

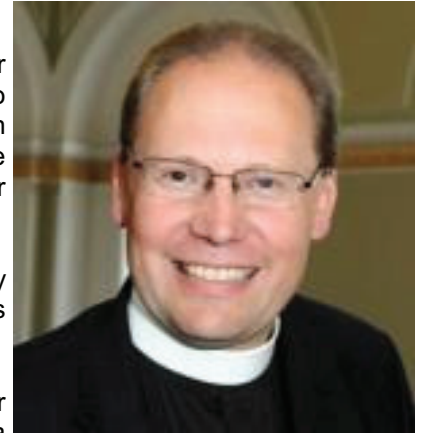


Canon Peter Howell-Jones writes.....

During the next few months, the Cathedral will be undertaking a 360° review of our entire operations. This is a significant piece of work that will help us as a community to understand ourselves a little more and focus ourselves a little better. We will reflect on our mission and ministry, take a look at the Cathedral estate and administrative operations, our education and discipleship work, how we deploy volunteers and our governance structure.

Undertaking such a process helps us to affirm those areas of mission and ministry where good things are currently happening. We are also able to identify weaknesses or areas where we face significant challenges in achieving our goals and aspirations.

I have already received a number of written comments from members of our congregations highlighting both joys and frustrations. There's still time, so if you have a specific comment with regard to any aspect of the Cathedral operation (what we do well, where we could improve etc) I would love to hear from you. Either write to me at 12 Abbey Square or email me at: vice.dean@chestercathedral.com.



There is also an opportunity this year to review your own Christian discipleship. Lent has historically been seen as a period of penitence and prayer: a focused time to develop our understanding of what it means to depend more on God, and become increasingly aware of him in our daily lives. The traditional question and answer session of Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday 'So what have you given up for Lent?' followed by 'chocolate / wine / eating rich foods / etc. etc, may well help us to lose weight but does little for our spiritual wellbeing and applied faith.

During Lent there are a number of different opportunities on offer at the Cathedral this year focused around prayer and spiritual review. Details can be found in the *Make more of Lent* leaflets available in the Cathedral. The idea is not that you make yourself frenetically busy by doing all of them! See what you might find helpful, and try it out.

Bible Talks

Commencing 1st February, the Bible Talk series will focus on prayer. The Apocrapha and Christian Prayer, Praying for the Monarch, Prayer & Holiness, Penitential Prayer (Ash Wednesday), Prayer of Fierce Complaint, The Lord's Prayer, The Priestly Blessing and its use in Christian Prayer - all take place in the Cloister Room from 1.10 – 2.00pm, on Wednesdays

Spiritual MOTs

Often it can be helpful to talk through issues concerning our spiritual lives with someone else. Most clergy have a spiritual director and do this regularly. The Cathedral clergy are offering the opportunity to have a 'spiritual MOT' – a meeting with one of the clergy for about 45 minutes when you can talk about your faith and prayer life, and work out what's going well and what might not be. All of us have ups and downs in our spiritual lives, and most of us could benefit from sharing some of these with someone else, to gain a different perspective and wider experience. And be reassured: despite it being called an 'MOT', there is no way you can fail this! To sign up for a spiritual MOT, please fill in the reply slip in the *Make more of Lent* form (available in the Cathedral).

Do take the opportunity to make the most of Lent this year. You might also consider attending one of the daily Eucharists or Choral Evensong. Praying together as a community is most important.

Prayer for February

Almighty God,
By whose grace alone we are accepted
and called to your service:
strengthen us by your Holy Spirit
and make us worthy of our calling
through Jesus Christ our Lord.



CURATE'S CORNER

One of the things I most enjoy is seeing people grow in their faith in God and in their understanding of discipleship. I have seen this at the University over the past 10 years and sometimes that means having conversations with people about their vocation. For some in my role that is obviously going to be youth work but often the question is whether it is Christian or general youth work, but for others it may be the beginnings of a call to the priesthood. As part of my role as chaplain I have been looking after the vocations group and it has been amazing to watch people as they explore what it might mean for them to become ordained in the future.



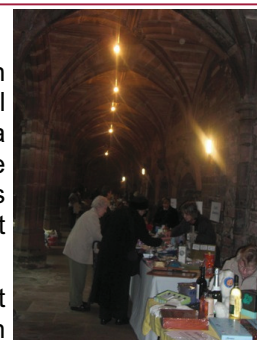
Others away from the University have spoken to me about their vocation and what it might mean for them in the future. What I find encouraging is that the majority know it is a costly business in terms of what it might mean for them as a person and any family members, but the cost is worth it for them, because they want to love God more and have a deeper relationship within which to grow more in their faith and discipleship.

At the end of the day for each of us, our vocation should be about loving God, loving our neighbour as ourselves and ensuring that whatever we do God is at the centre. Without God at the centre, without us trying to listen to where we are being led, without us loving God and neighbour and self, we may well miss what God through the Holy Spirit is trying to say to us.

'God, the one and only- I'll wait as long as he says. Everything I need comes from him, so why not?!..... So trust him absolutely, people, lay your lives on the line for him. god is a safe place to be. Psalm 62:1 & 8 The message translation.

CHRISTMAS EXTRAVAGANZA

The recent Extravaganza raised £1,773, slightly exceeding the total raised two years ago, which surprised us all given the slow sales on the high street and the recession. We were very grateful for all the support we received from donors of items for sale, two generous donations of money, a magnificent effort from the volunteer team and support from musicians at the west doors on the Saturday (including the Salvation Army band!). Our cake and preserve stall proved as popular as ever, with a host of people making jam for months beforehand. We are grateful too for the support and assistance of the Cathedral staff, the office staff, the verger team and the cleaners.



We have now raised well over £17,000 since we started fundraising three years ago after the first pilgrimage to Russia. We decided from the outset to give half the money to the Education Department and we have benefited other organisations too. At the Extravaganza we had two tables dedicated to Melanesia, which raised £270, and various local charities have received 'leftovers' from three Extravaganzas, three booksales and a toy sale. In particular this year Save the Family, a Chester charity, sent a van and took away all the children's items – clothes, toys, books and nursery furniture and equipment that were left over. I am also currently selling Garfields on eBay! Nothing you give ever goes to waste.

The fundraising team is meeting to discuss plans for 2012, so if you have any ideas of events you would like us to put on please do not hesitate to have a word with one of us. We are also looking at ways to further the link with Kondopoga and look forward to the possibility of another visit to Russia in 2013.

Jane Jones

Song School Challenge Initiatives to pay off the remaining loan

The Friends of Chester Cathedral EGM last August approved a grant of £100,000 from the Simmonds legacy to help Cathedral finances by reducing the large outstanding debt remaining from the Song School building which was opened in 2005. Discussion at and after the meeting highlighted the need for the remaining debt of £87,000 to be repaid so that it is not a hindrance to the Cathedral's essential future fundraising plans.

When asked earlier this year, the Dean said:

"The new year is the time for a new start. A significant blot on the Cathedral is the continued existence of the Song School debt. It would be wonderful to be free to develop new plans for the Cathedral and the Estate without this millstone. We could well use the interest which we must pay on the debt for better things. Let's get rid of the debt as soon as we can and let's do it together."

The Friends and others close to the Cathedral have responded by organising a number of initiatives to pay off the loan which include:

- The Friends Council decided in January to allocate all of the £136,000 Simmonds legacy to loan repayment. The remaining £36,000 will be paid in two grants of £18,000 (this month and in January 2013).
- Special tins of "Cathedral Biscuits" (similar to those sold by Harrods) will soon be available and all profits will go to the loan repayment.
- A "Come and Sing Messiah" will be held on 5 May with the aim of having a full Cathedral of over 1,000 voices.
- The Cathedral is also looking for support from individual members of the Friends, Companions, Cathedral Congregation and others to help liquidate this loan.



Thank you for feeding 35 hungry children in Kondopoga for 71 days

Sasha is 14. Small for his age, he lives with his alcoholic parents and has just been weaned off glue-sniffing. This year he was invited to take part in a summer camp in the village of Novinka, near Kondopoga. The camp, run by Father Sergei, brought teenagers together to help villagers to clear the vegetation along the banks of the stream (where the villagers go to fetch water and do their washing since they have no running water) and other useful jobs. At the end of the ten-day camp each teenager was given a present, a stuffed toy donated by a parishioner. Sasha was in tears. He had never been given a present before.



Kondopoga and the villages around it might as well be in a different world to Moscow with its super rich. There are small signs of wealth trickling down in the newly surfaced long-distance roads, but local people still have to

live with the near-collapse of the forestry industry. Life

expectancy for men in this region is similar to Kenya at 54. Many teenagers live like Sasha, their poverty made worse by their parents drinking and their neglect.

Thanks to the Chester fundraising efforts, Kondopoga parish has been able to feed 35 of the poorest children



through the summer holidays when they get no school dinners. Without your help, they may have gone hungry. With the new improved greenhouse, which you also contributed to in 2008, the parish keep the cost of feeding them low (just £1.20 per child per day) and make sure that they get plenty of fresh vegetables in their diet. Mother Julia writes: "Dear friends, thank you so much for remembering our children, for your love and care."

The parish Sunday School is also thriving, with 110 children now taking part in activities each Saturday and Sunday at the parish. A record 80 children went on camp at the dacha by the beautiful Munozero lake this year. Many of these children don't come from church-going families, but

become part of this strong community, going on to become volunteers themselves as teenagers.

However, thanks to St Gregory's Foundation investment, the parish is now able to fund this lively Sunday school themselves. Instead of funding general summer camps, St Gregory's will be concentrating its efforts on helping the poorest children from the most



dysfunctional families, children and teenagers recommended by the local social services. We will continue to feed 35 children for three months each summer, and to give them shoes and stationery for the new school year at a cost of £6,500. We will also help Father Sergei to develop his special summer camps, designed to allow these teenagers usually labelled "difficult" to help their community, to achieve something they can be proud of, and to introduce them to a stable and loving community. Your support and prayers will be hugely appreciated. Many Thanks Sarah Gale

Worship in the Cathedral:

Weekdays:

- 0915 Morning Prayer (St Anselm's Chapel)
- 1230 Eucharist (1130 on Thursdays)
- 1730 Choral Evensong (said service on Wednesdays)

Saturdays:

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

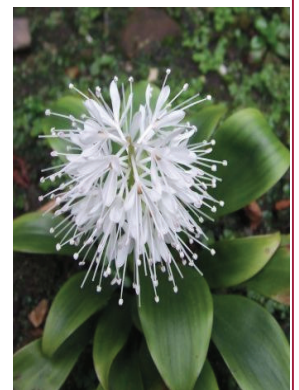
All subject to occasional variations.

In Residence - Day by Day

Sunday	All Clergy
Monday	Canon Peter Howell-Jones
Tuesday	Canon Jane Brooke
Wednesday	Canon Chris Humphries
Thursday	Canon Chris Humphries
Friday	Canon Peter Howell-Jones
Saturday	The Dean

Ypsilandra thibetica Melanthiaceae

A native of Bhutan, China and Nepal, typically found in upland sloping forest habitats. The organic sand and permanent shade of the S.W. corner of the Cloister Garth, replicate the drainage,



shade and shelter of its native environment, perfectly, ensuring the success of this rare and unusual plant. It happily co-exists with the ferns which dominate an area of the Garth that 'forever walks in darkness'; a full, perfect and sufficient symbiosis for the observer, angiosperm with pteridophyte. The perfume is exquisite.

Phil Hunt, Custos horticorum,
24.xii.11 Feb 9 0301 (005,007,008)

Congratulations to Louisa Cowell, one of our girl choristers, who was the winner of the 11-13 category in the Wicked Young Writers competition

She was announced the winner of the competition at the Apollo Theatre in London (home to the renowned musical Wicked)

Her story, 'Remembering', was inspired by the park behind her house. Louisa who is a pupil at The Queens School has won four tickets to see the award winning musical Wicked with the chance to meet cast members after, along with a £50 book voucher and a writing masterclass. Well done Louisa.



Andy's Recipe for February.... Also New Edition to Refectory Menu

Beef, stout and chestnut casserole with leek colcannon

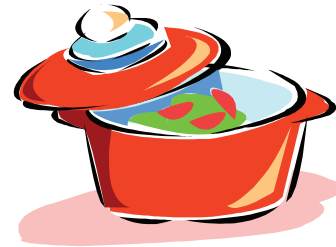
Ingredients

For the casserole

- 2 heaped tbsp plain flour
- 1 tsp sea salt flakes
- 1 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 1kg/2lb 3oz stewing steak, cut into chunks
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 3 large onions, peeled, sliced
- 1 tbsp tomato puree
- 8 carrots, peeled and cut into discs
- 2 sticks celery, chopped
- 500ml/17½fl oz beefstock
- 250ml/9fl oz Irish stout
- 1 tsp caraway seeds
- 1 tbsp raisins
- 20 chestnuts, cooked and sliced
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh parsley, to serve

For the leek colcannon

- 1kg/2lb 3oz floury potatoes, such as King Edward or Maris Piper, peeled and cut into large chunks
- 250ml/9fl oz milk
- 500g/17½oz leeks, washed and cut into rounds
- 2 tbsp butter
- 1 tbsp double cream
- sea salt flakes and white pepper



Preparation method

1. Preheat the oven to 160C/320F/Gas 2.
2. For the casserole, place the flour in a plastic bag, add the sea salt and freshly ground black pepper and shake to mix together. Add the chunks of stewing steak and toss to coat them in the flour.
3. Heat a large frying pan over a high heat and add the vegetable oil. Brown the beef in small batches, frying until the beef is golden-brown all over. Transfer each bath of seared beef to a casserole dish and repeat the process as necessary.
4. Fry the onions in the pan the beef was cooked in for 2-3 minutes, or until softened, then stir in the tomato purée and cook for a further two minutes. Transfer the mixture to the casserole dish.
5. Add the carrots, celery, beef stock, Irish stout, caraway seeds and raisins to the casserole and mix well to combine. Cover the casserole with a lid and cook in the oven for two hours, or until the beef is very tender.
6. Add the chestnuts and cook for a further 30 minutes.
7. Meanwhile, for the leek colcannon, cook the potatoes in a pan of simmering water for 15-20 minutes, or until the potatoes are tender. Drain the potatoes and set aside.
8. In a separate pan, bring the milk to a simmer and poach the leeks for 4-5 minutes, or until tender. Drain the leeks, reserving a few tablespoons of the milk.
9. Mash the potatoes and fold in the butter and the cream. Add the leeks and a few tablespoons of the reserved milk and mash together until creamy. Season, to taste, with sea salt and white pepper.
10. To serve, spoon the beef casserole into serving bowls and spoon the leek colcannon alongside.

Bible Talk and Lecture Series.

This season's talks will be centered around the Book Of Common Prayer. All are welcome to attend the Lectures which are free of charge. After the Lectures on the 1, 8, 15 February and also 14, 21 March, Canon Loveday Alexander and Peter Bamford (Cathedral Librarian) will be leading a visit to the Library Exhibition on the 1662 Book of Common Prayer. This will cost £2.50 per person and will include an exhibition guide. This will be a great opportunity for you to learn more about the history of the Book of Common Prayer.

The Chester Mystery Plays

Tickets for the 19 performances are now on sale at the Cathedral Box Office www.chestercathedral.com 01244 500959

Cathedral Box Office opening times, Monday – Saturday 9.00 – 4.30 and Sunday 12.30 pm – 4.00 pm www.chestermysteryplays.com



Concerts and Events at Chester Cathedral

				Tickets
1,8	February	Bible Talks BCP	1.10-2pm	All Welcome
15,22		This seasons talks are centered on the Book of Common Prayer		
14/15	February	Family Activities	10-12pm 1-2pm	Cathedral Admission Charge