

SOUTHWARK

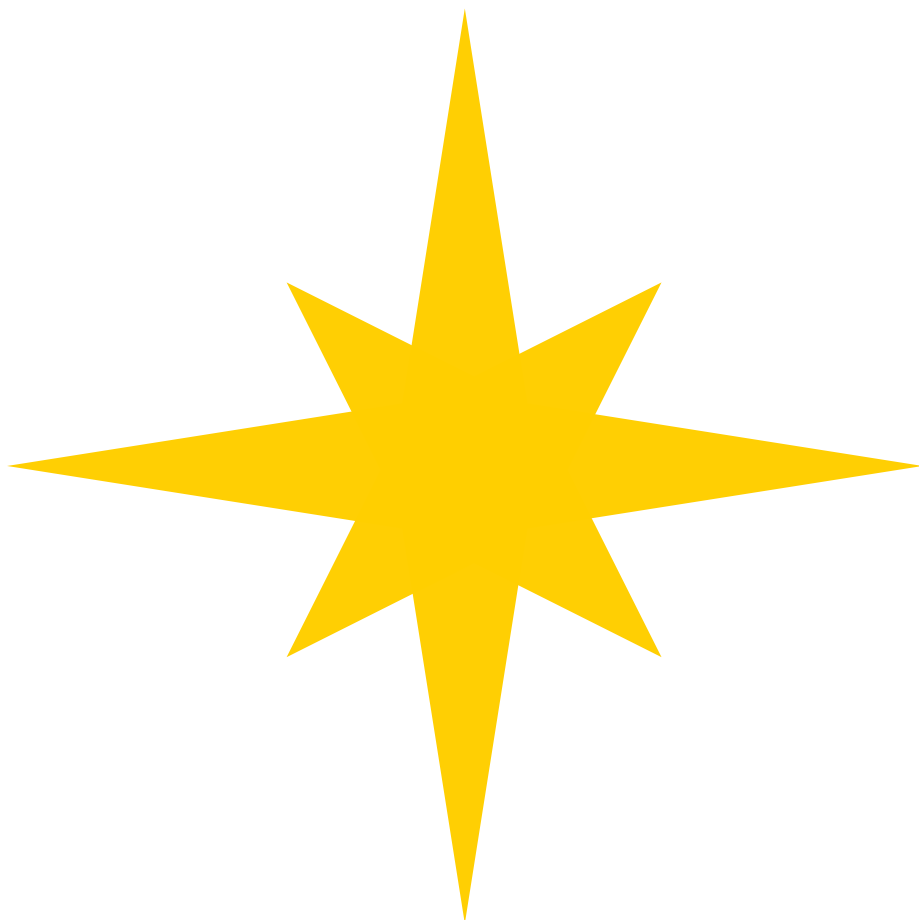
◆ CATHEDRAL ◆

CRIB SERVICE

CHRISTMAS EVE

WEDNESDAY 24 DECEMBER 2025

4.00PM



WELCOME TO SOUTHWARK CATHEDRAL

A MEMBER OF THE



ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Please ensure that all electronic devices are switched to silent.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography and video recording of the Choir is not permitted.

You are welcome to take photographs of the Cathedral but please do not take any photographs or videos during the service.

HEARING LOOP

Please switch your device to 'T'.

POSTURE

The instructions in this booklet are not prescriptive. Please sit if that is more appropriate for you.

DONATIONS



There are several donation points in the Cathedral where you can make your donation, or you can simply scan the QR code, or text SOUTHWARK (Amount) to 70085 (one standard rate message is also charged). Thank you very much for your generous support of the Cathedral.

You can also support the Cathedral by buying your books from the ethical online bookseller bookshop.org and designating Southwark Cathedral shop for the 30% of purchase price donation they offer us.

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CAROL

NEH 34

Choir only

Once in royal David's city
Stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby
In a manger for his bed:
Mary was that Mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little Child.

Everyone

He came down to earth from heaven
Who is God and Lord of all,
And his shelter was a stable,
And his cradle was a stall:
With the poor and mean and lowly,
Lived on earth our Saviour holy.

And our eyes at last shall see him
Through his own redeeming love,
For that Child so dear and gentle,
Is our Lord in heaven above:
And he leads his children on
To the place where he is gone.

Not in that poor lowly stable,
With the oxen standing by,
We shall we see him: but in heaven,
Set at God's right hand on high,
Where like stars his children crowned,
All in white shall wait around.

TUNE: IRBY

H. J. Gauntlett (1805-1876)

TEXT:

C. F. Alexander (1818-1895)

WE GATHER TOGETHER

All As we celebrate this day of our journey together, peace be with you
and also with you.

Come follow the light that shines for you
and leads you to a stable with a manger and child.

Come, listen for the voice that calls you to find new life
in the broken corners of the world.

Come, rich and poor, neighbour and stranger;
gather round and share a celebration with the Prince of Peace.

Come like wealthy kings, with priceless gifts
or poor shepherds with only themselves to bring,
for the Spirit has led you to this place
where you are offered the promise of new life.

SHOUT Are we ready?
Yes, we are!

NORMAL Shall we look?
Yes, we shall.

QUIETER Can we hear?
Yes! Shhh...

WE HEAR THE BEGINNING OF THE STORY

We meet some important people as we begin to build our crib.

**All Father we pray for those who are far from home
and those who are travelling hard roads.
Be close to them all and bring them safely to their journey's end.
Amen.**

All sing:

Little donkey, little donkey
on the dusty road
Got to keep on plodding onwards
with your precious load.

Been a long time little donkey
through the winter's night
Don't give up now little donkey;
Bethlehem's in sight!

*Ring out those bells tonight!
Bethlehem! Bethlehem!
Follow that star tonight!
Bethlehem! Bethlehem!*

Little donkey, little donkey
had a heavy day;
Little donkey, carry Mary
safely on her way!



TEXT & MUSIC:

Eric Boswell (1921-2009)

We pause for a moment to pray.

There's no room! We knock on many doors as we look for shelter on a cold night.

**All God of stables, stars and surprises
of light and life and new hope
forgive us when we shut you out
when we care more about ourselves than about others
when we would rather get than give.
help us to open our hearts and our lives
to make space for you and your love
so we may hear again the song of the angels
and respond with joy this Christmas and always.
Amen.**

We listen to a lullaby for a special baby, sung by the Choir.

CAROL

I saw a maiden • Old Basque Noël, arr. Edgar Pettman (1865-1943)

I saw a maiden sitten and sing:
She lulled a child, a sweete Lording.

Lullay, lullay, my dear son, my sweeting.
Lullay, lullay, my dear heart, my own dear darling.

This very Lord, He made all things,
And this very God, the King of all Kings.

There was sweet music at this child's birth,
And heaven filled with angels, making much mirth.

Heaven's angels sang to welcome the child
Now born of a maid, all undefiled.

Pray we and sing on this festal day,
That peace may dwell with us alway.

THE SHEPHERDS: GOOD NEWS!

The story continues as some shepherds have a very exciting evening and make an unexpected trip to Bethlehem!

NEH 32

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep, the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

O morning stars together proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King, and peace to all the earth!
For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.

O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Emmanuel.

TUNE: FOREST GREEN

English traditional
arr. R. Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

TEXT:

Phillips Brooks (1835-1893)



We pause for a moment to pray.

All Father,
as those shepherds
knelt at the cradle,
may we kneel quietly
before you,
just because we love you,
our God and King.
Amen.

APPROACHING THE MANGER

Before we all take our place in the story, we pause to ask if we are ready to welcome Jesus today.

We sing the first verse of the Carol:

NEH 28

In the bleak midwinter
Frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron,
Water like a stone:
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
Snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter,
Long ago.

Which is followed by a short talk.

Then, we sing the last verse:

What can I give him,
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb;
If I were a wise man
I would do my part;
Yet what I can I give him
Give my heart.

TUNE: CRANHAM

Gustav Holst (1874-1934)

TEXT:

Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)

We pray together:

All **God the great story teller,
thank you that we all have a place
in the story of your love.
Help us to learn what that means for us
and to stay close to Jesus day by day
as he stays close to us.
Amen.**



GATHERED AROUND THE MANGER

The scene is now complete, and we too are part of the story!

Together we sing a lullaby for baby Jesus.

NEH 22

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love you Lord Jesus, look down from the sky
And stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Be near me Lord Jesus, I ask you to stay
Close by me forever and love me I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender care,
And fit us for heaven to live with you there.

TUNE: CRADLE SONG

W. J. Kirkpatrick (1838-1921)

TEXT:

Anonymous, Philadelphia 1883

We pray together:

All **Holy Jesus,
by being born one of us,
and lying humbly in a manger,
you show us how much God loves the world.
Let the light of your love always shine in our hearts,
until we reach our home in heaven,
and see you on your throne of glory.
Amen.**

THE BLESSING

All May the love that breathes life into all humanity and all creation
be born in us tonight.

All May the love that brings us healing
be born in us tonight.

All May the love that overcomes hatred
be born in us tonight.

All May the love that forgives and renews
be born in us tonight.

All May the love that brings the blessing of peace
be born in us tonight.

And the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you,
and everyone you love,
this Christmas time and always.

All **Amen.**

We wish you all a very happy and blessed Christmas and we hope to see you again in the New Year!

Please leave the Cathedral by the North West doors and the Millennium Courtyard. Please consider supporting us by giving using the contactless donation points if you have not set up a regular payment. Thank you for joining us. We look forward to welcoming you back.



A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

The world is a fragile and precarious place at the moment. Many are living through the traumas of warfare, starvation, bereavement, and displacement. Others are finding the speed of change in society, as well as its inequalities, an unwelcome challenge to their identity and sense of belonging. At such times the temptation is to listen to those who offer simplistic solutions and scapegoat blame onto various vulnerable groups.

What does Christmas have to offer such a time of anxiety, frustration, and menace?

Christians believe that in the Christmas story - in the carols, readings and prayers - we are offered a different lens through which to look at the world. We encounter necessary truths for the human heart - caught up in a story of a couple seeking refuge, a new life coming into being, and people from different backgrounds drawn together by joy and kindness. The simplicity of the story, its belief that the earth is made for peace and friendship, not competition and hate, feels like a homecoming and a better compass from which we might navigate life. It is like a star in a dark night that wants to take us on a journey.

Wherever you are in life, whatever your beliefs, politics, heritage, and whoever you love in your life, you are welcome to Southwark Cathedral to hear this story afresh. You are amongst friends here and we hope you will feel at home.

I pray that this Christmas will contain peace for you and those you love. I hope you will have time to attend to the things that matter most. I also wish you every possible happiness in the coming year. Please come and see us again soon.

Mark Oakley
Dean of Southwark

WORSHIP AT CHRISTMAS

WEDNESDAY 24 DECEMBER ♦ CHRISTMAS EVE

5.30pm **Evening Prayer**
10.00pm **The First Eucharist of Christmas**
The Bishop of Southwark, The Rt Rev'd Christopher Chessun

THURSDAY 25 DECEMBER ♦ CHRISTMAS DAY

8.30am **Morning Prayer***
9.00am **Eucharist with Carols**
The Very Rev'd Dr Mark Oakley, Dean of Southwark
9.30am **Christmas Day Communion at St Hugh's**
The Rev'd Delorine Green
11.00am **Choral Eucharist**
The Very Rev'd Dr Mark Oakley, Dean of Southwark
1.00pm **Cathedral closes**

SOUTHWARK

◆ CATHEDRAL ◆

making space for love
with heart, mind, and soul

It is good to welcome you 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 ('over-the-river'). 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.

The Cathedral has a momentous and significant history and has had links with many famous and influential characters including St Thomas Becket, Geoffrey Chaucer, William Shakespeare and Charles Dickens. It has also been a Cathedral for those who feel on the edges of faith or society, our welcome reaching out to all people in their beautiful God-given diversity.

Here, our Christian faith is captured in our vision to 'make space for love: with heart, mind, and soul'. Faith requires our hearts to stand up for social justice, upholding integrity and kindness, and supporting the vulnerable and oppressed. It challenges our thinking, inviting our minds to be enquiring, honest, and generous. Faith also seeks to deepen our inner lives, with the arts and creativity, by sharing in the life of our community, and by learning the arts of prayer and attention. In Jesus Christ we see the human face of God, and our faith in him is our joy and our life.

We really hope you enjoy being here with us today and that we will see you again very soon.

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