

The Chapter Letter



SUNDAY 22 DECEMBER – SATURDAY 4 JANUARY

The next few weeks brings to an end a year which has been a very difficult and challenging one. This is true for many of us on a personal level, and it is also true in the life of the cathedral, of our nation, and our planet.

In our personal lives, this time of year can often open wounds which we manage to live with for the rest of the year. Christmas can expose us to raw and painful emotions. The sticking plasters of defence mechanisms which we manage to keep in place during the rest of the year somehow don't seem to adhere quite so well during these days. It can be any number of things which trip us up: health issues; strained or fractured relationships; loss of loved ones; memories (good, or bad); money worries: these things, and more, often impinge at this time of year.

The life of our nation remains badly fractured by the fissures opened up by Brexit; and as we move towards our departure from the European Union, no longer can we take for granted the cohesion which for so long has felt like one of the hallmarks of our life together as peoples and nations across our United Kingdom.

The last year has also brought centre-stage just how perilous the state of our planet is, and that things cannot continue as they are if human life is to remain viable. The Climate Change Conference hosted by the diocese and the universities together with the impressive delegates from the Diocese of Polynesia, reinforced this message for us. It is increasingly clear that radical change in the way we live must be swift and far-reaching if we are to reverse the current, irreparably damaging trajectory we are on. Countless young people (and those not so young!) are taking a stand, challenging decision makers and power brokers and speaking the truth to power.

'Let's hope next year is a better one for all of us.' I've lost count of the number of times I have heard this over the last few weeks. That is, of course, our hope for each other, for the cathedral, for our nation and for this planet we call home; that next year will be a better one for all of us. Yet there are no guarantees – are there ever? – so why, in the midst of all the mess and muddle that is the reality of human life, would anyone other than the most ardent of optimists think there is any cause for hope?

There are few better places to start than the birth of Jesus. As Christians, we pin our hopes on that child: born in Bethlehem to a poor couple, who had travelled to a neighbouring town in order to register in the census; who had only been able to find shelter in an outhouse shared with animals. In that birth we see God entering fully into the vulnerability and uncertainty of human life. The God we worship knows about the darkness and the difficulty of all that life can throw at us – as the gospel of John puts it "the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it".

In the gospel accounts of the birth of Jesus, we hear that the good news of the kingdom of God drawing near at hand is entrusted to surprising people, and found in the most unlikely of places. Let it be so for us as we celebrate once again the birth of the Christ-child; and as we enter this new year, let us look out for the signs of the kingdom where they can be found. And let us also do what we can to be agents of the good news of the love and the compassion of Jesus Christ

SAL MCDUGALL, PRECENTOR

BIBLE READINGS

Sunday 22 December *Fourth Sunday of Advent*

Sung Eucharist

Isaiah 7: 10-16
Romans 1: 1-7
Matthew 1: 18-end

Mattins

Micah 5: 2-5a
Luke 1: 26-38

Evensong

1 Samuel 1: 1-20
Revelation 22:6-end

Sunday 29 December *First Sunday of Christmas*

Sung Eucharist

Isaiah 63: 7-9
Hebrews 2: 10-end
Matthew 2: 13-end

Mattins

Isaiah 35: 1-6
Galatians 3: 23-end

Evensong

Isaiah 49: 7-13
Philippians 2: 1-11

Sunday 5 January *The Epiphany*

Sung Eucharist

Isaiah 60: 1-6
Ephesians 3: 1-12
Matthew 2: 1-12

Mattins

Jeremiah 31: 7-14
John 1: 29-34

Evensong

Isaiah 60: 1-9
John 2: 1-11

Worship & Mission

Additional Christmas Services

Lincoln Cathedral will host an additional Christmas carol service on Monday 23 December. It will be identical to the service on 24 December with the same carols and readings but will mean that more people can enjoy the special atmosphere of the Cathedral at Christmas.

Also new for this year is a family Crib Service which will take place on Christmas Eve at 10.30am. Aimed at families with young children, this short 30-minute service will take place around the crib and tell the Christmas story, with plenty of chance for everyone to get involved.

Sacred Space

Once a month on a Sunday at 6.45pm
This popular service is gentle and reflective with time to wonder and explore, encouraging everyone to use all their senses; it offers a different way to experience worship at Lincoln Cathedral.

The next Sacred Space service takes place on January 19, and the theme is 'Follow the Star.'

Stillpoint

Saturday 18 January, 9am-9.45am
Led by Revd Ann Mazur, this is a time of guided silent prayer to be still and aware of the presence of God.

Epiphany Carol Service

Saturday 18 January, 5.30pm
All are welcome.

Community

The Dean's Verger Writes...

In preparation for the Carol Services, the Cathedral opening times on Monday 23 and Tuesday 24 December will be as follows:

The Cathedral will close to the public at 1pm (last entry 12.30pm) and re-open at 2.30 to congregation attending the 4pm Carol Services.

Both services are open to the public - All Are Welcome.

Thank you from the Cathedral Refectory

The Cloister Refectory Manager, Susan Scatcliffe, would like to thank everyone who helped us during the Christmas Market, both in the chapter House and the Refectory. We had an excellent market which was greatly helped by all our extra volunteers.

Pilgrimage to Oberammergau

The Acting Dean and the Archdeacon of Lincoln are leading a Pilgrimage to Oberammergau to see the world famous passion play between 13-20 May next year. Staying in Austria and Germany the pilgrimage will explore this beautiful part of Europe, whilst reflecting on the events that lie at the heart of our faith. The play itself is the most extraordinary experience. There are a few places left. More information is available on the verger's table in the South Choir Aisle or from the Acting Dean.

Community cont

Cathedral Flower Team

After nearly 10 years as leader of the Flower Team, Micky Philp has decided to step down. Since the early 1980s Micky has been heavily involved in the Flower Team, the Music Appeal and the Cathedral Consort choir. In doing so, Micky has been instrumental in bringing music, colour and joy into the Cathedral and the Chapter would like to thank her for her contribution over these many years. Jenny Whitton will lead the Flower Team going forward and we wish her all the best."

Bringing up Elements at 9.30 am Eucharist

A reminder that there is a list on the Community Association noticeboard and if you would like to bring up the elements one Sunday, would you please sign it. We've not had a very good response to this so if more people do not sign up we will revert to our old method of asking people on the morning.

Cathedral accounts

The Cathedrals Consolidated Accounts and Annual Report for year ending 31 March 2019 are available to be viewed on the Cathedral website:
<https://lincolncathedral.com/contact-us/annual-statement-and-accounts/>

Events

Organ Concert - La Nativité du Seigneur

Sunday 22 December, 5.30pm
Come and experience Jeffrey Makinson in concert on the grand Father Willis organ in Lincoln Cathedral. Olivier Messiaen's 1935 masterpiece is considered to be one of the greatest Organ compositions of all time. La Nativité du Seigneur is a Christmas tradition at Lincoln Cathedral and one not to be missed.

Wallace and Gromit In Concert; The Wrong Trousers

Saturday 4 January
Audiences will be treated to five showings of the film on a big screen in the Nave, and the 30-piece chamber orchestra will bring the soundtrack to life in spectacular fashion.

Annual Choristership Celebration Evensong

Sunday 26 January, 3.45pm
This service is an opportunity for us to give thanks for the permanent named choristerships and annual choristership sponsorships, which are invaluable in supporting the exquisite music here in the Cathedral.

Passiontide Concert: St John Passion

Saturday 28 March 2020, 7pm
Lincoln Cathedral Choir accompanied by Northern Baroque are joined this year by some talented soloists: Mark Wilde: Evangelist
Jacob Fieldman: Christus
This year's conductor will be Lincoln Cathedral's Director of Music, Aric Prentice.
The St John Passion is one of Bach's most famous pieces of sacred music, telling the Biblical story of Jesus' crucifixion.