



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

Dear friends,

At a time when many of us are getting ready for Christmas, it was with a deep sense of shock that I learnt on Sunday of the unfolding events taking place on Bondi Beach in Sydney. The murder of 15 people, including a child, was horrific, as were the large numbers of injured. Tributes flooded in from around the world. The King sent a message saying, 'our hearts go out to everyone who has been affected so dreadfully by these events', adding, 'the light of the Jewish festival of Chanukah will always triumph over the darkness of such evil'. I was also profoundly struck by the words of the Chief Rabbi, Sir Ephraim Mirvis, (and I quote his words in full):

'As we kindle our first Chanukah lights this evening, we hold the victims of the unspeakable atrocity in Sydney in our hearts and in our prayers. We mourn the loss of the innocent lives taken so brutally in this act of hatred and terror and we pray for a speedy recovery for all those injured. Once again, Jews have been targeted for the crime of gathering together proudly as Jews and it is hard to find the words to adequately express our pain'.

That **any** community should live in fear of meeting together is an appalling indictment upon the world we live in. As Christians, we pray for people of all faiths and none, that they may be equally held in God's loving hands. I am enormously encouraged that communities across the world have come together and shown solidarity and support at this time, as I trust we all would for any community whatsoever attacked in this terrible manner.

I hope your preparations for Christmas are going smoothly. Please be on the lookout for people on their own, remembering that a kind word, a visit, a card or a telephone call can make all the difference to someone who is feeling lonely. Many people, sadly, live in isolation and find Christmas a difficult time. Let them know that they are not forgotten! You too could be an angel (that is, a messenger), bringing joy and the light of Christmas into someone's home.

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

Service Details for Sunday 21st December 2025

The Fourth Sunday in Advent

0915 Holy Communion (The White Tower)

1100 The State Carol Service (NB the chapel is now full.)

Collect for The Fourth Sunday in Advent

O Lord, raise up (we pray thee) thy power, and
come among us, and with great might succour
us; that whereas, through our sins and wickedness
we are sore let and hindered in running the race
that is set before us, thy bountiful grace and mercy
may speedily help and deliver us; through the
satisfaction of thy Son our Lord, to whom with
thee and the Holy Ghost be honour and glory,
world without end. **Amen.**

Poem of the week

Throughout these many weeks of singing Christmas carols in December (and there are eight services in the chapel this week), I have felt that there are several carols which always stand out. Last night, Colm chose two carols that were written by members of the choir. At the reception after the service, several people came up to me and said how wonderful it was to hear new carols alongside many of the well-loved ones. However, a personal favourite of mine (and one that Barbara, my wife, always loved) is '*In the Bleak Midwinter*', a poem written by Christina Rossetti and often sung to the beautiful tune composed by Gustav Holst. Some carols tend to exemplify, alas, the worst of Victorian sentimentality but not so Christina Rossetti's poem. Her strong but simple message is that the only way to respond to the love that God has given us in Jesus Christ is to offer our own hearts in return. She stresses the contrast between worldly treasures and spiritual simplicity. So often we forget that all we have has come from God, and for this, our hearts should always be eternally thankful.

In the Bleak Midwinter, by Christina Rossetti 1830 - 94

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.

Angels and archangels
May have gathered there,
Cherubim and seraphim
Thronged the air,
But only His mother
In her maiden bliss,
Worshipped the Beloved
With a kiss.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him
Nor earth sustain;
Heaven and earth shall flee away
When He comes to reign:
In the bleak midwinter
A stable-place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty,
Jesus Christ.

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.

Enough for Him, whom cherubim
Worship night and day,
A breastful of milk
And a mangerful of hay;
Enough for Him, whom angels
Fall down before,
The ox and ass and camel
Which adore.



Carols By Candlelight Concert

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



Christmas Carols at the Tower

On the weekend of the 13th & 14th December, the Tower of London welcomed over forty choirs from across the country to the Tower of London, including the Help for Heros Choir.



Jigsaw

<https://www.jigsawplanet.com/?rc=play&pid=348c243d560b>



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 and Janet Bryant.

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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