



THE ARCHBISHOP
OF YORK

York Minster is preparing to mark Advent and Christmas with a programme of new services and events for 2024, alongside returning seasonal favourites, family-friendly activities and a festival of Christmas Trees.

From moments of quiet reflection, away from the hustle and bustle of York's festive streets, to the cathedral's most popular events of the year, the special services, events and activities will celebrate the season's themes of anticipation, hope and joy.

The season begins on Advent Sunday (1 December), with the spectacular Advent Procession. Starting in complete darkness, the cathedral is gradually illuminated by candlelight as the Choir of York Minster moves through the building to readings from the Bible. Daily worship throughout Advent and Christmas will include prayers, music and readings as the season progresses.

Christmas week worship includes the Crib Service (24 December), Nine Lessons and Carols (22 and 24 December) and Midnight Mass (24 December). The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Stephen Cottrell, Archbishop of York, will preach at the Sung Eucharist for Christmas Day at 11am (25 December).

From Saturday 30 November (until Sunday 5 January 2025), the ever-popular York Minster Christmas Tree Festival returns with 70 trees, individually decorated by local businesses, schools and charities, on display in the cathedral's Chapter House, Nave and Lady Chapel.

York Minster will host a range of exciting concerts, from family-favourite *The Nutcracker* and the return of the well-known choral groups *The Chapter House Choir* and *Gabrieli Roar*, to a new performance by *The Brighthouse* and *Rastrick Brass Band*. The cathedral's much-loved Christmas Carol Concerts return on 11 and 12 December, with readings by actor Sue Devaney (*Coronation Street*), and music by the Choir of York Minster and the Yorkshire Volunteer Band.

The Very Reverend 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."

York Minster's Advent and Christmas programme is set out below. For booking information visit www.yorkminster.org or call the Bookings Team on 01904 557200.

York Minster's Advent and Christmas Programme 2024:

Johann Sebastian Bach's Cantata 140, Sleepers, wake

Sunday 24 November, 4pm

On the Sunday before Advent, the Choir of York Minster gives its traditional annual Evensong performance of Bach's popular Cantata 140, 'Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme' (Sleepers, wake), with orchestral accompaniment.

Free, no tickets required.

The York Minster Christmas Tree Festival

Saturday 30 November – Sunday 5 January 2025, during general admission times

York Minster Christmas Tree Festival returns for the fourth year with 70 trees on display in the cathedral's stunning Nave, Chapter House and Lady Chapel.

Included with general admission.

Minster Mash-Up: Lights switch-on

Saturday 30 November, 10am

Join York Minster's worship for young people and families – Minster Mash-Up – and get ready for Advent. Families are invited to join us at the lights switch-on for the York Minster Christmas Tree Festival as we prepare to mark the beginning of Advent and await the arrival of baby Jesus.

Free, no tickets required.

Advent Procession

Sunday 1 December, 5.30pm

On Advent Sunday, York Minster gradually emerges from darkness into full candlelight in the stunning and atmospheric Advent Procession. The Choir of York Minster will process through the cathedral to music, readings and prayers.

Free, pre-booked tickets required.

A Grand Georgian Christmas with Gabrieli Roar

Friday 6 December, 7.15pm

Following the successful Praetorius tour in 2022, Gabrieli Roar presents A Grand Georgian Christmas. Led by Gabrieli Artistic Director Paul McCreesh, over 4,000 late-primary and secondary students will join Gabrieli's world-class musicians across eleven performances in regional cathedrals around the UK, from Cumbria to Cornwall.

Tickets available in the autumn.

The Nutcracker at York Minster

Saturday 7 December, 7pm

A magical performance of Tchaikovsky's The Nutcracker from York Minster for children and adults alike. Narration by local children's actor Gemma Sharp (Artistic Director of local theatre company Hoglets), and music by Benjamin Morris, York Minster's Assistant Director of Music, who will bring Tchaikovsky's music to life on the cathedral's spectacular Grand Organ.

Tickets priced between £7 and £30 available via yorkminster.org

Christmas Carol Concerts

Wednesday 11 and Thursday 12 December, 7pm

The Choir of York Minster will perform much-loved Christmas music, with seasonal readings from special guest Sue Devaney and music by the Yorkshire Volunteer Band.

Brighouse and Rastrick Band Concert

Saturday 14 December, 7.30pm

The world-famous Brighouse and Rastrick Band arrive at York Minster for a fabulous festive concert of Christmas pieces, medleys and carols to get you into the Christmas spirit.

Tickets available in the autumn.

Sankta Lucia: Festival of Light

Monday 16 December, 7pm

An atmospheric, candlelit procession and carol service based on the traditional Swedish Lucia celebration. The service is run in partnership with the [York Anglo-Scandinavian Society](#).

Free, pre-booked tickets required.

Chapter House Choir 'Carols by Candlelight'

Friday 20 December, 7.30pm

The choir continues to build on its reputation as one of the North of England's finest chamber choirs, under the leadership of Musical Director Benjamin Morris. The Chapter House Choir will be joined by the Chapter House Youth Choir.

Tickets available in the autumn.

Nine Lessons and Carols

Sunday 22 & Tuesday 24 December, 4pm

Two services consisting of nine special readings, carols sung by the Choir of York Minster and hymns for everyone to join in. A traditional Christmas celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ.

Free, pre-booked tickets required.

Crib Service

Tuesday 24 December, 11.30am

The Christmas story in a fun and accessible service for families with carols and musical accompaniment. Children are encouraged to dress up as characters from the Nativity and the highpoint of the service will be the blessing of the crib, with the opportunity for children to come and see it before they leave the cathedral.

Free, no tickets required.

Midnight Mass

Tuesday 24 December, 11.30pm

Experience the First Eucharist of Christmas with choral music sung by the St William's Singers.

Free, no tickets required.

Christmas Day Services

Wednesday 25 December

York Minster celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ, the light of the world.

8am: Holy Communion from the Book of Common Prayer

10am: Choral Matins sung by the Choir of York Minster

11am: Sung Eucharist sung by the Choir of York Minster, with sermon by The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Stephen Cottrell, Archbishop of York.

4pm: Choral Evensong sung by the Choir of York Minster.

The cathedral will be open free of charge from 12.45pm – 3pm.

New Year's Eve bells

Tuesday 31 December

York Minster's Bellringers will ring in the new year as the clock strikes midnight.

Sung Eucharist for the Feast of the Epiphany

Sunday 5 January 2025, 11am

A special service to mark the Feast of the Epiphany with music sung by St Paul's College Choir, University of Sydney.

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