



## **Royal Carols: Together at Christmas Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2024**

### **A Reflection by the Very Reverend Dr David Hoyle, Dean of Westminster**

What does Christmas look like? The pictures in our heads are Christmas trees and crowded rooms, food, smiling faces. Is that what Christmas looks like? Ask the question again, here and now, 'What does Christmas look like?' The answer is that Christmas looks a lot like love. It's exactly what the poet Christina Rossetti said in 1885,

Love came down at Christmas,

Christmas is the love of God lying in a manger. In a letter, given out in the Abbey tonight - and to guests at fifteen community carol services around the UK - Her Royal Highness describes love as the greatest gift we can receive. Love sustains us when times are hard, love is light in the darkness. Christmas looks like love.

Christmas - the baby born in Bethlehem - is God with us, God one of us. Not a God far off, to be feared. Not a God to be obeyed. A God here, who loves, and who can be loved. Christmas looks like love.

Around us are stories of war, the politics of power and wealth. The Christmas story, though, is just life and love. Light in the darkness. God's glory.

Christina Rossetti was right,

Love came down at Christmas...

Love shall be our token,  
Love be yours and love be mine

We are offered life and love. Christmas looks like love.

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