let us be;
let us see thy great salvation,
perfectly restored in thee,
changed from glory into glory
till in heaven we take our place,
till we cast our crowns before thee,
lost in wonder, love, and praise!

Blaenwern 408i NEH
William Rowlands (1860–1937)
arranged by Christopher Robinson (b 1936)

Charles Wesley (1707–88)

All sit

The Reverend Robin Griffith-Jones, Master of the Temple, gives the Address

The choir sings the Anthem

OSING unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvellous things : his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory.

The Lord hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen.

He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.

Sing unto the Lord with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm.

With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the Lord, the King.

Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof : the world, and they that dwell therein.

Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together

Before the Lord; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.

Cecilia McDowall (b 1951)

Psalm 98

The Reverend Mark Birch MVO, Precentor, leads the Prayers

Let us pray.

All kneel or sit

The Reverend Stephen Baxter, Preacher to Gray's Inn, says

LET us pray for this United Kingdom, for its unity, peace, and concord; for Charles our King, and for all members of the Royal Family; for both houses of Parliament, and all who bear responsibility in the ordering of our society; that justice, truth, and integrity may direct our common life.

Lord, in thy mercy

hear our prayer.

The Venerable Sheila Watson, Preacher of Lincoln's Inn, says

LET us remember both the victims of crime and its perpetrators. Let us pray for those held prisoner, whether convicted or on remand, and for communities where there is anxiety and the fear of crime; praying for all that encourages social cohesion, resilience, and the development of virtue.

Lord, in thy mercy

hear our prayer.

The Reverend Mark Hatcher, Reader of the Temple, says

LET us pray for all who administer justice in this realm; for all judges and the tribunals judiciary, magistrates, jurors, and ombudsmen; for clerks and court officials; for barristers, solicitors, chartered legal executives; and all whose profession or expertise is the law. Let us pray for the police, the armed forces, the probation and the prison services, and those who maintain order in our land; that our nation may live in peace and security.

Lord, in thy mercy

hear our prayer.

The Right Reverend John Sherrington, Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster says

LET us pray for our fellow jurisdictions in the United Kingdom, in the nations of the Commonwealth, and the Council of Europe; and for all those who make and administer law in nations and bodies governed by the Rule of Law.

Lord, in thy mercy
hear our prayer.

The Reverend Dr James Hawkey, Canon in Residence, says

OGOD, the just and merciful Judge of all, look down from heaven, we beseech thee, on these thy servants, who are set by thy appointment to minister justice in this land. Grant unto them thy Holy Spirit, the Spirit of uprightness, the Spirit of discernment, and the Spirit of love, that they may boldly, discreetly, and mercifully fulfil their sacred duties, to the good of thy people and the glory of thy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

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 Dean pronounces the Blessing

GOD grant to the living, grace; to the departed, rest; to the Church, The King, the Commonwealth, and all people, peace and concord; and to us sinners, life everlasting; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

All sing the National Anthem

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.

Thy choicest gifts in store
on him be pleased to pour,
long may he reign.
May he defend our laws,
and ever give us cause
to sing with heart and voice:
God save The King

All remain standing as the Procession leaves the church

Music after the service

Celebration

Cecilia McDowall

The bells of the Abbey are rung

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