



Anthony Chappel Ross

To mark the start of the Advent and Christmas season, York Minster is preparing for the raising of its spectacular Advent Wreath and the opening of the York Minster Christmas Tree Festival in the first weekend of December.

On Friday 1 December, a three metre-wide Advent Wreath will be suspended below the Minster's Central Tower. The wreath is assembled around a vast and heavy metal ring with built-in channels to hold the water required to keep the foliage fresh. The structure also features five one-metre-high candle holders, representing the Sundays of Advent.

It takes the Minster's expert team of volunteer flower arrangers almost three hours to create the beautiful abundant display, overflowing with fresh holly and ivy. The raising of the Advent Wreath is the pinnacle of the calendar year for the flower arrangers who work all year round to provide the cathedral with beautiful floral displays.

Saturday 2 December marks the opening of the much-loved York Minster Christmas Tree Festival where 60 trees will adorn the Nave, Chapter House and Lady Chapel. The trees will be decorated to individual themes by local businesses, schools and charities, with trees provided by award-winning local company York Christmas Trees.

Throughout the festival, visitors will be able to vote for their favourite tree with the winning charity and school receiving a £200 prize and the winning business £200 to donate to a charity of their choice.

York Minster's Christmas Tree Festival will run from Saturday 2 December 2023 to Friday 5 January 2024 during general admission times (please check opening times on the website before visiting). Entry is included with general admission (general admission is free for York residents with proof of address).

The Very Revd Dominic Barrington, Dean of York said:

"As we move towards the great seasons of Advent and Christmas, we are conscious not only of the nights drawing in, but of the considerable darkness afflicting much of the world, including the region that Christians often call the Holy Land.

The season of Advent helps us prepare for the coming into the world of a light which is inextinguishable, and on each Sunday of that season, another candle will be lit on our great Advent Wreath to symbolise that light which the world has not, and cannot overcome. I hope you will visit the Minster during this wonderful, powerful season and let that light transform your life this Christmas."

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