



Follow The Star

CALM and BRIGHT

December can feel like chaos – lots of social events, services, Christmas presents to buy, never-ending to-do lists and the pressure to create the perfect Christmas. But in the midst of this chaos, our churches can offer an opportunity to find peace during this busy time.

The Church of England's theme for Advent and Christmas 2024, **Follow the Star: Calm and Bright**, draws on the world-famous carol, Silent Night:

“Silent Night! Holy Night!

All is calm, all is bright...”

One of the reasons that this carol is so universally loved is the way it invites us into the still centre of the Christmas story, to contemplate Mary holding the new-born Jesus, the Light of the World.

The angelic messages we encounter in the biblical story of Jesus’ birth typically hold together the need for calm in the present (“Do not be afraid” ... “Fear not”) with the hope of a bright future (“for you have found favour with God” ... “for behold I bring you tidings of great joy”).

Throughout Advent, we will focus primarily on how to find **Calm** during this busy period, with reflections offering people a chance to pause during the busy season and tips on how to prepare for a calm Christmas.

Then through Christmas, we will focus particularly on **Bright**, with a series of daily reflections from Christmas Day to the Eve of Epiphany (5 January) by Sammi Tooze, Discipleship Adviser for the Diocese of York, both in digital form and as [a full-colour booklet](#) to share locally.

We will also share reflective content throughout Advent and Christmas for those who find this time of year difficult, with some Blue Christmas resources.

Resources for churches

- **Booklets, prayer cards and family resources:** Ideal for giving away at Advent and Christmas services, new printed *Calm and Bright* Christmas reflections booklets, prayer cards for adults and families are available to [pre-order now from Church House Publishing](#). You can also [preview sample pages](#) from the reflections booklet online.
- **Logos and design guidelines:** The *Calm and Bright* logo maintains a design approach reminiscent of last year's *Join the Song* campaign. Logo packs for [print](#) and [digital](#) are available to download now. The [branding guidelines](#) are designed to assist churches and organisations in making the most of the spectacular *Calm and Bright* branding.
- There will be a range of [Digital Labs resources](#) available to churches from September onwards. This includes our regular webinars tailored for Advent and Christmas, blogs, how-to videos, and a Digital Planner to help you create, strategise and organise your church's digital content.
- **Christmas episodes from the Cheeky Pandas:** These free resources feature cartoons, songs and Bible stories to help you engage the children in your church with the Christmas story. [Find videos on the Cheeky Pandas website](#).
- **Get downloadable resources** including digital Christmas card templates, social media covers and templates, poster templates, and PowerPoint templates from [AChurchNearYou.com](#) (login required).
- **Coming soon:** Get involved in this year's Christmas advert by creating your own unique version. We'll be sharing a how-to video on how we made our advert, and we'd love for you to make your own. The how-to will be available soon.

Webinars

- Catch up on this **special webinar where we unwrap 2024's Advent and Christmas campaign**. Learn about the range of resources we're offering nationally to help you plan your local services and events to welcome your community to celebrate with you this Christmas. [Watch the webinar on-demand now](#). The Digital Labs team have also added [an accompanying blog](#) with additional content and links to resources.
- **How your church can engage with children and young people this Christmas:** Join us on 17 September to find out how you can support children and young people to find out more about faith this Christmas. Get a first look at the new resources for under-18s, along with practical ways to engage at church, at home and in schools. [Learn more and register your interest](#).
- **The Christmas Digital Planner:** Join us on 16 October for a practical session designed to help your church connect with more people through digital media this Christmas. We'll be introducing our brand-new Digital Planner to help you plan and create a calm, inviting space for your community. [Learn more and register your interest](#).
- **How can you make the most of Digital Giving this Christmas?:** Join us on 6 November as we explore how you can maximise [opportunities](#)

for giving over the Advent and Christmas period with a range of resources. [Learn more and register your interest.](#)

Resources for schools

- Four weeks of **collective worship resource materials** is available from the National Society for Education for use by schools during Advent. The resources unpack the theme of 'Calm and Bright', through the perspectives of the Angel Gabriel, Joseph, a shepherd and Mary and encourage learners to consider how they can bring calmness and brightness to the world. [Sign up now to get access to this resource.](#)

Resources for individuals

- **Reflections via email:** [Sign up](#) to our Advent and Christmas reflection emails and receive daily messages straight to your inbox. Our daily emails will offer Bible readings, short reflections and a practical challenge, as well as prayers linked to weekly themes.
- **Reflections via Everyday Faith app:** You can read and listen to the Advent and Christmas reflections through the Everyday Faith app, the new daily devotional app from the Church of England, which is available to [download here](#).
- **Social media:** Be sure to follow us across our social media channels – [X/Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [TikTok](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Threads](#) – this Advent and Christmas for a variety of thought-provoking and inspiring content, aimed at bringing peace in the midst of a busy Advent, and celebrating the joy of Christmas.

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