

CHESTER CATHEDRAL
NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2017



ISSUE 34

Remember, remember in the month of November

I don't how often you hear the words I haven't got time! November marks a time when the clocks have changed, the days get shorter and the build up to Christmas seems to start earlier each year. Advent seems to have been squeezed out by commercialism and that risks taking over the Kingdom Season – the four weeks that lead up to the feast of Christ the King which falls on Sunday 26 November.

In some churches the Kingdom season is marked by Red Liturgical Vestments and Altar Frontals symbolising people who have shed their blood as martyrs in history and those who have died for their country in recent wars. Red is also the colour symbolising the Holy Spirit and the Kingdom Season begins on 1 November with All Saints Day commemorating people who have reflected God's light and love. This year the Kingdom season celebrates the 70th Wedding Anniversary of HM Queen and HRH Duke of Edinburgh; it is a remarkable achievement which the country needs to remember and the Cathedral will be having a special Choral Evensong on Sunday 19 November at 3.30pm to give thanks for the Royal Couple's faithfulness to the promises they made in Westminster Abbey in 1947. Throughout the season the Church holds examples of those who have done their duty in following the commandments of God.

In a world where choices are made to frequently suit our own desires and fortune, it is essential that we make time to look back and reflect on those whose names still line the walls of churches and hearts. On days such as All Saints Day and All Souls Day (2 November) to think about what legacy and contribution to society that we will be remembered for. Asked by Kirsty Young on Desert Island Disks, the business entrepreneur Dame Stephanie 'Steve' Shirley was asked What will your legacy be? to which she responded Made a difference; it's a phrase I like and

employ. In Steve's case it was her philanthropy and generosity in giving away millions to charities especially for autism; no how matter much or little money we have, it is about giving away what we are and we have, that will make our mark.

The Kingdom season ends with the feast of Christ the King whose reign reveals the ultimate meaning of love through his servanthood, sacrifice for our salvation. God's power is given away through Jesus' ministry to bring healing and restoration in the world; Christ's whole life is given up on the cross so that we have all have the potential to live in freedom through forgiveness and reconciliation today! In our dark and long nights ahead, we live in times where this is both reflected physically, spiritually socially (isolation and loneliness) and politically (Brexit and world peace), we have to turn to Christ's light of hope which he gives us both in earthly ministry but in the hope that eternal reigns brings today. On Advent Sunday (December 3), the Cathedral and County will be having a Vigil to remember the victims of the Manchester Bombings and all terrorist acts that have tragically taken place during 2017. The Taizé chant Within our darkest night, you kindle a fire that never dies away will be sung and all will have time to remember the memories of the past year in order to shape the future. It will be one of many services through November and December where time and reflection will potentially give us space to look forward with hope. Look at your own life and prioritise some time each day or week to think about our time and work can make a difference to bring about God's Kingdom and may be make the difference for others, as well as be an example and name by which you can be remembered and inspire others.

Jeremy Dussek



The Cathedral in LEGO project is in need of your help.

Are you able to volunteer your time to discuss the project enthusiastically, to encourage our visitors to donate and continue the build of this exciting structure?

If you are, please get in touch with Helen Barber in the first instance - by emailing

helen.barber@chestercathedral.com

In this issue...

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- MISSION FORUM UPDATE
- CATHEDRAL COUNCIL
- UPDATE FROM THE ACTING DEAN
- PILGRIM WEEK

From the Vice Dean

It has been really interesting to join the cathedral community during a period of change, especially following the retirement of the Very Revd Gordon McPhate at the end of September. The cathedral is now at a junction where the wider church is asking: How can the cathedral best fulfill its calling to be the Seat of the Bishop, the Mother Church of the Diocese, a Centre for Mission and Ministry, and a place of welcome for all? It is also asking: what sort of person should be appointed to lead the Cathedral in its next phase of development? Like you, I am continuing to pray for Bishop Peter and the panel that has been appointed to oversee the selection process for the new Dean. Details of the statutory process can be found at:

www.churchofengland.org/media/1298731/appointment_process_for_deans.pdf

During these changes, the Cathedral Chapter will continue to fulfill its leadership role in managing the affairs of the cathedral. The duties of the Chapter are laid out in the Cathedrals Measure 1990. Details can be found at:

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukcm/1999/1/section/4

As part of their role, Chapter has agreed to two other changes that will impact upon the cathedral from January next year. Working with the Fabric Advisory Committee and the Cathedral Fabric Commission for England, both of which are statutory bodies (see: www.churchcare.co.uk/cathedrals/getting-advice/fac), it has agreed to refurbish both the Refectory and the toilets. Details of these projects will be displayed within the cathedral from early November. The Chapter has also sought advice from the Fabric Advisory Committee about the types of chairs and nave furniture that might be introduced in the future. The Fabric Advisory Committee considered two types of chairs that were regarded as suitable for use in a cathedral. Samples of both chairs were displayed during the summer. They have now recommended the Howe 40/4 chair, which has been adopted by many other cathedrals and used in St Paul's for more than 40 years. A sub-committee, led by the chair of the Fabric Advisory Committee, has also been formed to explore possible designs for a nave dais, altar and furniture. However, this is likely to be a lengthy process and any recommendations will require the formal approval of the Cathedrals Fabric Commission for England before moving forward. As potential designs emerge over the next year or so, they will be displayed for information and comment. In the meantime we would ask for your patience as the Chapter, the Finance Advisory Committee and the Cathedral Fabric Commission for England explore these key developments for our significant, beautiful and multi-role building.

On a much smaller scale, we are undertaking some relatively minor changes over the next few months. We are looking at new ways of storing our equipment so that our cathedral is free from clutter. We are starting to paint areas that have begun to look tired. We are reviewing our soft furnishings so that through colour and pattern our many users will be inspired. We are also experimenting with the layout of some furniture in order to create engaging areas that are both aesthetically pleasing and functionally appropriate. All of these decisions will be subject to the approval of our architect and the relevant statutory bodies.

We fully understand that change can be difficult and would ask for your prayerful support, advice and encouragement. We will keep you informed of any key developments over the next few months and will look forward to what is likely to be a creative and energetic period once our new Dean arrives.

Barry Wilson

The Revd Dr Mike Kirby is moving on...

The state and condition of moving on is a curious one – sometimes it is something we are drawn to do, sometimes we feel called to do so and sometimes we feel compelled to do so. Whichever is the reason, I have found moving on is always tinged with excitement, trepidation and sadness. Excitement and trepidation in not knowing what God has in store for us in the next part of the glorious walk with Jesus Christ – and the naturally human side of us which is uncertain what is around the next corner. And sadness – in leaving behind lovely people and places; the relationships made with the people one serves and the heavy heart with which one leaves them. But, the world is so connected these days – one is never far away; and I will never be far away... though the sadness for me is great, you will always be in my thoughts, prayers and my heart as a wonderful community which has welcomed me so much. Where I am off to, I don't know at this stage – but my final priestly duties here will be to serve you on Sunday 14 January 2018.

With my love and prayers, as always; God bless. Mike

WORSHIP IN THE CATHEDRAL

Weekdays:

- 08.30 Morning Prayer
St Anselm's Chapel
- 12.30 Eucharist
Lady Chapel
- 17.30 Choral Evensong
Quire

Saturdays:

- 09.30 Morning Prayer and Eucharist
St Werburgh's Chapel
- 16.15 Choral Evensong
Quire

Sundays:

- 08.00 Prayer Book Communion Service
- 10.00 Cathedral Eucharist
- 11.30 Sung Mattins
*(or Prayer Book Eucharist
on 1st and 3rd Sundays)*
- 15.30 Choral Evensong
- 18.30 Evening Service

IN RESIDENCE:

- Sunday: All clergy
- Monday: Canon Jeremy Dussek
- Tuesday: The Acting Dean
- Wednesday: Barry Wilson /
Revd Denise Williams
- Thursday: Canon Jeremy Dussek
- Friday: Barry Wilson
- Saturday: Rotated clergy / Mike Kirby

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

Joyeux Noël!

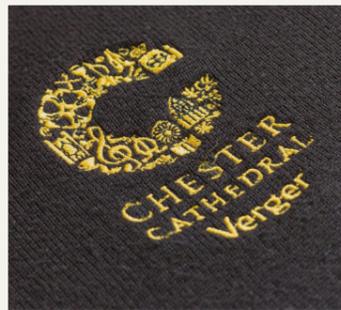
**Saturday 9 & Saturday 16
December | 7.30pm**

The Chester Cathedral Choir, directed by Philip Rushforth sing a selection of traditional carols for all to enjoy.

There will also be seasonal readings and a chance for all to join in and sing some festive songs and carols.

Tickets £10 - £20

Call 01244 500959 or click to:
chestercathedral.com



Hello from the Head Verger

It's been announced that I am now the Head Verger at Chester Cathedral. A position I consider a privilege and a huge responsibility, being part of and maintaining a sacred discipline that goes back centuries.

Understanding the role fully may take some time, and deciphering all of my twelve page job description will be a mammoth task, but there are three 'P's I will try and keep as my

priority in my time as your Head Verger; they are People, Place and Praise.

I will ensure that the People who I work with, vergers and volunteers, the visitors we interact with and the many people who make up the congregation of our amazing cathedral are cared for, listened to and appreciated. I will do my utmost to make sure the Place, Chester Cathedral, is cared for and looks top notch at all times. Of course, I cannot be Head Verger without the Praise that happens at Chester Cathedral to God, being an essential priority. I shall do my best to make sure that our worship continues to happen with dignity and reverence, with a firm appreciation for tradition and a positive outlook on contemporary approaches as well.

If you want to join the Vergers Department and help in any way, please do make contact as we are always looking for new volunteers, and just a few hours a week would make a massive difference.

I would be grateful for your prayers and support as I enter this new position, and you are always welcome to pop into the Vergers' office or find me around the Cathedral for a chat.

Corentyn Smith

Crocus sativus

Saffron crocus, autumn crocus, IRIDACEAE

More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey, and the honey-comb. (psalm XIX :10).

With a crop more valuable than its weight in gold is a small plantation in a hidden location. The scent from just a single flower is indeed exquisite. Not to be confused with the deadly poisonous Colchicum autumnale COLCHICACEAE, also known as Autumn Crocus, (q.v. Monthly News September 2013). Carl Linnaeus 1707 – 1778 developed the binomial system of nomenclature to prevent such confusion and potential disaster of common names.

C. sativus is not known in the wild but is thought to originate from the Eastern Mediterranean and Asia where it has been in cultivation for at least 3,500 years (Bronze Age). It is a triploid, unable to reproduce by seed and is therefore propagated by division of corms. The triploid characteristic points to an ancient hybridisation or mutation. Crocus is a delicacy and adds gourmet quality to the diet of the grey squirrel *Sciurus carolinensis*. It takes all of our human resources and ingenuity to outwit the tenacity of our adversary.



Please see Cathedral News March 2014 describing the employment of an infra-red initiated ultrasound device, which drove small boys of the choir to distraction and shut down the song school, whilst squirrels lined up on the parapet of the Cloister Garth, poking tongues. It is the dried styles and stigmas that are used for flavouring. There's not a lot of people that know this but it takes 70,000 plants to produce one pound of saffron and that is at 3 stigmas per plant.

Philip B. Hunt
Custos hortorum

'The Cathedral'

by David Diggory

The lone cathedral stands on high,
Above the wondering passer-by.
Why did it loom across the land,
Ordained in manner God had planned,
Today, an empty tomb bereft
Of inner spirit, all that's left
Of Man's great folly to presume
His deity required a room
To worship? No, there was no god,
Inspiring use of pick and hod!

Its neighbours, now, an office block;
Department stores for tie and sock;
Beyond, below, a brown canal,
With rubbish littered from the mall.
On paint-chipped benches, lovers sit,
And nod together to the hit
That's streamed to youthful ears for hours,
From studios to trellised towers,
Agnostic in comparison,
To steeples stacked in orison.

In decades gone, they'd doubtless doubt:
Anxiety, 'midst mire and rout,
The nostril-flaring, noxious fumes,
And dread disease – so, one assumes,
Far greater reason to conclude
That nothing lies beyond the crude
The coarse, barbaric, endless woe,
Which only lost despondents know.
And yet, and yet... there's still belief,
In bible scenes in bas-relief!

Let no-one dare think, unrenowned,
It rose benignly from the ground.
The hardest wit made measures true,
Bruises, curses, yes! death anew,
The price its stoic masons paid,
For every stone, in grace, they laid.
What arrogance we dare dismiss,
Their rise to meet, their God to kiss!
A testament for all to see,
Still, not so lovely as a tree.

Mission Forum Update

VISIT BY FOUR MEMBERS OF OUR LINK PARISH IN KONDOPOGA, KARELIA



During the first week of October, four members of our link parish in Kondopoga flew over to Chester for a fantastic eight day stay. At the service on 1 October they loved the cathedral choir, the building, the friendliness and being present at Dean Gordon's last service. Father Lev, the parish priest, and the Dean set up the link in 2009. They also had tea with the Bishop and Mrs Forster and dinner with Barry Wilson and his wife, involving much discussion on the similarities and differences between our Church of England cathedral and their orthodox church.

As well as Father Lev, there was Nadedzda, the housekeeper at Parish House, whose day starts with cooking hot food for 40 homeless people who queue up every morning to be fed, keeping the financial records, making sure all the food for feeding the street children we support is there, teaching Sunday School and looking after all the visitors who come to Parish House (including us when we went over there!). Maria also teaches Sunday School, feeds the street children and brings children over to Parish House every week from the local orphanage to experience something of family life and normal relationships. Finally we welcomed Nicholai, who helps run the summer camps for teenagers, helps with activities at Parish House and teaches music. We last saw him at a summer camp at the parish dacha, when he helped to put on a play and party for us. He was like a brother to Alexander, the disabled young man I wrote about before and touched everyone when he kept bending down to pick Alexander up so he could keep joining in with the dancing. We received the amazing news from them that after completing his distance learning course in IT, Alexander now has a job with the website of the Mariinsky Theatre in St Petersburg! This is a young man who was condemned to life in an institution before they adopted him.

After visits to the Chester and Ellesmere Port Foodbank and Save the Family, they gained some insight into the challenges we face in tackling the sort of social problems they are working with. They were astonished at the level of charity and goodwill in this country, having to spend a lot of their time changing a mindset influenced by 70 years of communism. They also spent the day at the Bishops' Bluecoat Church Of England High School in Boughton, where they were really taken aback by the friendliness, discipline and good manners of the pupils. They had never been into a church school before, but after meeting children, the Head, teachers and ancillary staff (the Polish caretaker speaks fluent Russian!) they described the school as 'heaven'.

A couple of days were spent in London, with directors of St Gregory's Foundation, who support our fundraising programme, and then back to Chester for a lively party at the home of Jane and Geoff Jones. There was much singing and eating and general jollity, and it was a pleasure to welcome three members of clergy to that party, with spouses.

A big thank you must go to all of the congregation and helpers who made this successful visit happen, especially those involved in raising the money for it. St Gregory's match-funded, but without the work carried out in the cathedral it would not have happened. Lots of people are now asking about another trip to Russia, perhaps in 2019. We are going to make some enquiries about the feasibility of this idea and we will let everyone know if it is possible. Watch this space!

Each month, we send an electronic version of this newsletter to a handful of readers. If you use email, do please subscribe to do the same - and help reduce the amount of paper and ink that we use to produce the newsletter.

To receive the newsletter in your Inbox simply email me at kevin.baxter@chestercathedral.com

Rest assured, you won't receive any other content, unless you ask to do so.

December Newsletter
Articles submitted by
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CHESTER CATHEDRAL