

SOUTHWARK  
◆ CATHEDRAL ◆



A Service of Thanksgiving for  
**Doorkins Magnificat**

2003–2020

# Welcome to Southwark Cathedral

Set on the south bank of the River Thames in one of the most vibrant and diverse communities in London, this building has been a constant witness in a place of change.

The first church was built on this site around the year 606. First a convent, then a monastery, it became in 1106 the Augustinian Priory of St Mary Overie. With Westminster Abbey and St Bartholomew the Great in Smithfield it is one of the three remaining great monastic churches of London. At the Reformation the Priory became a parish church and it remains so for the people of Bankside. In 1905, as south London was rapidly expanding, the church was consecrated as the cathedral for the new Diocese of Southwark.

As well as a place of constant witness to our faith in Jesus Christ, this church has a momentous and proud history and has had links with many famous and influential characters including St Thomas Becket, Geoffrey Chaucer, William Shakespeare and Charles Dickens.

In the 20th century this cathedral was at the heart of the new movement in theology termed 'South Bank Religion'. This movement asked challenging questions of people about faith in the modern age which continue to be

explored at Southwark Cathedral which describes itself as 'inclusive: faithful: radical'.

Whatever has brought you here today, you are most welcome. Become part of the life here if you can; it will change your life as you encounter with us our living God.

# Welcome and Bidding

The Dean

*The Bidding Prayer concludes with*

**All Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come;  
thy will be done;  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation;  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever.  
Amen.**

## Reading

Genesis 2. 18–22

*Read by Lisa Gutwein, author of the Doorkins book.*

A reading from the Book of Genesis.

Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.' So out of the ground the Lord God

formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.

This is the word of the Lord.

**All Thanks be to God.**

## **Psalm**

### Psalm 8

O Lord our Governor, how excellent is thy Name in  
all the world :  
thou that has set thy glory above the heavens!

Out of the mouth of very babes and sucklings hast  
thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies :  
that thou mightest still the enemy, and the avenger.

For I will consider thy heavens, even the works of  
thy fingers :  
the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained.

What is man, that thou art mindful of him :  
and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

Thou madest him lower than the angels :  
to crown him with glory and worship.

Thou makest him to have dominion of the works  
of thy hands :  
and thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet;

All sheep and oxen :  
yea, and the beasts of the field;

The fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea :  
and whatsoever walketh through the paths of the seas.

O Lord our Governor :  
how excellent is thy Name in all the world!

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son:  
and to the Holy Ghost;  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be:  
world without end. Amen.

# Reading

From Jubilate Agno • Christopher Smart

*Read by Jessica Klingsley, publisher of the Doorkins book.*

For I will consider my Cat Jeoffry.

For he is the servant of the Living God duly and  
daily serving him.

For at the first glance of the glory of God in the East  
he worships in his way.

For this is done by wreathing his body seven times  
round with elegant quickness.

For then he leaps up to catch the musk, which is the  
blessing of God upon his prayer.

For he rolls upon prank to work it in.

For having done duty and received blessing he  
begins to consider himself.

For this he performs in ten degrees.

For first he looks upon his forepaws to see if they  
are clean.

For secondly he kicks up behind to clear away there.

For thirdly he works it upon stretch with the  
forepaws extended.

For fourthly he sharpens his paws by wood.

For fifthly he washes himself.

For sixthly he rolls upon wash.

For seventhly he fleas himself, that he may not be  
interrupted upon the beat.

For eighthly he rubs himself against a post.  
For ninthly he looks up for his instructions.  
For tenthly he goes in quest of food.  
For having consider'd God and himself he will  
    consider his neighbour.  
For if he meets another cat he will kiss her in kindness.  
For when he takes his prey he plays with it to give it  
    a chance.  
For one mouse in seven escapes by his dallying.  
For when his day's work is done his business more  
    properly begins.  
For he keeps the Lord's watch in the night against the  
    adversary.  
For he counteracts the powers of darkness by his  
    electrical skin and glaring eyes.  
For he counteracts the Devil, who is death,  
    by brisking about the life.  
For in his morning orisons he loves the sun and the  
    sun loves him.  
For he is of the tribe of Tiger.  
For the Cherub Cat is a term of the Angel Tiger.  
For he has the subtlety and hissing of a serpent,  
    which in goodness he suppresses.  
For he will not do destruction, if he is well-fed,  
    neither will he spit without provocation.  
For he purrs in thankfulness, when God tells him he's  
    a good Cat.  
For he is an instrument for the children to learn  
    benevolence upon.



For every house is incomplete without him and  
a blessing is lacking in the spirit.  
For he knows that God is his Saviour.  
For there is nothing sweeter than his peace when  
at rest.  
For there is nothing brisker than his life when in  
motion....  
For the divine spirit comes about his body to sustain  
it in complete cat.

## **Memories of Doorkins**

Paul Timms, Dean's Verger

## **Homily**

The Dean

## **Anthem**

The Monk and his Cat • Samuel Barber

Pangur, white Pangur,  
How happy we are  
Alone together, Scholar and cat.  
Each has his own work to do daily;  
For you it is hunting, for me study.  
Your shining eye watches the wall;  
My feeble eye is fixed on a book.

You rejoice when your claws entrap a mouse;  
I rejoice when my mind fathoms a problem.  
Pleased with his own art  
Neither hinders the other;  
Thus we live ever  
without tedium and envy.

*Celtic text. Anon., translated by W H Auden*

## **Prayers**

Creator God,  
not a sparrow falls to the earth  
without you knowing,  
all things reflect your glory  
and all life reflects your life;  
we thank you for Doorkins  
and as we lay her to her rest  
assure us of your love for us  
for whom Jesus died and rose  
that we might live with you  
For all eternity.

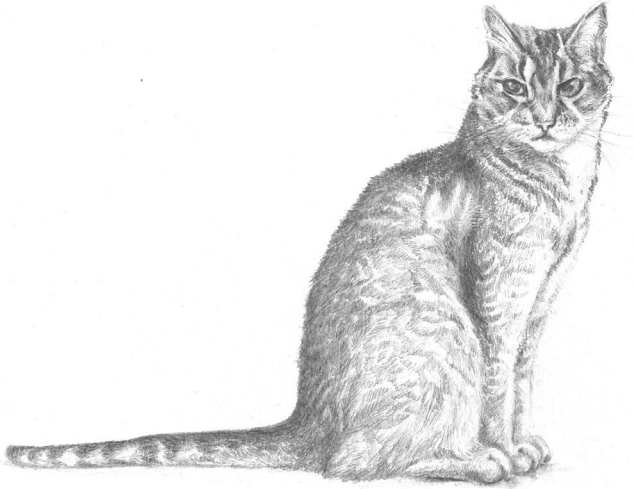
**All Amen.**

*Doorkins' remains are then taken to the churchyard  
and buried.*

*If you would like to record your own memory of Doorkins  
please visit the online memorial site where you can also*

*make a donation to Catcuddles Sanctuary or  
the Cathedral.*

*[doorkinsmagnificat.muchloved.com/](https://doorkinsmagnificat.muchloved.com/)*



## **In Memoriam**

Doorkins Magnificat of Southwark Cathedral (? – 2020)

What is taken out of this world when an old cat dies?  
We must go back to what happens when the kitten arrives:  
a squall of blood and fur, and a small blind thing comes  
unseeing into the light.

The fortunate own homes and biographies known from  
birth to death.

But Doorkins was not one of those.

A cat with a long pedigree of love is an undulating smile,  
a question-mark with expectations, twilight's happy  
rushing idiot, a dandy and an aesthete,  
the Madonna of the cardboard boxes, landlord of the  
bed and lap.

We cannot know how she fell from grace or if  
Doorkins was simply never one of those.

We don't know what left her homeless in South London,  
a skitter of street cat,  
her hunger eased by no one but herself; some nights only  
the dark between her ribs.

Hedge-sleeper, a bat's soft ear for danger, soon a cat of  
middle years with stiffness in the leg  
and a quick claw to show that human hands had not  
always been kind.

Cats with biographies trust us. Doorkins was not one of  
those.

She trusted the cathedral's open door, came inside by  
day, accepted food,  
yet never forgot the rituals of the hunt, the call of the  
moon nor the tang of her own wet fur.

Some Italian artists painted cats in their Annunciations  
and Sacred Families: all-knowing tabbies,  
sober eyes engaging with the viewer, ambassadors  
between God and man, creature and human,  
showing how diaphanous are the veils between.  
Doorkins was one of those,

rendering people tender by her smallness in the grandeur  
of the nave,  
reminding them how little they know of infinity and how  
much about love.

She acquired a name (itself a song of praise to God),  
a book, a Twitter account, merchandise, fame.

She stole the show at the Nativity, drowsing in the straw.

Another cat might have had her head turned,  
grown smug, believed her pawprints the imprimatur of stars.  
Doorkins was under no delusion.

She was, as she preferred, out a-tigering in God's jungle,  
the Cathedral garden

the night in June when terror came among the humans  
of her parish.

While helicopters churned above and sirens howled  
below, house-cats with biographies  
comforted those locked in, soothed frightened homes  
with a ferocity of purrs,  
were awarded extra treats and hugged against the  
dark outside.

Doorkins was not one of those.

Hardship had schooled her to crouch and hide,  
    shallowing her breath, splaying her senses.  
Take nothing for granted, she'd learned, not even life.  
    She lay low until the startled morning  
when she found her cathedral door locked and taped.  
    Un-arked, in the churchyard,  
a congregation of one, for days she was alone, the verger  
    and the vigil.  
At last all souls were once more let inside. Some wished  
    to never leave.  
Doorkins was one of those.

Not domesticated but churched, she exchanged her  
    cathedrals of twigs for this one of stone.  
Frailer, she became more human, eased herself onto gilt  
    cushions, slept through Evensong,  
soaked her bones in the comfort of heating grates,  
    baptised the Dean with her tongue.  
There was less slink to her, more limp, less substance,  
    just a handful of heartbeat and shadow.  
Finally she became again a small blind thing, unseeing  
    in stained glass rainbows,  
– one more beloved being, once given to the light,  
who shone, flickered, stilled, and went into the night.

*Poem by Michelle Lovric, October 2020*

*Drawing by Susan Young, October 2020*

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