

of the Nativity seen in stained glass windows

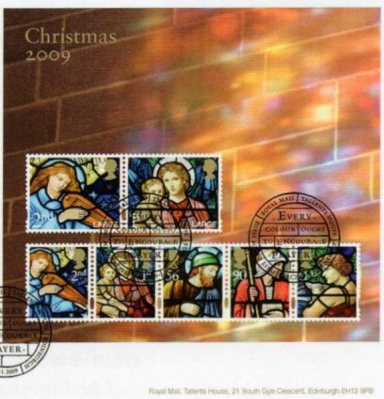


In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.
And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.
And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

And God said, **Let there be light**
and there was light.

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The illustrated presentation pack, above, is written by Maev Kennedy and printed by Walsall. It tells the story of stained glass windows. The FDC is shown at right, with the miniature sheet.



GENERIC & SMILERS SHEETS The 2009 Christmas generic sheet contains eight 2nd class, eight 1st class, two 56p and two 90p Christmas stamps, price £9.00. It will be printed in litho by Cartor. Five Christmas Smilers sheets, with customers' own images on labels adjoining the stamps, will be available, containing 10 x 1st class (£7.50), 20 x 1st class £13.50 (two or more sheets £12.50 each), 20 x 2nd class £9.50 (two or more £8.50 each), 10 x 56p £9.50 (two or more £8.50 each), and 10 x 90p £13.50 (two or more £12.50 each). Handling charge of £1.41 on all orders. To order Smilers sheets see the leaflet/order form in post offices, see www.royalmail.com/smilers or phone 0845 074 2000 •

Christmas prices Miniature sheet is abbreviated MS

Set of stamps or MS (Stained Glass Windows)	£4.58
Set of stamps (Madonna & Child)	£0.69
Presentation pack (Stained Glass Windows stamps)	£5.10
FDC envelope	£0.30
Serviced FDC: Windows stamps/MS (UK orders)	£5.73
Serviced FDC: Windows stamps/MS (overseas)	£4.99
Stamp cards set (7 Windows stamps and MS)	£3.12
12 x 1st class book	£4.68
12 x 2nd class book	£3.60
Generic sheet	£9.00
Airletter (standard or bilingual version)	£0.63

Christmas This year's issue is a celebration



The stamps The windows on the stamps are as follows.

2nd class: Angel by William Morris, Church of St James, Staveley, Kendal, Cumbria

1st class: Madonna and Child by Henry Holiday, Ormesby St Michael, Ormesby, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk

56p: Joseph by Henry Holiday, Parish Church of St Michael, Minehead, Somerset

90p: Wise Man by Sir Edward Burne-Jones, from St Mary the Virgin, Rye, East Sussex

£1.35: Shepherd by Henry Holiday, at St Mary's Upavon, Wiltshire

THIS YEAR'S Christmas stamps feature the Christmas story as depicted in stained glass windows, a theme previously used in 1971 and 1992. The new stamps go on sale at Post Office branches and philatelic outlets and at Tallents House on 3 November. The 2007 2nd and 1st class Madonna and Child stamps will also go back on sale at Post Office branches.

The new Christmas stamps were designed by Andrew Ross, who previously designed the 2007 Sea Life and 2008 Insects issues, and the National Portrait Gallery Presentation Pack and FDC in 2006. Andrew has worked at a number of prestigious design companies including The Partnership and Johnson Banks.

The stamps are printed in gravure by De La Rue on self-adhesive paper in sheets of 50. They will also be available in a miniature sheet, which is conventionally-gummed.

The Stained Glass Windows set includes images by William Morris and Edward-Burne Jones. Works by these two artists have also graced earlier stamps. *Strawberry Thief* by William Morris featured on a Textiles design stamp of 1982, and Sir Edward Burne-Jones's portrait of Lord Tennyson was on the 24p Tennyson centenary stamp of 1992.

The Madonna and Child stamps, designed by Peter Willberg, reproduce religious paintings: *Madonna and Child* by William Dyce, c1827, and *The Madonna of Humility* by Lippo di Dalmasio, c1390-1400. The two paintings are respectively held by the Tate Gallery, and the National Gallery in London. These two stamps are printed in gravure by De La Rue, in sheets of 50, on self-adhesive paper.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Orders for serviced FDCs must reach Tallents House (address below) by the day of issue. Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB (Tallents House postmark), or a Special Handstamp Centre (Bethlehem postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FD0929' (Tallents House), or 'FD0930' (Bethlehem). For details of sponsored special postmarks see the *British Postmark Bulletin*.

AIRLETTERS The 2006 airletter (standard and bilingual Welsh/English versions) goes back on sale at Post Office branches on 3 November, having remained on sale from Tallents House since November 2006. The airletter features reindeer and Father Christmas, by Tatsuro Kiuchi. The standard version was shown in the November 2006 Bulletin, page 74.