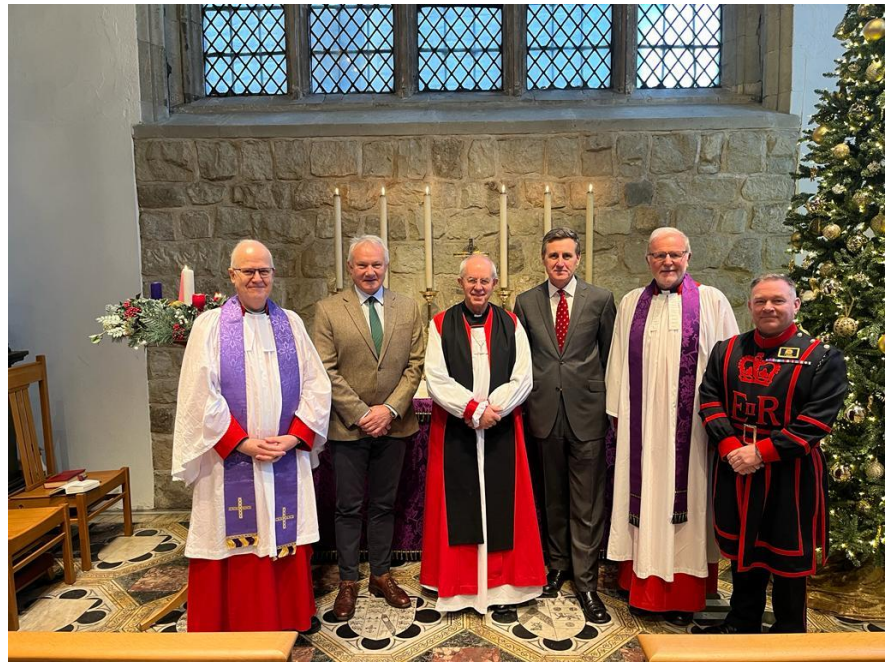




**The Chapels Royal of St Peter ad Vincula and St John the Evangelist
HM Tower of London**

Dear friends,

It was good to see the chapel full for the visit of the Archbishop of Canterbury last Sunday, and everyone was moved by his powerful sermon. I'm glad so many of you had the opportunity to speak to him afterwards over mulled wine. He enjoyed his visit and found us all very friendly and welcoming, which is important to me for all our visitors.



Next Sunday is our State Carol Service and the first time our new Constable will join us for this important occasion. At the time of writing, we have a full house and I am sorry therefore to disappoint you if you had hoped to join us. Debbie has a full list of attendees and will be on the gate to help usher people into the Tower. Details of the Christmas services are below and names are not needed for the Christmas Eve Service at 6pm.

Christmas carol services in the chapel continue in the evening; this week there are seven. Many of these services provide me with an opportunity to encourage those present to come back on a Sunday morning and join us, and it always pleases me when people return.

In these times of great hardship for so many people, and with so many tragedies this last week, we remember all those who are finding life difficult and sometimes over-whelming.

With my best wishes, thoughts and prayers for you all. Roger.

Christmas Services



18th December 2022 – Advent 4

0915 Holy Communion
1100 State Carol service (full)

24th December 2022 – Christmas Eve

1600 Crib Service
1800 First Mass of Christmas

25th December 2022 – Christmas Day

1000 Matins with Christmas carols followed Holy Communion

Service Details for Sunday December 18th 2022 The Fourth Sunday in Advent

0915 Holy Communion, White Tower
1100 State Carol Service, St Peter ad Vincula

Collect for the Fourth Sunday in Advent

O Lord, raise up (we pray thee) thy power,
and come among us, and with great might succour us;
that whereas, through our sins and wickedness,
we are sore let and hindered in running the race
that is set before us, thy bountiful grace and mercy
may speedily help and deliver us; through the satisfaction
of thy Son our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy
Ghost be honour and glory, world without end. **Amen**

Poem of the week

‘Thomas Hardy OM was an English novelist and poet. A Victorian realist in the tradition of George Eliot, he was influenced both in his novels and his poetry by Romanticism, including the poetry of William Wordsworth’.

With so many parts of our life, both nationally and internationally, in turbulence at the moment, I have once again found this poem by Hardy to be a source of solace in times of sadness and worry. Hardy alludes in detail to the wintry desolation and despair he feels, in common with the rest of humankind, but then, in contrast, describes how a thrush bursts onto the scene in full song. Could it be that with his beautiful singing, full of joy and hope, the aged thrush knows something that the poet and, by extension, the rest of the world, does not? Sometimes in the depths of chaos and misery, we catch a glimpse of something which gives us light, faith and cause for hope.

The Darkling Thrush

I leant upon a coppice gate
When Frost was spectre-grey,
And Winter's dregs made desolate
The weakening eye of day.
The tangled bine-stems scored the sky
Like strings of broken lyres,
And all mankind that haunted night
Had sought their household fires.

The land's sharp features seemed to be
The Century's corpse outleant,
His crypt the cloudy canopy,
The wind his death-lament.
The ancient pulse of germ and birth
Was shrunken hard and dry,
And every spirit upon earth
Seemed fervourless as I.

At once a voice arose among
The bleak twigs overhead
In a full-hearted evensong
Of joy illimited;
An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small,
In blast-beruffled plume,
Had chosen thus to fling his soul
Upon the growing gloom.

So little cause for carolings
Of such ecstatic sound
Was written on terrestrial things
Afar or nigh around,
What I could think there trembled through
His happy good-night air
Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew
And I was unaware.

Thomas Hardy 1840-1928

Snow at the Tower



Jigsaw

<https://www.jigsawplanet.com/?rc=play&pid=2889dd5d6ff9>



Prayers

Please continue to remember those on our sick list, some of whom are very ill, amongst whom we name: Norma, Pat, Ann, Ros, Heather, Mark, Madeleine, Dan, Derek, Peter, Johnny, Colin, Ian, and Florence.

RIP

Leslie Holden, Angela Amica and John Critchley.

Please continue to pray for Ukraine:

God of peace and justice, we pray for the people of Ukraine today.

We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.

We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow, that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.

We pray for those with power over war or peace,

for wisdom, discernment and compassion to guide their decisions.

Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear,
that you would hold and protect them.

We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of peace. Amen

With best wishes, Roger.



Canon Roger J Hall MBE
Deputy Priest in Ordinary to HM The King
HM Tower of London
07908 413045
Roger.Hall@hrp.org.uk
Twitter @RogerHall53