



Canon Christopher Humphries Writes....



A Flying Start to the New Year

“Geese in flock have seventy per cent greater range than a single goose on its own; Geese in formation fly seventy-five per cent faster than single geese.”

This thought from the Iona community has stayed with me ever since I first visited Iona thirteen years ago. The wild goose is a Celtic symbol of the Holy Spirit, so here is a powerful picture of the work of God's spirit with the Christian community. Common purpose, mutual support, call it what you will, with the power of God working among us, we are enabled to be more durable, more gracious and more loving in our dealings one with another.

Chester Cathedral is a community of sorts, actually of all sorts! What do we mean when we say “the Cathedral community”? Certainly not the same as the Benedictine community of monks that inhabited this place in mediaeval times with their vows, ordered routines and clear boundaries. Chester Cathedral in the 21st Century is more open and more complex in terms of the people associated with this unique building. But still we strive to go beyond being an organisation only and aspire to being a community. Within “community” I would include all who wish to be within that “common-unity”. That is to say our worshipping congregations, our staff and volunteers, our clergy and choirs, Chapter, Council and College of Canons; then there are the connections to the wider community in City, County and Diocese. So we're very widespread and thus quickly in danger of being so varied and disparate that we have no cohesion.

So what do we have in common? At our heart we are a **community of faith**, a faith that continues to be lived out and proclaimed. Here the Creed is regularly affirmed by Christian believers, and gives us our starting point for ministry, even as we reach out to those of little faith or none. As an Anglican cathedral we steer a delicate course between being “broad church” and having a clear gospel message. We encourage folk to explore the issues of faith, to question and be honest about their doubts, but at the same time we aim to be unashamedly and distinctively Christian.

Our big connection with our Benedictine forbears is that we want to be a **community of welcome**. This means that we look carefully at first impressions, initial greetings given to first time visitors, and how our ethos of warm, friendly hospitality is made real day by day. It has to permeate each part of the Cathedral from Refectory to High Altar. It draws on the virtues of love and acceptance, patience and toleration, but has obvious implications as well for thoughtful planning and preparation.

Many of the problems being encountered throughout Britain today, from litter on the streets to breakdown of family relationships, stem from the disintegration of community. Governments and politicians will have their strategies to address this, but churches, including the cathedrals of our land, are on the front line. Recently I read an article by Times journalist Tim Lott, an avowed atheist, who nevertheless has been drawn to worship with his family at his local church in North London. He is surprised and delighted at this strange turn of events since he and his wife Rachael were married there three years ago. He is still sceptical about the faith, but is “converted to the church, which I now understand that, despite all its flaws, can be a real force for good in a community... Instead of scorning my local church now, I am humbled by it and what it is capable of standing for.”

I was interested to note that Tim's favourite aspect of worship was the Peace “the part of the service I enjoy most – I walk around shaking hands and smiling with strangers and friends alike.” That sounds to me exactly the model of extended community that we hope to live out here at Chester Cathedral. It will be different to a parish church simply because of the size and significance of a cathedral. But the pulse and heartbeat are the same.



DON'T FORGET: During the winter months, (October - March) Morning Prayer will be held at 8.30am, Monday to Friday, in St. Anselm's Chapel. All are welcome.

New Year Road Works on Northgate Street

Repairs and maintenance on the gas mains are planned in Northgate Street from 6 January to the end of February. This will disrupt vehicle access to the Cathedral and diversions will be in force via Princess Street from time to time.

All road works will be coordinated by Cheshire West and Chester Council.



CURATE'S CORNER

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

Over the past two or three weeks, during the season of Advent, there has been so much going on here in the Cathedral, that I have been left wondering how we have been preparing to remember the coming of the Christ child!

Earlier in the month I blogged about preparing throughout advent and about the rushing around so many people engage in, the amount of food we prepare and consume, the presents people buy and for which some go into debt. I said on my blog I was having a minimalist Christmas with no Christmas food but some presents and that I hoped I would manage it; so far it is looking hopeful!

The point of me doing this is not because I do not like giving presents – I love giving! It is not that I don't like Christmas food; I love a nice vegetarian Christmas dinner!!! The point is that the rushing around, the consumerist society we live in has turned our eyes and attention from the reason for Christmas – Jesus, into a festival of eat, drink and be merry and let us try to outdo what we gave last year.

What can I give him, poor as I am? Give my heart... will you join me in giving your love to Christ and those around you who are in need this Christmas time?

Celebrating Marriage

On Sunday 13 February at 3.30pm, there will be a service in the Cathedral to give thanks for Marriage; whether it is our own, our parents, our friends or just the community at large. Chester Cathedral is joining with Mothers' Union in encouraging and supporting Marriage in our increasingly secular society. All are welcome to this celebration.

Education News

The Education Department enjoyed a busy end to 2010. In November we welcomed; several primary school groups for tours, a group of home schooled children and a small group from Gmersyllt Support Centre. We also hosted 76 Beavers Cubs who completed their Faith Badge on a day organised by Geoff Taylor and support by wonderful volunteers. In December we hosted many school carol concerts and some education volunteers enjoyed 'Singing the Christmas Story' in two concerts for Primary aged children.

Looking into 2011

Holocaust Memorial day: The University of Chester Academy in Ellesmere Port, year 6 children from Rosemoor Primary School, members of the local churches and community, have designed and are making two textile banners to hang in the children's chapel that will commemorate this year's Holocaust Memorial Day.



Immediately after 12.30 communion on Tuesday 25th January there will be a short service of prayers and poems by the children's chapel. All are welcome to join the designers and makers at this service. The banner's will proudly hang in the Cathedral for a month, accompanied by a sketch book which tells the story of its creation. Please do make time to visit.

King James Version of the Bible 400 years of celebration

There will be an exhibition from the University of Sheffield on the King James Version and work from children around the diocese will be shown next to the posters. As the exhibition runs through February there will be opportunities for children to participate in half term activities relating to the King James Bible, its language and its influence today.

Praying for the sick within our community

Praying for those who are ill is an integral part of any Christian vocation.

Every Sunday during intercessions we name those within our community who have asked for our prayers. But what do we mean by 'within our community'?

The people we pray for on a Sunday are themselves a member of the congregation, (including the clergy), or a member of their immediate family, who have become ill, are in hospital, are facing an operation, are diagnosed with a serious or terminal illness or a suffering because of a sudden accident or trauma.

Initially such people will be prayed for two weeks, which may be extended by the clergy if necessary. Please speak to a member of the clergy if you wish to add a name to this list.

Because of the nature of a cathedral, we also include in our definition of 'gathered community', staff and volunteers, members of chapter, the Cathedral Council, the College of Canons and well-known diocesan officers. So it becomes apparent that a considerable number of people may be included in our Sunday prayers!

Naturally, we may all know other people, beyond the immediate cathedral community, who need our prayers, or have asked for them and we include these in our weekday celebrations of the Eucharist. We also pray during the week for people who are living with long-term illness or disability. Again speak to the clergy if you would like to add a name to this list.

Sometimes people ask for private prayer by the clergy. If a member of the congregation requests such privacy it must be respected. Confidentiality is of the utmost importance to all of us, and private prayer is as significant as public. What we all hope and yearn for is God's transformation, so that we may be a praying and growing community, caring for each other and trusting more and more deeply in God's healing love.

Rev Christine Bull

James Griffiths

We are sorry to say goodbye to James Griffiths, who has proved himself to be an invaluable member of the Cathedral Estates Team in the six months he has been with us.



James is moving on to pastures new to start an architectural job in London, returning to his southern roots!

We will all miss James in the Office but wish him the very best of luck in his next career move.

Princess Anne Visits Chester Cathedral



Photo by Suzanne Humphries

On 8th December, the Cathedral was honoured to welcome Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal, when she visited as Patron of the Townswomen's Guilds at their Carol Service.

She was greeted by the Lord Lieutenant of Cheshire, David Briggs, who introduced her to The Dean, The High Sherriff, Mrs Diana Barbour, The Lord Mayor of Chester, Cllr Neil Ritchie and The Lady Mayoress, Mrs Kathie Ritchie, and the President and Committee members of the Townswomen's Guilds.

The event was a great success and afterwards, Princess Anne thanked The Dean for "a very genuine and sincere service."

Worship in the Cathedral:

Weekdays:

0830 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

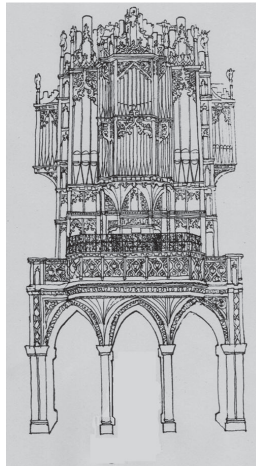
Sundays:

0800 Prayer Book Communion
Service (said)
1000 Cathedral Eucharist
1130 Sung Mattins (or Prayer Book
Eucharist 1st & 3rd Sundays)
1530 Choral Evensong
1830 Evening Service
*All subject to occasional variations
Check website for details*

Roger Fisher (*piano*) and Philip Rushforth (*organ*)

will be performing a Concert in the
Cathedral on
Saturday 29 January at 5.15pm.

Music will include
Mozart's *Piano Concerto No 17 in G major*
with accompaniment on the organ,
together with
Handel's *Organ Concerto No 10 in D minor*



In Residence - Day by Day

Sunday	All Clergy
Monday	Rev. Christine Bull
Tuesday	Canon Jane Brooke
Wednesday	The Dean
Thursday	Canon Chris Humphries
Friday	Canon Chris Humphries
Saturday	Rev. Christine Bull

King James Bible

2011 marks the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible.

The Cathedral's Canon Theologian, Loveday Alexander, will be holding workshops at 11am and 12pm on Saturday 29th January in the Library. The workshops have limited spaces and tickets at £3 (to cover costs) can be purchased from the Admissions Desk.

Professor Alexander will be presenting a lecture at 2pm on Saturday 29th January in the Chapter House. Entrance to this is free, although donations are welcome to support the work of the Education Department

There will be an KJ 400 exhibition in the South Transept in February.

Did you know...?

- It took 47 scholars 7 years to translate the Christian Bible into English
- The New Testament was translated from Greek, the Old Testament from Hebrew.

Chester Cathedral Nave Choir Presents...

Concert by Candlelight

Featuring music by Purcell, Buxtehude, Monteverdi,
Lassus & Carrissimi.

Directed by Ian Roberts, with Philip Rushforth & Laurence Lyndon-Jones
Saturday 12 February at 7.30pm.

**Tickets £10, available from the Cathedral Box Office 01244 500959
And online at www.chestercathedral.com**

A prayer for the New Year (from the Swedish Church)

Lord, we thank you for all the light, grace and life
Seen and known in the church which nurtured us.
Praying that still we may be set free from narrow
mindedness and complacency.
Open our eyes that we may recognise the work of
your Spirit

Among other people and under different forms.
And should we yet walk in some things on separate ways,
Then present before us
The common goal towards which we travel.
quoted in "A Wee worship book" Wild Goose / Iona community



Organ Recitals in 2011

Chester Cathedral is very proud of its musical heritage and the weekly Organ Recitals have been a tradition for many years. However the level of donations for attendance sadly has not covered the cost of holding the series, averaging out at less than £1.50 per person; so last year audience members were asked to complete questionnaires to gauge opinion about introducing a charge in 2011.



Out of the 64 returned questionnaires, it was evident that the series is highly valued. The survey results are summarised below:

- 25 respondents said they came to more than 26 recitals in a year
- 44 would be unlikely to attend in the evenings
- Only 2 said they would definitely attend an evening recital.
- 40 said they would be willing to pay £5 to come to a recital.
- 14 would pay between £3 and £6.
- 4 would pay £10 and 1 was prepared to pay £20!
- Just 4 individuals indicated that they would not be prepared to pay.

The Cathedral's Grand Organ will soon be in need of a major overhaul which is estimated to cost between £500,000 and £1million. Some visiting recitalists charge for their performances and most receive travel and accommodation expenses. The cost of closing the Cathedral to visitors in high season is around £300/hour. There are other underlying costs, such as payments to the Performing Rights Society and an appropriate proportion of the general heating, lighting, cleaning and preparation of the Cathedral. It is difficult to put an exact cost onto each Organ Recital, but it estimated to be between £500 and £1000 depending upon the recitalist and the time of year. Following such a positive outcome from the survey, a decision has been made to introduce a charge for admission to make sure that the series can continue.

The charge will be introduced from 1 January and will be at the same level as normal admission charges however Charisma cards will not exempt holders from the charge.

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| • Adults | £5 | Book of 10 Tickets | £40 |
| • Concessions (inc Friends) | £4 | Book of 10 Tickets | £35 |

Available from the Admissions Desk - 01244 500959

It is greatly hoped that the Organ Recitals will remain to be strongly supported. All income from organ recital charges will directly support the Organ Recital series.

The Organ Maestro Returns On Saturday 30 April 2011



The world famous American Concert Organist Carlo Curley returns to Chester Cathedral on his 40th Anniversary Tour.

To be fair classical music isn't everyone's cup of tea but when a musician boldly announces that 'Bach invented Rock and Roll', that a particular composition by Handel is a 'real toe-tapper', and that during the next piece his 'size 12's are going to go bananas with smoke rising from the pedalboard', it takes a strong will to turn a deaf ear.

Just such a performer is Carlo Curley, self-styled champion of the classical organ, a large and charismatic figure who has dedicated his life to blowing the cobwebs out of the organ loft and bringing music to suit all tastes to the masses - and by all accounts they're loving every moment of it!

This concert is kindly supported by the Friends of Chester Cathedral and tickets are on sale now from the Box Office in the Undercroft
Tel: 01244 500959 or online at www.chestercathedral.com

Bible Talk Lecture Series Spring 2011

Bible Talks are a series of lectures and discussions that take place in the Cloister room of from 1.15pm until 2.00pm. All are welcome.

The next series will focus on:

Translating God's Word

Why are there so many Bible translations? How can you tell which one is best? Which is closest to the original? This special series forms part of the Cathedral's celebration of the 400th anniversary of the publication of the in Authorized Version in 1611, and runs concurrently with the Cathedral's King James Bible exhibition.

Wednesday 2nd February 2011

Professor Philip Alexander

(Professor of Post-Biblical Jewish Literature at Manchester University)

"In the beginning ...": The problems of translating the Bible's first verse (Genesis 1.1)

Followed by optional tour of the King James Bible exhibition in the Cathedral Library (2.00 p.m.)

Wednesday 9th February 2011

Canon Loveday Alexander

(Professor at Sheffield University)

The Word made flesh: John 1.1-18

Wednesday 16th February 2011

Professor George Brooke

(Rylands Professor of Biblical Criticism and Exegesis at Manchester University)

"Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people ...": the challenges for the translator at the end of the Song of Moses (Deuteronomy 32:43)

Wednesday 23rd February

Canon Dr Trevor Dennis

On not frightening the children ... are Bible translators sometimes too careful?

Wednesday 2nd March

Professor John Rogerson

(Professor of Biblical Emeritus at Sheffield University)

Prophecy and Resistance: Micah 2:1-11

Wednesday 9th March

(Ash Wednesday)

Canon Loveday Alexander

Let this mind be in you: Philippians 2:1-11

