Advent and Christmas Services– FAQ's

Are there any charges for attending services?
There is no charge to attend any of the cathedral's public services, including our services during Advent and Christmas.

N.B. Tickets do need to be obtained for private carol concerts and services, for more information see the question below.

Do we need tickets to attend the services during Christmas and Advent?
Tickets are only required for the Messiah, supported by Fidelity International, on 7th December, and Sankta Lucia on 9th December.

We do also hold some carol services in December which are ticketed and these are sold in aid of the organisation holding the event: Italia Conti Carol Concert – 2nd December, Barnardos - 13th December, Barts and the London Charity Carol Service on 20th December.

We came for the services last year and noticed that some people had tickets...
These would have been staff, music patrons and corporate partners that had tickets for reserved seating.

How early do we need to arrive in order to guarantee a seat?
Unfortunately we cannot guarantee seating. Doors usually open one hour before a service starts, but at some popular services people start queuing up before that. Our stewards will monitor the queue and will advise people in the queue about the likelihood of getting a seat.

What is the cathedral's maximum capacity?
The maximum number of people allowed in the cathedral for services is between 2,000 and 2,400 depending on the seating arrangements for each service. No standing is permitted.

If I come with a group, can I arrive first and queue up for seats for the whole group?
Yes, but please note that all the people in your group should be in the queue when doors open (usually one hour before a service starts). As the queues will be monitored, please make sure that you give this information to the stewards counting the queue.

What arrangements do you provide for people with disabilities / people who cannot stand up for long periods of time?
Visitors with disabilities (and carer) may use the accessible entrance at the south entrance. The doors to this south entrance open approximately one hour before a service starts. Only those visitors with wheelchairs and walking difficulties should use this entrance.

If you have a group of people with wheelchairs/walking difficulties please let us know in advance as we can arrange access via the temporary ramp on the north side of the cathedral.
For worshippers that cannot stand up for long periods of time, someone from their party could queue for them until the doors open.

If I’m already in the cathedral i.e. visiting, am I allowed to stay in the cathedral and avoid queuing?
Unfortunately not; the cathedral needs to be clear of visitors in order to prepare for the service.

Some of the services were shown on a big screen at Paternoster Square last year - will it be the same this year?
There will not be a screen in Paternoster Square this year as we were unable to secure sponsorship for this broadcast.

How long do services last?
Services last for one hour, apart from The Messiah which lasts two hours.

Are children welcome?
Children are very welcome, especially to the Family Carols service on Saturday 17 December at 1pm. Please be aware that some services do require silence and therefore may not be suitable for babes in arms.