



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

Dear friends,

And so, we come to the end of another year; one that has seen a number of major events, from the war in Ukraine, the death of Queen Elizabeth II, a heat-wave in the summer and now strikes and economic strife. That said, the chapel has enjoyed several uplifting services and events this year and I am grateful to all those who, in many different ways, have been part of the chapel team. We have a lot to be thankful for and we look forward to a full 2023.

Throughout December, Colm, Christian and the choir have performed at numerous carol services and I would like to thank them, on behalf of us all, for their hard work and for the very high standard of music and singing they always maintain. I would also like to thank our stewards (all volunteers) who have turned up, night after night, to ensure the safe and smooth running of the chapel. Many people have commented on the warm welcome they have been given on entering the chapel, often a place they are discovering for the first time. I hope they will return. Thank you to everyone who has helped, in so many ways, to make our chapel a special place.

During the last week, several regular members of the chapel have sadly lost loved ones, as the prayer list at the end of this newsletter shows. Please keep in your prayers all the bereaved, as well as the sick and those who will find this Christmas a particularly difficult time, and look out for where you might be able to light a candle to dispel the darkness in someone's life.

I would like to thank you all for your support and encouragement during this past year, and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in 2023.

I wish you a very Happy Christmas and every blessing for 2023. Roger.

Services Details

24th December, Christmas Eve

1600hrs Crib Service, St Peter ad Vincula

1800hrs First Mass of Christmas and Holy Communion, St Peter ad Vincula

25th December, Christmas Day

1000hrs Choral Matins with carols,
followed by a shortened service of Holy Communion.

No services on 1st January 2023

8th January 2023, Epiphany Sunday

0915hrs Holy Communion, St John the Evangelist, White Tower

1100hrs Holy Communion, St Peter ad Vincula

Poem of the week

The Christmas Rose, written in 1944 by the Anglo-Irish poet and writer Cecil Day-Lewis, is an interesting and, for some, quite challenging poem, especially as Day-Lewis never had any particular religious affiliation. In his early years he claimed to be a Marxist, but was later deeply influenced by his friend and fellow poet W.H Auden, who saw in Christianity a wonderful power to change human lives, having recovered his own faith in 1940. Day-Lewis' experience of the second world war, together with his appointment as Poet Laureate in 1968, made him more moderate and conventional in his views. He went on to become a successful novelist as well, writing 19 crime and mystery books published under the pseudonym Nicholas Blake. He was the father of the actor Daniel Day-Lewis.

The Christmas Rose

What is the flower that blooms each year
In flowerless days,
Making a little blaze
On the bleak earth, giving my heart some cheer?

Harsh the sky and hard the ground
When the Christmas rose is found.
Look! Its white star, low on earth,
Rays a vision of rebirth.

Who is the child that's born each year –
His bedding, straw:
His grace, enough to thaw
My wintering life, and melt a world's despair?

Harsh the sky and hard the earth
When the Christmas child comes forth.
Look! around a stable throne
Beasts and wise men are at one.

What men are we that, year on year,
We Herod-wise
In our cold wits devise
A death of innocents, a rule of fear?

Hushed your earth, full-starred your sky
For a new nativity:
Be born in us, relieve our plight,
Christmas child, you rose of light!

Cecil Day-Lewis 1904-1972

Christmas 2022 in the Chapel of St Peter ad Vincula

Christmas State Carol Service



The Christmas State Carol service was a highlight of this year's many carol services. The service was attended by the new Constable of the Tower, Sir Gordon Messenger and Lady Messenger, as well as the Governor of the Tower, Tower Officers, the Chief Yeoman Warder and the Yeoman Body.

Carols by Candlelight Concert



One 'Hark the Herald' too many!



A few of the Chapel team at Christmas lunch



Christmas Cracker Jokes

Why does Father Christmas go down the chimney?

Because it soots him!

What is green, covered in tinsel and goes ribbet ribbet?

A Mistle-toad!

Where do snowmen go to dance?

Snowballs!

Who hides in the bakery at Christmas?

A mince spy!

The Choir in Concert - Marden (Kent) - January 8th, 5pm

Hello everyone!

I am writing to let you know about a charity concert the choir is involved in on January 8.

In Marden (the village in which I live) there is a café run by a Ukrainian lady called Olga. She has been raising funds to support people in Ukraine (her own parents are in a village just outside Kiev) and has personally driven several shipments of supplies to the Polish/Ukraine border. I very much wanted to do something to help Olga and to support Ukraine, and to this end she and I have organised a concert which will involve the Tower choir, to raise funds. Roger has already kindly pledged some support from the Chapel.

If you would like to support this event, you can get tickets from me for £10 (please email me at colmcarey@me.com). The church is a 5min (max) walk from Marden Station, and Marden is 45mins on the train from London Bridge (every 30mins). There is a pub 2mins from the church which does a good Sunday lunch, so if you fancied a roast before the concert..

Details are -

Concert to celebrate Christmas, Epiphany and New Year

January 8, 5pm - 6.15pm

Parish Church of St Michael and All Angels, Marden, TN12 9DR

Tickets £10 / Mulled Wine on sale

All proceeds go to supporting Ukrainians in Ukraine.

The date of the concert is significant in that it celebrates both (our Western Christian) Epiphany and (Ukrainian Orthodox) Christmas, so we will be singing a mixture of music for Christmas, Epiphany and New Year. It will also feature a presentation on Ukrainian culture and some traditional Ukrainian songs and dance (performed by Ukrainians).

Please do let me know if you'd like to visit the depths of Kent and support this event.

All best wishes to everyone for a wonderful Christmas, Colm.

Jigsaw

<https://www.jigsawplanet.com/?rc=play&pid=33cac740e6cd>



Prayers

Please continue to remember those on our sick list, some of whom are very ill, amongst whom we name: Norma, Pat, Ann, Ros, Mark, Madeleine, Dan, Derek, Peter, Johnny, Colin, Ian, and Florence.

RIP

Angela Amica, John Critchley, Ronald White, Heather Whittingham, Joy Murphy and Rita Lombers.

Please continue to pray for Ukraine:

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

We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of peace. Amen

With best wishes, Roger.



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