



Westminster Abbey

Christian Life & Worship



Welcome to Westminster Abbey, a working church within the Church of England. Christians have worshipped on this site for over 1,000 years. Everyone is welcome, no matter what they believe.

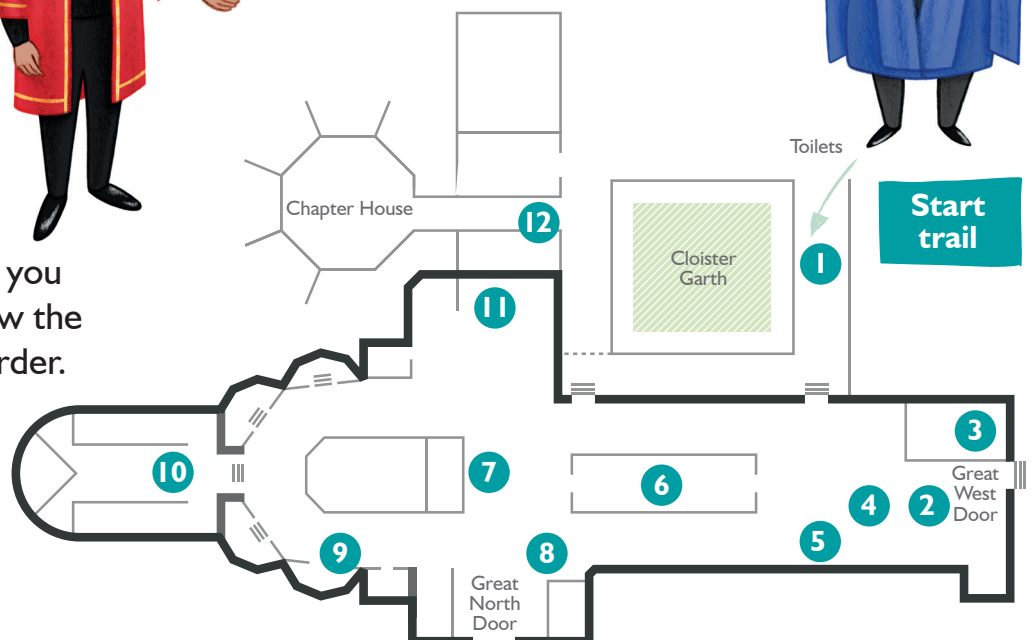
Worship means to show how much something is worth to you. Christians worship God through prayer and music, and by creating special art and beautiful buildings.

Top tip! If you have any questions, feel free to ask an Abbey Marshal or Abbey Guide in a red or blue gown.



Site Map

This map will help guide you around the Abbey. Follow the blue dots in numerical order.





1 The cloisters

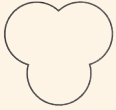
The Abbey is full of shapes with special meanings. You might see some of them in the cloisters.

Can you match the shape to the meaning?



Circle

The Trinity - one God worshipped as three distinct persons (Father, Son and Holy Spirit).



Trefoil

The four Gospels - books in the Bible about the life of Jesus.



Quatrefoil

God is eternal and has no beginning and no end.



See how many other examples you can find as you move around the Abbey.

Enter the Abbey.

2 The nave

The ceiling is very high to encourage people to look upwards and to think about God and heaven. Can you make the same pointed arch shape with your arms?

This part of the Abbey is called the nave (from the Latin word *navis*, meaning boat) because it looks like an upside-down boat. A boat was an ancient symbol of the Christian church.



How does this space make you feel?

Write down two or three words.

In the past, most people couldn't read, so colourful picture windows became important. These stained-glass windows reminded people of stories in the Bible.



Discuss: Can you think of any other reasons why coloured glass might have been used?

3 The Coronation Chair and Richard II portrait

Kings and queens are always crowned at Westminster Abbey. Here you can see the special chair used at coronations and a portrait of King Richard II on his coronation day.

Coronations are Christian ceremonies, and the monarch is the head of the Church of England.

Discuss: What clue in the portrait tells us that a coronation is a Christian ceremony?





4 Unknown Warrior



Do you recognise the red flowers? What do they make you think of?

Over 3,000 people are buried at the Abbey. This is the grave of a soldier who fought for Britain in the First World War. He represents the sacrifice of all who die in battle.

Look at the last sentence on his grave. Fill in the missing word:
IN CHRIST SHALL ALL BE MADE...

Christians believe that Jesus died as a sacrifice. He offered his life so that all people could be saved and have everlasting life.

5 Candles

Light is an important symbol in Christianity, as well as many other religions.

In the Bible, Jesus says, 'I am the Light of the World.'
Discuss: What might he have meant by this?



Candles are often lit in churches to mark special events (happy or sad) or as part of prayer.

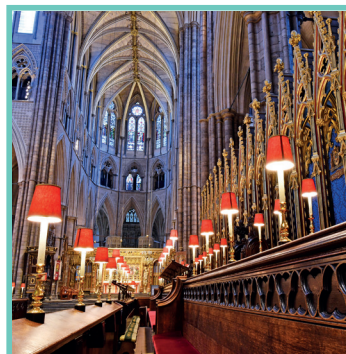
You are welcome to light a candle, with your adult's permission. You might want to have a quiet moment to pray or think about someone special to you.

Make your way to the golden screen and walk through.

6 The quire

This area is called the quire (another way of spelling 'choir'). Westminster Abbey has its own choir, made up of children aged 8-13 years. Singing is a very important part of Christian worship.

Discuss: Do you like singing? What is your favourite song?



Can you spot the large organ that sometimes accompanies them?
Clue: Look up for the grey pipes!

Colours are used to remind Christians of important ideas. Tick off each colour as you find it.

- Blue - heaven
- Gold - God
- Red - royalty



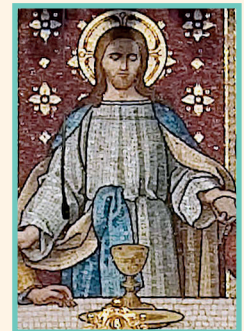
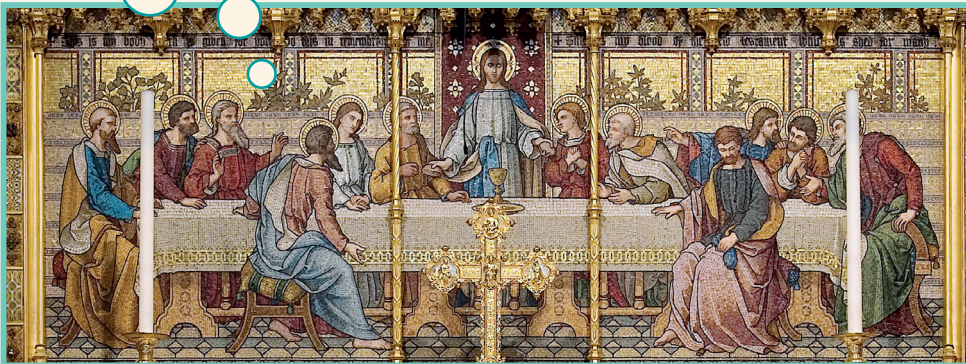
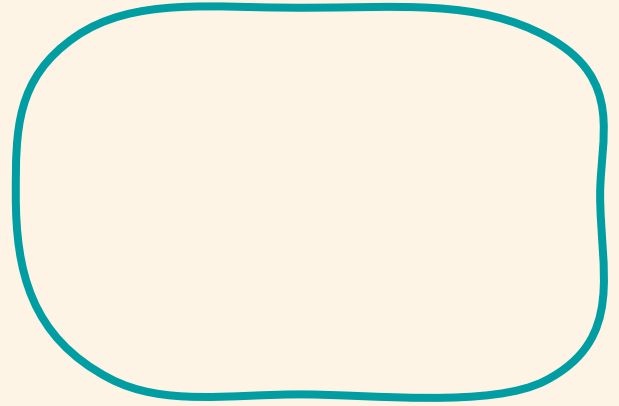
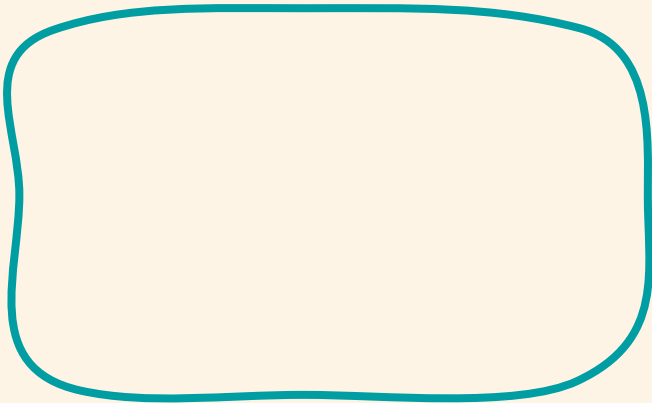


7 The high altar

Look for the image of the Last Supper on the golden wall. On the night before he died, Jesus had a special meal with his friends where he asked them to eat bread and drink wine to remember him.

How might his friends have felt? How might Jesus have felt?

Write your ideas in the thought bubbles.



Can you spot that the Abbey is built in the shape of a cross? *Clue: Look up!*

One of the most important Christian beliefs is that Jesus died on a cross so that everyone could be saved. Christians remember Jesus' sacrifice and his Last Supper by eating bread and drinking wine during Holy Communion.

Holy Communion is a **sacrament** where people receive God's special blessing. It is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.

Can you find the:

- Altar** - a special table used during Holy Communion.
- Lectern** - the Bible is read from here.
- Pulpit** - the priest speaks from here.

The high altar is also where services such as weddings, funerals and coronations take place.





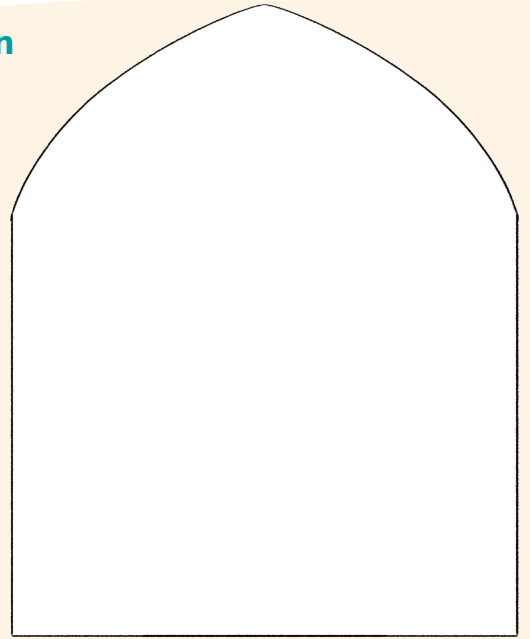
8 The Queen's Window

Christians often decorate churches with beautiful art as an expression of their faith. This includes statues, paintings and stained-glass windows. Look around and choose your favourite stained-glass window.

Can you spot the large, round ones? These are called rose windows.

This modern window shows the beauty of nature. It was designed by the artist David Hockney.

Design your own special window here.



9 St Edward's Shrine

This area is closed to the general public because it's very fragile. However, prayers are offered here several times a day. See if you can spot the shrine through the gap.

King Edward the Confessor built Westminster Abbey and was buried here. Later he was made a saint and, because of this, the Abbey became a place of Christian pilgrimage.



A saint - someone holy and close to God.

A pilgrimage - a special journey to a place of religious importance.

Discuss: Have you ever been on a pilgrimage or made a special journey to somewhere important to you?

10 The Lady Chapel

Which 'lady' in the Bible do you think the Lady Chapel is named after? *Clue: Look at the painting on the altar.*

Look for the carved, wooden font by the entrance. The font is used for baptisms and is filled with water which has been blessed. A baptism is also a **sacrament**.



Baptism - a ceremony in which someone is welcomed into the Christian faith. With some baptisms, the priest pours water over a person's head three times, to represent the Trinity.

Discuss: Why do you think the font might be placed near the entrance?

Don't forget to look up at the beautiful ceiling! It was designed to look like heaven.





11 Poets' Corner

The two large wall paintings are over 700 years old. They show St Thomas and St Christopher.

Look at the painting of St Thomas.



Christians have **faith**: they believe in Jesus even though they can't see him physically. Is there anything you believe in that you can't see?

The Bible tells us that Thomas would not believe that Jesus had really come back to life until he had seen him with his own eyes. Jesus invited Thomas to touch him to prove he was really alive.



12 The cloisters

Return to the cloisters.

If you have time at the end of your visit, why not sit for a while on one of the old stone benches and reflect on your visit?

- **What did you learn?**
- **Share your favourite bit about your visit.**
- **Sketch some shapes you can see.**

Use this space to make notes and sketches.



We hope you have enjoyed your visit to Westminster Abbey today!