

# FRIENDS NEWS

FRIENDS OF  
SOUTHWARK  
♦ CATHEDRAL ♦

SPRING 2025 • [www.southwarkcathedral.org.uk](http://www.southwarkcathedral.org.uk)



## A visit to Stowe – Monday 4 August

"At the heart of Stowe, the historic house is the perfect blend of past and present. Evolving through the centuries, it now serves as a school and welcomes visitors to discover its rich history."

We will gather at Milton Keynes station at 10.15am and transfer to Stowe for our day to begin. If you prefer you can meet us at Stowe as parking is available but this will need to be booked in advance.

On arrival we will enjoy refreshments before a tour of the house which will include an opportunity to spend time in the visitor centre and museum. We will be provided with a picnic lunch before visiting the gardens in the afternoon.

To book tickets contact the Friends office by email or post  
([kate.dean@southwark.anglican.org](mailto:kate.dean@southwark.anglican.org))

Tickets £27 (inclusive of entrance to the house and gardens, refreshments, guided tour and lunch plus transfer from Milton Keynes to Stowe)



## Pilgrimages and guided walk

Our pilgrimage to Winchester from Rochester continues. For further information take a look at our pages on Eventbrite which gives more details, including purchasing tickets.

### How about the North Bank? Saturday 24 May

The Thames Path stretches from London to Gloucestershire. A less rural part of it runs between Blackfriars and the Tower. Heralds, actors, vintners, Welsh worshippers, apothecaries and merchants all peopled this unusual and rather secret part of the north bank of the river, not to mention the very large rubbish transfer station! Meet outside Blackfriars station (North) at 11am for an hour and half walk.



## Dates for the diary

In our next newsletter we will include more details for these forthcoming events but do pop the dates in your diary

**6 June – Wine tasting (tickets on sale soon via Eventbrite)**

**8 June – Annual General Meeting**

**25 July – Célidh in the Cathedral (tickets on sale soon via Eventbrite)**

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## Cathedral news

### Learning Centre

The Learning Centre at the cathedral has been steadily rebuilding its work and Emily Harris explains some of the highlights of the last year.

The Learning Centre has had a busy 12 months in which we delivered 4671 instances of participation across our curriculum-linked interactive Cathedral trails and hands-on workshops. We also ran family learning 'pop-ups' in the school holidays which were well-received. With support from the St Olave's Foundation Fund, we were able to pilot a new bursary scheme to enable schools with students facing economic disadvantage in the borough of Southwark to apply for a free visit, and we are delighted they have given us a second round of funding to continue the bursary for 2025. 2024 culminated in our ever-popular Journey to the Manger event in partnership with the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education bringing 200 Yr 2 students (ages 6-7) from across our diocesan family to explore the meaning of Christmas through music, storytelling, craft and worship.



The team has recently expanded welcoming a new part-time administrator who is supporting the Learning Centre Manager for two days per week in term time. As we gather momentum for 2025, the Learning Centre will be focussing on session development, volunteer enrichment, partnership work and fundraising.

If you would like to know more about the work of the Learning Centre, please contact **Emily** on **[emily.harris@southwark.anglican.org](mailto:emily.harris@southwark.anglican.org)**.

## Music Department

The music is a very important part of life at Southwark. Simon Hogan is currently the Acting Director of Music and here he tells us a little about the choirs.

Providing the music for over 200 services each year, the Cathedral Choir is made up of around 18 boy choristers, 24 girl choristers and six Lay Clerks. The Cathedral Choir sings in various formations: on a Thursday you can often hear the girls singing Evensong on their own; Lay Clerks do some services without any of the choristers, and on a normal Sunday or Monday, you would hear either the boys or the girls singing with the Lay Clerks. For the big services, and for our annual Christmas concert, we combine all our singers together to make quite a sound!



If you were to walk past the Song School on a Tuesday or Thursday you would hear the sounds of yet more children – the probationers – who meet weekly to learn how the chorister life works. They meet with my colleagues Emily Elias and James Gough, singing pieces which are more accessible for those who are new to singing, learning how to read music, and getting to know the Cathedral and its liturgies. Unique to Southwark is the range of children we have the opportunity to educate: with no choir school, our doors are open to any child who can arrive from school by 4.30pm, and as a result we currently have nearly 70 children coming through our department each week, from nearly thirty different schools around London. While we have to contend with the age-old problem of retaining choristers as they transition from primary to secondary school, and try and juggle a million other extra-curricular activities alongside their choir commitments, chorister numbers remain healthy, and it is a joy for us to be a part of the musical and spiritual education of so many young people each week.

In addition to the Cathedral Choir, we also enjoy working with adults: Emily runs the Merbecke Choir which sings services and concerts throughout the year; James runs the Community Choir which rehearses on Thursday lunchtimes and is always on the lookout for more members; and from time to time our Cathedral Octet, comprising our Lay Clerks and adult sopranos, can be heard delighting audiences and congregations in 'special' services which fall at times when the other choirs might not be available.

All in all we're a pretty busy and healthy department, enjoying making music in the glorious acoustic of Southwark Cathedral, and for its wonderful and supportive community of worshippers and visitors. As readers will know, our Director of Music Ian Keatley sadly passed away in the summer of 2024, and his leadership and musicianship has been sorely missed. The Cathedral is committed to continuing Ian's legacy through the highest quality of music-making, and the choirs have done an admirable job in continuing to sing their hearts out as we've navigated this sad time together as a department. Recently the cathedral announced Ian's successor, Helen Smee. I know we all look forward to welcoming her into the music department as we enter this exciting new chapter.

The Cathedral has recently launched several new initiatives and we thought you'd like to hear about them.

# Renewing Our Vision

*Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest? Jesus said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all **your heart**, and with all **your soul**, and with all **your mind**." This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself."*

**Matthew 22.36-40**

Southwark Cathedral's original foundation was a Priory with a community that lived by the rule of St Augustine, written around 400 AD. Augustine begins his rule with the words, 'Before all else, love God and then your neighbour, because these are the chief commandments given to us'. Our renewed vision finds its inspiration in our spiritual heritage.

The word 'love' is used in many superficial and saccharine flavoured ways today. This might mean we are reluctant to use it, in case we look like we are buying into these. Instead, we want to reclaim the word and show how it is central to our Christian belief and practice. What Christ meant by 'love' is so urgently needed in our society. Love is not an intellectual theory. It is an embodied way of living. To focus on love, when the Church is too often known for division and disagreement, and discrimination, is a positive articulation of what we believe about God, the life of faith, and the dignity of all.



# Our Values and Foundations

Integrity  
Kindness

Justice  
Courage

## Our four foundations are:



Committed, resourced and valued people.



A Cathedral building, precinct and estate which is fit for purpose and well maintained.



Good IT and engaging communications.



A sustainable, developing financial base.

## Where are we going? | Our mission and objectives

Our mission and objectives combine in what we are calling the pathways for realising our vision. The Pathways through which we will make space for love of God and neighbour.



# LIVING FAITHFULLY

A programme of events and courses to  
develop and deepen our faith

**Wednesday 9th April - 6pm** FREE

## **Unmaking Mary: The Myth of Divine Motherhood**

The Director of Theos, Chine MacDonald, talks about her new book in which she argues that for two thousand years, the Virgin Mary has been depicted throughout art, literature and culture as symbolising the perfect mother: chaste, beautiful, meek, mild and white. These supposed virtues and symbols have penetrated not just Christianity but wider popular culture. They have, she concludes contributed to harmful views about motherhood and what it is to be a woman.

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**Sunday 27th April - 9.45am** FREE

## **'Embodied Theology': What we do with our bodies in worship**

Ever wondered why certain bodily things happen during the Sunday service? Why are the Gospel book and altar kissed, why do some bow halfway through the Creed, why are the priest's arms sometimes open wide and sometimes shut? Come and find out and ask Canon Roxanne Eversley all those questions you've been wanting to ask.

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## **Holy Week 2025 13th - 20th April**

This year our preacher during Holy Week is Bishop Rob Wickham. Bishop Rob served as Bishop of Edmonton in the Diocese of London from 2015-2023, and he is now CEO of the Church Urban Fund. The Fund's mission is 'to tackle complex challenges of poverty and exclusion across England by mobilising people, churches, and whole communities to make a positive difference'.

### **How to book tickets**

Bookings for events held at the Cathedral can be made on the Cathedral's Eventbrite page. This can be accessed directly via the link, <https://bit.ly/3OpdaWr>.



# MODERN SLAVERY



Southwark Cathedral joins the fight against Modern Slavery

## Talks

**The Truth about Modern Slavery | A Talk by Emily Kenway**

**Thursday 19 June, 7pm**

Emily Kenway is a leading expert on modern slavery and human trafficking. A former adviser to the UK's first Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, she argues in her book how modern slavery has been used as a political tool by those in power.

**Tickets £5, available from the Cathedral.**

**Anywhere But Here: How Britain's Broken Asylum System Fails Us All | A Talk by Nicola Kelly**

**Thursday 25 September, 6.30pm**

Nicola Kelly is an award-winning journalist and writer focused on UK immigration and asylum.

**Tickets £5, available from the Cathedral website and Eventbrite.**

**Migration, Ethics, and Exploitation | A Talk by Ben Ryan**

**Wednesday 8 October, 6pm**

Ben Ryan is Deputy CEO of Medaille Trust, a Charity providing support for survivors of modern slavery. He is a former National Public Policy and Ethics Adviser in the Church of England.

**Free tickets available from the Cathedral website and Eventbrite.**

## Events

**Southwark Against Modern Slavery Engagement Day in the Cathedral**

**Saturday 24 May**

We will be welcoming Southwark Against Modern Slavery (SAMS), a group established in the Diocese of Southwark to raise awareness of the issues of Modern Slavery across the Diocese.

Drop in at any time of day to find out more about SAMS and how we're working together to raise awareness of this crucial issue.

**Modern Slavery Awareness Days with the Amies Freedom Choir**

**Saturday 12 April and Saturday 12 July**

Join us for one - or both - of our awareness raising days. Across both days we will be welcoming charities and groups who provide support to those impacted by modern slavery and human trafficking. Drop in at any time during the day to find out more about how to spot the signs and help those in need in your local area and beyond.

The Amies Freedom Choirs aim to develop the musical and cultural awareness of young women who have survived trafficking by exploring songs and musical styles from each others' cultures and languages. Each year the choir projects support 40-60 women

**Anti-Slavery Day Saturday 18 October**

Details of an event to observe international Anti-Slavery Day will be announced soon. Keep an eye out on our social media and website to find out more.

**Exhibitions**

**Art is Freedom Wednesday 5 March - Monday 2 June**

*Accessible when the Cathedral is open.*

We are delighted to be hosting Hestia's Art is Freedom exhibition in the Churchyard this spring. Survivors supported by Hestia's Modern Slavery Response Service take part in art and photography workshops every summer, learning and refining their skills, before submitting their best pieces for the exhibition.

**Café Art Exhibition Thursday 18 September - Sunday 19 October**

*Accessible during the café's opening hours.*

An exhibiton of original artworks produced by survivors of modern slavery during a series of workshops run by Hestia.

# Become a Friend

Scan the code to find out more

**or visit**

[cathedral.southwark.anglican.org/  
support-us/the-friends-of-southwark-cathedral](https://cathedral.southwark.anglican.org/support-us/the-friends-of-southwark-cathedral)



## Contact the Friends

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