

York Minster has announced its services and events for Lent, Holy Week and Easter 2023

Beginning on Ash Wednesday (22 February), Christians across the world will keep a season of penitence culminating in the observance of Holy Week. This week recalls with the passion, crucifixion and burial of Jesus, and on Easter Day, the joyful celebration of his resurrection from the dead.

Maundy Thursday (6 April), will mark an historic occasion in the life of the cathedral. His Majesty King Charles III, accompanied by Her Majesty The Queen Consort, will visit York Minster for the first Royal Maundy Service of The King's reign.

The Dean of York, the Very Revd Dominic Barrington will lead the cathedral's Lent, Holy Week and Easter Services for the first time. During Holy Week, he will preach a series of themed sermons entitled 'The Last Word'.

Dominic said: "The journey of Lent and Holy Week is the greatest drama of the Christian year. Jesus' journey to the Cross is relentless and tough. It is a mixture of friendship and betrayal, fear and forgiveness, culminating in the ultimate climax of death and resurrection.

"We hope that people of all faiths and none, people with questions and people curious about Jesus' story will come to York Minster to share in



The key events and services are:

The arrival of the Lent Cross - Tuesday 21 February

The Lent Cross, the central symbol of the Christian Faith, will be suspended from the Central Tower.

Ash Wednesday - Wednesday 22 February

Lent, Holy Week and Easter lie at the heart of the Christian faith. Come and share this time together as our vast sacred spaces are brought to life with the glory of seasonal worship and music.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent - a season of reflection, penitence and fasting, and of preparation for Easter. The Imposition of Ashes will take place during our services of Holy Communion - the ashes are blessed and the sign of the cross is made, in ash, on the forehead of worshippers.

Ash is a sign of mortality - a reminder that we shall all die. The sign of the cross reminds us of Jesus' death - which was followed by his being raised to new life. Ash Wednesday reminds us that through 'dying' to all that is self-centred in our lives, we may, through faith in Jesus, share in the fullness of life he came to bring.

The Minster will be open for prayer and worship only on that day. All are welcome, whether to join acts of worship, to pray on their own or to experience the space.

Service times and Imposition of Ashes:

- 7.30am: Matins
- 7.50am: Holy Communion with Imposition of Ashes
- 12noon: Holy Communion with Imposition of Ashes
- 4.00pm: Evening Prayer (Said)
- 5.30pm: Choral Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes (with Allegri's Miserere)

Stations of the Cross - Wednesday 25 March until Sunday 16 April

7.00am – 7.00pm

The Stations of the Cross originated when early Christians visited Jerusalem hoping to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, tracing the path from Pilate's house to Calvary. They would pause for prayer and devotion at various points. Eventually those pilgrims brought the practice back to their home countries and ever since, Christians of differing traditions have used this form of devotion.

This year pilgrims will be able to journey around seven stations in Dean's Park, featuring artwork by local school children and material to encourage reflection and prayer. A final station will be placed inside the Minster on Easter Day, Sunday 9 April.

The stations will be available for people to explore each day from Wednesday 25 March, to Sunday 16 April in Dean's Park, which lies to the north of the cathedral and is open daily from 7.00am to 7.00pm.

Lent Sermon Series

Beginning on Ash Wednesday and continuing through the Sundays in Lent, we explore the themes developed by the Archbishop of York in his Lent Course during the York Minster's 11.00am Sunday Sung Eucharist.

At 12.30pm, following the Eucharist, there will be an opportunity to discuss the Lenten sermon theme over light-lunch with the preacher of the day and the Minster's Canon Missioner. All are welcome. For more details contact: nextsteps@yorkminster.org

The sermon themes will be:

22 February, Ash Wednesday - Prayer

26 February, First Sunday in Lent - Worship

5 March, Second Sunday in Lent - Love

12 March, Third Sunday in Lent - Generosity

19 March, Fourth Sunday in Lent - Witness

26 March, Fifth Sunday in Lent – Rest

York Minster's Sunday Worship during Lent (starting Sunday 26 February)

All are welcome to join York Minster's Sunday worship, which will follow this pattern:

8.00am – Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer

A quiet and contemplative service of Holy Communion in the traditional language of the Book of Common Prayer.

10.00am - Choral Matins

The Choir of York Minster will lead this traditional contemplative service of Choral Matins with canticles, psalms, readings, and State Prayers.

11.00am – Sung Eucharist

The Choir of York Minster will sing at this service of congregational hymns, readings and a sermon on the themes listed above.

These services are also livestreamed.

4.00pm – Choral Evensong

Choral evensong is sung each Sunday by the Choir of York Minster as we continue our journey through the holy season of Lent. With music, readings and a sermon exploring Lenten themes.

These services are also livestreamed.

Lent Compline with Meditation - Thursdays (from 23 February until 30 March)

8.30pm – 9.10pm

A meditative service of candle-lit Compline or ‘night prayer’ sung by the Ebor Singers in the Quire of York Minster with traditional prayers, beautiful music and silence. During these services of shadows and light, the Choir will sing excerpts from Tomas Luis de Victoria's Tenebrae Responsories, a cycle of 18 pieces that trace the Passion story, originally included in the Holy Week service of Tenebrae at which the candles of the church were successfully extinguished.

Each service will include a short meditation on one of six ‘habits of Christlikeness’ connecting to the newly formed Diocesan Rhythm of life and the Archbishop of York’s Lent Course.

Compline will take place every Thursday at 8.30pm, no booking is required. The dates are:

- Thursday 23 February - Prayer
- Thursday 2 March - Worship
- Thursday 9 March - Love
- Thursday 16 March - Generosity
- Thursday 23 March - Witness
- Thursday 30 March – Rest

Handel’s Messiah - Saturday 25 March

Performed by the Choir of York Minster, 7.00pm, Nave.

For the first time since 2019, the Choir of York Minster will be joined by internationally renowned soloists for a performance of Handel's Messiah in the spectacular setting of the cathedral's Nave.

It will be the first time the choir has performed the popular oratorio since December 2019, and the first time in recent years that they have staged the moving and poignant choral performance, which tells the story of Christ, during the season of Lent and Easter.

Holy Week at York Minster

Holy Week sermon series from the Dean of York

The Very Revd. Dominic Barrington, Dean of York will preach throughout Holy Week, offering a series of sermons entitled The Last Word.

The sermons will be given at the following services:

Procession and Eucharist for Palm Sunday, Sunday 2 April, 10.30am

Compline, Monday 3 April and Tuesday 4 April, 7.30pm

Holy Communion, Wednesday 5 April, 12noon

Eucharist of the Last Supper, Thursday 6 April, 7.00pm

The Three Hours' Devotion and Liturgy of Good Friday, Friday 7 April at 1.30pm

The Vigil and First Eucharist of Easter, Saturday 8 April, 8.00pm

Palm Sunday, Sunday 2 April

Palm Sunday is the first day of Holy Week and the Sunday before Easter Day. On this day we commemorate Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem.

10.30am: Procession and Eucharist for Palm Sunday

The service will begin outside the Minster on the South Piazza when a procession led by a donkey leads the congregation into the cathedral via the West End. The Eucharist will include the Passion Gospel, sung by the Choir of York Minster, and the blessing of palm crosses, as a reminder of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, and what would come afterwards. This service turns from triumph to sorrow, marking the beginning of Jesus' journey towards the cross.

Part of this service will also be livestreamed from inside the Minster.

4.00pm: Choral Evensong

A service of Choral Evensong which prepares us for our walk with Christ through Holy Week.

This service will also be livestreamed.

7.30pm: Stainer's Crucifixion

The Ebor Singers, an associate choir of York Minster, will perform John Stainer's Crucifixion. The work incorporates congregational hymns with a recounting of the passion of Christ.

Choral Evensong - sung daily during Holy Week by the Choir of York Minster.

Compline in Holy Week, Monday 3 April and Tuesday 4 April

7.30pm – 8.30pm

This beautiful candlelit service of night prayer or ‘compline’ will be sung by The Ebor Singers, with Holy Week Addresses given by the Dean of York.

The service is a form of prayer said at the completion of the day, and traditionally after this service we are encouraged to enter into a period of silence. On Monday, the choir will sing J. S. Bach's motet Jesu meine freude, with its commentary on Jesus Christ freeing man from sin and death. Marc-Antoine Charpentier's vivid depiction of St Peter's three-time denial of Jesus in his oratorio Le Reniement de St Pierre, can be heard on Tuesday.

Chrism Eucharist, Tuesday 4 April

11.00am

The Chrism Eucharist takes its name from Chrismation (anointing). The Archbishop of York will preach and will bless three oils for baptism, confirmation, and healing. The Archbishop will gather clergy from around the Diocese to renew the vows made at their ordinations, remembering the ministry to which they are called.

This service will also be livestreamed.

York Minster will be open for services only on this day.

The Royal Maundy Service, Thursday 6 April

The first Royal Maundy Service in the reign of His Majesty King Charles III, will take place at York Minster starting at 11am. Maundy Thursday commemorates Jesus Christ washing the feet of His disciples at the Last Supper. The service is rooted in the ancient history and traditions of the church. Sovereigns throughout the centuries have imitated Jesus’ actions, first through washing the feet of beggars and then through history, evolving into the giving of a small gift of coins.

74 men and 74 women (signifying the age of the Monarch) selected from Church of England dioceses across the country, will receive the Maundy gift from The King, to thank them for their outstanding Christian service and for making a difference to the lives of people in their local communities.

5.30pm: Choral Evensong

7.00pm: Eucharist of the Last Supper

The Eucharist of the Last Supper recalls the final meal Jesus shared with his disciples in the upper room, before his arrest and trial. We remember that Jesus called us to love and serve one another through the washing of feet. As we bless bread and wine, we follow his command to proclaim his death until he comes in glory. The Dean of York will preach at this service.

8.30pm: The Watch

The Watch will follow the Eucharist of the last Supper. The Watch – a type of vigil – recalls the time Jesus spent in the Garden of Gethsemane before his arrest, trial and crucifixion.

Good Friday, Friday 7 April

On Good Friday, Christians remember the crucifixion of Jesus.

York Minster will be given to prayer and worship only on this day. All are welcome, whether to join acts of worship, to pray on their own.

12noon – The Three Hours’ Devotion with the Liturgy of Good Friday

We begin the Three Hours’ Devotion with a service of meditation, music and prayers with periods of silence and addresses given by the Holy Week Preacher. At 1.30pm, the formal Liturgy of Good Friday will commence with a sung passion, veneration of the cross and a sermon by the Dean of York.

This service will be livestreamed at 12noon and 1.00pm.

5.30pm – Choral Evensong for Good Friday

The Choir of York Minster will sing including Antonio Lotti’s anthem for 8 voices, *Crucifixus etiam pro nobis*, a traditional Lenten piece.

Saturday Mornings at York Minster, Saturday 8 April, 10.00am

Join our sessions for families – Saturday Mornings at York Minster – and get hands on creating and blessing York Minster’s Easter Garden as part of the cathedral’s activity to mark Holy Saturday. The session will also include a fun and interactive short service exploring the Easter story.

The Saturday Mornings at York Minster sessions run throughout the year and explore the seasons in the Christian calendar, with different interactive opportunities each time including craft workshops, sensory activities, music and worship.

Families are invited to come at any time during the free 45 minute event, which starts at 10.00am, and stay for as long or as little as they like.

Future dates for 2023 include:

Saturday 27 May – Pentecost

Saturday 9 September – Harvest/ Creationtide

Saturday 11 November – Remembering

Saturday 2 December – Advent and Christmas

Easter Eve, The Vigil and First Eucharist of Easter,

Saturday 8 April, 8.00pm

This Eucharist moves from darkness to light. We recall God's saving actions through time, culminating in the Resurrection in the light of the first Easter Day.

The Easter Vigil marks the end of the emptiness of Holy Saturday, and leads into the celebration of Christ's resurrection. During this service a number of candidates will reaffirm their faith through confirmation. The Archbishop of York will preside and the Dean of York will preach at this service which will be sung by the St William's Singers.

Easter Day, Sunday 9 April

On Easter Day, Christians celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead on the third day after his crucifixion.

8.00am: Holy Communion from the Book of Common Prayer

A simple said service in the traditional language of the Book of Common Prayer.

10.00am: Choral Matins on Easter Day

Following the pattern of Matins from the Book of Common Prayer, with sung psalms, canticles and an anthem.

11.00am: Festal Eucharist on Easter Day

We greet the risen Lord with joy, proclaiming Alleluia, Christ is risen, He is risen indeed! The Archbishop of York will preach and preside.

This service will also be livestreamed.

4.00pm: Festal Evensong

A great day of rejoicing culminates in an uplifting service of Choral Evensong. The preacher will be the Dean of York.

This service will also be livestreamed.

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