

**The Right Reverend Nicholas Holtam,
The Bishop of Salisbury**

Dear Bishop Nicholas,

We write as members of Salisbury CND to ask for your support in opposing plans to host a thanksgiving service for Britain's nuclear weapons system at Westminster Abbey.

The Royal Navy will host a National Service of Thanksgiving to mark 50 years of the Continuous at Sea Deterrent (CASD) on the 3rd of May (1) (2). New CASD Dreadnought submarines are currently being constructed as part of a £205 billion (3) Trident replacement scheme.

We agree with Kate Hudson, CND general secretary, who said:

“It’s morally repugnant that a service of thanksgiving for Britain’s nuclear weapons system is due to be held at Westminster Abbey. This sends out a terrible message to the world about our country. It says that here in Britain we celebrate weapons – in a place of worship – that can kill millions of people.

“If the Defence Secretary doesn’t cancel this service, we call on the Church authorities to step in to stop it.

“CND will hold protests at Westminster Abbey on the day of the service, if this celebration of nuclear weapons goes ahead.”

We would argue that the decision to host the thanksgiving service in Westminster Abbey is contrary to Church of England's stated policy.

In July 2018, the General Synod passed a motion which states “nuclear weapons, through their indiscriminate and destructive potential, present a distinct category of weaponry that requires Christians to work tirelessly for their elimination across the world.” (5)

We hope that you will share our grave concerns about the prospect of the Church of England being drawn into a service that appears so at odds with its stated policy.

We would appeal to you to use whatever influence you have within the Church of England to prevent this service taking place.

Yours sincerely,

Caroline Lanyon,
Peter Gloyns,
Peter Hugall

On behalf of Salisbury CND

Notes

- 1. [Invitation to CASD service at Westminster Abbey](#)
- 2. [Royal Navy press release](#)
- 3. [Cost of Trident](#)
- 4. [Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson statement on CASD commemoration \(Hansard\)](#)
- 5. [The Ethics of Nuclear Weapons – General Synod of the Church of England – Sunday 8 July 2018](#)