

Canon Christopher Burkett Writes..... (W)hol(I)y Wasting Time



Am I looking forward to my holiday? You betchya! And the new gadget that I won't be buying to take with me is a silicon skin to protect my laptop so that I can receive emails on the beach. Emails are part of my everyday; an essential component of work. Usually I check them frequently. But on holiday I'm not going to look at them once. My principal task will be to do nothing, or perhaps more accurately to take a lot more time about doing things that I like that I normally only manage to squeeze in. A different kind of time regime will rule my life from the usual one of the workaday round. And that step-change is vital.

Have you ever watched a small child playing in the park? Typically the child will use the equipment with great enthusiasm, but then every so often will return to the parent. Then, seemingly having gained strength or confidence from the parent, the child will return to the play equipment very happily. This process of independent action followed by retreat to the parent and then return to play will be repeated over and over again.

I've heard behavioural psychologists call this process oscillation; swinging between independent action and dependency. In small children the process is very obvious, but all of us, throughout our lives do something very similar. In order to achieve in autonomous action we need times of recuperating dependency. There has to be a swing in our lives—from work to home, from initiating things to accepting things, from hyper action to quiet restfulness. Such oscillation is essential to a healthy living. Without it, damaging burnout is likely. Simply put, constant doing is harmful to people.

In traditional religious practice, the ultimate kind of prayerful withdrawal has been the retreat. Across many centuries, people of faith have taken time out of the daily round to spend uninterrupted time with God in a place set-apart. In our time-driven world, more and more people are finding retreats vital to their well be. I've heard them described as 'the luxury of time simply to be.' There are lots of things the person on retreat could be doing, but being physically away in a place apart, none of them are possible. Instead, there is space. Space to think, to rest, to worship. A recuperating breather.

The Christian faith has always emphasised the importance of space simply to be before God, or space to do something completely different from everyday activities. These times are essential to our well-being and spiritual growth. Indeed the idea of a holiday comes from the notion of 'a holy day'— something special and out of the ordinary.

In crowded lives in a crowded world we need times of space just to be. Worship often has this function. It is time to do something that is not productive in any commonsense understanding. Worship being quite literally something just worth doing for its own sake—worth-ship. The paradox is that these times of waiting on God and realising our dependency actually improves our effectiveness in the rest of our lives. For our own health we need such times even more when you're busy.

And that, of course, is why every busy cleric should ask humble pardon of God and God's people. If 'the cure of souls' is the task of an ordained person, and that must surely be the case, then clergy should take care to model in their own lives a commitment to godly space.

Almost fifty years ago, Monica Furlong famously wrote: 'I am clear what I want of the clergy. I want them to be people who can by their own happiness and contentment challenge my ideas about status, about success, about money, and so teach me how to live more independently of such drugs. I want them to be people who can dare, as I do not dare, and as few of my contemporaries dare, to refuse to work flat out (since work is an even more subtle drug than status), to refuse to compete with me in strenuousness. ... I want them to be people who have faced the problems of player. I want them to be people who can sit still without feeling guilty, and from whom I can learn some kind of tranquillity in a society which has almost lost the art.' I think those words even more pertinent now in our time-poor, computerised world. Forgive me when I've messed-up such godly time-out.

Praying for others is also a kind of time-out. We may not often be able to spend hours, let alone days, away from it all with God, but praying imaginatively for others frees us from the self concern and preoccupations of everyday. For a while, the horizon of our mental vision is lifted to things, issues and needs that aren't just our own. And that's why the prayer intentions listed week by week on the cathedral notices are so significant. Regular intercession for communities and individuals beyond our immediate knowledge is in itself the creation of a different kind of personal space. That widening vision isn't the reason why we should pray, but it is one of the blessings of doing so.

The being 'out of it' that worship and prayer affords gives us the opportunity to put our needs and the needs of others within the framework of God's ultimate purposes, and that is immensely liberating. Just as the child finds renewed strength and confidence sitting on Mum's knee for a while, so will we when we pray awhile with God. As someone said, 'Don't just do something—Be!'

Saturday Singing Club

The new term starts again this Autumn, so if you are interested in joining, please contact Carmella De Lucia on 01244 324756 for more information.

FAC Secretary on His New Role

Cathedral Executive Assistant Michael Waight has recently taken over the role of Secretary for the Fabric Advisory Committee from John Makinson. Here, he talks about his new role.



“The Fabric Advisory Committee is a part of the ecclesiastical planning process. It is a body independent of the Cathedral, created by the Care of Cathedrals Measure 1990. The matters with which the FAC is concerned are determined by the Measure, and cover building works that would materially affect the character of the Cathedral or its surroundings, the sale of certain objects owned by the Chapter, and the addition of any object which would affect the character of the Cathedral. Some building works must gain the permission of the Cathedrals Fabric Commission for England, which is akin to a FAC but on a national scale. I became involved with the FAC as part of the administrative support in the Cathedral. When John Makinson, the previous Secretary, moved on to become Chairman of the Cathedral Forum, I volunteered to take over. It seemed like a good way of gaining extra knowledge about the history of the building, as well as being a role in which I could make use of my law degree.

The FAC will be busy in the coming months with the progression of the Cathedral Quarter Phase 1 plans. I expect to be involved in preparing and giving advice on the preparation of the documents that the FAC will need to consider.”

Michael Waight



Local choir, **A Handbag of Harmonies**, (pictured left) who made it into the finals of Last Choir Standing on BBC1 in 2008, are putting on a concert in the Wolf Room at Eaton Park on 9 November at 7.30 pm, with kind permission of their Graces the Duke and Duchess of Westminster. This is part of a fundraising programme for the Education Department and our link parish in Kondopoga and the proceeds from the evening will be split between them. Tickets cost £15, including wine and nibbles, and are available from Jane Jones on 01244 312188, or in coffee after the services on Sunday mornings.

We are also pleased to announce that pianist John Gough is going to play for a fundraising musical evening on 11 September at 7.30 pm. The event will be held at the home of Jane and Geoff Jones and will be limited to 30 people. There will be singing by Rachel Barlow and others, violin solos from Annemauraide Hamilton and piano solos by John Gough. We are extremely lucky to have John supporting us so please come and hear him. Tickets are available from Jane Jones as above, priced £10, and will include wine and canapés.

Jane Jones

The European Medical Students' Orchestra & Choir 2010
proudly present their
Summer Gala Concert
in support of Christie's Hospital

Saturday 7th August at



Chester Cathedral

Tickets £8 (£5 concession) at the Cathedral Box Office—01244 500959

CURATE'S CORNER



Each month, our new Curate Dot Gosling will be writing a few words about her journey of faith at Chester Cathedral.

I have been overwhelmed with the kindness from everyone since I became your Curate on 4th July. In the month I have been with you, I have been going to Mattins (morning prayer) usually twice a week (sometimes three), have assisted at both 10.00 & 11.30 Sunday services, read the lessons at 2 Choral Evensongs, led evening prayer once, assisted at a 12.30 Eucharist once. I have also been to clergy staff meetings and had two supervision meetings.

But the main thing I have been doing is meeting so many of you that faces and names are beginning to blur into one! I know you know that is going to happen as so many of you have said exactly that. So I want to thank you for being welcoming and accepting - even when things don't go quite according to plan and please keep reminding me of your names, I do want to get them right!

Ordination of Deacons - 4 July 2010

Sunday 4 July was a very special day for the Cathedral when over twenty Deacons were ordained in the Nave.



All gathered together on a glorious sunny day to celebrate obedience, dedication and service within the Cathedral. It was a truly happy day, which is evident in this photograph.

COMING SOON TO CHESTER CATHEDRAL

There are a number of exciting concerts on at Chester Cathedral within the next few months. Book your tickets early to avoid disappointment.

7 August	<i>EMSOC Concert</i>	7.30pm	01244 500959
18 September	<i>Fodens Brass Band Concert</i>	7.30pm	01244 500959
28 October	<i>Friends' Annual Lecture</i>	7.30pm	01244 500959

Tickets for the above concerts are on sale from the Cathedral Box Office



Cathedral Safety at Height

In light of the exciting 'Cathedral at Heights' tour which aims to open up the Cathedral Tower to visitors, The Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service climbed aloft our tower on Tuesday 6 July to work out the best way of bringing someone down from the top, as well as the internal ringing chamber to the Nave roof, using slings and cradles.



From there, any casualty will be brought down to ground level on a hydraulic platform or to the Cloister Garden by rope line.



The tower tour promises to be a fantastic adventure, exploring the Cathedral's upper galleries and visiting the tower's internal chambers.

But of course, the health and safety of visitors is paramount—therefore all contingencies must be taken into account. The Fire and Rescue Service carried out exercises to test various anchor points and made recommendations regarding the wellbeing of visitors, to ensure that all appropriate safety measures have been tested and approved.



Friends of Chester Cathedral Card

This card, issued to members of the Friends of Chester Cathedral entitles the holder, on presentation of the card, to 10% discount in the Cathedral Shop and the Cathedral Refectory Cafe and, again on presentation of the card, to free entry to the Cathedral with one guest.



News from the Education Department

The Cathedral's Education Department made us all extremely proud recently, when they were awarded a 'Learning Outside the Classroom' Quality Badge in recognition of the high quality 'out of the classroom' learning experiences they provide for local schools.

The Badge aims to assure children, parents and schools that providers offer very worthwhile activities in a safe environment.

Our excellent education team, Maureen Richards and George Carr have done a sterling job in making it easy for schools to visit the Cathedral.

Maureen Richards said: "George, the Education Support office, and all our Volunteers provide a full range of children's activities in the Cathedral and everyone is pleased that this has been recognised."



Education Officers George Carr and Maureen Richards

Summer Activities in the Education Department

August 4th – Sumptuous Sketching

Inspired by Chester Cathedral's magnificent organ and with the assistance of an experienced artist, learn how to add light and shade to your own pictures. Suitable for all ages.

August 11th – Mesmerizing Mosaics

Using our beautiful Victorian mosaics and tiles as an inspiration, create mosaics using small pieces of coloured card to piece together your own design.

August 18th – Spectacular Stained Glass

Tour the Cathedral admiring our stunning stained glass, then create your own design to take home on our special transparent paper.

August 25th – Quire stall creatures

Visit our weird and wonderful wood carving in the medieval Quire stalls, and then use clay to create your own fabulous or terrible creature to take home.

All workshops are drop-in sessions running from 10.30 am to 3.00 pm.

Children's activities are aimed at 4 to 12 years and children must be accompanied by an adult throughout the activity, normal Cathedral admission charges apply.

CANON CHRISTOPHER BURKETT'S FAREWELL

We are sad to say goodbye to Canon Christopher Burkett who will be leaving his position of Canon Residentiary here at Chester Cathedral in mid September to take up the new post of Director of Ministry for the Diocese.

His last Sunday will be on 12th September, where he will be thanked for his considerable contribution to the life of the Cathedral for over ten years.

We wish him the very best of luck for the future and thank him for his good work, not to mention his irreplaceable sense of humour and impromptu singing performances in the Cathedral Office!



Canon Christopher Burkett

AUGUST SPECIAL OFFERS IN THE REFECTORY



Throughout this month, the Refectory will be running some exciting special offers.

Come and sample delicious **soup and a sandwich** for just £5 and **top up coffee** refills for only £1.

Too good to miss!

SUNG COMPLINE BY CANDLELIGHT from September 2010, Sunday 6:30pm

From the beginning of September 2010 there will once again be a weekly Sunday 6:30pm service at Chester Cathedral. The Cathedral Clergy have re-introduced these evening services for a trial period of ten months. Services of Wholeness and Healing, Worship in the Taizé Style and various special services will continue throughout the year in their present form. In addition, there will be a new regular service of **Sung Compline** with the chanting of the office undertaken by the Cathedral Nave Choir.

The ancient service of Compline can be traced back as far as St Benedict in the 6th Century and some scholars suggest that the service has 4th Century origins. The word Compline is derived from the Latin *completorium*, literally meaning the completion of the day. For the Benedictine monks of the Abbey of Chester, it would have been the final spiritual devotion before retiring to bed.

With the busyness of our 21st Century lives, it can be difficult to find space and quiet contemplation at the end of the day. I know that some find our weekday services of Choral Evensong very helpful for this reason, but others, perhaps because of work commitments, find the 5:30pm timeslot difficult. 6:30pm on Sunday is an opportunity for meditation, prayer and spiritual renewal before the start of another working week and we hope that this might appeal to a wide variety of people.

Sundays at Chester Cathedral bustle with life. Along with our regular Cathedral services we often have services with special groups from the community in attendance or the celebration of civic events. As the organ thunders, we sing God's praises with strength and confidence. But on Sunday evening the Cathedral will remain quiet for prayer and reflection from 6pm. Some may like to just come, sit and enjoy the silence.

The simple service will then be sung (or occasionally said) in the Quire or Lady Chapel at **6:30pm**. Plainsong and other simple and quiet music will usually be offered. There will be psalms, a reading, homily and short time of prayer. This will be followed by a time of contemplation as a suitable piece of organ music is played. Following final prayers, the sung service concludes with the singing of a Marian Antiphon before all leave in silence.

If you are able to attend Sung Compline (the first will be on Sunday 12th September), we hope that you might leave having felt the presence of God in the stillness, silence, candlelight and music of an ancient monastic service in our ancient monastic Cathedral.

The schedule of Sunday 6:30pm services for the rest of 2010 will be as follows:

- September** Sunday 6th *Service of Wholeness and Healing in the Lady Chapel*
Sunday 12th *Sung Compline in the Quire*
Sunday 19th *Sung Compline in the Quire*
Sunday 26th *Cathedral Praise*
- October** Sunday 3rd *Sung Compline in the Quire*
Sunday 10th *Sung Compline in the Lady Chapel*
Sunday 17th *Sung Compline in the Lady Chapel*
Sunday 24th *Service of Wholeness and Healing in the Lady Chapel*
Sunday 31st *Choral Requiem for the Commemoration of the Faithful Departed:
John Rutter's setting of the Requiem sung by the Cathedral Choir*
- November** Sunday 7th *Worship in the style of Taizé*
Sunday 14th *Sung Compline in the Quire*
Sunday 21st *Sung Compline in the Quire*
Sunday 28th *'From Darkness to Light': Cathedral Advent Procession with Carols*
- December** Sunday 5th *Service of Wholeness and Healing in the Lady Chapel*
Sunday 12th *Sung Compline in the Lady Chapel*
Sunday 19th *Christmas Organ Meditation: Philip Rushforth plays Olivier Messiaen's La Nativité du Seigneur on the Cathedral Organ, interspersed with seasonal readings*
Sunday 26th No 6:30pm service

Canons in Residence:

AUGUST

1st-7th - Canon Christopher Burkett
8th-21st - Dean Gordon McPhate
22nd-31st - Dean Gordon McPhate

SEPTEMBER

1st-4th—Dean Gordon McPhate
5th-18th—Canon Chris Humphries

Worship in the

Cathedral:

Weekdays:

0730 Morning Prayer
(St Anselm's Chapel)
1230 Eucharist
(1130 on Thursdays)
1730 Choral Evensong (said service on Wednesdays)

Saturdays:

0900 Morning Prayer
(St Anselm's Chapel)
0930 Eucharist
1615 Choral Evensong

Sundays:

0800 Prayer Book Communion Service (said)
1000 Cathedral Eucharist
1130 Sung Mattins (or Prayer Book Eucharist 3rd & 5th Sundays)
1530 Choral Evensong
1830 Evening Service on 1st and 5th Sunday

All subject to occasional variations.

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<http://twitter.com/chestrcathedral>

A Service of Meditation by the Icons

will be held on Sunday 8 August at 6.30pm in the Lady Chapel.



Led by the Revd Christine Bull, this will involve quiet and reflective worship, focusing on the icons from Kondopoga.

Come along as we use words, music, silence and attentive gazing to draw us into the presence of God.

