

InHouse

The Journal of the Lincoln Cathedral Community Association

Au revoir, auf wiedersehen, arrivederci- but we hope not goodbye!

As most readers of InHouse will know, this Christmas marks the retirement of Canon David Dadswell, one of our residentiary canons. But there may be things about David that you don't know, so I persuaded him to talk to me a bit about his past, his time with us and his future plans.

The title of this piece is a hint about one thing you may not know: David is impressively multilingual. Following on from A levels in French, German and Latin, David's first degree, from Oxford, was in Modern and Medieval Language and Literature, and among other things involved a year in France and the challenge of reading Dante's *Inferno* in the original Italian. All these languages have come in useful in various ways, both professional and social, over the years, but his time at Oxford, and in Normandy where he found an Anglican chaplaincy, took him down a different path, first thinking about training as a Reader and then, one Saturday afternoon, recognising a call to ordained ministry.

He spent three years at Cambridge living at Westcott House while studying theology. Here he met his partner Stuart, now a professional musician. Music has been in David's life since his time as a choirboy in his home parish, and since then he has belonged to a choir wherever he has lived (recently singing in *Messiah* at the Cathedral) and we have all benefited from his musicality when he has presided at the Sunday Eucharist.

After ordination, David found himself back in his native Liverpool, serving his curacy in West Derby, a large village now a suburb of Liverpool. This large church in the Liberal Catholic tradition gave him opportunities of all kinds but particularly youth work, both in church and in the community. This in turn led to his next role as Chaplain at Brunel University, working with a Roman Catholic nun colleague in the chaplaincy team. David told me how he came to realise that university chaplaincy is not just about ministering to young people but to the whole university community. At Brunel, David also met someone who became both an employer and a mentor to him, a member of staff who had been married in the chaplaincy some years before and who was now a part time lecturer in the social sciences.



From this acquaintance, and his experiences in chaplaincy, David took the step of moving away from formal ministry into consultancy, drawing on his experiences and his faith to develop an approach that focussed both on systems and processes but also on people, helping a wide range of companies across the globe to a clearer understanding that success is not dependent on leaders' personalities but on having systems that allow people to be all that they can be.

We have benefited from some of his experiences in heavy industry as he has preached to us about helping those in charge of big companies to recognise the need to ensure that those in the hardest and dirtiest jobs need to feel valued, indeed loved. As he put it, it was not so much about injecting God into these situations as helping people recognise that God was already there. We have also benefited in that it was through David's consultancy work that Bishop Christopher tempted him to Lincoln, first in the Bishop's Office and more recently as our Diocesan Secretary.

Once established in Lincoln, David was soon finding himself in the Cathedral more often as Bishop Christopher established the principle of joining morning prayer with the cathedral community rather than saying it separately in the chapel in Edward King House.

(continued on p.2)

Christmas Greetings from the Dean



Christmas is a celebration of God coming among us in the present moment and, as such, provides an opportunity to look back as well as forward. As this Christmas approaches, I have much to be thankful for. Returning to Lincoln has been a very positive experience. Darren and I have greatly appreciated the warm welcome and support offered to us by so many people. The contrast with last Christmas is striking. When I left Lincoln on Christmas Day, there was no certainty about what would happen in 2024.

In a rapidly changing world that often feels unstable, I'm keenly aware that much greater uncertainty about the future is a reality for many people and for many different reasons. What we celebrate at Christmas doesn't remove that uncertainty, but in the greatest act of solidarity the world has ever known, by being born as one of us, God promises to be with us whatever the future holds. For me, this is cause for hope, for our world, for the cathedral and for all of us.

May Christmas bring us all this gift of hope that in Christ God is with us.

Simon



The cast of the Lincoln Mystery Plays Nativity performed in the cathedral and other city churches — see p.12

(Farewell David Dadswell, continued from p.1)

Many of us will remember David from that time as a quiet presence on Sunday mornings in the chairs by the south choir curtain.

Both then, and since his installation as a residentiary Canon, David has offered us a quiet but positive view of inclusion as a partnered gay person. Over the past couple of years, we have been especially blessed by David's presence among us as a Canon, both from his ministry and preaching and from his pastoral nature as he engages with the community - we shall miss him!

As to the future, most immediately there is a building project underway on their house in Windsor, and of course a focus on helping Stuart make a full recovery from his recent surgery. There will also be more time for visits to their house in Occitanie. But there are other plans too: a book reflecting on his learning from his time in the Diocese, some possible consultancy and trustee roles, and a re-engagement with the ministry team serving three parishes in Windsor (not all of which are full of wealthy southerners, and from which the Clewer community of nuns emerged, leading years later to the Clewer initiative to stop modern slavery). And as to what David will miss, it was no surprise that he talked first about missing his colleagues both in the cathedral and the diocese, as well as the wider cathedral community, but also about the garden he has developed in their house here and which kept him sane during lockdown.

David, we thank you for all you have brought to us and for your ministry among us which so many of us have valued greatly. We wish you a very happy retirement and hope that at least occasionally you will come back and see us. As I started by saying, we hope this is Au Revoir and not Goodbye!

Muriel Robinson

Greetings from the Lincoln Cathedral Community Association and the Editorial Team of InHouse.

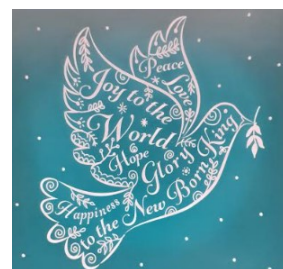
This edition of InHouse is packed with articles about the life and work of the Cathedral and its community. We say a fond farewell to Canon David Dadswell, who retires from his positions as Residentiary Canon and Diocesan Secretary. David's warm personality and engaging sermons will be much missed.

In the coming months, the LCCA will be transforming itself in line with the requirements of the Cathedrals Measure of 2021. We will still be representing the Cathedral Membership Roll, and organising social events for the Cathedral community, but we will no longer be a separate entity, collecting donations on behalf of the Cathedral. Please join us at our Extraordinary General Meeting early in the New Year, when the changes will be explained in full. Look out for more details soon.

As always, our thanks are due to the editorial team led by Elaine Johnson, ably assisted by Margaret Campion and Judi Jones, for the publication of this magazine. We hope you enjoy reading it.

Wishing all our readers a Blessed Christmas and a very Happy New Year!

Simon Crookall
Lay Vice Chair, LCCA



LCCA Annual General Meeting 2024

The Lincoln Cathedral Community Association Annual General Meeting held on Monday 25th November 2024 in the Chapter House opened with the Dean welcoming members with an opening prayer.

After the confirmation of the 2023 AGM minutes as a true record, the Dean said that he was very pleased to return as Dean after his short sojourn as Interim Dean last year and continued by summarising the changes in the Senior Leadership Team over the previous 12 months including the installation of the Canon Missioner. Since his return in September, the Dean has had over 100 meetings on an individual basis with staff, volunteers and city and county representatives identifying the challenges faced by the Cathedral, in particular that of good communication. The cathedral's future vision of becoming one cathedral with one mission is based on devolving to individual groups how they can contribute to the achievement of excellence and everyone's contribution would be valued. He intended to pursue the integration of the LCCA as a cathedral committee which would continue with its current remit without the responsibility for collecting monies but with its own budget. The new LCCC would report directly to the SLT including making recommendations for charitable giving. The Dean then explained that, due to the most recent Cathedrals' Measure, there was a requirement to compile a new Cathedral roll and the Canon Missioner expanded on this.

She explained that there would be both a Community Roll and a Worshippers' Roll and applications can be made by either completing the online form or a paper copy.

This application process would be disseminated through multiple avenues of communication and all were encouraged to apply.

Simon Crookall, as Lay Vice-Chair, detailed the LCCA's work since the last AGM including its charitable donations, publishing InHouse, serving refreshments after services and social events. He thanked the committee for their hard work, Elaine Johnson for her continued efforts in making InHouse such a sought-after publication and David Ford for taking on the co-ordination of both the Sunday morning refreshment rota and refreshments for other ad-hoc events.

Duncan Garmonsway outlined the salient points of the LCCA accounts for the previous 12 months.

Three existing Executive Committee members stood for re-election for their 2nd term and were elected unanimously. Details of the full committee can be found on the LCCA noticeboard in the North Choir transept where other LCCA information is also displayed. Anyone wishing to know more about the LCCA can either speak to a committee member or email: lcca@lincolncathedral.com.

The Dean closed the meeting by saying that his decision to return to Lincoln had been influenced by the strong sense of commitment to the community and thanked the LCCA committee, in particular Simon Crookall, Duncan Garmonsway and Andrea Paterson, for their work in supporting this important part of cathedral life.

Andrea Paterson, Secretary LCCA

Lincoln Cathedral Community Association Harvest Supper

Friday 18th October saw the Lincoln Cathedral Community Association Harvest Supper, held in the Chapter House.

It was a very well-attended event and all those present enjoyed the evening. Entertainment was provided by Allan Johnson and Dave Pape, who were playing a selection of catchy folk tunes as people arrived, creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Simon Crookall, the Lay Vice Chair of the Association, welcomed everyone before Dean Simon said Grace.



A delicious two-course meal of chicken casserole with vegetables and garlic bread followed by apple crumble and custard was provided by the Cathedral Cafe, with suitable alternatives catering for different dietary requirements.



Allan and Dave played again in the break between the courses, keeping us all entertained, along with three table quizzes, created by Linda Jones, which encouraged conversation and some head-scratching. We thought we knew our cathedral but where had she been standing when she had taken those photographs?



Answers were thoughtfully provided towards the end of the evening.

A request in advance for tins and packets for the Lincoln food bank filled two large boxes. Very many thanks to all those who contributed to this so generously.

A big thank you to the LCCA committee and all those involved in the planning and preparation of the evening, not forgetting the clearing away and washing up at the end.



Do look out for the Shrove Tuesday Supper at the beginning of March for another pleasant and sociable evening.



Welcome, Verger Neil Goalby

A warm, if slightly belated, welcome to Verger Neil Goalby, who joined the cathedral team of Vergers in February and has since completed and passed his probationary period. Neil brings with him a background in architecture, having worked with architectural firms both in the UK and internationally. His career spans projects ranging from small residential designs to large-scale commercial masterplans, including notable landmarks such as Birmingham's National Indoor Arena and a Formula 1 racetrack in Saudi Arabia.

Neil describes his greatest job satisfaction as walking through spaces that began as mere sketches on his drawing board. A close second has been his work mentoring students and young professionals entering the field. Throughout his architectural career, Neil focused on community-centred designs, fostering collaboration and creativity to positively impact the people who would eventually use the spaces he created. Despite these accomplishments, Neil found that the demanding hours left little time for engaging with the very communities his projects served. This was an aspect of his work that he missed, and as a Verger, he now finds fulfilment in directly interacting with the community at the cathedral.

We all know how valuable the Vergers are to the daily functioning of the cathedral. They are the first to enter



and the last to leave, and Neil truly enjoys interacting with everyone: staff, volunteers, worshippers, and pilgrims.

Vergers are the first point of contact for most queries, and if they don't know the answer, they certainly know where to find it.

Whether for services or events, it's all about getting the right information to the right people at the right time.

Neil's faith as a practising Christian also deepens his role, blending his architectural knowledge with his spiritual commitment. He participates in the daily services whenever possible and otherwise worships at Alive Church Lincoln.

As he joins our long-established, dedicated team of Vergers, we wish Neil every success in his role here.

Elaine Johnson

Earlier this year the LCCA gave a substantial donation to the Diocesan 'Ready for School Fund' which was concerningly low in funds before September.

Diocesan Communications Officer, Steven Tune, tells us more:

The Bishop of Lincoln's Ready For School Fund aims to support schoolchildren who are lacking the things they need in order to access confidently the full life of school and the curriculum. With a new school term on the horizon and a hive of enthusiastic young people waiting to jump back into the classroom, it was clear that something needed to be done to ensure that every child had the resources they needed to feel confident and prepared for learning.

Even the most common of items can have a dramatic impact on a child's quality of education and feeling of belonging among their peers. Study Books, exercise books, bags and pens are all essential as they navigate school life. These basic requirements are what the fund can help provide (and the cost soon adds up!), but it is only the beginning of what the fund is capable of.

We've heard encouraging stories of families in desperate need for their children that have now received vital aid in the form of food parcels to fill hungry bellies, clothing that is no longer dirty or torn and other vital subsidies for their children. No child should be without a pair of sturdy shoes or a uniform they can feel confident wearing, but the fund has offered to contribute to these often-expensive pieces of clothing. In the past, larger furniture items such as beds have been provided where a child hasn't been able to rest their head peacefully at night. The fund is ready and prepared for all possibilities, as you never know what a child may need.

School teachers are noticing a difference in their pupils, too. Head teachers are getting in touch to share their delight at witnessing a transformation in the way a child is engaging and acting. The children are filled with glee at wearing correct, clean and smart uniform or having the ability to be part of a fascinating school trip somewhere with their classmates. The fund broadens horizons.

The Cathedral Community should be filled with immense pride and satisfaction for their generous contribution to the Ready for School Fund which is continuing to help where it is needed. The Diocese of Lincoln and Diocesan Board of Education are immensely grateful – the money is helping to shape young lives, support their development and equip them for their brighter futures.



The Service of Thanksgiving for the Thirtieth Anniversary of the Ordination of Women to the Priesthood.

It is well known that Lincoln Cathedral has a long and varied history, full of many significant events and dates and 28th September 2024 was one more added to that list. First St. Hugh's Choir then the Chapter House witnessed a large gathering of clergy and laity, both male and female, many of whom had travelled considerable distances to be there, to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Ordination of Women to the Priesthood!

Mingling with many more recent ordinands were several female priests who had been ordained in Lincoln thirty years ago and, despite ministering in many and varied parishes, dioceses and countries since September 1994, they had made special efforts to return to the place where their priestly journey began.

It was poignant to meet and talk afterwards to former Lay Readers, Church Army Officers, Parish Workers, Church Wardens etc who had waited and prayed so long for the necessary legislation to be passed and whose time as Ordained Priests was inevitably quite brief. How many of us sharing in the jubilation of this service realised that our Verger Kate had led in the procession of ordinands 30 years ago and was delighted to lead this procession again 30 years later?

However, there was no doubt that although this anniversary day was inevitably full of mixed memories it was primarily an occasion of joyful celebration and thanksgiving, starting with the Thanksgiving Eucharist. The President was The Revd Liz Brown, the priest appointed by the Bishop as Dean of Women's Ministry in this Diocese. (Installed as a Canon on St. Hugh's Day this November). She also preached the sermon, which many people afterwards said they thought was extremely relevant and wished they could have a copy! All of the other main parts of the service were led by women, including the final blessing, which came as a surprise to many, given that our Bishop was present.

The comment was overheard that his smile as the procession left to move on to the Chapter House was blessing in itself.

Once the congregation re-gathered in the Chapter House the atmosphere was palpably more lively, as Bishops, Diocesan staff, training incumbents, various clergy with their families, parishioners and former colleagues re-discovered each other, some after a considerable number of years. What a memory test that was.

Fascinating discoveries were made about the various roles women priests had taken: parish curates, senior diocesan staff, hospital, school, university, college, prison and industrial chaplains in both the UK and abroad. The orange fire-proof boiler suit required by anyone going into the depths of Scunthorpe Steelworks certainly didn't fit easily over clerical garb.

Reminiscences filled the Chapter House, some more surprising than others. The changes affecting family life, children's schooling, sometimes husbands' employment as relocation to the new parish required at least a house move if not a move to a different part of the country. Many single women experienced loneliness before discovering and becoming part of their new church families and communities. First Parish Communion services, weddings, funerals and festivals were all recalled, many with rueful laughter, such as when the new priest had to overtake the hearse in order to reach the Crem ahead of the cortege, just making the service in time and another taking her first school assembly being asked by a pupil, "Why aren't you a man?"

On 28th September I asked several of those who had been "Ladies in waiting" for varying amounts of time what had been so special about today. Here are some of the responses I received..

"Coming into Lincoln Cathedral again."

"Meeting up with so many former colleagues and hearing about what they have been doing."



Rev. Michael Boughton with Rev. Pat McCulloch, ordained on 22nd May 1994 and appointed as Michael's curate. (Photo: Carrie McCulloch)

"Recalling the moment when the knot on my Deacon's sash was untied and it became a Priest's stole."

"Meeting and greeting male colleagues, as an equal or even as a superior!"

"Experiencing again the high standard of music provided by the organist and choir."

"Having time to ponder again on what a privilege, despite the difficulties and tough times, it is to have been a priest all these years."

"Realising again what a special place the cathedral has in my heart."

So ended the day, full of yet more memories, warm and heartening experiences, laughter, fun, gratitude, love and an increased sense of admiration for those who have served and continue to serve our church communities in many ways, regardless of gender. Thanks to all who helped to provide such a splendid anniversary celebration.

Doreen Boughton

The Curious Case of the Cathedral Carpets

Over more than forty years I have been in and out of the cathedral and heard many stories, legends and curious customs, but when one of the vergers asked if I knew about the special carpets for the Mayor and Lord Lieutenant I simply did not believe them! But it is true – the Mayor and the Lord Lieutenant and their official parties do indeed have special carpets which are put out for them whenever they make formal visits. In the Mayor's case, their traditional costumes include light pumps rather than sturdy shoes and it was requested, long ago, that carpets should be provided so that the mayoral feet should not suffer from the cold stone slabs of the cathedral and, apparently, the Lord Lieutenant and his party were also included at some point (no one knows exactly when).

But does the custom continue? The questions came thick and fast as the story emerged and when the fragments are brought together, this is what I discovered:

The tradition seems to have originated from a request from the Guildhall for a carpet for the Mayor and this is confirmed by a document held in the Guildhall dated 1595 and I quote it here:

" ... 1595, Jan17 – A 'wyned' table to be made, with a green carpet of 7 quarters broad cloth, to stand before the mayor at sermon times in the body of the Minster, to lay sword, hat and mace upon (and a velvet cushion, f236d) and also a new hat to be made for the sword bearer of crimson velvet, with the band and tassels and other furniture thereunto belonging. F226..."

So it appears that not only did the mayor get a carpet for his feet in or around 1595 but that a table was also requested for the mayoral regalia to be placed upon – and the sword bearer got a new hat! It is not known if the table still exists or, if so, it is now in the cathedral or the Guildhall.

The original carpets have been replaced and those now in use are part of a commission funded by Dean Butler when the Sanctuary was re-ordered between 1885 – 1886. They are hand knotted and made in Auchain near Smyrna (Izmir) and the design is based on the Tree of Jesse or Tree of Life. There are 8 carpets in all, one large, one tiny – which is still in use by the High Altar – and 6 small ones among which are those used for the tender feet of the 'Great and the Good' when they come to the Cathedral for formal occasions. They are believed to be very valuable (the carpets not the feet) and were cleaned and conserved by Janie Lightfoot Textiles in 2018.

The tradition of keeping smaller pieces for the exclusive use of the civic party and other dignitaries seems to have lapsed over the years but was started again in 2023 when the heating in the cathedral was turned off for most of the year (many of us remember those icy Sunday mornings). I think it is pretty amazing that an order from the Guildhall for more furnishings in 1595 should have started a tradition that is still continued (if only spasmodically) in the cathedral 429 years later.

It was pointed out to me that in 1595 'carpets' were for covering tables not for warming feet, so the original request could be interpreted differently, but the custom of providing a rug or similar for dignitaries during long ceremonies must have started somewhere and, as the first mention of the word 'carpet' seems to have been in 1595, it is not unreasonable to suggest that is when the custom started. But any other information on this curious case would be gratefully received.

This information is a joint effort of memory and research by John Campbell, former Deans Verger, Kate Wilson and Jo Blanchard (vergers) and the Mayor's Officer. We are very grateful to all of them for their help.

Margaret Campion

And a memory from 22 May 1994

This service on 22 May 1994 was a momentous event not only for the 25 women who were presented for ordination but also an historic event in the life of our cathedral. From 1092 until 1994 no woman had ever celebrated the Eucharist here – now there were 25 who could – and they have continued so to do!

At the time I was one of the volunteer vergers in the cathedral and was on duty – in a very humble capacity – simply crowd management as far as I can remember – but at the end of the service as Bishop Bob Hardy came back into the cathedral, I remember him raising his arms and doing a kind of 'high fives' with a big, big smile on his face! I remember thinking what a long journey it had been and how thrilled he must have been to preside over such a momentous event.

Margaret Campion

Events and Activities under the Peace Doves

For the past four months, Lincoln Cathedral has hosted Peter Walker's Peace Doves installation – a drift of over 10,000 paper doves, hanging from the centre of the crossing.

The doves have come from all across Lincolnshire; from community projects, churches, hospital chaplaincies and schools; and also from all across the world, from tourists and pilgrims to our Cathedral.

This installation has inspired us, as a Cathedral community, to reflect on peace and what it means to hope, pray and work for peace in a broken and troubled world.

The programme of events held under the doves has given us an opportunity to reflect on the theme of peace, and to simply gather and enjoy the space in a variety of ways. We held three open evenings, when people were simply welcomed in to see the doves - lit in the ambience of the evening light of the Cathedral, one evening of which ended with a service of sung Compline.

Alongside this, various groups who contributed to the making of the doves took time to come back and visit the Cathedral once the installation was in place, including the Green Synergy coffee and chat group from the Tower Estate, and also St. Christopher's SEND School. We also had Knitters for Peace, who came to knit their peace scarves under the peace doves.

Each year, the Cathedral hosts the end of the Baby Loss Awareness Walk, and this year those attending the walk were welcomed into the Cathedral to light candles and sit under the doves, finding a space in which their grief could be held.

Our Sacred Space community (which meets monthly for reflective worship) gathered for an Agapé meal around the Table for the Nation and under the doves, reflecting on the theme of 'Love in a Broken World'. One of the final events to take place under the doves was, of course, the Remembrance Sunday service, where the sight of the poppy leaves falling through and catching on the doves was a poignant image of the complexities of working for peace in a world where war is still a daily reality – themes ably explored in Dean Simon's sermon.



While the installation is now gone from the Cathedral, we hold onto the call as Christians to be 'people of peace' and continue to reflect on how we can live that out in our daily lives and contexts. It feels apt then, to end with a prayer used on the International Day of Prayer for Peace, which happened on the 21st of September, soon after the doves were installed:

O Lord, you have said to us 'Peace I leave with you.' This peace that you give is not that of this world: it is not the peace of order, when order oppresses; it is not the peace of silence, when silence is born of suppression; it is not the peace of resignation, when such resignation is unworthy. Your peace is love for all people, is justice for all people, is truth for all people, the truth that liberates and stimulates growth. Lord, it is this peace we believe in because of your promise.

Grant us peace, and we will give this peace to others.

(Italy: the Waldensian Community)

Rowena King

Come and join us ... The Wednesday Intercession Group

An important part of the worshipping ministry at the Cathedral are the opportunities available for Prayer Requests. This is met by the provision of two places where prayer requests can be made. These are in the Morning Chapel or on the board outside the Fleming Chantry. Every Wednesday the Prayer Request Cards that have been left in those places are read in a short service before being presented during the Offertory at the 10-30am Eucharist on the following Sunday.

There is a small group of people who meet at 2-00pm every Wednesday in the Longland Chantry off the South Choir Aisle to read all of these requests in a short service. The length of the service varies depending on the number of request cards but it usually lasts for around 45 minutes.

It is a small but vital group that is an important part of the regular prayer and worship at the cathedral. Its influence reaches far beyond the Cathedral Community. We have recently lost two of our regular members so we would like to encourage more people to share this time with us. Even if you can only attend occasionally it would help us to maintain this important ministry. We look forward to giving you a welcome.

Canon Michael Boughton.

Astrid Zydower's Nativity Scene

Since 1989 Astrid Zydower's Nativity scene has been a striking part of celebrating Christmas at Lincoln Cathedral. The artwork is not obviously festive, with its austere and bleak landscape, elongated figures and monochrome mud-coloured paint scheme. However, its scale, sensitive and accomplished modelling, dynamic figures, and joyful baby Jesus lend it an appeal which has garnered love and appreciation among many. It was, according to a conversation between Astrid and Visitor Officer Linda Tilbury in 1997, voted "The best crib in England" in the 1980s in a European journal. However, it is, a piece of art to divide opinion, and some find it stark and depressing. In recent years only the key figures have been used as part of a Nativity scene.

The artwork was made between 1975-77 for St Paul's Cathedral. The scene is divided into two halves; outside the stable the three wise men and shepherds arrive, while inside Mary lies on a dais with baby Jesus, with Joseph lying on the floor. Sheep, cattle, a dove and a jug with bread complete the scene.



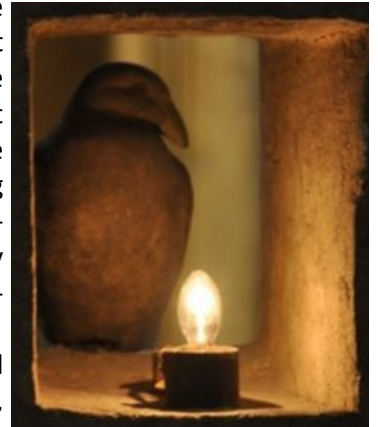
Spotlights in the triforium give a cold hue to the outside and a warm glow to inside the stable. The symbolism is drawn from the Gospels according to Matthew, Luke and John, envisioning light overcoming darkness. The Shepherds approach from the fields of Bethlehem,



the Wise Men from the East carrying their gifts – myrrh with a lamb on top (representing sacrifice), frankincense topped with a dove (to represent God) and gold which has a small elephant on top (a symbol of universal sovereignty).

They are guided by the lamp which represents the Light of the World; the Dove represents the Holy Spirit.

The vertical cracks of the stable walls suggest insecurity and it was the intention of the artist that in walking around the stable and looking through them that visitors would unconsciously become part of the Nativity scene themselves.



Comprised of 45 sculpted and structural elements, the figures and animals are modelled onto welded armature out of vermiculite, plaster and glue, with polystyrene walls and a plywood base. When in full use it requires an extensive Works Team effort of Facilities, Joinery and Conservation to move and erect it from its current home in the Tithe Barn. Thirty-five years of use at Lincoln has seen considerable wear-and-tear damage, particularly to the fragile joints and extremities of the figures and animals each year. When sited at St Paul's, Astrid Zydower would undertake repairs herself, but at Lincoln these have been undertaken by the Conservation Department – an annual highlight for the team.

Astrid's background provides something of an insight into understanding her work. Born in Germany (now Poland) in 1930, at the age of nine, along with her two siblings, she was one of the last of the Kindertransport to be shipped off to England. Both her parents were subsequently killed at Auschwitz, and the Zydowers were the only Jewish children in their village to survive the Second World War. This is a theme which shaped much of her work. She was settled with a Quaker family in Sheffield, from where her talent was spotted early by her foster mother and she was encouraged to go on to study art, winning a scholarship to the Royal Academy. She became a successful sculptor with an eminent and starry client list. She was awarded an MBE in 1968 and continued to work into her 70s. The year before her death in 2005, she visited Lincoln Cathedral and saw the nativity scene in-situ.

Jane Cowan ACR, Head of Conservation



'Coat of Hopes' still walking, August 2024



Five of us set off for the 66-mile pilgrimage from Winterton to Lincoln. The hospitality was generous, with our first evening meal at Winterton Trinity Methodist church.

Mike Joyce, Community Chaplain for Winterton, kept us well informed for the first two walks, first to South Ferriby, then South Ferriby to Barnetby. A lot of the walking was rural, so encounters were few but always meaningful.

Canon Sarah Spencer, diocese of Lincoln, met us at Barnetby, and Allison Thomas hosted us royally at St Barnabas. Local people joined for the Viking Way section to Caistor, where we held a busy and moving Coat encounter in the evening. The Methodists fed us, and lace maker David helped with some stitching and repairs.

More locals joined for the rather brisk Sunday walk to Market Rasen. I had pledged to be there by three o'clock, and this proved a challenge! The Methodists again did us proud, with a ready audience for Coat stories, and excellent food (and a carpeted church floor!) Rev Heather Wilson saw us off with a blessing, two days before her retirement and departure for Canada.

From Market Rasen we walked mostly lanes, collecting local friends at Legsby and having a surprise tea at the Old Nurseries, West Torrington! Wragby All Saints saw our largest encounter, with perhaps 25 sharing and wearing the Coat.

We left Wragby early, a band of four now, for the longest walk: 15 miles into Lincoln. We had our first experience of rain as we left Fiskerton for Cherry Willingham, where the sun came out. Here eight Lincoln people including the Canon Missioner, Rowena, joined us for the final six miles into the city. We arrived at the cathedral at 5pm.

Thank you to the cathedral for warmly hosting the Coat before its departure to Nottingham, as well as to the kind people of Lincolnshire for supporting us on this journey.

As the Coat song says:

*'In truth my destination is each person that I meet
The turning of our future is on all our backs and feet.'*

You can see photographs and keep up with the Coat's onward journey on <https://www.coatofhopes.uk/now>

Sandie Stratford

Come and join us ... Evening discussion group

Some years back, the Precentor started a Lent Group which continues under the leadership of our Canon Missioner and the title Tea@Four. However, this group, which meets monthly throughout the year in the afternoon, is only available to people who can get to afternoon meetings. So, in response to requests from others who wanted to meet, we, with the Precentor's approval, formed an evening group which meets once a month at our house in Wragby Rd, usually on a Tuesday evening from 7.30 to 9pm. Sometimes we use the same material as the afternoon group and sometimes we choose something different. We have read and discussed two short books by Rowan Williams, followed courses published by Church House on the Lord's Prayer and currently on the Commandments, and practised Lectio Divina.

Tea@Four, outside Lent, also practises Lectio Divina (sacred reading) normally based on the gospel for the previous Sunday.

The evening group is a small group of six and we would be delighted to be joined by others. Our next meeting is on Tuesday 14 January at 7.30pm. Please speak to John Davies for more details if you are interested.

Tea@Four would also welcome you at their meetings. Please speak to the Reverend Rowena King if you are interested in the afternoon group.

John and Jeannette Davies

Lay Ministry Service at the Cathedral

Saturday 12 October 2024 saw the dedication and contributions of lay ministers within the Lincoln Diocese celebrated at the annual Lay Ministry Service at Lincoln Cathedral. The building was filled with members of various parishes and chaplaincies, all coming together to recognise those who serve in lay roles.

The service of Sung Eucharist was led by the Bishop of Grantham, who gave thanks for the calling of Lay Ministry and emphasised its importance in supporting the spiritual and community life of the diocese.

The Bishop of Lincoln preached a sermon about waiting – and how everyone is gathered with those waiting to see where their vocational journey leads, waiting to see how God’s call will unfold.

The service included the formal declarations by the candidates, affirming their commitment to their faith and their roles within the Church of England. The new Readers each received a blue scarf to show their new ministry, which they can wear when robed.

This annual event not only recognizes the hard work and dedication of lay ministers but also inspires other to



consider how they might serve their communities in similar ways.

It was a day of reflection, celebration, and renewed commitment to the mission of the Church, highlighting the vital role that lay ministers play in the life of the diocese.

Congratulations to Pauline Wiggett and Peter Holmes who were admitted and licensed as Readers by the Bishop of Grantham, and to Lynne Smith who was blessed and commissioned as a Warden of Lay Ministry to work alongside Clare Lyndsay.

Steven Tune, Diocesan Communications Officer

On Monday 18 November, five new canons took their place within the College of Canons at Lincoln Cathedral:

Revd Carolyn Bailey (Partnership Dean of the Elloes, Rector of the Ness Group)

Ms Ruth Brewin (Lay Co-Lead of North East Lincolnshire)

Revd Liz Brown (Partnership Dean of North Lincolnshire, Priest-in-Charge of Goxhill & Barrow with New Holland)

Revd Julie Donn (Partnership Dean of North East Lincolnshire, Vicar of Immingham)

Mr Steven Sleight (Pastoral and DAC Secretary)



The College of Canons exists to give counsel to the Bishop and to the Cathedral Chapter on any matter concerning the Cathedral as the seat of the Bishop. The work of the cathedral canons is to support and carry out the Bishop’s apostolic ministry throughout the Diocese and beyond.

Steven Tune, Diocesan Communications Officer

A poem for St. Hugh’s Day

Saint and Swan

Across the waters of a shining lake
A swan now trails its silver silken wake
To meet a waiting figure tall and still
Whilst music of soft beauty spreads its veil.

Hugh loved the steady silver stream of grace
The gift of faith that lights a pilgrim face.
His westering gaze still turns with burning eyes
Across his city to the distant skies.

Micky Philp



Just two of the beautiful examples of work by the Cathedral Needlework Guild on display on the Table for the Nation at the end of October.

Lincoln Mystery Plays Trust – Medieval Nativity Play 2024

This year's Medieval Nativity includes something of a rarity: 'The Parliament of Heaven' has only been performed once before by the Trust and doesn't even exist in most other Mystery Play cycles. In this play, we see the Four Virtues portrayed as bickering sisters all determined to influence God one way or the other on the matter of whether to forgive people for Adam's sin in the Garden of Eden or to continue their justly-deserved suffering. Misericordia (Mercy) is all for forgiveness, but her sisters Justicia (Justice) and Veritas (Truth) think this will make a mockery of God's laws. Pax (Peace) wades in to try to resolve the situation and - no spoilers! - the eventual solution suggested by Filius (God's son) leads to Gabriel's annunciation to Mary.



Such an interesting concept which shows the medieval mind working to understand and explain key biblical events. In deciding which plays to include this year, I translated it and sought feedback from a group of our actors. They were universally impressed by the play and wanted to perform it.

It actually works rather well, as it is followed by the contrasting, much more down-to-earth play 'Joseph's Doubts'.

This play begins with the brusque line "How, dame, how? Undo your door, undo!" and portrays Joseph as a right grump who, very humanly, proceeds to berate Mary and disbelieve her assertion that an angel has got her with child.



In fact, with all the 5 plays we're performing this year, you don't need to scratch far under the surface to reveal very human characteristics easily recognised today and this, I think, is the key to their continued success, relevance and impact on audiences.

In this year's cast of 16 (plus four musicians), we have three newcomers as well as one actor who has been prepared to take on a speaking role for the first time. For me, it's wonderful to see these enthusiastic amateur actors really going for it in their roles and bonding as a group. They've come together from different parts of the county to rehearse a play which we hope will bring a lovely warm glow to audiences this Christmas. There's definitely a lot of humour to experience amidst the awe and wonder!



Over the last couple of years, we've developed these wonderful medieval plays, first written down around 1450, adding more song and sometimes dance. In this we've been accompanied by talented medieval musicians, 'The Lincoln Mystery Players'. Our 2023 Nativity was performed in St Mary Magdalene's and was very well-received with one audience member saying it had been "the best thing about Christmas".

The Lincoln Mystery Plays Trust is a registered charity. We aim to revive, re-energise and re-engage audiences with these little-known gems from the past. We are a community theatre group and welcome all in our productions.

Follow us on Facebook or check out our website. www.lincolnmysteryplays.org for further information.

Ruth Hewitt, director of production
and Chair of Lincoln Mystery Plays

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