



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

Dear friends,



Next Sunday 30th November is Advent Sunday. I always enjoy learning about the practices of other Christian churches and reflecting on what lies behind them. As we had an Orthodox icon of Christ the King last week, I thought we might have one for Advent this week. The conventionally abbreviated Greek words at the top mean ‘Mother of God’ and those below, alongside the image of Jesus in his mother’s womb, mean ‘Jesus Christ’.

Western Christians tend to associate fasting with Lent rather than Advent but the Orthodox also fast during Advent. In fact, Orthodox Christians fast for more than half the year, often giving up meat, dairy, eggs and, on strict fast days, giving up oil, wine and fish. By following the prescribed fast of the Church, they are working on their self-control, in the hope that by abstaining from foods, they learn also to abstain from sinning.

The Book of Common Prayer contains a prayer by the Eastern Saint John Chrysostom - John ‘Golden-mouth’ - (347-407 AD), which we always use at Morning Prayer:

Almighty God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto thee; and dost promise, that when two or three are gathered together in thy Name thou wilt grant their requests; Fulfil now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants, as may be most expedient for them; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting.

St John Chrysostom also gave guidance on fasting. In order for fasting to be effective, he said, it must consist not merely of abstention from certain food and drink; rather, those who fast must do so:

“ ... with the eye and the ear and the feet and the hands and all the members of our bodies.

Let the hands fast, by being free of avarice.

Let the feet fast, by ceasing to run after sin.

Let the eyes fast, by disciplining them not to glare at that which is sinful.

Let the ear fast, by not listening to evil talk and gossip.

Let the mouth fast from foul words and unjust criticism.

For what good is it if we abstain from birds and fishes, but bite and devour our brothers?”

So, if by any chance you feel like fasting this Advent, there is some helpful advice. I, for one, will look differently in future on chocolate-filled Advent calendars.

With all good wishes, Cortland.

Service Details for Sunday 30th November 2025
Advent Sunday

0915 Holy Communion (St Peter ad Vincula)
1100 Advent Carol Service (St Peter ad Vincula)

The Collect for Advent Sunday

Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness,
and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life
in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility;
that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty
to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal;
through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen**



The Advent Wreath On Sunday we shall light the first candle on our Advent wreath. These originated in Germany in 1830; the story goes that Johann Hinrich Wichern (1808-81), a pastor in Germany, built a wreath out of an old cartwheel to help the children in his mission school count the days until Christmas. He added small candles to be lit every weekday and Saturday during Advent, and on Sundays, a large white candle was lit. The practice spread and now almost all denominations have adopted it.

Poem for Advent I came across this little poem by the contemporary American writer Mark Stucky, which I thought I would share with you. Some background on him from – of all places – the Amazon website, contains the following: “Mark D. Stucky has advanced degrees in religion and communications. After being a pastor, he moved into communications and has been a technical and freelance writer for over three decades. During his day job, he has documented (with guides, manuals, catalogues, brochures, and web pages) diverse technology products. In his free time, he’s written a book and hundreds of poems, stories, and articles on a variety of topics. He has received four dozen writing and publication awards. He believes in following facts and faith, understanding other perspectives, protecting the vulnerable, and saving the world (or at least trying to).” His wry little poem is, I think, timely, self-explanatory and thought-provoking.

Your Order for Peace on Earth

Since Amazon has almost everything,
I placed several orders for Peace on Earth.
I hoped the shipments would arrive in time for Christmas.
I even paid extra for overnight delivery to Gaza and Ukraine.
But, alas, angelically-voiced Alexa announced
that promised Peace on Earth was out of stock.
Easy earthly peace is elusive,
found in nobody’s shopping cart.
We’ll need to work together
to deliver peace ourselves.

© Mark Stucky.

Jigsaw Definitely time for an Advent Wreath. The puzzle is [here](#).



Christmas State Carol Service
11am Sunday 21st December 2025
Nine Lessons and Carols

If you would like to attend this service, please
[email Debbie](#) in advance to be added to the
guest list. Places are limited so please be in
touch soon.

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 all those killed in the Hong Kong fire.

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, Cortland.



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HM Tower of London

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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 _____

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Please notify the charity if you:

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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:

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