

York Minster today announced details of services and livestreamed worship for Advent and Christmas 2020. The cathedral reopened for public worship on Wednesday 2 December in line with the guidance and restrictions in the Government's three tier Covid control system.

Whilst attendance inside the Minster will continue to be severely restricted, with pre-booked tickets required for key services during December, digital worship has flourished, keeping people connected to their faith, to prayer and to each other, throughout this difficult year. The most popular and beloved Advent and Christmas services will be livestreamed, so that people who cannot visit the cathedral can still participate in real-time or catch up later via the Minster's website, You Tube and Facebook channels.

The Revd Canon Vicky Johnson, Canon Precentor at York Minster said: "This will be a most poignant Advent and Christmas after a sombre year. We cannot welcome all those who would wish to visit the Minster this Christmas but we will be present for them in other ways. Christmas will look a little different for us this year.

Vicky explained: "We cannot do the things we would ordinarily do, and we, along with everyone across the nation have had to think creatively about how we can share the story of Christmas, but the message remains the same: Jesus is born for each one of us, bringing light and hope to the whole world.

"Advent and Christmas at York Minster will be available online, accessible to everyone in real-time or to catch up later with friends and family in your own time. We hope you will join us as we move through the season of Advent from darkness into light and the hope signified by the birth of Jesus Christ."

As well as its regular daily and Sunday worship, York Minster's Advent and Christmas schedule will include a range of services in the building and on-line.

### **Candlelit Choral Evensong**

Tuesday to Saturday during Advent at 5.30pm

Experience the beauty of Choral Evensong in the largest gothic cathedral in Northern Europe, sung by the Choir of York Minster on most week nights during December. Free tickets need to be booked in advance for Evensong services on Tuesday 15, Wednesday 16, Thursday 17, Friday 18 and Sunday 20 December to help us safely manage numbers inside the cathedral.

### **A little story for Christmas: Tales from the Crib for children and families**

- Saturday 12 December at 3.30pm (tickets released 10am on 4 December)
- Saturday 19 December at 3.30pm (tickets released 10am on 11 December)
- Thursday 24 December at 2pm (tickets released 10am on 16 December).

Join York Minster's clergy, in their best Christmas jumpers, for a little story for Christmas. The short service will take place at the crib, surrounded by the angels and shepherds. Children are invited to come in fancy dress of their choosing.

*Free tickets for this family service must be booked in advance to help us safely manage numbers inside the cathedral. Capacity will be limited and tickets will be available on a first come first served basis at 10am eight days in advance of each service.*

The service will also be broadcast online at 3.30pm on Saturday 19 December on our Facebook and YouTube channels.

### **Chapter House Choir: Virtual Carols by Candlelight**

Wednesday 16 December at 7.30pm

The ever-popular and atmospheric 'Carols by Candlelight' moves online. Presented by the Chapter House Choir, an associate choir of York Minster, this year's performance includes new virtual recordings from the Choir, alongside highlights of past 'Carols by Candlelight' performances, set against beautiful footage of York Minster's Chapter House in candlelight.

The concert will be broadcast at 7.30pm on Wednesday 16 December. Links will be available at [www.yorkminster.org](http://www.yorkminster.org) and via the choir's social media channels.

### **Christmas Week at York Minster**

Daily worship will continue at York Minster throughout Christmas Week. The following services and events will also take place:

#### **Candlelit Evensong with Carols for Christmas**

Wednesday 23 and Thursday 24 December, 4pm

Join the Choir of York Minster for these special candlelit services of Evensong with Carols for Christmas, including Christmas carols sung by the choir, readings, prayers and beautiful music from choir and organ, to prepare us all for the birth of Christ.

Tickets for this service need to be booked in advance and will be available from 10am on Monday 7 December here. The service will also be livestreamed via our website [www.yorkminster.org](http://www.yorkminster.org) and via our Facebook and YouTube channels.

#### **7pm: A Vigil Eucharist for Christmas**

A quiet, contemplative service of Holy Communion at the cathedral, reflecting on the birth of Christ, and holding before God in prayer our world, our nation, our communities and our families during this time of pandemic. The Dean of York will preside and the Canon Precentor will preach with Organ accompaniment.

Tickets for this service need to be booked in advance and will be available from 10am on Monday 7 December from [www.yorkminster.org](http://www.yorkminster.org)

#### **11pm: Digital Midnight Mass from York Minster with the Archbishop of York – online only**

The First Communion of Christmas with Blessing of the Crib, with the Archbishop of York and music from the Songmen and Choral Scholars of the Choir of York Minster

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This will be a pre-recorded online service only (there will be no service taking place at the cathedral at this time). The service will be available online at [www.yorkminster.org](http://www.yorkminster.org) and on our YouTube and Facebook channels.

- 17 December: O Sapientia (*O Wisdom*)
- 18 December: O Adonai (*O Lord*)
- 19 December: O Radix Jesse (*O Root of Jesse*)
- 20 December: O Clavis David (*O Key of David*)
- 21 December: O Oriens (*O Dayspring*)
- 22 December: O Rex Gentium (*O King of the Nations*)
- 23 December: O Emmanuel (*O God with us*).

### **Digital Lessons and Carols for Christmas – Saturday 26 December at 2pm (online only)**

Based on the traditional service of Nine Lessons and Carols developed by a former Dean of York, Eric Milner White, this wonderful service journeys through the Christmas story, with readings from scripture, images from the building and music from the Choir of York Minster.

-Ends-

### **Notes for Editors**

#### **Keeping people safe: Covid-19 control measures at York Minster**

In line with Government and Church of England guidance, York Minster has implemented a range of measures to help keep visitors and staff safe. These include:

- compulsory wearing of masks inside the Minster
- limiting the number of people allowed inside
- reduced seating
- a one-way system to allow people to physically distance from one another
- hand sanitizer points
- additional cleaning measures
- staff and clergy wearing face masks and visors
- worshippers attending public services will also be asked to leave their name and contact details to assist with the NHS Test and Trace programme, in line with Government guidance.

Changes to services include no singing or sharing of the Peace and the suspension of the Common Cup during Holy Communion will continue. There will also be no plate collection at the end of services, although people are encouraged to make a donation using contactless donation points inside the cathedral.

Parts of the cathedral will remain closed including the Central Tower and Undercroft Museum and there will be no guided tours.

The Minster has been approved for the UK-wide 'We're Good To Go' industry standard, launched this week by national tourism organisations for England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, which demonstrates it is adhering to the respective Government and public health guidance.

York Minster's arrangements for worship and visiting came into effect on 2 December but may be subject to change following any further Government advice.

For further information visit [www.yorkminster.org](http://www.yorkminster.org)

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