

Advent &
Christmas

SALISBURY
CATHEDRAL



A season of celebration

SERVICES AND EVENTS AT SALISBURY CATHEDRAL

A message from The Dean



It's a time of year when we give gifts. It's also a time of year which is itself a gift. A time to be soothed by shining candlelight, unearthly beauty, and blissful tranquillity. A time to be refreshed by awesome architecture and the most sublime music ever written. A time to be renewed by conversation, challenge, and ancient wisdom.

Advent and Christmas 2026: like all gifts, they need to be unwrapped, savoured, and enjoyed. Where better to unwrap them, savour them, and enjoy them than Salisbury Cathedral? Come and be soothed, refreshed, and renewed. Whatever you believe, whatever you don't believe, here you will receive the gifts of this time of year. For we believe that the birth of Jesus is the greatest gift of all. You will be very, very welcome.

The Very Revd Nicholas Papadopoulos, Dean of Salisbury



Opening hours for sightseeing

As a living church, Salisbury Cathedral may be closed to visitors for services or special events. Please check our website for closures or restrictions before visiting.

Sightseeing tickets are valid for a whole year, and admission during opening hours is FREE for residents of SP1, SP2, SP3, SP4 and SP5 (with proof of residence).



Saturday 21 November, 10am – 3pm

Salisbury Cathedral School Christmas Fair

Get in the festive spirit and visit the stalls in the cloisters for some Christmas shopping. High-quality stalls line the stunning walkways of the Cathedral cloisters, selling unique gifts for the whole family.



Adults £2.50, Children free entry

Sunday 22 November, 4:30pm



Choral Evensong with Britten's 'Hymn to St Cecilia'

As part of our regular service of Choral Evensong, the Cathedral Choir will perform Benjamin Britten's 'Hymn to St Cecilia' marking the feast day of St Cecilia, Britten's birthday, and the 50th anniversary of his passing..

All are welcome, no entry charge

Saturday 21 November, 7:30pm

Abraham and Isaac: The music of Benjamin Britten and his contemporaries

Written for alto, tenor and piano, *Abraham and Isaac* is one of Britten's most compelling vocal works. Drawing on the medieval Chester Mystery Plays, it retells the story of Abraham and Isaac with striking directness and emotional depth. The two voices take on multiple roles, creating a vivid musical drama that remains one of the composer's most distinctive settings of a biblical text.

Performed by the Salisbury Cathedral Lay Vicars, this concert also features works by some of Britten's contemporaries, placing *Abraham and Isaac* within the rich musical landscape of twentieth-century Britain.

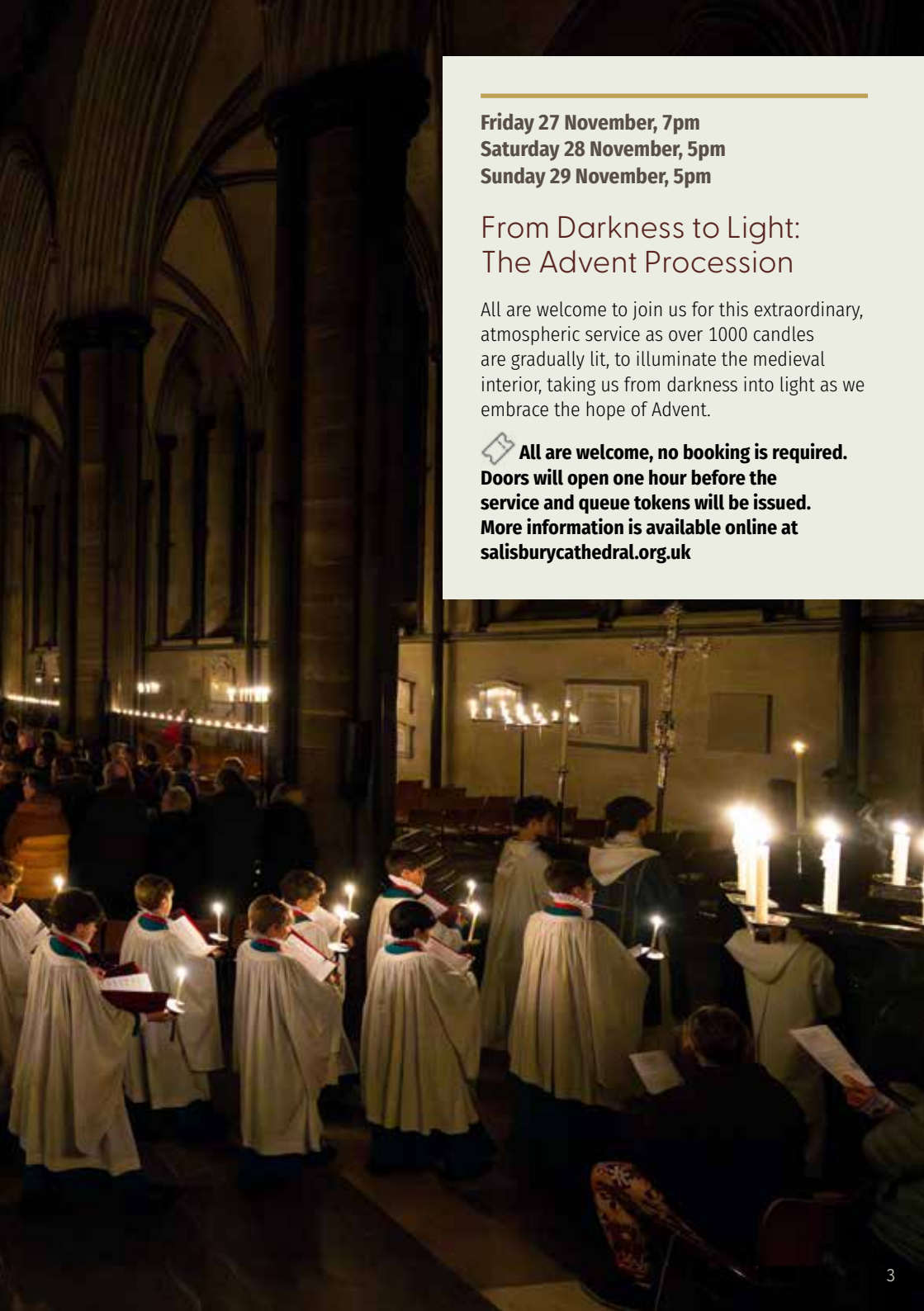
This concert forms part of a wider weekend celebrating the life and music of Benjamin Britten, marking the 50th anniversary of his death in 2026.



Adults £15, U18s & students £5







Friday 27 November, 7pm
Saturday 28 November, 5pm
Sunday 29 November, 5pm

From Darkness to Light: The Advent Procession

All are welcome to join us for this extraordinary, atmospheric service as over 1000 candles are gradually lit, to illuminate the medieval interior, taking us from darkness into light as we embrace the hope of Advent.



All are welcome, no booking is required.

Doors will open one hour before the service and queue tokens will be issued.

More information is available online at salisburycathedral.org.uk



Saturday 5 December 2026 – Sunday 24 January 2027, during visiting hours

Nativity Prayers

Enjoy the spectacle of our community-created nativity scene in the St Lawrence Chapel. Every figure in the Nativity scene has been created by a member of our community and carries a prayer or message. During your visit, children and adults can decorate and add their own wooden figure and contribute to this beautiful display. All the figures will be blessed at a service on Candlemas.



Included with admission

Every Sunday from 29 November until 20 December 2026, 9 – 9.45am

Font Service in Advent

Gather at the Font with us and journey onwards as we prepare for Christmas by exploring stories of angels, including music, storytelling, and prayer. Suitable for children and open to all.

All are welcome, no entry charge

Saturday 5 December 2026 until Tuesday 2 February 2027, during visiting hours

Angels Activity Trail

Search for heavenly messengers this Advent and Christmas with our fun Angels Trail for children. Explore the Cathedral and spot hidden angels. Pick up a trail sheet on arrival and see if you can find them all.



Included with admission

Thursday 3 December, 7.30pm

A Christmas Carol

Star of stage and screen, **Anton Lesser** (*Wolf Hall*, *Endeavour*, *Game of Thrones*, Disney's *Andor*) is joined onstage by the **Orchestra of the Swan** to bring all of Dickens' much-loved characters to life.

Will Tiny Tim live to see another Christmas? Can Scrooge recover his humanity and learn to love the fellow men he seems to despise? The evocative writing of Charles Dickens will make you laugh and cry as you follow Scrooge's supernatural adventures on Christmas Eve.



Unforgettable storytelling combines with captivating, live onstage music in the atmospheric setting of the Cathedral, to create an unmissable start to the season's celebrations for everyone!

Narrator **Anton Lesser**

Music Arranged and Directed by **David Le Page**

Directed by **Judy Reaves**

 **from £26.02**

BOOK AT salisburycathedral.org.uk



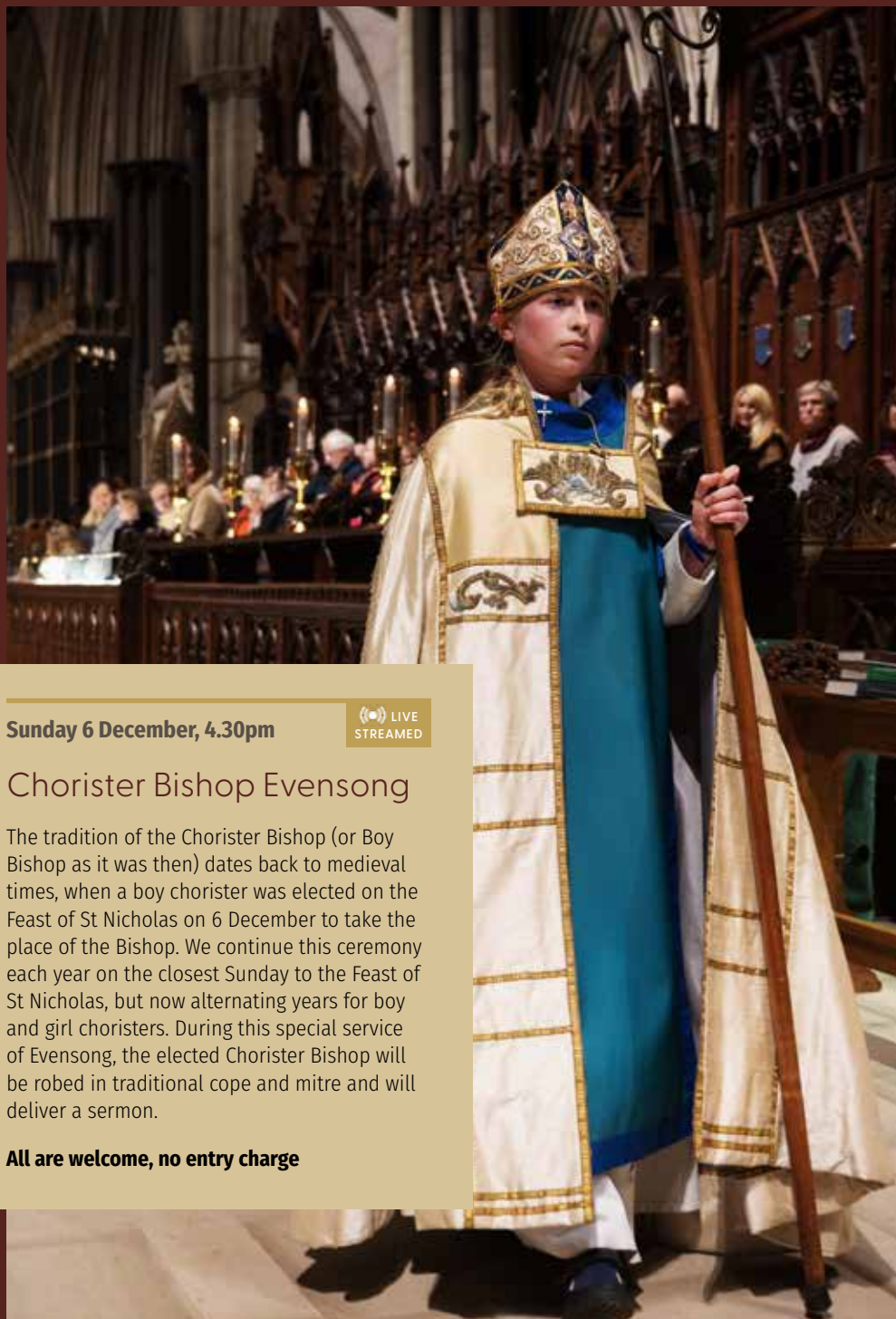
Saturday 5 December, 7pm

Handel's Messiah

Returning for another year with the City of London Sinfonia, the full Cathedral Choir and four distinguished soloists, this is one of the most anticipated events in Salisbury Cathedral's festive calendar, held in support of Salisbury Cathedral's Choral Foundation.

 **Adults £10-£40, U18s & students £7.50**

BOOK AT salisburycathedral.org.uk



Sunday 6 December, 4.30pm



Chorister Bishop Evensong

The tradition of the Chorister Bishop (or Boy Bishop as it was then) dates back to medieval times, when a boy chorister was elected on the Feast of St Nicholas on 6 December to take the place of the Bishop. We continue this ceremony each year on the closest Sunday to the Feast of St Nicholas, but now alternating years for boy and girl choristers. During this special service of Evensong, the elected Chorister Bishop will be robed in traditional cope and mitre and will deliver a sermon.

All are welcome, no entry charge

Thursday 10 December, 6.30 – 8.30pm

Festive Late Night Opening

Explore Salisbury Cathedral after dark, with live music performances in the Spire Crossing throughout the evening. Enjoy performances from our Staff Choir and the Kate Edgar Singers, and join our Come and Sing-Along session, with festive music and carols accompanied by piano.

New for this year, children can take part in a free silent mini disco in the Trinity Chapel throughout the evening, featuring a playlist of fun festive music.

Our beautiful 'hidden' library will be open to visit, and you can also take a trip up to the West Window to enjoy a unique view down into the Nave. Christmas vestments will be on display at the High Altar, and children will have the

opportunity to dress up in our mini copes and discover more about worship at the Cathedral. Little ones and big kids alike will enjoy decorating one of the candles from our Advent procession to relight at home on Christmas Eve.

The café will be open for hot chocolate, mince pies and mulled wine, and our Gift Shop is fully stocked with unique Christmas gifts and stocking fillers. With our huge Christmas tree, wooden Nativity scene and stunning floral arrangements, an evening visit to Salisbury Cathedral is the perfect way to recharge your festive spirit.



FREE, no booking required





Christmas Organ Extravaganza!

with David Halls & John Challenger

Friday 11 December, 7pm

Join Salisbury Cathedral's organists, David Halls and John Challenger, for a spectacular evening of festive music in the breathtaking surroundings of the Cathedral.

Enjoy a programme of music from festive films and beloved Christmas carols, performed on one of the country's finest organs. Mince pies and mulled wine will be available to purchase throughout the evening.



Adults £18, U18s & students £5

BOOK AT salisburycathedral.org.uk



Saturday 12 December, 10am – 1pm

Christmas Crafts

Join us for a host of angel-themed craft activities.

Children can get creative making:

- Christmas cards
- Wearable angel wings to take home
- Angel tree decorations made from buttons

Alongside the crafts, enjoy sitting by the Christmas tree for our angel-themed storytelling session.

Finally, don't miss our Angel-themed activity trail running throughout Advent and Christmas. Can you spot all the angels in the Cathedral to collect your sticker?

 **Included with admission**

Saturday 12 December, 7pm

The Muppet Christmas Carol (U) – Film Screening

Sit back, relax, and enjoy a popular festive film on the big screen in the magnificent building adorned with Advent and Christmas decorations and of course the spectacular Christmas tree; the perfect festive scene. Enjoy festive drinks like mulled wine and hot chocolate, plus classic cinema treats including popcorn and sweets.



Adults £7, 11-17yo £5, U11s £3.50

BOOK AT salisburycathedral.org.uk

Saturday 12 December, 12.15 – 12.45pm

Festive Music

Come and listen to the Cathedral Youth Choir, directed by Steve Abbott and accompanied by Miriam Reveley, in a 40-minute concert of seasonal music, featuring composers Bob Chilcott, David Halls and Esther Bersweden.



Included with admission





**Saturday 21 November to Saturday 21
December, 3.15pm, Mon – Sat only**

Twilight Tower Tours

Climb to the base of Salisbury's iconic Spire after dark for unparalleled views of the city's twinkling lights.

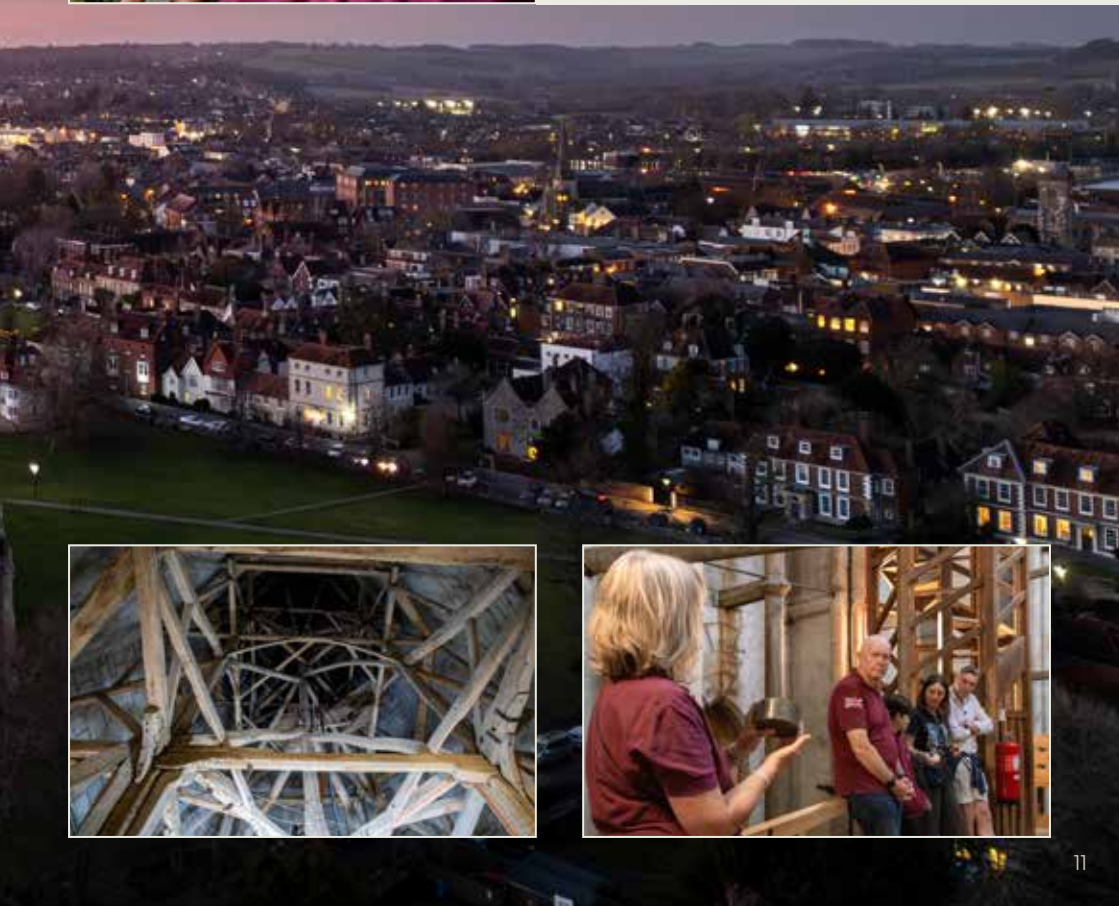
Your Tour booking includes day entry to the Cathedral before your tour begins.



when booked in advance online:

**Adult £25, Full time Student (with ID) £21,
Child (7–16yo) £18**

BOOK AT salisburycathedral.org.uk



**Monday 14 December,
10am – 2pm**

Christmas Crafts for Pre-schoolers



Preschool children will love getting creative and crafting their very own angel wings. Perfect for playtime in the holidays!

Gather round beneath the huge Christmas tree at 11.30am for an engaging storytelling session about angels.



Included with admission

Monday 14 December, 7.30pm

G4 Christmas



Step into a breathtaking musical journey with the beautifully-blended voices of G4. Enjoy unique renditions of traditional carols, sacred contemplations, classical favourites and modern festive hits including Silent Night, All I Want for Christmas, When a Child is Born, The 12 Days of Christmas and many more.



from £19.50

BOOK AT salisburycathedral.org.uk

Saturday 19 December, 7.30pm

Christmas with the Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra

Celebrate the joy of Christmas with the Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra in this fun-filled festive concert. Sing along to your favourite Christmas carols, from beloved traditional carols to modern classics, including familiar tunes from *The Snowman* and *Home Alone*.

Don't forget to post your best (or worst!) Christmas jokes in our Joke Box, and one lucky audience member will be invited onto the podium to conduct the orchestra!

So pull on your favourite Christmas jumper, don your festive hat, and join us for a joyful celebration that's guaranteed to leave the whole family smiling.



from £16.63

BOOK AT salisburycathedral.org.uk

**Monday 21 December,
10am – 2pm**

Christmas Crafts for all ages



All are welcome to get creative making Christmas cards and angel tree decorations using buttons

Alongside the crafts, gather round beneath the huge Christmas tree at 11.30am and again at 2pm for our angel-themed storytelling sessions.



Included with admission



Tuesday 22 December, 7pm



Wednesday 23 December, 7pm (no livestream)

Carols by Candlelight

With traditional carols in a spectacular setting, our beautiful Carols by Candlelight services are unmissable. Join us at these beautiful candlelit services featuring bible readings, favourite carols and choral works sung by our Cathedral Choir as they tell the age-old story of Jesus' birth.

Doors open one hour before the start of the service.

All are welcome, no booking required

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Services



Thursday 24 December, 1pm & 2.45pm

A Family Crib Service for Christmas Eve

This short service for all the family, especially suitable for younger children, is a joyful retelling of the story of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem. Includes traditional Christmas carols with modern flourishes and music from the Salisbury Cathedral Junior and Youth Choirs, alongside the Salisbury Cathedral Choir junior choristers.

Doors open half an hour before the start of each service.

All are welcome, no booking required

Thursday 24 December, 5.30pm



Choral Evensong for Christmas Eve

A moving service of readings, prayers and choral music sung by the Cathedral Choir.

Thursday 24 December, 11pm



The First Eucharist of Christmas (Midnight Mass)

Celebrate the start of Christmas by sharing communion together, hearing the Christmas Gospel followed by a Christmas message, with carols and beautiful music from the Cathedral Choir and organ.

All are welcome, no booking required

Friday 25 December, 8am

Holy Communion on Christmas Day

This traditional, said service uses the 1662 Book of Common Prayer and suits those looking for a more quiet and reflective communion service to mark Christmas Day.

Friday 25 December, 10.30am



The Eucharist on Christmas Day

All are welcome as we celebrate Christ's birth with the sharing of communion. With music from the Cathedral Choir and organ and congregational hymns.

Friday 25 December, 3pm



Festal Evensong for Christmas Day

Come and celebrate Christmas with us at this special Evensong service. The service will include readings, prayers, hymns and music sung by the Cathedral Choir.

All are welcome, no booking required





Saturday 16 January, 10am – 1.45pm

Epiphany Pageant Crafts

Come create colourful banners, streamers or crowns that will be used in The Epiphany Pageant Play service at 2pm.

Included with admission



Saturday 16 January, 2pm

The Epiphany Pageant Play

A short collective-worship-style service suitable for all the family, with craft preparation beforehand. Join a series of lively parades through the Quire as the Caravan of the Wise Men follow the star to Bethlehem in teams Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh. Come early to make crafts that will feature in the processions!

Sunday 24 January, 5pm

The Epiphany Procession

Join us for the last of the popular processional services celebrating Advent, Christmas and Epiphany. Telling the story of the journey of the Magi, travelling to worship the infant Jesus, this moving service consists of readings, devotional addresses, and the sound of the Cathedral Choir.

All are welcome, no booking required



ancient AND MODERN | 2027



A programme of talks, film, music, art and family events throughout 2027, to celebrate, debate and explore how the past has informed the present; how humanity and the way we live and think have evolved; and how creativity has been at the centre of our development.

13 JANUARY YOUTUBE PREMIERE
Healey Willan played by John
Challenger on the Father Willis Organ.
An online event.

15 JANUARY TALK
Michael Rosen: Getting Through It

4 FEBRUARY FILM
The Princess Bride
Hosted by The Pulp Kitchen Podcast

3 MARCH FILM
Folktales

11 MARCH TALK
Alister McGrath: Rethinking Christianity

3 APRIL MUSIC
Pop Goes Classical with the Royal
Philharmonic Orchestra

21 MAY TALK
Edward Rutherfurd: Sarum

3 JUNE TALK
Alec Ryrie: The Age of Hitler is
Nearly Over

15 JUNE TALK
Dr Louisa Toxværd Munch:
What Does Freedom Mean Today?

22 JULY TALK
John Lloyd: It's A Funny Old Life

18 SEPTEMBER TALK
Tom Holland: Ancient and Modern

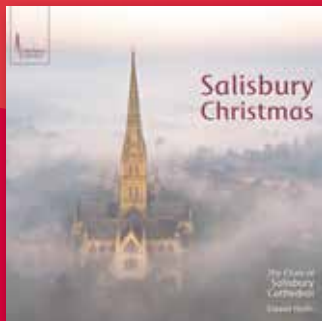
SALISBURY CATHEDRAL

Keep an eye on the website for more details and more events to be added
salisburycathedral.org.uk/whats-on

BEAUTIFUL & UNIQUE GIFTS

We pride ourselves on offering an interesting and eclectic mix of products in our Gift Shop, whether you are looking for a memento of your visit or a thoughtful Christmas gift for that 'difficult to buy for' friend. Many of our items are locally made, and some (such as our beautifully illustrated advent calendar) are unique to the Cathedral.

We also have all the latest recordings from the Cathedral Choir and Organists available to buy on CD.



Carols, seasonal songs and music, performed by Salisbury Cathedral Choir.



FOOD & DRINK AT THE CATHEDRAL

During your visit why not take a break in our Refectory café serving delicious homemade cakes, soups, sandwiches and hot mulled winter drinks?

And on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays throughout December you can enjoy a traditional roast lunch with all the trimmings, followed by vegan Christmas pudding with ice cream.

Follow us on socials:    

Charity number 1202770

salisburycathedral.org.uk