

The Chapter Letter



SUNDAY 16 MARCH - SUNDAY 29 MARCH

Woman at the Well

If you regularly listen to Radio 4's Sunday Worship, which airs at 0820 on a Sunday morning, you may have heard Dr Pat Bennett speak about Lent. Using the well-known passage of scripture which tells the story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4: 5-42), Dr Bennett shared her idea of Lent not being the arid and dry desert that we often associate with the season, but as a time for creating space. Not the kind of empty space that creates a vacuum, but the kind of space which is full of possibility and enables things to happen.

Our cathedral is a space. A very big space. And how that space feels changes all the time. Often, when we prepare for large services in the cathedral, there is a palpable atmosphere in the cathedral when everything is ready and before people start arriving. The same thing happens *after* large gatherings; you can still *feel* the people in the building. Sacred Space, once a month, is another time when the cathedral as space in which things can happen if we let them come to the fore.

'Space' is what was created by Jesus and that woman in the story. 'Space' around each other, and for each other. Have you ever noticed how much time these two people spend together in that story? No man anywhere in the gospels gets a whole chapter to himself with Jesus - but this woman does. Jesus and the woman make space for each other. They're both vulnerable because they're doing something which is counter-cultural in multiple ways; but they are both prepared to take a risk and continue to make and hold the space they have created, and their encounter deepens.

So I'd like to invite you to consider a different approach to Lent. One which suggests that the stripping away we associate with this season is actually a way of clearing the clutter to allow for the creation of space; because even in Lent, the grace of God isn't dry or dusty or absent, however hard the going is or however unforgiving and relentless the journey feels. Rather, the God whose name we profess and in whose steps we seek to follow is the wellspring of life. Our task is to make enough space not only to recognise our need of God and his love, and to ask him for that.

That whole story hinges on Jesus asking the Samaritan woman for a drink of water. Something so seemingly simple, but which shows us that - amazingly - God in Jesus had the humility to ask for what he needed. So this Lent, may we make enough space to let God in, and have the humility to ask God for what we need.

SAL MCDUGALL, PRECENTOR

BIBLE READINGS

Sunday 15 March
Third Sunday of Lent

Sung Eucharist
Exodus 17: 1-7
Romans 5: 1-11
John 4: 5-42

Mattins
Amos 7: 10-end
2 Corinthians 1: 1-11

Evensong
Joshua 1: 1-9
Ephesians 6: 10-20

Sunday 22 March
Fourth Sunday of Lent

Sung Eucharist
1 Samuel 16: 1-13
Ephesians 5: 8-14
John 9

Mattins
Isaiah 43: 1-7
Ephesians 2: 8-14

Evensong
Micah 7
James 5

Sunday 29 March
Fifth Sunday of Lent

Sung Eucharist
Ezekiel 37: 1-14
Romans 8: 6-11
John 11: 1-45

Mattins
Jeremiah 31: 27-37
John 12: 20-33

Evensong
Lamentations 3: 19-33
Matthew 20: 17-end

Worship & Mission

Sacred Space

Once a month on a Sunday at 7pm (Doors open 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 Sunday 15 March, and the theme is 'Walking the Wilderness.'

Themes for the coming months are:

April 19 - Joyful Creation
May 17 - Doubt and Wonder
June 21 - Explore and Grow
July 19 - Community and Connected

Stillpoint

Once a month on Saturday at 9am-9.45am
Please note, Stillpoint now takes place in the Longland Chantry.

Led by Revd Ann Mazur, this is a time of guided silent prayer to be still and aware of the presence of God.

Dates for the coming months:

March 14 April 18 May 16
June 13 July 11 September 5

The Way of the Cross

Saturdays mornings 9am-9.45am

Walking in the footsteps of Jesus:
Reflecting on our Christian discipleship

The Stations of the Cross seem to have begun with the desire of pilgrims in Jerusalem to follow in Jesus's footsteps from Pilate's house to Calvary, stopping for prayers on the way. Led by Ann Mazur, this is an opportunity follow the order of devotions, readings, meditations and prayers with others.

Dates for these sessions:

March 7 March 14 March 21 April 4

The Rosary

Last Tuesday of the Month 2.30pm-3.30pm

For many years a small ecumenical group has met in the Longland Chantry. It was possibly started by the Anglican Sisters of Wantage and has continued ever since.

On a personal note, I knew nothing of the way of praying the Rosary, but now I love it having joined a small house-group which introduced me to it. Some people think the Rosary is just for Roman Catholics, but it is for all Christians who wish to honour Mary. Please consider coming along to our next meeting on Tuesday 31 March, when you will be made most welcome, and have a chance to see whether you find this way of praying pleasing - Julia McNeill

Email: juliamcneill@hotmail.co.uk

Community

Cathedral Council

Following the recent ballot for a staff member to sit on the Cathedral Council, we are pleased to advise that verger Kate Wilson has been elected as staff representative.

Corona virus: Guidance for Communion

Lincoln Cathedral continues to follow the guidance issued by the national church, and we regularly review our own practices and advice in light of this.

Having considered all available advice, the Cathedral has decided not to offer communion wine from the common cup with immediate effect. We also recommend that you refrain from shaking hands during the peace.

We believe that it is better to be over-cautious, and wish to take every precaution to protect the diverse range of people who come through the Cathedral's doors.

Theologically, the church believes that Christ is fully present in the bread and in the wine and nothing is lacking in either - the doctrine of concomitance - and that communion in one kind is fully valid.

We will continue to monitor national church and government advice and will update our practices as necessary. We thank you for your continued understanding and support

You can find the full current advice from the Church of England by visiting the following page -

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-parishes>

Events

Passiontide Concert: 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 Feldman: Christus

This year's conductor will be Lincoln Cathedral's Director of Music, Aric Prentice.

John Passion is one of Bach's most famous pieces of sacred music, telling the Biblical story of Jesus' crucifixion.

Save the date

As always, there are numerous great events planned for 2020. There will be more details to follow, but for now make a note of some of the following dates in your diaries.

- Jazz Concert - 9 May
- Cathedrals at Night - 30 May
- Come and Sing - 6 June
- Be a Chorister for the Day - 13 June
- Flower Festival - 29 July - 3 August
- Museum of the Moon - 12 October - 2 November
- The Hallé - 23 October
- Handel's Messiah - 21 November
- The Snowman - 12 December
- Carols by Candlelight - 16 December

Organ Concert Series 2020

Four concerts to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the birth of Louis Vierne (1870-1937), organist of Notre Dame Cathedral, Paris.

All concerts will include music by Vierne and JS Bach.

Saturday 20 June - Jeffrey Makinson

Saturday 11 July - Colin Walsh

Saturday 12 September - Jeffrey Makinson with Soprano, Laurie Ashworth

Saturday 3 October - Jeffrey Makinson, Colin Walsh, Lincoln Cathedral Choir and Aric Prentice

Tickets £8.50 including a drink on arrival.

A screen will display a live view of the organ loft.

For details and tickets, please visit www.lincolncathedral.com, the Cathedral Shop, or phone 01522 561 658.