

Civil Service  
Choir

*Directed by Stephen Hall, OBE*



# Christmas 2023

## Lunchtime Carol Service

*Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> December*

*St Stephen's Church, Rochester Row, Westminster*

*Charity collection for the Cardinal Hume Centre,  
Charity for Civil Servants and St Stephen's Church.  
Please give generously.*

 Cardinal Hume  
**Centre**  
Turning Lives Around

**CHARITY  
FOR CIVIL  
SERVANTS**



Civil Service Choir



@CSChoir



[civilservicechoir.org.uk](http://civilservicechoir.org.uk)

Welcome to this special celebration of Christmas in words and music, organised by the Civil Service Choir. We particularly welcome colleagues from the Christians in Government networks in the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC); the Home Office; the Department for Transport (DfT); and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

This event is the 32<sup>nd</sup> annual staff Carol Service to be held at St Stephen's. We should like to express our gratitude to Revd. Graham Buckle for allowing us to use this fine church once again.

The Civil Service Choir brings together staff from almost all Government Departments and agencies in Westminster. The choir has a membership of over 200 singers and today's service is the choir's 173<sup>rd</sup> performance since it gave its first concert here in St Stephen's in November 2009 with 25 singers.

2023 has been a busy year for the choir. At Easter we performed *Dvorak's Mass in D* with orchestra in St John's Smith Square – a regular concert venue for us. In December 2022 we reached our 150<sup>th</sup> performance and as a belated celebration we gave a summer concert here in St Stephen's, *A Medley of Musical Memories*, comprising some of our favourite lighter pieces performed since the first concert. Our highlight of the year was a jazz extravaganza back at St John's Smith Square, *Celebrating Will Todd Choral Jazz*, with a professional jazz orchestra and soloist and an introduction from composer Will Todd himself. We even had renowned composer John Rutter in the audience! Along the way the choir also sang in this church for several services, at Somerset House on Remembrance Sunday, and a further five performances already this December.

Through its formal concerts and carol services the choir has raised £45,400 for charities.

Many recordings of the choir's previous performances are available on YouTube, including a carol Advent Calendar. Please visit [www.civilservicechoir.org.uk](http://www.civilservicechoir.org.uk) to find out more.

The choir is directed by Stephen Hall OBE, with organist Matthew Warbis.

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Christians in Government UK (CIG UK) is a non-denominational staff network connecting, supporting and representing Christians working in UK national Government. We are passionate about supporting our members to serve Ministers and the public, and to bring the blessing of God to the heart of Government for the benefit of all.

The network has been running Whitehall Christmas and Easter Services and other events for civil servants since 1999, having taken over the role of supporting Christians in the civil service from the Civil Service Christian Union. Having formal recognition from the Cabinet Office to represent and serve civil servants, CIG UK is the umbrella organisation for all Christian networks in UK Government departments. Please visit <https://christiansingovernment.org.uk/> to find out more.

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Catherine Grannum – DLUHC       | <a href="mailto:catherine.grannum@rsh.gov.uk">catherine.grannum@rsh.gov.uk</a>                   |
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**There will be a retiring collection for the Cardinal Hume Centre – a homelessness and poverty charity based on Horseferry Road; the Charity for Civil Servants; and St Stephen's Church.**

**PLEASE GIVE GENEROUSLY**

**Congregational carol. Please stand.**

**ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID'S CITY**

*Words by C. F. Alexander*

*Music by H. J. Gauntlett, harmonised by A. H. Mann, descant by David Willcocks*

**Solo** (Freya Henfrey)

1. 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:**

3. 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.

**Choir only**

2. He came down to earth from Heaven,  
Who is God and Lord of all.  
And his shelter was a stable,  
And his cradle was a stall.  
With the poor and mean and lowly,  
Lived on earth our Saviour Holy.

**All:**

4. 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

**Please sit.**

**The lighting of the advent candle**

**All sing the chorus:**

Christmas is coming  
The Church is glad to sing  
And let the advent candles  
Brightly burn in a ring.

**Bidding Prayer and the Lord's Prayer**

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. 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.

**Reading: The birth of Jesus** St Luke Chapter 2

AND it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. And all went to be taxed, everyone into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judæa, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. This is the word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

**Choir: Hail Blessed Virgin Mary**

*Words translated by G. R. Woodward*

*Traditional Italian carol, arranged by Charles Wood*

**Congregational carol. Please stand.**

**O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM**

*Words by Bishop Phillips Brooks*

*English traditional tune, arranged by Ralph Vaughan-Williams, descant by Thomas Armstrong*

1. O little town of Bethlehem,  
How still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
The silent stars go by.  
Yet in the dark street shineth  
The everlasting Light;  
The hopes and fears of all the years  
Are met in thee tonight.

2. 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 wondering love.

3. How silently, how silently,  
The wondrous Gift is given!  
So God imparts to human hearts  
The blessings of His Heaven.  
No ear may hear His coming;  
But in this world of sin,  
Where meek souls will receive Him, still  
The dear Christ enters in.

4. O holy Child of Bethlehem,  
Descend to us, we pray;  
Cast out our sin and enter in,  
Be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels  
The great glad tidings tell:  
O come to us, abide with us,  
Our Lord Emmanuel!

**Please sit.**

**Reading: *The shepherds go to the manger.* St Luke Chapter 2**

AND there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. This is the word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God**

**Congregational carol. Please stand.**

**WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED**

*Words by Nahum Tate*

*English hymn tune, arranged by Thomas Clark*

1. While shepherds watched their flocks by night,  
All seated on the ground,  
The angel of the Lord came down,  
And glory shone around.

2. "Fear not," said he (for mighty dread  
Had seized their troubled mind);  
"Glad tidings of great joy I bring  
To you and all mankind.

3. "To you in David's town this day  
Is born of David's line  
A Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;  
And this shall be the sign:

4. "The heavenly Babe you there shall find  
To human view displayed,  
All meanly wrapped in swathing bands,  
And in a manger laid."

5. Thus spake the Seraph; and forthwith  
Appeared a shining throng  
Of angels praising God, who thus  
Addressed their joyful song:

6. "All glory be to God on high,  
And to the earth be peace;  
Good-will henceforth from heaven  
to men; Begin and never cease."

**Please sit.**

**Choir: Away In A Manger**

*Words anon.*

*Traditional Normandy tune, arranged by Reginald Jacques*

**Please stand.**

**Reading: St John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation.** St John Chapter 1

IN the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that light but was sent to bear witness of that light. That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only be-gotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. This is the word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

**Please sit.**

**Choir: All My Heart This Night Rejoices**

*Words by Paul Gerhardt, translated by Catherine Winkworth*

*Music by Johann G. Ebeling*

**Address: The Reverend Graham Buckle**

**Congregational carol. Please stand.**

**O COME ALL YE FAITHFUL**

*Translated by F. Oakley and W. T. Brook (and others)*

*Composer unknown (probably 18<sup>th</sup> century), arranged by David Willcocks*

1. 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:

2. God of God,  
Light of Light,  
Lo, he abhors not the Virgin's womb;  
Very God,  
Begotten, not created: **Chorus**

**Chorus:** *O come, let us adore Him,  
O come, let us adore Him,  
O come, let us adore Him,  
Christ the Lord.*

3. Sing, choirs of angels,  
Sing in exultation,  
Sing, all ye citizens of Heaven above!  
Glory to God in the highest: **Chorus**

**Please sit.**

**Choir: Masters In This Hall**

*Words by William Morris*

*French carol, arranged by Edmund Sedding*

**Please stand for the Blessing.**

**Congregational carol. Please remain standing.**

**HARK THE HERALD ANGELS SING**

*Words by C. Wesley, T. Whitfield, M. Madan (and others)*

*Music by Felix Mendelssohn, descant by David Willcocks*

1. Hark the Herald angels sing  
"Glory to the new born King,  
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled!"  
Joyful all ye nations rise,  
Join the triumph of the skies;  
With th'angelic host proclaim,  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the new born King!"

2. 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.  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the new born King!"

3. 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 us second birth.  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the new born King!"

There will be a retiring collection for the **Cardinal Hume Centre – a homelessness and poverty charity based on Horseferry Road; the Charity for Civil Servants; and St Stephen’s Church.**

**PLEASE GIVE GENEROUSLY**

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Our principal charity is the **Cardinal Hume Centre** – turning lives around to overcome poverty and homelessness – which provides remarkable support to young and other vulnerable people just a short walk from St Stephen’s.

[www.cardinalhumecentre.org.uk](http://www.cardinalhumecentre.org.uk)

**We are also proud to support St Stephen’s Church – the upkeep of this fine building, and the work it supports in this parish and further afield.**



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We are funded by donations from civil servants.

[www.cfcs.org.uk](http://www.cfcs.org.uk)

SPARTA – the Sports and Recreational Association of The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and the Department for Transport

We would like to thank SPARTA for all the support it provides to the choir.



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## **Upcoming performances by the Civil Service Choir**

***Brahms – Ein Deutsches Requiem | 7pm, Sun 17th Mar | St John’s Smith Square***

*An evening choral concert with the Kensington Philharmonic Orchestra.*

***Schubert Mass in G and Haydn’s Little Organ Mass | 1.05pm, Tue 26th Mar***

*St John’s Smith Square Easter Festival – free lunchtime concert*

