

Downside Abbey Festival
July 16th-19th 2026

Thursday 16th July 2026

11.00am

Tour of the Abbey Church
(The Basilica of Saint Gregory the Great)

Downside Abbey is one of England's great neo-Gothic churches with the works of several distinguished architects including Thomas Garner, Sir Ninian Comper and Sir Giles Gilbert Scott contributing to its beauty and originality. The tour will highlight many of the architectural features of this magnificent church, including the exquisite Lady Chapel.

(Please note, access to the Lady Chapel is via a small flight of steps)

Tickets for the tour must be booked in advance at:

www.ticketsource.com/downside-abbey-festival

7.30pm-8.30pm

'A Festive Fanfare'

David Bednall (Organ) & The Bristol Brass Consort

The Downside Abbey Festival is launched by international organist and composer, David Bednall, together with the Bristol Brass Consort, to perform a festive programme of works for brass and organ in the magnificent setting of Downside Abbey. Featuring the Basilica's grand Compton organ, the largest made by the firm, the programme will include uplifting works by Peeters, Gigout, Mawby and Widor alongside works for solo organ and brass.

Tickets may be purchased in advance at:

www.ticketsource.com/downside-abbey-festival

Friday 17th July 2026

7.00pm – 9.30pm

'Come and Sing'
with
Sir John Rutter

A unique opportunity for all who love to sing (and can read a bit of music) to spend a summer's evening in the glorious setting of Downside Abbey, performing a selection of beautiful choral works, under the direction of the internationally famous composer and conductor, Sir John Rutter.

Music by Byrd and Tallis, Stanford and Rachmaninov will feature alongside a selection of John Rutter's ever-popular works.

Copies of the music will be provided.

The accompanist for the evening will be the acclaimed organist, pianist and conductor, Julian McNamara.

*Please note tickets must be booked in advance for this event:

www.ticketsource.com/downside-abbey-festival

Doors open for registration at 6.00pm

Saturday 18th July 2026

3.00pm

'Anglia dos Marie'

Choral Music for a Summer's Afternoon

Sung by

**The Choir of Saint Mary's Church,
Wimbledon, London**

Adam Wills Begley – Director John Lenon – Organ

The acclaimed choir of St Mary's Wimbledon perform a
colourful programme of sacred works by
Monteverdi, Howells, Buxtehude, Ireland, Mozart, and Byrd

Free admission – retiring collection

The choir of St Mary the Virgin, Wimbledon is an historic parish choir in residence steps away from the world-famous All England Lawn Tennis Club. Founded in the first millennium, St Mary's church enjoys a vibrant programme of sacred music led by her skilled Adult and Youth ensembles. The choir's year-round calendar of weekly choral services is supplemented by biannual cathedral residencies, which in recent years have included Westminster Abbey and St Paul's Cathedral. Annual international tours have seen concerts in Switzerland, Spain, Ireland and Malta. St Mary's Choir unites professional musicians and skilled amateurs from all walks of life who share a vision for performing to a high standard and serving the congregation in worship. The choir is committed to offering the best sacred music of all periods, from Renaissance masters like Byrd, Josquin and Victoria to living composers such as James MacMillan, Joanna Marsh and Arvo Pärt.

Sunday 19th July 2026

10.00am

Pontifical Sung Mass

Celebrant & Homilist

The Right Reverend Dom Nicholas Wetz

The Choir of St Mary's Wimbledon

Mass for Four Voices by William Byrd
with motets by Palestrina and Fauré

6.30pm

Saint Andrew's Church, Mells

Tenebrae Associate Artists

Directed by Nigel Short

Music by Byrd, Gibbons, Lauridson, Sullivan and Chilcott

The final concert of the Festival takes place in the beautiful setting of Saint Andrew's Church, Mells (BA11 3PW) featuring some of the UK's finest new generation of young professional singers

This concert is a joint promotion with
'Music in Country Churches'

It is recommended that tickets are bought in advance at:

www.ticketsource/micc/music-at-mells/e-ovgpkv

All seating is unreserved on a first-come-first-seated basis

The performance lasts seventy minutes approximately

There will be a twenty-minute interval – drinks will be available.

*Doors open at 6.00pm

Downside Abbey Exhibition

'Everyday Lives'

Middle Sacristy – Downside Abbey

10.00am – 4.00pm

A fascinating historical glimpse of some of the people who worked at Downside as domestic servants and estate workers from 1814 until the 1920s.

The exhibition will also feature various aspects of the lives of villagers which were affected by the presence of the monastic community in the village.