



The Revd Christine Bull reflects on

The Praying Community

The phone rang at twenty past six in the morning. Twenty minutes later I was on the road, beginning the 35 mile journey to the hospital where my son had just been taken into intensive care.

It was the beginning of a week in which the world contracted to a hospital bed in a room full of equipment, machines and monitors. I had never been inside an intensive care unit before and had no idea what to expect. What I discovered was the intense focus of all the staff and the complete commitment to those in their care. In a situation where we were totally de-skilled and had no understanding of the procedures we had no option but to trust the medical staff but that was not difficult to do. Their skill, knowledge and judgement inspired our confidence that they would give our son the best possible chance of recovery- without question. But I also discovered- and in fact the consultant explained as much- that medicine is as much an art as a science. The consultant makes a judgement about a course of action, based on knowledge and evidence and the response of the patient, but also directed by intuition- or, perhaps one might dare to say, a leap of faith. I found myself with a profound respect for the courage needed to take such decisions. Whatever words one may use, the judgement call was sound and my son is now out of danger and the future management of his condition is being considered.

But it was a long and exhausting week. Being helpless, being out of control of the situation, being able only to sit and wait, these things drain us of energy. There was too much time to think the unthinkable and to worry about a variety of scenarios, all of them unwelcome and undesirable. At such times we long for the best but fear the worst. And when under extreme stress, we can find it hard to pray. Frankly, I can remember only an inchoate yearning inside me- please, let it be alright. Perhaps for all of us that is our deepest prayer.

But I had known, as soon as my son was admitted to intensive care, that prayer was what was most needed. I asked, and I know we received abundantly. Very many of you, here in the Cathedral and elsewhere upheld us in prayer, and I am deeply grateful. It is one of the most important acts of a Christian community, to pray for each other and to take on the burden of prayer when someone cannot do it for themselves. I use the word 'burden' deliberately because such prayer can be very costly; 'on behalf of' is not an easy option, performed instead of someone else; it is in no way about letting anyone off the hook but a profound sharing of burdens. It is not usually visible or high-profile but it is a defining quality of community.

I had no energy to give to my own prayer relationship with God during those few draining days when we did not know the outcome. At that time being upheld in the prayer of others was so important. Publicly, privately, in words and in silence, bringing those in need into the presence of God is one of the most precious obligations of a Christian disciple. Praying on behalf of others is true intercession- not presuming to pre-judge the outcome or to know what should happen but simply bringing them into the presence of God and trusting in his love and power to heal. And knowing that whatever happens, 'underneath are the everlasting arms.'

I have spoken much in recent months of the importance of trust, and here it is again. In a world where trust has been so catastrophically eroded, I discovered again its importance in our own family crisis- the trust in the dedication and giftedness of the medical staff, the trust in Christian community and our fellowship together, and trust in the living God. We are all gifted by God in different ways, we have abilities and knowledge, as well as being vulnerable and broken, and we are all dependent on each other. Society desperately needs to rediscover this truth. As Christians we have so much to offer- to live this trust and mutual dependence ourselves, openly sharing both gifts and burdens and so helping the world to rediscover these truths of human flourishing.



CURATE'S CORNER

What is God saying to you? As the time for my Priesting is getting nearer (18th June at 5 pm), as I said in my blog on the Cathedral website, I have an aching and a longing to spend more time with God my heavenly Father, trying to hear the beat of his heart.



Relationships are at the heart of being a human being, at the heart of what I do as a youth worker, at the heart of what I do as an ordained person. As such it is important that I work on the relationships I have, but the most important one is my relationship with God and that is the one therefore that needs most work. On the morning of 22nd of May as I was driving into Chester I felt very strongly I needed to add something to my sermon! What was it? It was about the fact that we need to spend time with God listening to what He is saying, nurturing our relationship with Him.

That day was also the day when I was leading Compline and again felt very strongly that I should be speaking about our relationship with God and about being still – different focus from the morning but still about knowing God more deeply than we do at present.

I am also hearing from others in and around our city as well as further afield that they are feeling the same, that we need to be spending more time focused on God than on being busy and filling our lives with all sorts of stuff.

What is your priority? The Westminster Shorter Catechism asks : What is the chief end of man – the answer is: To worship God and enjoy him forever. Is that your priority? I pray that it might be the priority for all of us, to listen for the heartbeat of God, for you, for this Cathedral Church, for the places where we live and work, and the people with whom we are connected. **The Revd Dot Gosling**

Excavation work in St Werburgh Street

Cheshire West and Chester Council are currently investigating the cause of the depression in the road surface of Werburgh Street. The surface has been taken up and excavations, which could take up to two weeks, are continuing.

Steve Kent, Cheshire West and Chester Council's Director of Community and Environment said "People may be aware of the 'dip' in the road, which has become worse over time. It has now reached the stage where an investigation needs to be carried out to establish the cause, and we must plan any necessary remedial works before any significant problems occur."

It is clearly important that this irregularity be investigated since the hard landscaping envisaged by the CQP1 plans must be laid on a secure and firm foundation.

Archaeologists are keeping a watching brief on the investigation since this is such a historically sensitive area. Steve Kent said "The area involved is thought to be rich in archaeology. The initial work of excavating the road surface will be fairly noisy and once this is complete it will be interesting to find out what archaeologists discover near such an historic landmark."

Prayer for June

A Pentecost prayer based on John 7: 37-39

'Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink....Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water.'

Flowing Spirit,
living water,
Mother of creation:
refresh our hearts,
inspire our gifts,
indwell our gathering,
and make us a sign
of all the world's vocation
to communion with you;
through Jesus Christ, who
quenches our thirst.
Amen

(From Prayers for an Inclusive Church)



CQP1 Update: New liaison group established at Chester Cathedral

One of the aims of the ambitious Chester Cathedral Project is the provision of a new platform at the east end of the nave of Chester Cathedral. The new platform and associated choral staging will enhance the capability of the Cathedral as a location for concerts and events and confirm the Cathedral as the natural centre of the city's cultural life.

It is a real challenge to devise the best way of staging concerts inside a medieval Cathedral since both the historic fabric as well as the sacred nature of the building must be taken into account and combined with the requirements of modern concert organisers. As part of the planning process a new consultative body, the Chester Cathedral Events group has been established to look at ways of improving the way that Cathedral events will work. Roger Gibson of 'Chester in Music' said 'Chester has one of the finest of England's Cathedrals in which to enjoy choral and orchestral music. We welcome this opportunity to work together to maximise this enjoyment, and help place the Cathedral in its rightful place in Chester's Cultural Mosaic.'

As a first step, representatives of Chester Festivals, concert organisers and Cathedral staff met to discuss a wide range of issues and establish how best to work together in order to achieve realistic and practical solutions. The meeting was very constructive and explored new ways of partnership working to the benefit of all concerned. It is envisaged that the group will continue for the foreseeable future in order to ensure the continued development of events at the Cathedral.

Concerts at Chester Cathedral

			Tickets
25 June	Chester Philharmonic Orchestra	7.30pm	0151 632 1633
30 June	Cathedral Nave Choir Concert	7.30pm	01244 500959

The Cathedral Pastoral Team

The Cathedral Pastoral Team headed by the Revd Christine Bull, have been spending the past month learning to be good listeners, as part of their training. If you would like a member of the team to visit someone in need or just for a chat, please contact the Revd Christine Bull with details. A big thank you also to John and Julia



de Newton, for opening their house to the team over the past month, and offering all a very warm welcome. **The Team are from left to right:** Chris Jones, Geoff Fitch, Mary Thomas, Ruth Blakebrough-Miller, David Harris, Revd Christine Bull, Louise Fedrick, Jackie Rainsforth, Biddy Brett-Rooks, Jan Makinson, Lyn Barritt, John de Newtown and Julia de Newtown

ST. ALBAN

St. Alban was a soldier and the First British Martyr. Bede attributed his martyrdom to the persecution of Diocletian c.305. Alban was martyred in the amphitheatre outside the town of Verulamium, which later grew into the new town of St. Albans. Alban was believed to have been a pagan soldier who sheltered a priest who converted and baptised him. When soldiers searched his house looking for the priest and Alban, dressed in his robes, was arrested by the soldiers and refused to offer sacrifice so was executed, but not before he converted the first man sent to execute him. The second executioner beheaded Alban but it is said his eyes fell out. The sick were cured at his shrine and dust was removed to add to other relic collections. His relics were venerated at his shrine until the Reformation. Ely is said to have translated them, but St. Albans said Ely's relics were a false set. St Alban's original grave was claimed to have been found in 1257 but this is disputed. The importance of St. Albans Abbey as the wealthiest abbey in England helped his cult to prosper and a new shrine was built, part of which still survives. His cult extended all over England and into parts of France. His Feast Day is the 20th June.



Memorial Photography in Chester Cathedral

Did you know that one of the memorials in Chester Cathedral is a great rarity and may well be unique? The marble memorial to John and Thomas Wainwright on the West wall, above the marble font may well be the only signed funerary monument by William Kent, one of the best known architects of the early eighteenth century. William Kent (c. 1685 – 12 April 1748) was an eminent English architect, landscape architect and furniture designer; he was responsible for the interiors of Houghton Hall and designed Holkham Hall in Norfolk, said to be the finest Palladian house in England. He provided sculpture for various churches, including the famous memorial to Isaac Newton in Westminster Abbey and the memorial to the first Duke of Marlborough in the chapel at Blenheim Palace.



A major exhibition of his work will take place in 2013-14 at the Bard Graduate Center in New York and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. The exhibition guide will contain a chapter on Kent's monuments and sculptural designs and last week, photographs of the Chester Cathedral memorial were taken by Bruce White for inclusion in the catalogue. Bruce White has created photographs for many prestigious museums including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

Nick Fry June 2011

"Do you know someone who might be a useful volunteer at the Cathedral: perhaps someone with skills in a particular area where currently we do not have volunteers? The Cathedral staff believe that potential volunteers are not always getting the correct information, therefore, a series of volunteer recruitment mornings are being set up. Anyone interested in volunteering at the Cathedral will be invited to these meetings where our mission will be explained, and they will be able to learn more about the volunteer roles within the Cathedral community. If you would like to be a volunteer, pass your details onto Edward Walton or Patricia Faraday, the Volunteer Co-ordinators. **The first volunteer morning is planned for Saturday 9th July 2011 10am - 12.** Tea and coffee will be served and the meeting will be followed by a short tour of the Cathedral."

Andrew Backhouse, Hospitality & Welcome Director

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:

- 0915 Morning Prayer
(St Werburgh's Chapel)
- 0930 Eucharist (St Werburgh's)
- 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.

Koinonia

Is an exciting art exhibition to be displayed in Chester Cathedral in August 2011. The piece called **Koinonia** (meaning community) is inspired by Antony Gormley's Turner Prize winning 'Field for the British Isle'. We hope that many Chester and Cheshire communities will represent themselves by creating figures, so that the figures show the unique aspects of individuals within a uniformity of the wider community.



Picture © of Church Times

The figures are solid forms with no additional painting and made out of air drying terracotta clay.

Do you want to make a figure? Join in!

Make a figure to be part of this tiny terracotta community, showing your connection and place in Chester Cathedral's community. Contact Nicola Preston, Cathedral Education Officer education@chestercathedral.com or 01244 500957 and register to make joining one of the Cathedral sessions:

Saturday 23rd July	10.00 am - 12.00 noon
Wednesday 27th July	2.00 pm - 4.30 pm

A similar installation made by young and old in the wider community displayed in Wakefield Cathedral in 2010. **Help Chester have more figures on display!**



This Month's Recipe

Honey & Mustard Glazed Turkey Steaks

- Mix together 1 1/2 tbsp oil
- 3 tbsp coarse grain mustard
- 1 1/2 tbsp lemon juice
- 3 tbsp clear honey
- 1 1/2 tbsp soy sauce
- 4 turkey breast steaks



Marinate the turkey in the above mixture, grill for 8—10 minutes brushing with the glaze until cooked.

Serve with baked potato and corn on the cob.

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



Grand Book Sale

Paperbacks and hardbacks, variety of subjects, fiction and nonfiction

Chester Cathedral Cloisters
Friday 3rd & Saturday 4th June



10 am to 4 pm
Entry free

Cake stall on Saturday



All proceeds raised will be shared between the Education Department at Chester Cathedral and the work of the Cathedral's link parish in Kondopoga, North Russia.



BIBLE TALK LECTURE SERIES



Bible Talks are a series of lectures and discussions that take place in the Cloister Room of Chester Cathedral from 1.10pm until 2.00pm. There is no charge for attending, although donations towards the work of the Cathedral are welcome. This year's Summer series will focus on:

Paul's letter to the Galatians



Wednesday 11th May

The Very Revd Professor Gordon McPhate, Dean of Chester

Galatians Chapter 1:

The trumpet call of the gospel!

Please note this lecture will take place in the Song School; members of Cathedral staff will be on hand to direct you and assist those who wish to use the lift.

Wednesday 18th May

The Very Revd Professor Gordon McPhate, Dean of Chester

Galatians Chapter 2:

The man who stuck to his mission

Wednesday 25th May

The Ven Michael Gilbertson, Archdeacon of Chester

Galatians Chapter 3:

Gift of Grace, Curse of law

Wednesday 8th June

The Revd Dot Gosling

Galatians Chapter 4:

The appeal of love

Wednesday 15th June

The Revd Canon Chris Humphries

Galatians Chapter 5:

Conflict between nature and spirit

Wednesday 22nd June

The Revd Canon Jane Brooke and Nicola Preston

Galatians Chapter 6:

Sharing the burden and living the life

If you would like to be added to the Bible Talk mailing list, please contact our Education Officer, nicola.preston@chestercathedral.com.