

InHouse

the Journal of the Lincoln Cathedral Community Association



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A day in Bethlehem

Muriel Robinson

In November I was one of 55 people on the diocesan pilgrimage to the Holy Land. To capture the whole impact would take many more words than I have, so given this is the Christmas edition, let me tell you about our day in Bethlehem.

Bethlehem is, of course, in Palestine and so to go there involves crossing a border. On our way in, in our Israeli-registered coach and with Arab Israeli guides, we had a fairly short wait but could see the very long queues of Palestinian vehicles waiting to cross back into Israel, a first glimpse of the very real tensions on this border. Soon after, we began to pass graffiti, including the well-known Bank-sy with its dove of peace in the sniper's crosshairs, and were then able to stop to see the Palestinian side of the separation wall before our first visit of the day. This was not to any of the religious sites, but to the Al Shurooq School for blind and partially-sighted children. The school is run by Arab Christians with no state support; the children, between 3 and 11 years old, are all Muslim. The director of the school was very clear that we would see no visible Christian symbols; rather, the staff see their role as expressing their faith through their actions- a sharp reminder of the reading at morning prayer on the bus:

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works?

(James 2.14-17)

We learned that most, if not all, of the children have been born prematurely to mothers as young as 14 who have been married to cousins, and their sight prob-



lems stem from this. Their families often blame the mothers and the children receive very little stimulation at home. Most live in outlying villages and, as travel between the parcels of land that make up Palestine is so difficult, the children are weekly boarders. Some children have multiple disabilities. As we were shown round the school, we were impressed by the holistic, play-based educational approach, and moved by the challenge the school faces and by the care taken to help each child develop life and educational skills so that where possible they can be integrated back into mainstream schools at 11. The staff also work with the mothers wherever the fathers will permit this. One powerful memory is of the older children singing to us, in English they clearly understood, 'We shall overcome'. We could only hope that they will.

And yes, later we visited the Church of the Nativity and queued to see the sights

there, and joined the lunchtime procession to the shrine, and we celebrated an outdoor Christmas Eucharist at the shepherds' fields (downhill from Bethlehem, by the way). These were also very moving experiences, though perhaps most powerful was when we were singing

'and man, at war, with man, hears not the love-song which they bring:

Oh hush the noise, ye men of strife

And hear the angels sing'

while jet fighters flew noisily overhead. But without that visit to the school, I think the day would have been poorer. Here we saw one of the hymns from the previous day's liturgy lived out:

I will hold the Christlight for you

In the night-time of your fear;

I will hold my hand out to you,

Speak the peace you long to hear.

(Richard Gillard)

May we all do the same this Christmas and every day.

A Journey of Faith

Elaine Johnson

We are pilgrims on a journey,
fellow trav'lers on the road;
We are here to help each other
Walk the mile and bear the load.
(Richard Gillard, 1977)

Many of us will have read Alan Wilson's interesting description of the 'Journey of Faith' from Louth to Lincoln in the Cathedral Times but what was it really like for those who did it?

Rachel Ford was asked by Alan to be a second core member who would complete all the five days, as well as representing the Cathedral Chapter on the journey. Reflecting afterwards, Rachel said how pleased she was that she had said 'yes'. She thought it was likely to be the sort of project which people hear about and think, "That sounds really interesting, I must get around to doing it" ... and then most people won't. But, having done it, Rachel really emphasised how important it is to make that time and do it. The journey was such a good opportunity to think and reflect and be quiet, taking time out of busy lives, whether Christian or a non-believer.

Although it can be done alone, Rachel felt that she got more out of it by doing it with others, although initially it could be daunting because people might not know each other very well. However, sharing this time together became precious and, as the week progressed and confidence increased, people became closer, sharing personal experiences. For Rachel, the essence of the week was captured by a broken bicycle chain when two of the participants walked together. The one whose bike was intact had his arm around the other, acting like a propeller to help him up the hill. An artist in the group captured the image in a cartoon.

Over the five days, the numbers varied as people joined and left as they could fit it in. Some days they walked, one day they cycled, one day there was a bus ride and another day their transport was a narrow boat. Along the route they visited real



treasures of churches. They met warm, friendly people and heard wonderful stories. In one church the sundial, although created in the 1940s, was carved from twelfth-century stone gifted from the Cathedral. Another, St Mary's at East Barkwith, was approached by bike down a wooded path, with sheep grazing in front of church. At Wragby, it was the feast day of St Francis and Rachel had Rupert, her dog with her; the vicar was delighted!

At each church, the guide to the journey of faith includes a point to ponder - a verse from a psalm - and it was only at St Giles, Langton-by-Wragby, that the group realised that there was duplica-

tion and another psalm was needed. As a member of Chapter, Rachel is allocated a daily psalm and her psalms are 41 and 42, the first verse of the latter being, 'As a deer longs for a stream of cool water, so I long for you, O God'. What could be more appropriate for a church of St Giles whose sole companion, according to legend, was a deer who sustained him with her milk?

The journey can be done over several consecutive days or in single days over a period of time. Alan and Rachel hope that the guide will encourage people to do it because, physically, mentally and spiritually, 'It's good to talk and it's good to walk.'

Will Harrison, Chapter Clerk

Judi Jones

In January 2018 Will took on the demanding and exciting role of Chapter Clerk (he had been acting Chapter Clerk since August 2017). I called in at the Chapter Office to find out about his first few months.

I asked Will about his role in the Cathedral and he explained that the national Cathedrals' Working Group has laid out clearly how cathedrals should be managed. Thus, a new legislative model is being developed and followed ahead of legislative changes which are expected to follow within a few years. This model emphasizes the pre-eminence of the Dean, who, in all Church of England cathedrals, is effectively the Chief Executive and therefore Will's role as Chapter Clerk is to manage the cathedral for the Dean and the Chapter and to ensure that everything is run properly.

These last few months have been very busy ones. The property agency has been put out to tender and a new agent has been engaged to ensure that the long-term plan for all our properties is sustainable. This new system is working well.

There has been a major IT review and a new company is now responsible for updating all the technology. The email is now stored on the 'cloud'; a great improvement and will provide opportunities for much better sharing of information.

Work is being undertaken to create terms of reference for every committee to ensure consistency across the board. The advice for Health and Safety is being outsourced. The exciting Lincoln Cathedral Connected programme is progressing well and, in preparation for 2020, there have been reviews of the work of the Cathedral Shop, the Refectory and the Cathedral Centre. There are preparations being made to ensure the smooth running of aspects of the new buildings: for example, new tills for the shop are being procured.

Will appreciates the huge debt the



cathedral has to its large army of volunteers and is delighted that a new Volunteer Officer has recently been appointed.

Will is really looking forward to the completion of the Cathedral Connected project and hopes that it will open up the cathedral to more people. In the meantime, there is plenty to concentrate on. The day I spoke to him the first of the Forest Stations was due to be tried out in what might be their new exhibition area in the south cloister. In fact, the Forest Stations have only ever been on display temporarily (as they have been since they arrived), as that is all that the Fabric Advisory Committee will allow. Temporary can be a long time in the life of the Cathedral! Will believes that this different location, if it proves suitable, will enable the wonderful carvings to be used more reflectively, as part of a journey.

He explained that new cassocks will replace the old choir robes. At present the boys and the girls wear different robes and the new ones will be unisex and more adaptable. The colour will be perhaps darker, particularly as a practical measure because the children of the choir have to cross the road to get to

services, and he hopes that an example will be displayed on a mannequin for us to see. This will be a long-term investment (fully funded, Will explained, partly by the Friends of the Cathedral and by the generosity of another fund) but an important investment as our choristers act as ambassadors for our cathedral.

Arriving here in 1996 as a Choral Scholar, Will believes that the cathedral has had a huge influence on his life. As Chapter Clerk, he is no longer able to sing full time in the choir, but, thankfully, his daughter Chloë, is carrying on his legacy. (He is a very proud Dad). He also has hopes that his son, Daniel, may follow in his footsteps.

He feels that it is a great privilege to work for the cathedral and he values the very great support of all those who work beside him.

Valuing the contribution of the hundreds of volunteers who help the cathedral in so many different ways, he is always keen to volunteer if he is needed as a server or as an alto or a bass in the Choir.

I feel that we are very lucky to have such a dedicated and approachable Chapter Clerk working for us and hope that the future proves to be successful.

WOW Days

Sally Bleasdale

At the moment 'Wow' Days are 'test pilots' for what will happen when the new visitor centre opens in 2020, when I expect many more schools will visit because of the much wider range of opportunities. They will have a dedicated learning space with separate facilities and lunch room, which will be a massive help in encouraging schools to spend the day here.

There are two main purposes behind developing and hosting Schools 'Wow' Days

1. To bring in schools that might not consider a visit to Lincoln Cathedral
2. To show that it is a cross-curricular venue with the means to provide an ideal school trip

On Thursday 11th October 2018, 136 Year 9 pupils visited Lincoln Cathedral from St Lawrence School in Scunthorpe. Their 'Wow' day consisted of nine possible activities of which they did three each. This was the content on the day:

Everyone found the first groups a little 'challenging' but then by the end of the workshop even those who were apprehensive about leading activities for teenage groups said that they had found the experience personally very rewarding and confidence-building.

Teacher feedback was excellent:

"Hi Sally,

I just want to say thank you once again for your all your hard work in organising today for us. Our students had a really memorable time and have experienced things that they may never have the chance to experience again. Can you thank all the workshop leaders



and Rachel again for their input to today?

The whole experience was amazing and inspired awe and wonder in many of our students. The students who took part in the Stained-Glass Window tour really enjoyed the tour guide who was very engaging and all the workshops fed beautifully into our GCSE studies. The joinery workshop provided a fantastic opportunity to see part of the Cathedral we may not normally see. The worship was informal, engaging and just at the right level for our students. It was a wonderful, reflective experience.

The day was beautifully paced with a really varied range of activities and it will have provided experiences that our students will remember for a long time. Thank you so much."

I am planning Primary and Infant Wow days for early next year, and we will do more Family Wow days during the school holidays from February 2019.

Celebration	SHOW & TELL find out more about Christian ceremony, signs & symbolism
	TAKE PART IN CELEBRATORY MUSIC
	VESTMENTS AND LITURGY (chance to try on mock vestments)
People and Work	MEET THE CLERGY Who's who? find out what the roles are within the church. Interview a member of the clergy
	MEET A STONEMASON find out about stonemasonry and carving
	MEET A JOINER find out what holds the roof up and more
Places	TOUR on architecture of the Cathedral on this specialist trail.
	TAKE A PILGRIM INTERACTIVE TOUR Dress as a medieval pilgrim, eat bread and drink 'small beer' smell herbs and incense and visit Hugh's Shrine
	GLASS WINDOWS TRAIL – learn the purpose and stories of the windows.
Service	'Celebration'

Learning Team Sewing Group Volunteers - Unsung Heroes

Sally Bleasdale

The Learning Team volunteer sewing group started a year ago, having previously worked with me at Lincoln Castle. I think they followed me because if you like to be kept busy (and they do!) I can always find a job for you!

I am a great believer in encouraging people to use their specialist skills, which is always to the benefit of everyone in the workplace. These ladies have a stunning range of sewing skills from being the fastest, most productive sewing machine operators for making 100 canvas covers for the real vestments, to embroidering and appliqueing swans onto stoles for dressing-up clothing. I am constantly amazed at how quickly and skilfully they produce work I have requested. They really are amazing!

They continue to work tirelessly on new projects – the latest being items of clothing for the 'dressing-up' area of the 'Discovery Zone' in the new Visitor Centre, taking inspiration from the real vestments held in the vestry. They research and ask



lots of questions until they are happy that they are producing what is required. They never stop working from the minute they get here – even whilst having tea and cake, and there's always plenty of banter and interesting conversation to be had. I treasure them and feel very lucky indeed to have them bringing their skills here to the great benefit of the Cathedral.

Sacred Space

Muriel Robinson

A new initiative to enrich our worship experience has recently started. Running on Sunday evenings on the third Sunday of each month, Sacred Space offers us a chance to encounter the cathedral in a very different way.

On the first evening, after a welcome cup of tea or coffee and cake, we were encouraged to explore various prayer stations in different parts of the cathedral, including a labyrinth to be walked (or experienced as a tactile hand-held experience).

As we moved silently around, we were accompanied by a violinist playing gently before coming together for a very short closing liturgy. The subdued lighting and the joy of the empty nave made for a truly reflective experience and a new way to be in our amazing building.

Designed to complement rather than replace our existing worship opportunities, Sacred Space is a welcome addition and one which I hope will be with us for some time.



Entertaining Angels

A recent art exhibition in the Chapter House of work by Jaq McCaughern included these stunning angels alongside some beautiful paper sculptures and larger canvases. More information is available from www.jaqmccaughern.com or you can mail the artist at jaqmccaughern@hotmail.com



A Great Organisation

Michaela Philp

If you did not go to the Organ Extravaganza on Friday 5th October, you missed a truly great treat.

It was obvious something special was up when the audience filtered in to find four small organs grouped in the crossing in the shadow of Father Willis, and a platform on which were placed a set of old bellows, lots of vacuum cleaner hoses, a lilo and some ancient leather trousers. This was the Stellos built by Aric's father and other instruments were chamber organs and a continuo organ also courtesy of Aric's father.

There was a big screen showing the manuals and stops of the mighty Father Willis, and, later, the lightning dexterity of our organists. To actually see them at work is awe-inspiring. The choir entered, and after a very amusing intro by Tom, tenor on Cantoris, they gave us a splendid Vaughan Williams *Te Deum*, a real great song of praise and part of their repertoire. A Handel organ concerto followed and our four organists were kept very busy whizzing from one instrument to another, keeping the piece unfolding without a hiccup. They really shifted, all

most entertaining, the music and the action. Ever seen Aric pelting about on a scooter?? We have.

The *Sugar Plum Fairy* was twinkling away next as she does until Hilary gave her some extraordinary massive chords. Would have deflated her tutu had she worn one. If anyone had been dozing, those chords would have woken them very quickly. The Gigout Grand Choeur Dialogue that followed was just that, as Father Willis and a smaller instrument, but still quite vociferous, chatted to one another.

A sumptuous Widor choir anthem restored one's belief that choir and organists had their serious moments, then the Stellos was fired up. Bravo to the two small chantresses who valiantly womaned the bellows. Four probs sat on the lilo to keep pressure up and Hilary directed the choristers as they played their piece.

Next, after a carefully planned 'false start', Vierne, a magnificent Gloria to elevate the spirits and give the audience a taste of just what fine musicians we have in Lincoln. Colin, of course, was truely

ly in his element. Jeffrey next with *Danse Macabre* and fingers a blur at times on the screen. The screen just helps us to appreciate the sheer brilliance of our organists' technique as we watch the dance of the hands and the changing of stops.

I wonder where it is, the large orange furry sort of orangutan that appeared momentarily in the organ loft and looked ready to play Father Willis. One of those ancient cathedral mysteries. Perhaps it is back in one of the 32 footers. Some Mozart, on several instruments, the Radetsky March and a Handel Lollipop from the *Water Music* with a strange finale complete with many extraordinary final chords. Some element of competitiveness here!!

Humour and brilliance characterised the whole evening. We all joined in with Jerusalem and the evening was over. The good news is choir and organist laureate have new cds out, Colin with Bach and choir with music that underpins the liturgical year. Christmas??? SORTED!!!!!!!

PS. I caught those three bars of *THE toccata*!

Lincoln Camera Club Exhibition of Churches September 2018

Margaret Campion

For one week in September the Lincoln Camera Club ran a delightful exhibition of 42 churches from our diocese and considering that they had well over 600 churches to choose from I think they came up with an excellent selection.

Many will be familiar to visitors because they are churches standing on or near frequently used foot paths like the Viking Way but some are more remote and difficult to find; all are extremely picturesque and the quality of the photos and the information cards accompanying them, are excellent.

The churches ranged from very ancient, Stow Minster, to comparatively new and included churches thatched, white-washed, wooden and haunted plus the delightful little church at Sutterby which is in the care of the Friends of Friendless Churches – an organization which aims to pick up even those churches the Churches Conservation Trust can't care for, leave alone a diocese with over 600 very fine churches in its care!

Markby St. Peter is our only thatched church; Southrey St. John is, I believe, the only wooden church in the diocese and looks rather like an early American mission church; it is very photogenic and completely charming. St. Edith at Little Grimsby is difficult to find because it is



www.flickr.com/photos/lincolnian/102988037 shared under Creative Commons licence, by Brian stjohnsouthrey.jpg

in the grounds of the Hall, but it is a tiny whitewashed building tucked away in the extensive gardens. There are very atmospheric photos of St. Botolph's at Skidbrooke, taken at sunset and we are told that it is reputed to be the most haunted church in the U.K! It was deconsecrated in 1974 and is now in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust.

At a personal level I was happy to see my own favourite church, the exquisite church at Saxby St Helen, included – we have stopped there many times for a 'banana break' using the convenient benches in the west facing porch overlooking the tranquil meadows beyond! It all brought back many happy memories of our Church Visiting days!

Harvest Supper 2018

This year's Harvest Supper was a very fine and friendly affair – some 70-odd people attended, the Chapter House was unusually and delightfully warm and the tables looked splendid with their new Provencal table cloths and posies of flowers in the middle of each table.

The food was, as always, delicious and was provided by Sue and her staff from the coffee shop. We had chicken casserole this year, it was really good and the apple crumble was equally delicious. Music was provided by a local ceilidh band and we even had some dancing led by our own Elaine Johnson whose husband was also playing the mandola in the band!

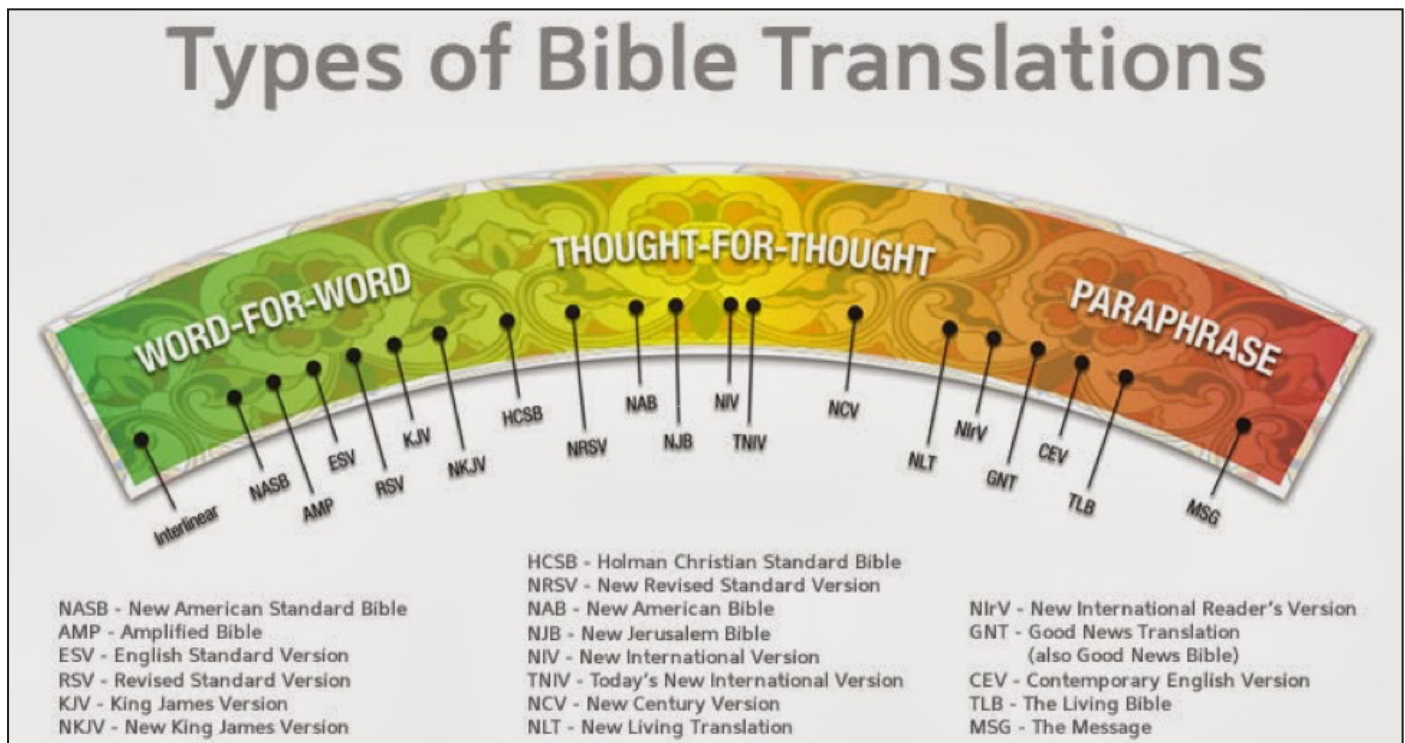
A truly enjoyable evening for all the community.



Which Bible? Part 2:

Translation Philosophies and Uses

Dr Paul Overend



When translating any language, we become aware that no two languages are the same. Words have ranges of meaning - and those semantic ranges are not shared in other languages. For example, the English word 'can' may be a verb ('I can') or a noun (a tin or, in American, a toilet). Or in French, there are different words for the English verb 'to know' (*savoir* and *connaître*).

So choices need to be made when translating as to which the text might mean. The Hebrew word *torah* can mean 'law' in our legal sense (as with divorce law), but the meaning of the Hebrew *torah* includes much guidance and instruction that is not legal, such as dietary regulation. So the word *torah* might be translated in different ways, depending on context.

There are two trends in translation. The first seeks to preserve a **word for word** correspondence (or 'formal equivalence') - aiming to communicate in English something of the tone of the original. This aims at accuracy, in spite of the difficulty of semantic range, but can make for very difficult reading, as the reader has to become

attuned to the Biblical use of words. But today word for word translations do make exceptions for issues of gender inclusion ('people' for 'men', and 'they' for 'he'). So where the *Revised Standard Version* (RSV 1962) tends to a formal equivalence, the *New Revised Standard Version* (NRSV 1989) compromises that intention by using gender inclusive language. Such texts are generally good for academic study and for formal liturgy, especially for exegetical¹ preaching

Another way is to **paraphrase** (or 'functional equivalence'). This aims to be intelligible within the readers' culture. Amplified versions (such as *The Amplified Bible*, AMB, updated 1987) add explanations to help make the text intelligible. But such paraphrases may take liberties with the text and can sometimes be idiosyncratic when trying to translate an idiom into something nearer to home for us. At best, this can bring the text to life for readers familiar with only one translation, as is true of *The Message Bible* (translated by Eugene H. Peterson between 1993-2002). They can also be accessible to those who have

no familiarity with the Bible. But even the best paraphrase can lose something of the original and paraphrases can make too easy some complex cultural and theological ideas.

Between these two there is a middle ground, often called a **thought for thought** translation. In this middle ground are found the *New International Version* (NIV, 1978) and its revision as *Today's New International Version* (TNIV, 2011), *The New Jerusalem Bible* (NJB 1985, which includes the apocrypha) and the *Revised English Bible* (REB, 1989, which I still use for daily prayer). These are all good for general use and a suitable compromise between literal word for word accuracy and communal intelligibility.

Interestingly, the *NIV Readers Version* (NIRV) is a plain English version with the lowest 'reading age' of all Bibles, with short sentences and intelligible phrases, and can be very useful for children's work as well as in some working parishes where educational attainment is not high. Yet it remains more accurate than some paraphrases.

¹ [editorial note: preaching which undertakes a critical explanation or interpretation of Bible texts].

A View from Minster Yard

Part One

Anne Senior

When this wonderful old house was built in Minster Yard about 800 years ago, and became the residence of the Sub-dean, the room which is now my kitchen was, I like to think, an ante-room and the window which faces north towards the West Front was probably very useful, to warn and inform, as well as to let in light.

Nowadays, the many mundane activities during the day are enormously enlivened by a simple turn of the head to the left, or, for something very special, leaning the elbows on the deep windowsill and blatantly 'people watching'.

Now, Lincoln Connected is very evident all around us. Almost overnight, a silver Jacob's ladder appeared rising heavenwards up the centre of the West Front. Sadly, it was soon veiled in fine netting, but we can just see small figures ascending and descending behind it. The beautiful faces of the Number Houses are similarly veiled, but we know that eventually the result of much hard work will be revealed.

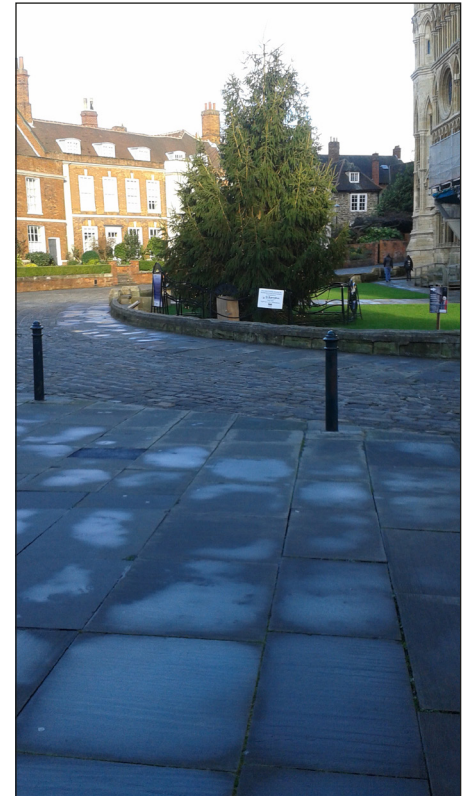
An alien might be extremely puzzled,

if not alarmed, by a strange event deep in winter. Men, women, children and even some dogs, clad in scarlet robes, running together, cheered on by families and friends. It is, of course, the annual Father Christmas Fun Run, one of several organised to raise money for charities.

Winter also brings the Christmas market. Some friends stockpile supplies, vowing not to set foot outside their own doors for the duration. Visitors from all over the country go past the window enjoying the stalls, the winter smells of gluhwein and mince pies, carols and Christmas music and somehow the weather is almost always bearable, and rarely dreadful. It seems a miracle how every trace completely disappears overnight after four days of happy crowds.

Suddenly, it seems, it is Advent. A magnificent Christmas tree is decorated at the West Front and lights our way into dusky Evensong. The ever-present wind of Kill-Canon Corner rises ever more fiercely, trying to blow it over.

Does all this "observing" lead to talk-



ing to oneself? Yes! But I try to restrict it to Trollope's Archdeacon Grantly's very expressive "Good Heavens!"

(To be continued)

HOW TO CONTACT US

If you wish to be added to the list for electronic contact, or if you have an article to submit, please remember our new email: inhouse@lincolncathedral.com

See our editorial policy for more details. Thank you!

Editor and Editorial Policy

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Decisions on content are made by the editors for each edition of *InHouse*. **Submissions of short articles are welcomed** though it may not always be possible to use all pieces as space is limited; articles are also commissioned to address identified issues. We reserve the right to edit submitted articles. Copy for the next edition should be emailed to the Editors at inhouse@lincolncathedral.com by **February 15th 2019** in **Word format**; accompanying photographs are also welcomed as JPEG files. Advice for contributors is available – please email for a copy. Regrettably it is not possible to accept hard copy as we do not have any secretarial resources.

If you do not currently receive *InHouse* by email and would like to do so, please email your address to us at inhouse@lincolncathedral.com. The electronic version has full colour photographs and is distributed ahead of the print version, so there are advantages!

PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE OF EMAIL ADDRESS ABOVE, WHICH IS PART OF OUR APPROACH TO THE CHANGE TO DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION!

St Hugh's Day

Through the eyes of a very new lay canon

Muriel Robinson

As I'm sure you know, November 17th is a very significant date for Lincoln Cathedral, marking as it does the feast day of St Hugh. This year was my first St Hugh's Day since being made a Lay Canon on February and I wasn't sure what to expect. I've often been to the festal evensong but not to any other events, so it was all a pretty new experience.

The lunchtime Eucharist, where we canons were able to robe and process to sit in our stalls, was an uplifting one, despite the slight nervousness created by being asked on the day to read the first lesson! It did occur to me that few of our regular Sunday congregation were present and that many more would find this a worthwhile experience - maybe one to put in the diary next year?

Lunch was provided for the College of Canons and we enjoyed what was possibly the inevitable Lincolnshire sausages and mash before what for me was the highlight of the day, a



chance to get up close and personal with the Gallery of Kings on a visit to the Workshop in the Sky. To be face to face with these carvings and the Romanesque frieze was such a privilege! I was particularly interested to know that it is possible that the faces are later additions and that there is speculation that some of the figures are actually female.

The frieze also shows Noah building the ark, sailing in it and after landing, though I was puzzled as to why the only animals seemed to be outside the ark rather than in it. In the middle of the run of Noah carvings is a very fine carving of Daniel in the lions' den and this has been half cleaned to show the before and after. The workshop is impressive in the extreme and we were fascinated by the Subdean's account of the challenges in terms of deciding whether to keep the originals in place once cleaned or to instead replace them with the commissioned replicas and to preserve the originals away from the wind and weather.

After our tours, the College of Canons met in the Chapter House and heard accounts from the Dean, Precentor, Chancellor, Subdean, Chapter Clerk and Chair of the Finance Committee about the achievements of the year and the challenges ahead. Then it was time for evensong, and to welcome a new member of the College.

Next year the feast falls on a Sunday, so the celebrations will be translated, probably to the Saturday, since our non-residentiary clergy Canons are of course busy on Sundays. Do watch for the date and consider joining us for Eucharist or evensong, or both! Many thanks to the Dean and Chapter for a great day, and we look forward to hearing more about progress in that Workshop in the Sky.



A View from the Vergers' Vestry

Elaine Johnson

Working part-time as a verger at York Minster, while studying at university, Matthew realised he enjoyed it so much that he wanted to take it further.

So, three months ago, he came here to Lincoln as a full-time member of the vergers' team. He says that one of the reasons the job is so enjoyable is because it is so varied. You never know exactly what is going to happen and although you try to organise and prepare for things as far in advance as possible, once things have started you have little to no control over what might happen and must be able to react immediately, as needed.

The vergers work seven days, alternating between an opening and closing shift, then have three or four days off. On a typical shift, they open up in the morning, starting at 7.00am ready for Matins at 7.30am, during which they prepare for the 8.00am Holy Communion, where they serve. Matthew finds that immersing himself in the rhythm of worship in cathedral life is a real privilege of the job. Participating in daily worship, he is continually experiencing and living his faith.

The prayers and services throughout the day are the structure on which everything else is built. Prayers at 12 noon and 3.00pm remind people that the building is a site of Christian worship. At midday a verger rings the Angelus, then prepares for the 12.30 Service. After lunch, it is back to general tasks of the day, then preparation for Evensong and services the following day. For the Eucharist, a verger prepares the elements in the Sacristy, brings them to the credence table and then the table. He or she finds the readings for the day in the missal and then inserts the propers (the collect, table prayer, and post communion prayer) into the liturgy. Preparation for evensong involves setting the readings, psalms and hymns in the canons' stalls, filling oil candles if needed, and finding the readings in the lectern bible.



The verger's preparation enables the officiant to focus on the service and not have to worry about practicalities.

Vergers do everything from cleaning to welcoming dignitaries or leading the Bishop in procession. Matthew sees the vergers' role as a form of ministry and says that he feels the real pulse of pastoral care during the day as, between them, the vergers and duty chaplains do their best to support everybody. Recently, Matthew helped to organise the collection of items to support the home-

less and he was touched by the quantity of donations to help people whom the donors may never meet. Among the visitors, the vergers may encounter very different points of view and Matthew enjoys the many interesting conversations which he has with people.

Matthew is very pleased to be part of a strong team of vergers with great depth of experience. He says everyone has been really welcoming and have helped him to settle in. We wish him a long and fulfilling time here in Lincoln.

A word from the editor

Muriel Robinson, Editor

For once as I write this, the weather outside seems appropriate to our December issue, with the nights definitely longer and Advent Sunday just two days away. We have even received our first Christmas card, and I have to write and post our own before Wednesday as we are off to France for ten days then to experience a different kind of Christmas market.

The approaching season has influenced some of our content here, although we also look back at the autumn and reflect on our Chapter Clerk's first year. Thanks to all those who gave us feedback on our themed issue and who have suggested future possible themes. One of these was pilgrimage, and this issue does have two articles on that topic, which I think may be a recurring mini-theme for a while. Watch out for another fully-themed issue in

2019 and, as ever, don't forget we are always happy to receive articles for consideration for publication, as Word files to our new email address please: inhouse@lincolncathedral.com

Since our last issue, we have had the AGM of the LCCA and have elected our new Lay Vice-Chair and Committee Chair, Alison Eagleton. I'm really pleased that Alison stepped forward for this role and have greatly appreciated her support during my own term of office. In the next issue we will carry an interview with Alison so that those who haven't met her can learn a bit more about her but her photo here may help you identify her! Alison can be contacted via the LCCA email: lcca@lincolncathedral.com Please do your best to support her and the committee; it makes all the difference to have active involvement from our community!

I'd like to take this public opportunity



of thanking the committee members, past and present, who served with me, for all they did to make my life easier and to ensure we represented your interests as well as offering you what we hope have been enjoyable social times.

Wishing you all a happy and holy Christmas and the very best for 2019.

The New Year Bells



Every year as midnight approaches on the 31st December crowds begin to gather outside the West Front of the Cathedral to keep the New Year Watch and be ready to cheer the New Year in with laughter, singing, dancing and – for some – sober reflection on the general state of the universe.

The New Year peal has traditionally been rung on muffled bells – that is the clapper within each bell is covered with a leather glove which 'muffles' the sound – before starting the pre-midnight ring at

11.30pm or thereabouts. This is actually rather a hazardous operation for the ringer who has to apply the muffles whilst the bells are 'up' that is, in ringing position. Remember some bells are very heavy indeed; the tenor bell weighs twenty-three-and-three-quarter hundredweight or 1,202 kilos for our younger readers!

Health and Safety regulations and insurance implications have caused this practice to be discontinued and instead, in recent years the Ringers have devised a different routine for New Year. Before

midnight, on the way up to midnight, there is a 'diminishing ring' with the bells gradually stopping one by one until, just before the magic hour, only the lightest bell is ringing. Then the Master of the Ringers starts to toll Big Tom from the Great Crossing until midnight, at which point on the final strike of Big Tom, all the bells start their joyful full peal which continues, amid the cheers of the crowds, for about half an hour!

And a very happy and prosperous New Year to all our readers!