

Civil Service Choir

Directed by Stephen Hall, OBE

*"This choir is one of the
best I've ever heard."*

- Jools Holland



The Mystery of Winter

28th November 2024
St Stephen's Rochester Row

Director Stephen Hall, OBE
Leader Christian Halstead
Organ Stella Kremer
Piano Matthew Reed



 Cardinal Hume
Centre
Each Person Matters

**CHARITY
FOR CIVIL
SERVANTS**



 Civil Service Choir

 @CSChoir

 civilservicechoir.org.uk

Welcome

Welcome to our concert, *The Mystery of Winter*.

We are delighted to be performing at St Stephen's Rochester Row on what is – almost to the day – the choir's 15th birthday. We first rehearsed in September 2009 in an office basement with just 4 people. On 24 November 2009, our choir of 25 gave its debut concert here – *First Flight (from Mozart to the Hippopotamus Song)*.

Since 2009 we have given 186 performances large and small, including 52 formal concerts. St Stephen's has continued to be one of our principal venues, where we have given concerts, sung in church services, and where we hold our annual carol service - this year at 1pm on Tuesday 17 December (no tickets required). We are most grateful to Revd. Buckle and all at St Stephen's for their support over the years and for hosting us once again.

It has been quite a journey since that first concert 15 years ago. We are proud to have grown and established ourselves as a choir of note – Jools Holland described us as one of the best choirs he had ever heard! As well as singing at Civil Service events and ceremonies, we have been invited to collaborate with other prominent orchestras and choirs, participated in music festivals and performed in prestigious venues such as Smith Square Hall, Westminster Abbey, St Martin-in-the-Fields, and even abroad, in Bruges and Normandy.

As well as making music, the choir has always been dedicated to charity fundraising by various means, be that charity collections at our free concerts or donations of ticket proceeds, such as from our summer concert, which alone raised £3,300. In all we have raised over £50,000 for charities since 2009.

Tonight, we hope to raise lots of money through your donations for refreshments. We are delighted to be supporting a poverty and homelessness charity, the Cardinal Hume Centre; the Charity for Civil Servants, and St Stephen's. Please give generously.



Stephen Hall
Music Director of the Civil Service Choir

St Stephen's is a non-smoking venue. Fire exits are by the west and front doors.

Programme

Joseph Haydn – *Missa Sancti Nicolai (St Nicholas Mass)*

Choir, string orchestra and organ

Please refrain from applauding between movements.

Interval – 20 minutes

A selection of wines, juices and soft drinks is available free of charge, with charity donations welcome, supporting the Charity for Civil Servants, The Cardinal Hume Centre and St Stephen's Church.

Ola Gjeilo – *Serenity*

Chamber choir & solo violin

Ola Gjeilo – *The Rose*

Chamber choir, string quartet & piano

Jan Sandström – *Es ist ein Ros entsprungen*

Unaccompanied chamber choir

Edward Elgar – *Serenade for Strings*

String orchestra

Edward Elgar – *The Snow*

Choir, solo strings & piano

Benjamin Britten – *A Hymn to the Virgin*

Unaccompanied choir

Herbert Howells – *A Spotless Rose*

Unaccompanied choir

Morten Lauridsen – *O Magnum Mysterium*

Unaccompanied choir

Joseph Haydn – St Nicholas Mass

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732 – 1809) was born in Rohrau, Austria, to Matthias, a wheelwright, and to Maria, a cook. Although his parents could not read music, his father was a self-taught harpist and folk musician. Haydn's ability manifested itself from an early age. Following an apprenticeship with a relative, Matthias Frankh, and stints as a music teacher and street serenader, in 1752 Haydn became valet-accompanist to the Italian composer Nicola Porpora, from whom he learned "the true fundamentals of composition". Haydn spent almost 30 years of his career as court musician for the Esterházy family at their castle. His enormous output includes 104 symphonies and 14 masses.

The *Missa Sancti Nicolai* (St Nicholas Mass, No. 6 in G Major), a traditional Latin Mass setting, is likely to have been written to celebrate the name day of Prince Nicolaus Esterházy on 6th December 1772. The original parts of Haydn's music are still preserved in the Esterházy archives at Eisenstadt Castle. At that time, Haydn had not fully written out the *Dona nobis pacem* section of the Agnus Dei. It is thought that the composer finally completed this section much later, around 1795-1800, as evidenced by the parts found in the Eisenstadt collection.

Kyrie eleison

Kyrie, eleison. Kyrie, eleison.
Christe, eleison. Christe, eleison.
Kyrie, eleison. Kyrie, eleison.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Gloria

Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra pax
hominibus bonae voluntatis.
Laudamus te, benedicimus te,
Adoramus te, glorificamus te.
Gratias agimus tibi
Propter magnam gloriam tuam.
Domine Deus, Rex coelestis,
Deus Pater omnipotens.
Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe.
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris.
Qui tollis peccata mundi,
Miserere nobis.
Qui tollis peccata mundi,
Suscipe deprecationem nostram.
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,

Glory to God in the highest, and peace
on earth to men of good will.
We praise You, we bless You,
We worship You, we glorify You.
We give You thanks
for Your great glory.
Lord God, King of Heaven,
God the Father Almighty.
Lord only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ.
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father.
You who take away the sin of the world,
Have mercy on us.
You who take away the sin of the world,
Hear our prayer.
You who sit at the right hand of the Father,

miserere nobis. Quoniam tu solus sanctus, tu solus Dominus, tu solus altissimus, cum Sancto Spiritu in gloria Dei Patris, Amen.

Credo

Credo in unum Deum, Patrem omnipotentem, factorem coeli et terrae, visibilium omnium et invisibilium. In unum Dominum Jesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum, ex patre natum ante omnia saecula, Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero. Genitum non factum, consubstantialem Patri; per quem omnia facta sunt. Qui propter nos homines et nostram salutem descendit de coelis. Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto, ex Maria Virgine; et homo factus est. Crucifixus etiam pro nobis sub Pontio Pilato, passus et sepultus est. Et resurrexit tertia die secundum Scripturas, et ascendit in coelum, sedet ad dexteram Patris, et iterum venturus est cum gloria, judicare vivos et mortuos, cujus regni non erit finis. Credo, credo in Spiritum Sanctum Dominum, et vivificantem, qui ex Patre Filio procedit, qui cum Patre et Filio simul adoratur, et conglorificatur, qui locutus est per Prophetas. Confiteor unum baptisma in remissionem peccatorum, mortuorum, et vitam venturi saeculi. Amen.

Sanctus

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth: pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua. Hosanna in excelsis.

have mercy on us. For You alone are holy, You alone are Lord, You alone are the Most High, with the Holy Spirit in the glory of God the Father, Amen.

I believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. In one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father; through Him all things were made. For us and our salvation He came down from heaven: By the power of the Holy Spirit He became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate; He suffered death and was buried. On the third day He rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father; He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and His kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son; with the Father and the Son He is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. I acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins; of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts: heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Benedictus

Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.
Hosanna in excelsis.

Blessed is he who comes in the name
of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Agnus Dei

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona nobis pacem.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins
of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins
of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins
of the world, grant us peace.

Ola Gjeilo

Ola Gjeilo (born 1978) is a Norwegian composer and pianist, who studied composition at the Norwegian Academy of Music, the Julliard School (New York) and the Royal College of Music. He has lived in the United States since 2001 and has received worldwide attention for his choral music. Among his major works are *Sunrise Mass*, *Dreamweaver*, *The Dark and Luminous Night of the Soul* and *Winter Songs*. He is currently composer-in-residence with DCINY (Distinguished Concerts International New York) and Albany Pro Musica.

Serenity (O Magnum Mysterium)

Of *Serenity*, Gjeilo says that he wanted to write music that has “a symphonic, abundant feel....I love a warm, lush sound that can give a feeling of space and evocativeness, but still be intimate, somehow.” The text is from a Gregorian chant from the fifth responsory of nine for Vigil on Christmas Day. It relates the scene of the nativity of Jesus in the manger next to the oxen and donkey.

Latin text

O magnum mysterium,
et admirabile sacramentum,
ut animalia viderent Dominum natum,
iacentem in praesepio!

O beata virgo, cuius viscera
meruerunt portare
Dominum Iesum Christum.

Alleluia!

English translation

O great mystery,
and wonderful sacrament,
that animals should see the new born Lord,
lying in a manger!

O blessed virgin, whose womb
was worthy to bear
the Lord Jesus Christ.

Alleluia!

The Rose

Gjeilo's composition sets Christina Rossetti's famous poem for mixed chorus, piano and string quartet, and is part of a collection entitled *Winter Songs*.

The Rose

The lily has a smooth stalk,
Will never hurt your hand;
But the rose upon her brier
Is lady of the land.

There's sweetness in an apple tree,
And profit in the corn;
But lady of all beauty
Is a rose upon a thorn.

When with moss and honey
She tips her bending brier,
And half unfolds her glowing heart,
She sets the world on fire.

Jan Sandström – Es ist ein Ros entsprungen

Jan Sandström (born 1954) was born in Vilhelmina, Sweden, and grew up in Stockholm. He studied at the Luleå University of Technology's Piteå School of Music and the Royal College of Music, Stockholm with Pär Lindgren, Gunnar Bucht and Brian Ferneyhough. He was appointed professor of composition at the Piteå School of Music in 1989. Notable compositions include the *Motorbike Concerto* of 1989, a *Rekviem* (Requiem) of 2008 and a ballet entitled *the Tale of a Manor*, composed in 2009.

Composed in 1990, Sandström based this a cappella piece on Praetorius' famous Christmas carol of the same name. The ensemble is divided into two choirs, with Choir I singing the original Praetorius and Choir II humming throughout, with ethereal effect. The original carol has two verses, but the composer uses only the first verse in his setting. This evening it is sung in German. The translation coincides with the English text of the first verse in Howells' *A Spotless Rose*, which also features in tonight's programme.

German text

Es ist ein Ros entsprungen,
aus einer Wurzel zart,
wie uns die Alten sungen,
von Jesse kam die Art
Und hat ein Blümlein bracht
mitten im kalten Winter,
wohl zu der halben Nacht.

English translation

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

Edward Elgar

Sir Edward Elgar (1857-1934) was born near Worcester, the fourth of seven children. His father, William, was a violinist and organist, and worked as a piano tuner and proprietor of a music shop. Edward received piano and violin lessons from the age of eight, but much of his musical education was from library books and Hubert Parry's articles in the *Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. Following a brief stint as a solicitor's clerk, Elgar became focussed on a musical career, making frequent public appearances as a violinist and organist. In the 1890s Elgar began to establish himself as a composer. The *Serenade for Strings* is from this decade, as is the piece that secured his growing reputation, the *Enigma Variations*. In 1900, he wrote his choral masterpiece, *The Dream of Gerontius*.

Serenade for Strings in E minor

One of Elgar's most popular works, the *Serenade for Strings* was written in 1892 and first given a private performance in the same year by the Worcester Ladies' Orchestral Class. It received its first public performance in 1896, in Antwerp, Belgium, followed by the British public premiere in 1899. The piece is dedicated to the organ builder Edward W. Whinfield, who had given Elgar encouragement in his early years. It is in three movements, *Allegro piacevole*, *Larghetto* and *Allegretto*.

The Snow (arr. John Pointer)

This piece is set to words by Elgar's wife, Caroline Alice Elgar (1848-1920). It was originally scored for three-part women's chorus, 2 violins and piano. This evening we use the four-part mixed chorus arrangement by John Pointer.

O snow, which sinks so light,
Brown earth is hid from sight
O soul, be thou as white as snow,
O snow, which falls so slow,
Dear earth quite warm below;
O heart, so keep thy glow
Beneath the snow.

O snow, in thy soft grave
Sad flow'rs the winter brave;
O heart, so soothe and save, as does the snow.
The snow must melt, must go,
Fast, fast as water flow.
Not thus, my soul, O sow
Thy gifts to fade like snow.

O snow, thou'rt white no more,
Thy sparkling too, is o'er;
O soul, be as before,
Was bright the snow.
Then as the snow all pure,
O heart be, but endure;
Through all the years full sure,
Not as the snow.

Benjamin Britten – A Hymn to the Virgin

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976) was born in Lowestoft, Suffolk, to Robert, a dentist, and Edith, a talented amateur musician. Benjamin displayed outstanding musical abilities from an early age and made his first attempts at composition aged five and went on to become an outstanding pianist after studying with his mother from age seven. He also played the viola from the age of ten. Britten studied at the Royal College of Music in London, as well as privately with the composer Frank Bridge. His output included 15 operas, among them, *Peter Grimes*, *Billy Budd* and *The Turn of the Screw*. The *War Requiem*, written to mark the consecration of the new Coventry Cathedral, built after the original 14th Century construction was destroyed during World War II, was completed in 1962. Along with the singer Peter Pears and librettist and producer Eric Crozier, Britten founded the Aldeburgh Festival in 1948 and was also responsible for creating the Snape Maltings Concert Hall. Britten wrote a wide range of orchestral, choral, chamber and instrumental music, and delighted in writing for amateurs and children, notably the opera, *Noye's Fludde*.

Although *A Hymn to the Virgin* was written in 1930, when Britten was just 16 years old, it conveys the mystery of the text in a remarkably mature and nuanced fashion. The choir is split into two groups, each taking it in turns to sing a phrase in antiphonal fashion, firstly in English, and then in Latin. The text comes from an anonymous poet, written around the year 1300.

Of one who is so fair and bright
Velut maris stella, [Like a star of the sea]
Brighter than the day is light,
Parens et puella: [mother and maiden]
I cry to thee, thou see to me,
Lady, pray thy Son for me,
Tam pia, [so pure]
That I may come to thee.
Maria! [Mary]

All this world was forlorn,
Eva peccatrice, [because of Eve, a sinner]
Till our Lord was yborn,
De te genetrix. [through you, his mother]
With ave it went away,
Darkest night, and comes the day
Salutis; [of salvation]
The well springeth out of thee.
Virtutis. [of virtue]

Lady, flower of everything,
Rosa sine spina, [Rose without thorn]
Thou bare Jesu, heaven's king,
Gratia divina: [by divine grace]
Of all thou bear'st the prize,
Lady, queen of paradise
Electa: [chosen]
Maid mild, mother
es effecta. [you are made]

Herbert Howells – A Spotless Rose

Herbert Howells (1892-1983) was born in Lydney, Gloucestershire. His father, Oliver, was a builder by trade, who played the organ at the local Baptist church. Herbert showed early musical ability and often deputised for his father. In 1908, Howells was apprenticed to Herbert Brewer, organist of Gloucester Cathedral. In 1910, Howells became acquainted with Ralph Vaughan Williams at the Gloucester Three Choirs Festival, where he heard the older composer's *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis*. This encounter engendered in Howells a fascination in Tudor music, which, along with the music of Vaughan Williams, had a deep influence on him. Howells went on to study at the Royal College of Music (RCM) where his teachers were Charles Villiers Stanford, Hubert Parry and Charles Wood. He joined the teaching staff at RCM in 1920, where he remained until 1979. A significant part of Howells' output is for the Church. Among these works, was the highly regarded set of pieces known as *Collegium Regale*. One of his finest works, *Hymnus Paradisi*, was written in response to his son Michael's tragic death from polio in 1935. It received its first performance in 1950. Howells' ashes are interred in Westminster Abbey.

A Spotless Rose was written in 1919 and is one of the Three Carol-Anthems, the others being *Here is the little door* and *Sing Lullaby*. This setting of an anonymous 15th Century poem about Jesus' birth and the purity of Mary is the same poem that is used in the Praetorius/Sandström piece, but on this occasion, Howells uses both verses.

The composer recalls writing the piece in a single sitting "after idly watching some shunting trains from the window of a cottage in Gloucester which overlooked the Midland Railway." Somewhat in contrast to the scene Howells depicted, the second verse contains a glorious baritone solo with a gentle full choir accompaniment. Of the very end of the piece the composer Patrick Hadley wrote: "I should like, when my time comes, to pass away to that magical cadence."

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

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

Morten Lauridsen – O Magnum Mysterium

Before Morten Lauridsen (born 1943) embarked on a musical career, he was a Forest Service firefighter. He was stationed in a remote tower near Mount St. Helens, an active volcano in Skamania County, Washington State.

After attending the Whitman College for two years, Lauridsen studied composition at the University of Southern California (USC). He began teaching at USC in 1967. He was composer-in-residence of the Los Angeles Master Chorale from 1994 to 2001 and in 2007 received the *National Medal of Arts* from the President in a White House Ceremony “for his radiant choral works combining musical beauty, power and spiritual depth that have thrilled audiences worldwide.” Lauridsen is professor emeritus of composition at the USC Thornton School of Music, where he taught for 52 years until his retirement in 2019. Among his major choral works are *Lux Aeterna*, *Sure on this Shining Light* and *Ave Dulcissima Maria*, as well as *O Magnum Mysterium*. Lauridsen references Gregorian chant and Medieval and Renaissance elements in his music, which he imbues with a more modern sensibility.

Lauridsen wrote his 1994 setting of *O Magnum Mysterium* in response to a commission from the Los Angeles Master Chorale. The first performance was given by them on 18th December of that year. The composer said that his inspiration for the piece was a 1633 painting by Zurbarán, *Still Life with Lemons, Oranges and a Rose*, which has been interpreted as symbolising the Virgin Mary. Lauridsen says: “...the objects in this work are symbolic offerings to the Virgin Mary. Her love, purity and chastity are signified by the rose and the cup of water. The lemons are an Easter fruit that, along with the oranges with blossoms, indicate renewed life. The table is a symbolic altar.”

Latin text

O magnum mysterium,
et admirabile sacramentum,
ut animalia viderent Dominum natum,
iacentem in praesepio!

O beata virgo, cuius viscera
meruerunt portare
Dominum Iesum Christum.

Alleluia!

English translation

O great mystery,
and wonderful sacrament,
that animals should see the new born Lord,
lying in a manger!

O blessed virgin, whose womb
was worthy to bear
the Lord Jesus Christ.

Alleluia!

Performers

The Civil Service Choir is no ordinary workplace choir: un-auditioned, it boasts nearly 200 members, and a reputation for remarkable performances. The choir has recently established an auditioned chamber choir. The choir continues to fundraise for charities and has raised over £50,000 since being founded in 2009.



Music Director **Stephen Hall, OBE**, founder and chairman of The Civil Service Choir, is a government statistician at Defra. Stephen has honed his conducting skills and choir leadership throughout the choir's 15 years. He sings with several choirs, conducts a local choir, and is involved in amateur theatre as an actor. In 2018, Stephen was appointed an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE) for voluntary and charitable service.



Orchestra leader **Christian Halstead** studied violin at the Royal College of Music, winning several prizes. Since graduating, he has had a busy career on the freelance circuit, appearing with ensembles such as the Royal Northern Sinfonia, the Orpheus Sinfonia and the London Mozart Players. Christian also leads the Kent Sinfonia, the Surrey Opera, The Royal Orchestral Society, the Westminster Philharmonic Orchestra and The Whitehall Orchestra.

Organist **Stella Kremer** studied the organ under Gareth Green before gaining an organ scholarship to University College, Oxford (Univ). At Oxford she performed on tours in Prague, Florence and Paris and appeared on two recordings with the University Chapel Choir. She was the accompanist for the Civil Service Choir 2019-2023 and now sings with Hesperos, a London-based chamber choir.

Pianist **Matthew Reed** joined the Civil Service Choir in 2018 and has sung in and played for various choirs for as long as he can remember. He also plays for his local church in East London.

Choir

Sopranos: Topaz Amooore, Helen Baker, Kate Bennett, Izzy Bowen, Lee-Anne Browne, Lucia Carini, Elizabeth Chrominska, Stephanie Clackworthy, *Abi Coskun**, Moira Costello, Martina Di Fonzo, Lisa Fitzpatrick, Carolyn Foxall, Daria Gromyko, Rosemary Hadfield, Jennie Hall, Rosemary Harvey, Freya Henfrey, Beverley Howes, Jacqueline Jowett, Kate Lorimer, Gill McManus, Mary Ngei, Kate Nicholls, Natasha Peters, Jennie Pick, Georgie Salzedo, Christine Solway, Iulia Turiac, Pippa Vanderplank, Tricia Vincent, Helen Weir, Maisie Williams, Megan Williams.

Altos: Lois Clement, Elspeth Coke, Sally Donaghey, Loretta D'Silva, Alice Ertl, Nicola Fosker, Maria Freeman, Laura Gibbs, Klaudia Grochot-Fraser, Sue Harling, Jane Houghton, Bethan MacDonald, Clare MacIntosh, Sharon Maddix, Hannah McNaught, Eileen Mortby, Alex Moyler, Felicity Newall, Eden Portman, Alisoun Probert, Pamela Roberts, Inga Sagolla, Emily Sallabank, Kim Sibley, Heather Simpson, Martine Tolmay, Vicky Vale, Hannah Vlcek, Iona Wakely, Imogen Wignall, Rachel Worledge.

Tenors: Robert Bradburne, Phil Earl, Mark Jones, Richard Kwasniewski, Theo Maniura, Tim May, Giles Ordon, Michael Richardson, Peter Swift, Gordon Woods, Matthew Yau.

Basses: Chris Bailey, Richard Barrett, Alejandro Basilio, Nick Boorer, Ian Rutland Boughton, David Freeman, Matthew Holt, Kevin Lei, *Chris Mason-Thom**, Steve Railton, Alexander Rees, Mark Rothen, Matt Sayles, Connor Spence, Jonathan Tillson.

**Vocal soloists (Haydn 'Gratias' soprano solo; Howells baritone solo)*

Orchestra

Violin I

Christian Halstead
Stephen Brown
Alison Collins
Francis Dickinson

Violin II

Will Clark
Rachel Moyce
Charlotte Town

Viola

Sebastian Brooks
Jeremy Cook
Rosemary Cook

Cello

Alison Holford
Chris Terepin

Double Bass

Susan Moss

Fundraising

This evening's donations for refreshments will go to support three charities.

The Charity for Civil Servants

The Charity for Civil Servants supports current, former and retired civil servants when they face tough times. From mental health struggles and financial assistance to relationship issues, getting through grief, and coping with disability, this charity helps people stay strong, whatever life brings.

Set up in 1886 as a benevolent society to support the widows and orphans of civil servants, the charity has supported civil servants for generations, providing an umbrella of support when it's needed.

The Cardinal Hume Centre

The Cardinal Hume Centre is a Westminster-based charity supporting families and young people facing poverty and homelessness by helping them to thrive.

They provide tailored advice and support to prevent the root causes of poverty at a young age, to break its cycle into later life.

Many families, young people and vulnerable individuals live in poverty and need support. Each year, this charity helps over 1,100 people to reduce their risk of homelessness.

St Stephen with St John Westminster

St Stephen's is a welcoming and diverse community rooted in faith, worship, and service. Worship at St Stephen's is a space to encounter God, explore life's questions, and celebrate the joys and challenges of faith. Rooted in worship and service, it celebrates the Christian journey while embracing people at all stages of faith.

As a community hub, St Stephen's opens its doors to groups like the Evergreen Club for over 50s, baby and toddler groups, and various support initiatives. The church's mission extends beyond its doors, fostering love and service in the wider world. With openness and a spirit of inclusion, St Stephen's offers a home where everyone is valued, and all are invited to grow in their relationship with God.

Civil Service Choir

Directed by Stephen Hall, OBE



Christmas 2024

Lunchtime Carol Service



Tuesday 17th December, 1pm

St Stephen's Church, Rochester Row, Westminster

Charity collection for the Cardinal Hume Centre, Charity for Civil Servants and St Stephen's with St John – please give generously.

Live-stream at  **St Stephen's Westminster**


The service is not ticketed.

 **Cardinal Hume
Centre**
Each Person Matters

**CHARITY
FOR CIVIL
SERVANTS**

 Civil Service Choir

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 civilservicechoir.org.uk

Upcoming performances

This Christmas

- **17 December:** Lunchtime carol service, St Stephen's, Rochester Row
- **18 December:** Whitehall carol service, Emmanuel Centre, Westminster

For more information and links to live streams, visit civilservicechoir.org.uk

Spring 2025

- **30 March, 7pm: Mozart Requiem** – an evening concert at Smith Square Hall, celebrating one of Mozart's best-known works and featuring Mozart's *Ave Verum Corpus in D major* and *Vesperae Solennes de confessore in C major*.
- **15 April, 1.05pm: Choral Reflections for Easter** - a lunchtime concert at Smith Square Hall, performing Pergolesi's *O Sacrum Convivium*, a setting of *Stabat Mater* by František Tůma and Gounod's *Troisieme Messe Solennelle de Pâques* as part of the Sinfonia Smith Square Easter Festival.

Tickets for both concerts will be available from sinfoniasmithsq.org.uk

Acknowledgements

The Civil Service Choir would like to thank SPARTA Recreational Association, our rehearsal accompanists Matthew Reed, Daniel Leung, Patrick Lillie and Molly Scott; our occasional conductors Matthew Warbis, Rob Bradburne, Anna Wardell, Freya Henfrey and Oliver Pilgrim; the Choir Committee; the Reverend Graham Buckle and the team at St Stephen's Church, Rochester Row; the Cardinal Hume Centre, Father John Scott and Westminster Cathedral for use of the Sacred Heart Church for rehearsals, and all others who have supported the choir in putting on this concert.



The Civil Service Choir is proudly supported by SPARTA, the sport and recreational association of the Department for Transport and the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government.