

SOUTHWARK

◆ CATHEDRAL ◆

2026 Social Justice Literacy Programme



Events to inspire
imagination and
encourage reading.

Welcome

An important part of our Vision is a commitment to social justice. Each year, we focus on a theme highlighted for attention and action. In 2026, the 'National Year of Reading', our theme is literacy.

Reading opens doors to learning and opportunity, yet millions of people across the UK face challenges with basic literacy skills. Throughout the year, we are working with the National Literacy Trust and other partners to champion the importance of reading through an imaginative programme of events, tours and talks.

We warmly encourage you to explore the programme and take part. We hope you discover new ideas, new voices and new ways of seeing the world.

June

20 June | 2:30-4pm | Free tickets from Eventbrite
Stories of Faith, Hope and Love: In Conversation with Charlie Baczyk-Bell

For too long, conversations about the Church of England have been marked by anxiety, decline, and despair. Join us for the launch of this timely and compelling book — an invitation to reimagine the Church of England with courage, and hope.

July

1 July | 7-8pm | Free, RSVP on our website
Theology Book Group

Do you enjoy reading theology? Or would you like to begin? Over a glass of wine at the Deanery, we will explore Lamorna Ash's book, *Don't Forget We're Here Forever: A New Generation's Search for Religion* (Bloomsbury, 2025). Available to buy from the shop.

2 July | 7-8.30pm | Tickets £5 from Eventbrite

Liturgies of the Wild: Dr Martin Shaw

Join writer, mythographer and Christian thinker Dr Martin Shaw in conversation with Sir Mark Rylance and Dr Rowan Williams to discuss his new book *Liturgies of the Wild*. Drawing on myth and initiatory rites, Shaw explores how ancient stories can guide us towards a deeper connection to the world around us.



August | Summer of Stories

Story-Themed Family Trail

Collect a free, self-led family trail available daily throughout the summer holidays. Inspired by the rich history of Southwark Cathedral, our story-themed trails invite families to create their own characters, settings and story themes as you explore the Cathedral together.

Family Storytelling Sessions

On selected dates throughout August, families are invited to enjoy interactive storytelling sessions and additional drop-in creative activities. These sessions offer a relaxed and engaging way to bring stories to life within the Cathedral space. *For full dates and details, please visit our website.*

Pop-up Reading Corner

Take a quiet moment to relax in our family-friendly pop-up reading corner, featuring a selection of books for children to enjoy. Availability may vary, so please speak to a member of staff on arrival.

22 August | 10am-8pm | Tickets available from Eventbrite
The History Book Festival

Step into the past at the History Book Festival at Southwark Cathedral, where centuries of heritage provide the perfect backdrop for a celebration of historical storytelling.

This day will bring together authors whose work explores different eras, themes and perspectives from across history. Throughout the day, visitors can enjoy a rich programme of author talks, offering the chance to hear from leading historians and writers about the stories that shaped our world. From ancient to modern history, this festival highlights a diverse range of topics and voices.



September

3 September | 7-9pm | Tickets £7 from Eventbrite
The Quiet Ear: Raymond Antrobus

Raymond Antrobus in conversation with the Dean of Southwark, Mark Oakley, about his “essential” memoir *The Quiet Ear*. Born deaf and only diagnosed at the age of six, Antrobus reflects on growing up in a world of missed sounds and misunderstanding, and on the experiences that shaped his life as a poet. He explores the book’s wider themes of D/deaf creativity and culture, alongside figures who reimagine language, sound, and expression.

17 September | 6:30-8pm | Tickets £5 from Eventbrite

Breaking not Broken: Timothy Goode

Join Canon Timothy Goode as he discusses his new book *Breaking not Broken* with the Dean. Drawing on disability theology and his own lived experience, Goode challenges the Church's inherited assumptions about disability, healing, and belonging. Offering a vision rooted in the wounded yet glorified body of Christ, this book invites us to imagine a more just and inclusive Church.

October

2 October | 11am-12pm | Tickets £9 available from Eventbrite

Bards, Poets and Playwrights: A Literary Tour

Uncover the literary figures connected with Southwark Cathedral. Explore the life of poet John Gower, friend of Chaucer, step into the world of Shakespearean theatre, and learn about Charles Dickens' visit to the Cathedral.

8 October | 7-9pm | Tickets available from July

An Evening with David Larbi

Join writer, poet and creator David Larbi for an evening of poetry and conversation. Known for his reflections on joy, David has built an online community of more than a million people. He is the author of the Sunday Times bestselling book *Frequently Happy*. More details to be announced.



17 October | 9am-2pm | Tickets available from September
Modern Slavery, Right Here, Right Now

Returning to our 2025 Social Justice theme of Modern Slavery, this Anti-Slavery Day event brings together lived experience and expert voices to explore the past, present and future of modern slavery, and to consider what needs to change to build a world free from exploitation.

20 October | 6:30-8:30pm | Tickets available from August
The Puffin: Michelle Lovric

Join author Michelle Lovric and guest, the Dean of Southwark, for an evening celebrating *The Puffin*, a daring standalone sequel that blends historical fiction with themes of power, faith, and resistance across 19th-century Venice and beyond. With its vivid settings, eccentric characters, and wickedly twisty plot, the event promises a lively discussion on writing, belief, and the art of storytelling. More details to be announced.

22 October | 6:30-8:30pm | Tickets available from Theos
A Common Good Economy with Prof Mariana Mazzucato

To mark the 20th anniversary of Theos, the leading think tank examining religion, politics, and society in the contemporary world, Professor Mazzucato explores the relationship between Christianity and economics in a thought-provoking conversation. Further details can be found on the Theos website.

November

26 November | 6:30-8:30pm | Tickets available from September
The Princes in the Tower: A Debate

Join Dr Nicola Tallis, Matthew Lewis and Nathen Amin for a discussion and debate on one of the greatest mysteries in British history - the murder of the Princes in the Tower.



World Book Night at Southwark Cathedral. April 2026.

Credit: Maya Barter

Take Action: Support Literacy

If you need help with literacy, want to encourage a child to read, or are looking for reading activities you can do at home, visit:

- **National Literacy Trust** (literacytrust.org.uk)
- **National Year of Reading** (goallin.org.uk)
- **BookTrust** (booktrust.org.uk)
- **The Reading Agency** (thereadingagency.org.uk)

If you believe in our work, you are warmly invited to support the Cathedral's social justice programme through a donation. Help us continue to develop programmes and partnerships that address societal needs:
cathedral.southwark.anglican.org/donate



Opening Times

The Cathedral is open daily.
Monday to Saturday | 08:30-18:00
Sunday | 08:30-17:00

Make a Donation

Southwark Cathedral is free to enter and everyone is welcome. Please consider making a donation to help support our life and ministry. Every donation helps preserve the Cathedral for the future. Thank you.

Stay in Touch

For the latest information, visit our website, sign up for our What's On newsletter and follow us on social media: @southwark_cathedral.

Find Us

Southwark Cathedral
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Please check the Cathedral website for the latest information and to purchase tickets for events before planning your visit.

All information was correct at the time of going to print.

