



Revd Christine Bull writes...

Talking about faith

The first full week in February has been designated the World Interfaith Harmony Week. The resolution to hold such a week each year at this time was passed by the UN general assembly, and was proposed by King Abdullah II of Jordan. What is interesting to me about this is that the UN is promoting world harmony from a specifically theological standpoint, including mention of God, whilst being at pains not to exclude by its language those without a religious belief. There is clearly a searching to find a way to hold creative conversation not only within faith communities but between all people of goodwill.



In our pluralistic world this seems an entirely good, even necessary encouragement. As Christians we cannot claim to be the only people of faith, nor to have the only access to truth. We routinely talk about the Christian journey, which itself implies change and growth as our life progresses. Jesus is always ahead of us, beckoning us on, wanting to show us new things. At any one point in our life we may only be able to say with complete honesty 'this I sincerely believe but I trust God to show me if I am wrong.' Such an attitude requires openness of mind and heart, or what the Archbishop of Canterbury described recently as wanting to keep open many different sorts of questions. Unfortunately we live in times when there is a determination to close down questions; such a desire always seems to me to stem from fear. God is surely big enough to cope with all our questions. I would like to describe my own faith as being rock hard in the centre but very fuzzy on the edges. It is very important to have room for doubt and uncertainty. If we have not decided everything in advance we are capable of creative conversation with those who have a different understanding of life, which might well be mutually enlightening.

I was delighted to read a newspaper article recently which reported that some of the world's leading thinkers were stressing the importance of being comfortable with uncertainty. A good scientist is never 'certain', I read, but will be ready to shift to a new perspective if better evidence emerges. Great advances in science have happened as a result of testing out a flash of intuition, a moment of illumination. The same surely applies to religion. St Augustine said 'I believe in order that I may understand.' And as we understand more we may have to revise our first position. There is no need to fear this if we are firmly rooted in God's goodness and care for us and for his world.

On 3rd February we celebrate Candlemas, when we turn away from the celebrations of Christmas and start the journey- that word again!- towards Jerusalem and the cross. Two biblical characters mark this change- Simeon and Anna. Both had led faithful and devout lives; both were blessed with a moment of illumination, of deep understanding and of insight into the future. I do not believe this would have been possible, they would not have been able to see, if their minds and hearts had not been both rooted in God and open to the world.

There has been a lot in the media recently about the nature and quality of dialogue in our world. The issue of free speech is very much a live one. But it is a thorny problem and we necessarily have laws preventing libel, slander and incitement to racial hatred. We need discipline in order to have freedom. We also need courtesy- what the art historian Sir Kenneth Clark said was the quality which best defined civilisation. It is very proper to engage in robust and legitimate criticism of other faith positions or world views, but we must not let that descend into ignorant prejudice. If we are confident in our own faith *and* aware of the complexity of the world we live in then we can engage courteously with others.

Barak Obama said that the challenge is to find and use words that heal, not words that wound. Jesus showed us the way- costly indeed but profoundly necessary if we really want harmony in our world today.

Saturday 30 April 2011

The Return of Carlo Curley - his 40th Anniversary Tour

Supported by the Friends of Chester Cathedral

Tickets on sale now from www.chestercathedral.com 01244 500959

CURATE'S CORNER

It is already well into January and it feels like months ago since my very minimalist Christmas! No Christmas food apart from the odd mince pie, very few things received that I didn't need, so less clutter in my home!

The start of the New Year is traditionally a time for thinking about resolutions, although I don't usually go in for resolutions, as I tend to forget or break them almost immediately. This year however, I am trying to be even more aware of me and my stuff in relation to the bigger picture, the wider world and how it is always about perspective. When I am tired I can give in to my thoughts and feelings and a 'pity party' is suddenly being held in my head and yet quite often it is something so tiny others would not bother about it, but it is big in my head.

Again this is something I blogged about and have asked those who read the blog to occasionally say perspective to me if I am looking as if I am worrying about something! When I listen to friends, become more aware of others, not only am I being more Christ like in my care for others, I am also more likely to realise that me and my 'stuff' is not as bad as I sometimes make it out to be. The phrase 'with hindsight' is a good one to remember as things often turn out to be fine. I have met so many supportive people since starting here and one keeps telling me not to worry – thanks Jo, and another keeps saying everything will be all right – you know who you are! So thanks to you and to all of you for being supportive, for giving me new perspectives, and I hope I do the same for you.



Chris Walton

At the end of February, we will bid farewell to Chris Walton, who has been at the Cathedral for just over three years as Commercial Director. He has overseen the day to day management of the Cathedral Shop, Refectory Café, Special Services and Events, Visitors, Tourism and Hospitality.

Chris was instrumental in the improvements in Cathedral signage, the introduction of a box office and negotiating various contracts with new and existing suppliers to help streamline some of the huge running costs of the Cathedral. He has also been a regular editor and contributor to this news letter.

Chris says "It has been a great pleasure to have been involved with Chester Cathedral. I hope, in my relatively short time here, I have been able to make a contribution to this very special place. There are so many wonderful people at the Cathedral; all have different motives for being here and I have enjoyed meeting and working with everyone. Thank you to all of you for the support that you have afforded both me and the Cathedral. I shall leave with many fond memories."

Chris is off to seek pastures new. We wish him and Blodwyn (his dog) well.



Cathedral Quarter Phase 1 - Update

A number of drop in sessions were held in January and two more are scheduled at 2-4pm and 5-7pm on Thursday 1 February at St Mary's Centre, near the Castle.

These drop in sessions have enabled members of the public to ask questions of representatives from Chester Renaissance, the Cathedral and BDP, the scheme architects, to see and make comment on outline plans for the proposed public realm developments.

These developments aim to create a picturesque, contemporary public square with the Cathedral providing a splendid backdrop. Access from the walls is proposed to come from the Cathedral side of the bell tower through a restyled Garden of Remembrance, which will remain for quiet contemplation. New matching street furniture and granite paving will enhance the streetscape and improved lighting will make the area much safer after dark and highlight the Cathedral's architecture.

Keep up to date with developments at www.chestercathedralquarter.org



Old Face - New Role

Following the recent departures of Carmella DeLucia and Michael Waight, Chris Jones has taken on some of the Admin roles within the Cathedral office over the short term. Many of you may know Chris as our Head Server and Reader in training, and will have seen him at many of our services throughout the year.



Ian Roberts

Ian leaves us at the end of February to become Director of Music at St John's Church, Ranmoor, Sheffield. St John's has a strong musical tradition with four choirs.



Ian sang in the Cathedral Choir as a Chorister and later as a Choral Scholar and Lay Clerk. After University at Norwich and singing in the Cathedral Choir, he was Organ Scholar at Blackburn Cathedral and then Chichester Cathedral before returning to Chester Cathedral as Second Assistant Organist.

In May 2008 he was appointed Assistant Director of Music and we have valued his enthusiasm, skill and dedication. Ian's skill as an improviser is exemplary and I shall miss his imaginative improvisations, particularly those heard at the conclusion of the Gospel at the Eucharist. Under Ian's direction the Cathedral Nave Choir has developed into a fine choir and he has also put considerable energy into the *Sing Up* project and in setting up the *Saturday Singing Club*.

We wish Ian and Kate every blessing for their forthcoming move to Sheffield.

Philip Rushforth

New Member of Chapter

The Venerable Malcolm Squires attended his first meeting of Chapter in January, following his appointment by the Bishop of Chester in place of Bishop Alan Chesters, who retired last year.



Born in 1946 in West Yorkshire, after St Chad's College, Durham and Cuddesdon College, he was ordained in Ripon and worked in two parishes in Leeds. These were followed by three jobs in Wakefield diocese, the last being Vicar of Mirfield.

In 1996 he crossed the border and became Rector of Wrexham. In 2001 he was appointed Archdeacon of Wrexham. He volunteered to spend the last 18 months of his stipendiary ministry as Chaplain to the Bishop of St Asaph.

He is married to Elizabeth, the Diocesan Director of H R. They have two daughters and three grand children. They now live on the North Wales coast in Penrhyn Bay.

Bible Talks 2011



Chester Cathedral

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 Authorised version in 1611, and runs concurrently with the Cathedral's king James Bible Exhibition.

FEB 2 Professor Philip Alexander (Manchester)

"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 (2:00pm)

FEB 9 Canon Professor Loveday Alexander (Chester)

The Word made flesh: John 1.1-18

FEB 16 Professor George Brooke (Manchester)

"Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people...": the challenges for the translator at the end of the Song of Moses (Deuteronomy 32:34)

FEB 23 Canon Dr Trevor Dennis (Chester)

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

MAR 2 Professor John Rogerson (Sheffield)

Prophecy and Resistance: Micah 2.1-11

MAR 9 Canon Professor Loveday Alexander (Chester)

Let this mind be in you: Philippians 2.1-11

Wednesdays, 1pm, Cloister Room

Cathedral Volunteers

Thank you to all those who have sent in their signed volunteer agreements in time for the 7th January deadline.

There is a small number of volunteers who have yet to return completed agreement forms. It is absolutely vital that these are sent in to the Volunteer Coordinators as soon as possible in order that the Cathedral is able to discharge its duty of care to its volunteers.

The Dean has agreed that the names of those who have not signed up as registered volunteers will be referred to Chapter in February.

If you need a replacement form, please contact the volunteer coordinators at the Cathedral Office. Please do contact us if you wish to discuss your status as a volunteer.

Happy New Year and thank you for your continued support.

Edward Walton & Patricia Faraday,
Volunteer Coordinators

Forthcoming Events - Tickets on sale now

Date	Event	Time	Tickets	Available from
12 February	Nave Concert by Candlelight	7.30pm	£10	01244 500959 www.chestercathedral.com
24 February	Chetham's Symphony	7.30pm	£14 £8 £5	0161 838 7244 www.chethams.com
30 April	Carlo Curley	7.30pm	£12.50 £8	01244 500959 www.chestercathedral.com

For more details and to book online, please visit the Cathedral website www.chestercathedral.com

Education News

After producing another fantastic crib service this year the Sunday School has begun 2011 thanking the children with a series of parties and events. On Sunday 9th January the youngest Sunday School attendees enjoyed a 'Epiphany Party' where they played games, tucked into party food, and as you can see from the photography generally had fun. A big thank you, to all the leaders and parents who's support made the party possible, especially Helen Harris, the party organiser.



The older children from Jackie Rainsforth's group are currently looking forward to a visit to Theatre Clwyd's 'Wok 'n' Roll' Pantomime, and Mary Clay's group will have a bowl 'n' bite evening at Ten Pin in February.

In February we are looking forward to displaying two textile banners which think about this year's Holocaust Memorial Day theme of 'Untold Stories'. If you have time do call into the children's chapel and spend a few minutes reading about the banners development in the accompanying sketch book.

Also throughout February children's art work will be displayed alongside the exhibition celebrating 400 years of King James Version of the Bible in the south transept. During the half term holiday (21st - 25th February) there will be a volunteer and myself at the exhibition each day from 2.00pm until 4.00pm to lead an activity linked to the exhibition. On Wednesday 23rd the activity will be a creative writing workshop for children in key stage 2, led by Elizabeth Moncrieff.

Schools are beginning to book visits for the coming term. We in the education team are looking forward to welcoming new schools to the Cathedrals and saying Hello again to schools who visit us annually.

Nicola Preston

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 BCP Choral Eucharist 1st & 3rd Sundays)
- 1530 Choral Evensong
- 1830 Evening Service

Times subject to occasional change

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

Chester Cathedral Nave Choir

Concert Candlelight

Purcell
Buxtehude
Monteverdi
Lassus
Carissimi

Directed by Ian Roberts

With Polly Burdett and Louisa Lyden-Jones (organ)

7.30 pm

Saturday 12th February

Tickets £18 from the Cathedral Box Office
www.chestercathedral.com 01244500559

Nave Choir Concert

The Nave Choir will once again be performing under the direction of Ian Roberts, who sadly will be leaving us soon.

The Nave Choir under Ian's direction and a tremendous amount of hard work and dedication have become one of the best choirs in the Northwest.

This will be your last chance to hear the Nave Choir perform under Ian's direction, so don't hesitate and get your tickets in good time, for what will be a very beautiful and emotional setting.

Celebrating Marriage at Chester Cathedral

The Rt Revd Dr Peter Forster
Bishop of Chester
will preach at a service to
Celebrate Marriage
on
Sunday 13th February 2011
at 3.30pm

All Welcome

