



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

Dear friends,

As we approach the half-way point of Advent, we get closer to the moment of celebrating the birth of Christ at Christmas. Some of the preparation will be joyful but, as with a new birth, there will also be apprehension and anxiety. We all know that life changes the moment a new baby appears and nothing will ever be quite the same again. John's Gospel speaks of Jesus's birth as the coming of light (John 1: 2), without which nothing can live, but also in which nothing can hide. Light is symbolic of all that is God: it is life, it is truth, it is warmth; light pushes away the darkness. I'm delighted that we have so many Carol Services and concerts in December. It does, of course, make it hard for those of us who have to keep singing *Hark the Herald Angels sing* every day in Advent, but my hope is that the message of Christmas, told anew at every service, will bring some light and joy into people's lives and encourage them to think again about what this time of year is all about.

Bringing light into people's lives is at the heart of the Gospel. Jesus is 'The Light of the World', as in William Holman Hunt's famous painting which hangs in St Paul's Cathedral. Our chapel has at its heart the mission to bring new light into the world through its weekly services and charitable works carried out by the congregation (such as donations of coats and shoes, visits to The Clink at Brixton Prison, and other activities).

What light have I brought into other people's lives during Advent? What light have you brought into other people's lives during Advent? If we believe that we are made in the image of God, then surely, we too must bring some light into other people's lives.

And now for an apology. I said in my sermon last Sunday that one of my favourite books is *Enduring Love* by Sebastian Faulks, when it was, in fact, written by Ian McEwan. I blame the accident I had on the previous Friday and the blow to my head for that – at least that's my excuse! I'm glad you are such a forgiving congregation.

We have now had two excellent visits to The Clink Restaurant and there is a desire to go again next year, which we will do.

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



Service Details for Sunday 14th December 2025

The Third Sunday in Advent

0915 Holy Communion (The White Tower)

1100 Holy Communion (St Peter ad Vincula)

Mulled wine after the service

Readings

James 5: 7-10.

Matthew 11: 2-11.

Anthem Laetentur coeli (Byrd)

Collect for The Third Sunday of Advent

O Lord Jesus Christ, who at thy first coming
didst send thy messenger to prepare thy way
before thee; Grant that the ministers and stewards
of thy mysteries may likewise so prepare and make
thy way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient
to the wisdom of the just, that at thy second coming
judge the world we may be found an acceptable people
in thy sight, who livest and reignest with the Father and
the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. **Amen.**

Poem of the week

Thomas Flatman was an English poet and painter, born in London in 1637 and educated at Winchester and New College, Oxford. My guess is that many of you, like me, will know little or nothing about him. He was called to the bar in 1662 but seems never to have practised as a lawyer. He was famous as a miniaturist painter, noted for the vitality of his work. There is a self-portrait of him in the Victoria and Albert Museum. He was a staunch Royalist and wrote a poem to celebrate the return of Charles II in 1660, after the collapse of the Cromwellian Commonwealth. His *Poems and Songs* were published in 1686 and include *An Appeal to Cats in the Business of Love*, a poem I found some years ago and which always makes me smile, particularly as I've never been quite sure what I think about cats!

An Appeal to Cats in the Business of Love

Ye cats at midnight spit love at each other,
Who best feel the pangs of a passionate lover,
I appeal to your scratches and your tattered fur,
If the business of love be no more than to purr.
Old Lady Grimalkin with her gooseberry eyes
Knew something when a kitten, for why she was wise;
You find by experience, the love-fit's soon o'er,
Puss! Puss! Lasts not long, but turns to *Cat-whore!*
Men ride many miles,
Cats tread many tiles,
Both hazard their necks in the fray,
Only cats, when they fall
From a house or a wall,
Keep their feet, mount their tails, and away!

Thomas Flatman 1637-88

The HRP Staff Carol Service



Canon Roger Hall welcomes HRP Staff and Volunteers to the Chapel



With the Governor and Deputy Governor of the Tower; Sexton YW McCormick leads the Choir of the Chapels Royal out after another beautiful service.

The HRP Patrons Concert



Master of Music Colm Carey and the Choir of the Chapels Royal



An exciting programme of music performed by the Choir of the Chapels Royal, partnered with readings from some familiar faces; Canon Roger Hall and Baldrick have a cunning plan.

Jigsaw

<https://www.jigsawplanet.com/?rc=play&pid=2a01a56b79c1>



Prayers

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

RIP

Jill Ridgeon, Janet Bryant, and Lance Corporal George Hooley, a 28-year-old member of the Parachute Regiment and the first British soldier killed on active service in Ukraine.

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.



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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 _____

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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.

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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

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