

# FRIENDS NEWS

FRIENDS OF  
SOUTHWARK  
CATHEDRAL

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



## From the Bishop of Southwark

2025 has been another fruitful year in the life of the Cathedral, amid the comings and goings of life in this part of our busy metropolis. We said goodbye to Paul Timms, the Dean's Verger, upon his retirement after many years of faithful service and we welcomed Helen Smee as the new Director of Music. The installation 'Peace Doves' by Peter Walker gathered thousands of prayers and hopes and offered them to God in this holy place. It was moving, and powerful in its simplicity. I express my gratitude to the whole Cathedral Chapter, lay and ordained, and also to all the volunteers and employees who contribute to the Cathedral's life as the Mother Church of the Diocese and a valued part of the community on Bankside.

However, this last year has also been challenging on many fronts, and it is not always easy to discern signs of hope in the world. Advent gives us an opportunity to recall hope purposefully as we reflect on Mary's hope for her child, Jesus, and I encourage you to reflect on Mary's journey of hope. Unlike optimism, hope is substantial and stubborn. Hope brought Mary through the challenge of her pregnancy, and gave her strength for the journey to Bethlehem. In a similar way, hope gives us strength for the journey, and brings us closer as we travel together.

Pope Francis declared 2025 a year of jubilee, with the theme 'Pilgrims of Hope' and encouraged us to be signs of the hope that does not disappoint. The Cathedral is a sign of hope for many and the Friends play their part in making it so. It is both a site of pilgrimage, and a place from where pilgrims depart. This Advent and Christmas, let us be signs of hope where hope is lacking and wherever our pilgrimage takes us. If voices are lacking, we can speak up. If comfort is needed, we can bring it. If action is needed, we can act. Together we can be signs of resilient, stubborn, life-giving hope.

I wish you and those you love a very happy Christmas with peace and joy in the coming year.



## Friends events for 2025



### **Wreath Making workshop | Saturday 29 November 10.30-1.00pm**

For the first time the Friends will be running a Wreath Making workshop led by our amazing flower arranging lead, Patricia Ellis. You can book your tickets via this link on Ticket Tailor. Tickets are strictly limited and further information is also available via this link

<https://buytickets.at/thefriendsofsouthwarkcathedral/1932761>

.....

### **Pop up preserves stall | Sunday 30 November 9.30-12.45**

Once again the Friends will be running a pop-up stall selling various flavours of marmalade and jam, together with chutneys and other home made goodies. A great opportunity to stock your cupboards for the festive season.



**Advent tea prior to the Advent Carol Service |  
Sunday 30 November @ 4.45pm**

Members of the Friends and their guests are invited to join us for Advent tea before enjoying the Advent Carol Service

**Tickets are available on Eventbrite**

.....  
**An evening with the Dean - Discs for a Desert Island |  
Tuesday 16 December @ 6.15pm**

The Very Revd Dr Mark Oakley will be in conversation with Michelle Lovric as he explores his essential music choices and other useful items when swept away to a desert island.

Festive drinks will be served on arrival

**Tickets available via Eventbrite**

## Advent and Christmas at the Cathedral

**From Darkness to Light: An Advent Procession** | Sunday 30 November, 6pm

**Journey to the Manger – Merbecke Choir Concert** |

Saturday 6 December, 7.30pm

**A Quiet Christmas** | Tuesday 16 December, 7pm

**Cathedral Community Carols** | Thursday 18 December, 12.45pm

**Cathedral Choir Concert** | Friday 19 December, 7.30pm

**Cathedral Carol Services** | Sunday 21 and Monday 22 December, 6pm

**Crib Service** | Christmas Eve, 4pm

**First Eucharist of Christmas** |

Christmas Eve, 10pm (Bishop of Southwark preaching)

**Morning Prayer** | Christmas Day, 8.30am

**Eucharist with Carols** | Christmas Day, 9am

**Choral Eucharist** | Christmas Day, 11am (Dean of Southwark preaching)

.....

### **Christmas Carol Services Sunday 21 and Monday 22 December, 6pm**

The Cathedral Carol Services are extremely popular and although they are free to attend you do need to book tickets. We have secured a limited number of tickets for the Friends at each of the Services. You can use this link to book your priority tickets [tinyurl.com/bdecjwnz](https://tinyurl.com/bdecjwnz) using the code FRIENDS2025 Book early as they'll be issued on a first come, first served basis. If you don't use the internet contact the office and we will reserve tickets on your behalf if they are still available.

Full details of all of the above, plus a selection of charity services can be found on our website: [cathedral.southwark.anglican.org/christmas/](https://cathedral.southwark.anglican.org/christmas/)

.....

### **Advent Learning Opportunity: O Antiphons Sundays 14 & 21 December, 9.45am**

Please join us for one or both of these Advent sessions on the O Antiphons. The O Antiphons accompany the Magnificat during the last days of Advent. Come along for a session on the "traditional Os" on the 14th and/or a more contemporary interpretation on the 21st. More details will be available soon but you can register your interest by contacting the Friends office by email. We will then send further information when it's available.

## Looking forward to 2026

### **New Friends tour – Saturday 10 January @ 10.30am**

New Friends are invited to an introductory tour of the Cathedral to welcome them to the Friends. Afterwards we'll enjoy coffee/tea and cake together.

This event is free of charge but booking is essential – please reserve your place by contacting the office

.....

### **The Lodger of Lant Street: Charles Dickens' Southwark – Saturday 14 February @ 10.30am**

Join us for a Valentines Day brunch at 10.30am before an illustrated lecture with Guy Rowston at 11.15.

Despite early traumatic childhood days spent in Southwark, Charles Dickens went there frequently in later life. His novels show that he knew the area as well as any cabbie. We hear of Shakespeare performed on horseback, the Gordon riots, Bedlam, a notable hanging, Astley's amphitheatre, the South London novel *Little Dorrit* and a perilous ascent of the cathedral tower.

**Tickets: £10.50 available via Eventbrite or contact the office**

.....

### **Lent visit to St Bartholomew the Great - Tuesday 24th February 2026**

Together with Southwark Cathedral, which became an Augustinian Priory in 1106, and Westminster Abbey, St Bartholomew the Great in Smithfield is one of the three great monastic churches that have survived in London. The Priory Church of St Bartholomew the Great, and the Hospital Church of St Bartholomew the Less, were both founded in 1123, and are the twin churches at the heart of the Anglican Parish of Great St Bartholomew.

Join us at 10.45 for an hour-long tour given especially for the Friends by the Head Verger of both churches. Hear about the history and highlights of the ancient building of St Bartholomew the Great. At 12.30 we will attend Holy Eucharist at the Hospital Church of St Bartholomew the Less, after which the Head Verger will then tell us something of the history of that building, concluding at 13.30. There are several cafés and pubs in the area for you to purchase your own refreshments.

**Tickets: £17.50 available via Eventbrite or contact the office**

## Pilgrimage to Winchester

We are now on a winter break from the monthly pilgrimage. We'll be starting again in March from Four Marks on the last few stages of our pilgrimage to Winchester.

.....

### Trip to Northumberland – 30 April – 3 May

We will arrive in Berwick upon Tweed on Thursday 30 April. As everyone is coming from different places it seems sensible to make our own way there using railcards which you may hold. If you let me know what time your train arrives in Berwick on the afternoon I will meet you there so we can make our way to the hotel which is located near the sea.

On that Thursday evening supper will be available at 7.30pm (this is included in the price of the weekend)

On Friday we'll take a trip to Lindisfarne. This will be a full day visit to work with the tides. I hope we'll be able to arrive early enough so those who wish to do so can walk (barefoot?) onto the island. There will be tours of the castle and priory as well as some other visits and time to enjoy this special place. We will have supper on the island before we head back to Berwick for the night.

On Saturday we can make our way to Bamburgh Castle for a tour and afterwards a boat trip around the Farne Islands.

Our last day is Sunday and we'll attend a Service in the morning before making our way homeward.

The trip will cost £650 (not including your travel to and from Berwick upon Tweed which costs around £140 from Kings Cross before adding discounts). There is a £75 supplementary charge for a single room.

If you would like to join us we will require an initial non-refundable deposit of £200 and the balance by 1 March 2026. Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis but we hope to provide spaces for all who wish to join us. We will also ask you to complete a short form to ensure we have relevant information to provide appropriate support on our trip.

.....

## Dates for your Diary

- **5 June – Wine tasting on a sparkling theme**
- **9 October - Ceilidh in the Nave**
- **18 October – AGM**

# 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

Kate Dean  
Friends of Southwark Cathedral  
London Bridge, London SE1 9DA

**Tel:** 020 7367 6724

**Email:** [Kate.dean@southwark.anglican.org](mailto:Kate.dean@southwark.anglican.org)

Follow us on

