

Stephen Cottrell, the Archbishop of York, will be in the children's Christmas Activity tent in York Minster's South Piazza from 10.45am on Saturday 4 December, to give a reading from his children's book, *The Sleepy Shepherd*. There will also be the opportunity to buy a copy of the book and have it signed by the Archbishop.

The Sleepy Shepherd is an enchanting Christmas tale for children aged 5-7 that tells the story of Silas, who as a boy is so dozy that he completely misses the visit of the angels and the chance to greet the Christ-child in Bethlehem. But one crucial night, years later, he makes an important decision – to be a real shepherd to a man whose friends have all fallen asleep.

Archbishop Stephen said, "I have always loved the act of sitting down with my children and enjoying the wide-eyed extravagant wonder of a tall tale. We all have imagination but, like every other muscle, it needs exercising.

"I fear for a world without this, for story-telling has been a vital bedrock of every culture. I hope that more people can capture the love of sharing stories and I look forward to seeing a tent full of those keen to hear more about the shepherd boy who can't stay awake on a most important night!"

Archbishop Stephen will be in the Christmas Activity tent next door to the Christmas Tree Festival in the Minster's South Piazza. This is a free non-ticketed event, spaces for the reading will be limited and will operate on a first come first served basis. The book signing is open for all – and will run from 10.45 to 11.45am approx.

There are other events taking place around [York Minster](#) at this time which include:

Experience Christmas Trail

Saturday 4 December to Thursday 6 January, 9.30am – 4pm

Discover more about the Christmas story by exploring six activity stops hidden around the Minster. Families can follow a special trail with items to look at, touch, smell and discuss at each point. There will also be interpretation encouraging adult visitors to spend time reflecting on what each stop tells us about the Christmas story. Free with admission.

The York Minster Christmas Tree Festival

18 November 2021 to 6 January 2022, 10am – 7pm

Experience the Minster's first Christmas Tree Festival set in the cathedral's grounds. The new festival will take place in a festive marquee by the South Piazza and feature around 40 trees decorated by local businesses, schools and charities.

Visitors can vote for their favourite tree in the 'best dressed tree' competition and visit the activity marquee to write their own Christmas message on a tag to add to a tree there or inside the cathedral's East End. Admission is free but donations are encouraged. No pre-booking required.

The Winter Village at York Minster

18 November 2021 – 6 January 2022, 10am – 7pm

The Winter Village at York Minster brings the best of both location and local produce to this brand new event. Situated at the foot of the majestic South Door of York Minster, The Winter Village comprises several decorative wooden cabins offering food, drinks, gifts and the perfect place to sit and admire the view. The Winter Village, which is being run in partnership with CMJ Events, will be open daily from 10am to 7pm. Entry is free.

The Sleepy Shepherd is published by [SPCK](#) and can be purchased via most bookstores or online

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