



**The Chapels Royal of St Peter ad Vincula and St John the Evangelist
HM Tower of London**

Dear friends,

Last week I told the congregation that, to my great surprise, I had recently received my first Christmas cardthere's nothing like being organised! 😊

All Souls' Day – 2nd November 2025

This year All Souls' Day falls on Sunday November 2nd. As in previous years, I am now collecting names of loved ones whom you would like remembered at that service. Please send the name (or names) to me or to Debbie.

The Clink

I'm delighted to say that 34 people have signed up to visit The Clink at Brixton Prison on either 4th or 9th December, and so we will be going on both days.

Thought for the day

John Bell in his book *Living with the Psalms* reminds us that there are only a handful of psalms of wisdom, and Psalm 32 is one of them. The psalm begins with the words '*Happy are those whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is put away*'. This psalm is sometimes referred to as '*The Joy of Forgiveness*'. To me, this seems an interesting pairing as, in my experience, forgiveness has often been anything but joyful. Both the 0915 and the 1100 services have a place for confession and absolution. Both are important but at times I find the words of the Prayer of Humble Access found in the Book of Common Prayer even more helpful. "*We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies.*" These words are a valuable reminder that we cannot earn God's forgiveness and yet it is always forthcoming. Now that is a joy to hold in our hearts!

With my prayers and best wishes for you all, Roger.

Service Details for Sunday 26th October 2025

The Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity

0915 Holy Communion St Peter ad Vincula

1100 Holy Communion St Peter ad Vincula

Readings

Ephesians 4: 17 – end, Matthew 9: 1-8

Anthem Ave Verum Corpus (Colin Mawby)

Collect for the Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity

O God, forasmuch as without thee we are
not able to please thee; Mercifully grant,
that thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct
and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ
our Lord. **Amen.**

Poem of the week

Last week I travelled up north to the city of Durham to visit my 97-year-old mother. A few years ago, she needed to move into a nursing home because of failing eyesight and increasing deafness. While I was there, I popped into Durham Cathedral which is very close to where mum now lives. By chance, on the seat next to where I was sitting, someone had left a poem on a piece of paper. The poem was *A Sacramental Sparrow* by Maggie Jackson, an award-winning American author and journalist, best known for her pioneering writings on social trends, notably technology's impact on humanity. She was the winner of the 2020 Dorothy Lee Award for Outstanding Scholarship in the Ecology of Culture for her book *Distracted: Reclaiming Our Focus in a World of Lost Attention*. Her book *Uncertain: The Wisdom and Wonder of Being Unsure* is a recent best-seller. She lives with her family in New York.

I find something very moving in this poem. Perhaps it's because of the description of the strength and character of the sparrow compared with the size, power and wisdom of the other birds. Could it also be that important truths are transcended by the least expected? In Christian symbolism, the humble sparrow is an illustration of the inherent importance to God of the whole of creation, no matter how small or overlooked.

A Sacramental Sparrow

It should have been an owl, according to belief.

A Barn Owl with powerful wings
and wisdom in its eyes.

A bird whose stillness, when perched,
owns the attentiveness of an awesome God,
or a Buddha perhaps, deceptively sleeping,
transcending all in contemplation,
a silent counsellor for troubled souls.

But now, when wise listeners are absent,

It's not the Owl's attention I call upon,
Nor any God or mystical mentor.

It's a single Sparrow who sits on the birdbath,
Dipping its beak into the water of life.

Watchful of bigger birds who try to displace it.

Vitality clothed in a flutter of feathers.

Winged immanence communing with the world.

Maggie Jackson

Carols by Candlelight, Thursday 11th December, 7pm

Sir David Suchet

Choir of the Chapels Royal, HM Tower of London

Daniel Greenway, organ. Colm Carey, director

The Choir of the Chapels Royal will perform a concert of Christmas music especially for the Chapel congregation on the 11th of December. The carols will be interspersed with Christmas readings performed by **Sir David Suchet**.



Featuring carols old and new, sacred and secular - most of which you will not hear during services - the programme will include the amazing *Fantasia on Christmas Carols* by Ralph Vaughan Williams as well as the world premiere of *two* new pieces being composed for us.

We are very keen to fill the Chapel for what will be a joyous celebration of the Nativity. It would be great to see you there! Please do spread the word and encourage family and friends to join us.

Tickets £30. Available to purchase soon. We will keep you updated with details of when they go on sale through the newsletter. They will be available to purchase online: [Carols by Candlelight | Tower of London | Historic Royal Palaces](#)

Jigsaw

Harvest Festival decorations in St Katharine Docks by the Tower of London.

<https://www.jigsawplanet.com/?rc=play&pid=16d7c45742d3>



Prayers

Please continue to remember those on our sick list, some of whom are very ill, amongst whom we name: Ciara, Val, Gillian, Louise, Stanley, John, Rob, Kofi, Anselmo, Joaquim, Nick, John, Brian and Val.

RIP

Bob Smith, David Rees, Margarete Thiede and Margaret Pratt.

Please continue to pray for peace in Ukraine and the countries of the Middle East:

God of peace and justice, we pray for the people of Ukraine and the Middle East today.

We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.

We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow,
that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.

We pray for those with power over war or peace,
for wisdom, discernment, and compassion to guide their decisions.
Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear,
that you would hold and protect them.

This we pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of peace. Amen.

With best wishes to all, Roger.



1 Tower Green
HM Tower of London
EC3N 4AB
07908 413045
Roger.Hall@hrp.org.uk
Twitter @RogerHall53

Our Safeguarding Officer

Anna Kimber, Tower of London Head of Operations Anna.Kimber@hrp.org.uk

Donations to the Chapel

We are always grateful for financial contributions to help us in our work. If you would like to support the Chapels Royal, HM Tower of London by setting up a Standing Order, making a one-off donation to Chapel Funds or setting up a Direct Debit, this is how to do it.

Thank you in advance for your generosity.

STANDING ORDER. This is our preferred method because it ensures that we get maximum benefit from your contributions in the timeliest manner. If you would like to set up a Standing Order, you should be able to do this online with your bank, using the following details:

Bank name: **CAF Bank plc**

Sort code: **40-52-40**

Account number: **00027597**

Account name: **The HM Tower of London Chapels Royal Foundation**

Reference: *[your initials and surname]*.

If you prefer to set up the Standing Order by hard copy, please complete the Standing Order form below and send it to your bank.

In either case, please be sure to complete the Gift Aid Form below if you are an eligible UK taxpayer, as this increases the amount of your donation by 25% at no additional cost to you. Please send the completed Gift Aid Form to the address on the form: *The Chapel Administrator, 1 Tower Green, Tower of London, London, EC3N 4AB* or scan it and send it as an e-mail attachment to: TowerofLondonChapelAdministrator@hrp.org.uk.

ONE-OFF DONATION. You can make a one-off donation online by clicking on [this link](#) or pointing the camera of your phone or tablet at this QR Code



and following the link which then pops up. If you are eligible for Gift Aid, please tick the relevant box and provide the required details on the CAF Bank online form. These two links are also available on our website [here](#).

DIRECT DEBIT. It is also possible to use the links above to set up a Direct Debit if that is what you prefer.

If you are an eligible UK taxpayer using the CAF Bank website via the links above to make either a one-off donation or to set up a Direct Debit, please remember to tick the Gift Aid box on the CAF site form. This method of Gift Aid payment does entail some delay in our receiving the benefit – hence our preference for Standing Orders. Gift Aid is available only to eligible UK taxpayers.

If you would also like to give to the Music Fund known as the Chapel Music Friends, please click [here](#).

Please note that Standing Orders and Direct Debits can be set up only from accounts with banks in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man. One-off payments may be made from anywhere in the world, using the card or PayPal options on the CAF Bank website from the links above.

Please see below for the Standing Order and Gift Aid forms. **Thank you again for your generosity.**

The HM Tower of London Chapels Royal Foundation



Standing Order

Standing Order

If you have an online banking facility, you should be able to use that to set up a Standing Order with the information in the box below. If not, please complete the form and send it to your bank.

To: The Manager, _____ *[Name of your bank]* *[Address*
of _____ *bank]* *[Address* _____ *of*
bank] *[Sort code]* _____ *[Account No.]* _____

Please remit £ _____ to the account detailed below commencing on

_____ *[date]* and monthly / annually *[delete one]* until further notice.

[Signature] _____ *[Date of signing]* _____

Use the information below to set up online, or return the completed form to your bank.

Please remit to: CAF Bank plc	Sort code	40-52-40
	Account number	00027597
	Account name	The HM Tower of London Chapels Royal Foundation
	Reference	<i>[your initials and surname]</i>

The HM Tower of London Chapels Royal Foundation



Gift Aid

Charity Gift Aid Declaration – Multiple donations

Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address is required to identify you as a current UK taxpayer. In order to Gift Aid your donation you must tick the box below.

☐ I want to Gift Aid my donation of £ _____ and any donation I make in the future or have made in the last four years to The HM Tower of London Chapels Royal Foundation.

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in the tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference. *If this does not apply, please strike through and continue with the rest of this form.*

My details: Title _____ First name or initials _____

Surname _____ Home Address _____

_____ Post Code _____ Email _____

Phone No _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Please notify the charity if you:

- want to cancel this declaration
- change your name or home address
- no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains.

.

If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment Tax Return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

Please post, or return to:

The Chapel Administrator, 1 Tower Green, Tower of London, London, EC3N 4AB.

or send as an e-mail attachment to:

TowerofLondonChapelAdministrator@hrp.org.uk

Registered Charity Number 1160859