

Cathedral in Touch

A Newsletter for our Community

9 June 2024 | 2nd Sunday after Trinity



Leicester Cathedral
A beating heart for City and County



Joined together for our common life

I have been deeply moved in these last days by the coverage of the **80th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings** on television and radio, and indeed by the service which was held at the Cathedral to commemorate the anniversary on Thursday. I was especially touched of course by the memories and testimony of the remaining veterans. However, what also left an impression on me was a sense of the joint effort this campaign demanded – an alliance of forces across national borders and a huge number of people working together not just in air, on sea and land, but also in countless support roles away from the front line. The success of the operation depended on each undertaking their part. As one veteran said: 'we all did our bit'.

Many noted that united endeavour and dutiful teamwork were hallmarks of the generation who lived through war 80 years ago. Some have doubted whether our more individualistic society today can embody anything similar or whether we have become too fragmented and less inclined to work together for the common good. I found it very encouraging to see how younger people participated in some of the commemorations and, as is often the case, some of the most profound words came from children expressing gratitude for what those liberating forces did all those years ago, and pledging to work together in today's world for peace and the thriving of all.

It made me wonder what our society would look like if we all took seriously the sentiment of 'doing our bit', and indeed

what the 'bit' might look like for each of us. This week is **Volunteers' Week**. Often people tell me that their church or club or community project etc. is struggling to recruit and retain volunteers to keep things going and this seems to have become even more difficult since the pandemic. Of course, many people do offer their talents and time and we are grateful at the Cathedral for the many people who contribute to our common life in all sorts of ways. However, have we perhaps lost as a society the sense that volunteering is something that everyone does as a part of life? Without that collaboration and teamwork we risk the bonds of community becoming ever looser and our common life becoming much less rich for all.

In Church life we understand community to be key – we are the Body of Christ, a temple built of living stones. God calls us family – and all are needed, all ages, all abilities, all temperaments, all backgrounds. The sense of joining in and of teamwork thus takes on a subtly different focus for Christians. Yes, we need people to do tasks, to fill rotas for serving or hospitality or welcome or leading worship – or to ring bells, lead tours, listen to those in need... and a whole host of other things. But importantly, our sense of being involved is firstly a question of vocation: we are each called by name by God to take our place within his family, his community, his living Body on earth.

'Doing our bit' as a Christian does not begin with 'doing' but begins by responding to the call of Christ and simply being part of our Cathedral

community. Then, as we learn to live together, we may discern the gifts that each of us can bring in God's name to our common life. Together, with God's guiding, we discover the tasks that need to be done and trust that God is already calling the right people to fulfil them. I wonder what 'doing your bit' in our common life together might look like? When God nudges you, come and have a word!

We may never quite match the selfless sacrifice made by those who went before us, but let us be inspired by their example to join together so that this world may shine with hope, peace and joy.

Emma Davies
Canon Precentor



CANON-IN-RESIDENCE

ONE OF the clergy always holds this phone. Do feel able to contact us if you need but please be aware we cannot receive texts.

07399 523 330

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News & Updates

Thank you to our volunteers

We are so grateful for all our volunteers this Volunteers' Week (and every other week!).

Our family of volunteers play a crucial role in welcoming visitors and enhancing the quality of life in the Cathedral, from bell

ringing and flower arranging to Choir chaperones and delivering guided tours.

If you are interested in joining this community, learn more about the wide range of opportunities we have on our [website](#).



Service of Commemoration for the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day

On Thursday 6 June, the UK and allies commemorated the 80th anniversary of the Normandy Landings in 1944, leading to the end of the Second World War and the liberation of Europe.

The focus for the City and County's commemoration of this significant anniversary was a Choral Evensong at Leicester Cathedral, attended by the Lord-Lieutenant, the Lord Mayor, the Chairman of the County Council, and

other civic dignitaries, and with music sung by the Cathedral Choir.



Services this week

SUNDAY 9 JUNE

TRINITY 2

- 10.30am Cathedral Eucharist
- 12.00pm Questions Together
- 3.30pm Choral Evensong with Safeguarding Co-ordinators
- 4.00pm *Together with* Choral Evensong
at St Hugh's Church, Market Harborough
- 6.30pm Eucharist at St Nicholas Church

MONDAY 10 JUNE

- 8.30am Morning Eucharist
- 12.30pm Lunchtime Recital: Anna Crawford, Cello
and Ana Manastireanu, Piano
- 5.30pm Choral Evensong

TUESDAY 11 JUNE

BARNABAS THE APOSTLE

- 8.30am Morning Prayer
- 12.30pm Lunchtime Eucharist
- 5.30pm Choral Evensong

WEDNESDAY 12 JUNE

- 8.30am Morning Prayer
- 12.30pm Lunchtime Eucharist
- 5.30pm Evening Prayer

THURSDAY 13 JUNE

- 8.30am Morning Prayer
- 12.30pm Lunchtime Eucharist
- 5.30pm Choral Evensong

FRIDAY 14 JUNE

- 8.30am Morning Prayer
- 12.30pm Lunchtime Eucharist
- 5.30pm Evening Prayer

SATURDAY 15 JUNE

- 9.30am Morning Prayer
- 9.30am Summer Pilgrimage Walk
- 5.30pm Evening Prayer

SUNDAY 16 JUNE

TRINITY 3

- 10.30am Cathedral Eucharist
- 12.30pm Final Service of the Royal Leicestershire Regiment
- 3.30pm Choral Evensong
- 6.30pm Eucharist at St Nicholas Church

Farewell to Two Choral Scholars

We'll be doing our usual round of goodbyes to singers who are moving on over the summer nearer the end of term, but two of our Choral Scholars will be leaving before then and I didn't want to miss the opportunity to thank them for what they have contributed to the life of the Cathedral in the time they've been with us.

Grace Stephens-Spada joined us at the start of this academic year as a first year Medical Physiology student at the University of Leicester. She has sung many memorable solos, including a beautiful rendition of *Blute nur* from Bach's *St Matthew Passion* on the Wednesday of Holy Week and the Leicestershire Chorale WhatsApp group was buzzing after her solo in Stainer's *I saw the Lord* at our joint concert, asking what sort of transfer fee they'd need to pay in order to get her to sing regularly with them! Grace is transferring to the University of St Andrews in the autumn, where she has an unconditional offer to read Medicine.

Alex Pitcher joined us a year before Grace, and is reading Computer Networks and Security at De Montfort University. In his case we're saying 'au revoir' or 'auf Wiedersehen', rather than 'goodbye', as he'll be back in a year's time, once he's completed a placement near Reading as part of his degree course. Alex is the first bass choral scholar

we've had in a while and his strength of tone in the lower register has enabled me to put pieces such as the Rachmaninoff *Nunc dimittis* on the music list, without first worrying whether one of our regular extras will be free.

Above all though, Alex and Grace have been wonderful people to have around the place. Always enthusiastic about the choir and the music we're singing, they've been great company when I've given them lifts to the various places we've visited around the diocese as part of *Together with Leicester Cathedral* and fantastic role-models for our younger singers.

Grace and Alex, thank you for all that you have given to the musical life of Leicester Cathedral during your time in the Choir. We wish you all the very best for the exciting future that lies ahead and you go with our love and prayers.

Christopher Ouvry-Johns
Director of Music



Girls' Choir Anniversary

Leicester Cathedral Girls' Choir held its first rehearsal in September 1974 under the direction of the then Assistant Master of the Music, Geoffrey Carter, and thereby became the first Church of England Cathedral to have female top line independent of the boys. We're fiercely proud of that fact and want to celebrate the Golden Anniversary of this historic event in style!

The Cathedral has earmarked the weekend of 14 and 15 September 2024 for the celebrations and, if you have been involved with Leicester Cathedral Choir over the past 50 years, whether as a singer, choir parent, member of staff, or just an appreciative member of the congregation, we'd love you to join us! We plan to hold a concert on the Saturday evening and a Festal Evensong on the Sunday afternoon.

Please let us know that you're interested in being part of the event by filling in the [GoogleForm via this link](#). The last question is *Is there anything else you'd like to add?*, so that's the place to let us know about anything we've forgotten or haven't thought of.

Above all, please share the link with anyone you're still in contact with from your time in the choir and encourage them to fill the form in too.

The invitation is explicitly for **everyone who's been involved with the**



choirs of Leicester Cathedral, not just former Girl Choristers: this is a milestone that we should all want to celebrate! It would be helpful if you could fill in the form for once per person (e.g. if more than one sibling was in the choir, please fill it in once for each; choir parents should fill the form in separately from their offspring etc.).



Support Music at Leicester Cathedral



Music is at the heart of Christian worship.

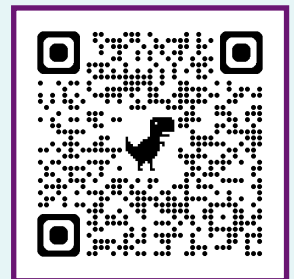
It shapes our cathedral life and plays an important part in creating a welcoming environment, ensuring our visitors feel at home in services, concerts, and other events.

With your support, we can extend singing lessons to all our young singers, offer more choral scholarships, and ensure quality of life for our music department.

Cathedral Music Showcase | Wed 19 June

Join us at 7.00pm for a celebration of cathedral music, featuring members of the Choir past and present.

**If you enjoy music at the Cathedral,
please consider supporting
[Leicester Cathedral Music
Foundation.](#)**



Leicester **Cathedral**
A beating heart for City and County



leicestercathedral.org

Election of a member of Chapter

As part of implementing a revised Constitution and Statutes for the Cathedral, the membership of Chapter is changing. One space is to be filled by election and nominations are now invited.

Nominations may be made by persons who are included on the electoral roll of the Parish and/or the community roll of the Cathedral. If you are in any doubt as to whether you are on one of these rolls, please contact Adaeze.Ebodili@LeicesterCofE.org.

The following information can be found [on our website](#):

1. Chapter member role description
2. Chapter Terms of Reference
3. Details of who is eligible to be elected
4. Nomination Form

Completed nomination forms should be sent to:

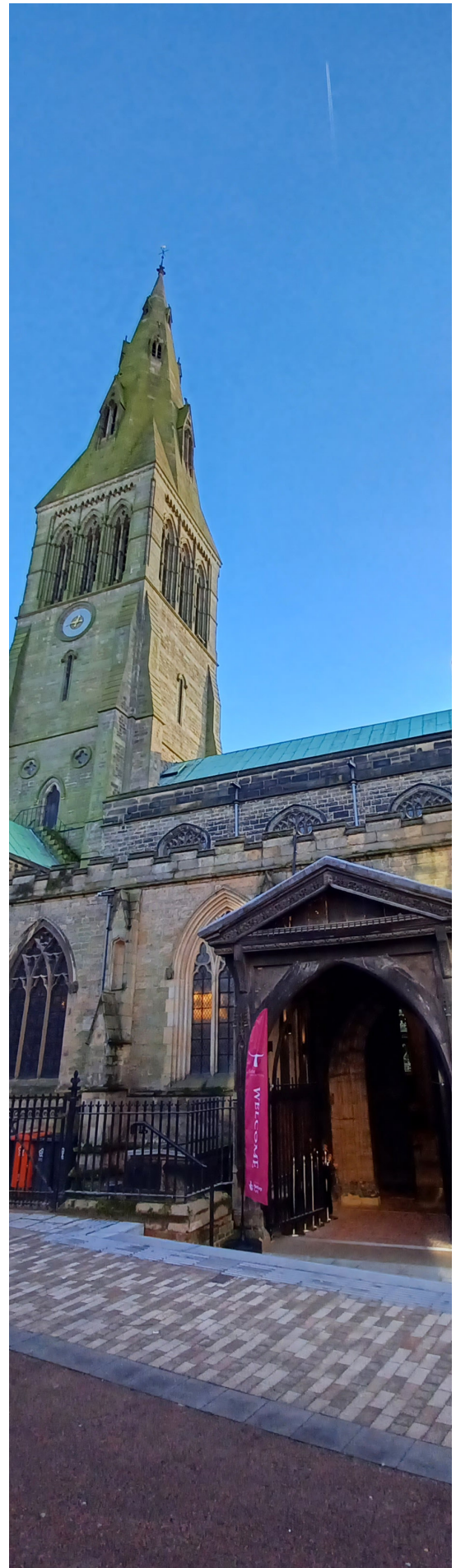
By email:

Adaeze.Ebodili@LeicesterCofE.org

By post

Adaeze Ebodili, Leicester Cathedral,
St Martins House, 7 Peacock Lane,
Leicester, LE1 5PZ

Nominations will be open from Friday 21 May 2024 and must be received by 12 noon on Friday 21 June 2023. If a ballot is required, voting will open on Monday 24 June 2024 and close at 12 noon on Monday 8 July 2024.





Summer at Leicester Cathedral

This summer we will have exciting opportunities to explore and enjoy stories of Leicester, of faith, and of culture, as we celebrate the new life our cathedral building is bringing.

Treat yourself to the beauty of Choral Evensong and recitals by talented young musicians. Laugh at local Paul Gosling's [Dr Watson](#) comedy show. Explore the city's 2,000 year history with world-renowned archaeologist [Mathew Morris](#). Learn about the community [food-growing and environmental project](#) in the heart of Leicester.

It will be great to see you!

See all events and services on our [website](#)

**Pick
up a
booklet!**

Sunday 9 June | 4.00pm

Choral Evensong Together with St Hugh's Church

Join us for a special service of Choral Evensong at St Hugh's Churches, in the Parish of The Transfiguration in Market Harborough, as part of our *Together with Leicester Cathedral* project.

Thursday 13 June | 6.30–8.30pm

Leicester Uncovered: Leicester Cathedral Revealed

The construction of our new heritage learning centre has revealed a fascinating snapshot of life in Leicester over the past 2,000 years, including a possible Roman shrine, an Anglo-Saxon building and a burial ground in use from the late Saxon period to the 19th century.

Join archaeologist **Mathew Morris** from University of Leicester Archaeological Services for a talk about the recent archaeological excavations and what they tell us about the lives of the people of St Martin's parish and the story of Leicester.

Tickets: £5.50 Full / £3.50 Concession – available from [Eventbrite](#).

Sunday 16 June | 12.30pm

Final Service of the Royal Leicestershire Regiment

Please note the Cathedral will be open today between 1.30–3.30pm.



Questions Together

Next on Sun 9 June

Our monthly discussion group aims to offer a friendly space to ask questions about faith and discipleship. Join us as we ask, wonder, and share together!

In the Cathedral after the Sunday Eucharist.

Leicester Uncovered

Leicester Cathedral Revealed

A talk with Mathew Morris

Thursday 13 June 2024
6.30–8.30pm

*Uncover the history of Leicester
over the past 2,000 years*

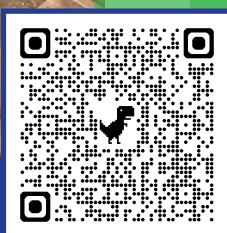
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including a possible Roman shrine, an
Anglo-Saxon building, and a burial
ground in use from the late Saxon
period to the 19th century.

*Event made possible thanks to
National Lottery players.*

Tickets

Adults £5.50
Concession £3.50
available from **Eventbrite.**



Lunchtime Recitals

Summer Season 2024



**12.30pm | Free admission,
donations encouraged**

Monday 13 May
Ellis Thomas Piano*

Monday 27 May
Philip Millwood Organ

Monday 10 June
Anna Crawford Cello (+ Duet partner)*

Monday 24 June
Osnabruck Youth Choir

Monday 8 July
Leicestershire Music Strings Ensemble

Students aged 13–18, the LMSE performs a varied programme of summer chamber music including well-known quartets and octets. Directed by Phil Houghton.

Philharmonia

* with the **Philharmonia Fellowship Scheme**

The Philharmonia is a world-class symphony orchestra – based in London at Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall, resident in cities and at festivals across England, and streaming online, the Philharmonia creates thrilling performances for a global audience.

Here at Leicester Cathedral, we're thrilled to welcome Philharmonia Orchestra Instrumental Fellows for a series of recitals in a new partnership with this acclaimed orchestra.



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www.leicestercathedral.org



Pilgrimage Walk

Saturday 15 June

Starting from 9.30am outside St Martins House

Join us on a prayerful walk through the city and its surroundings. Over the course of 2.5–3 hours, we will journey together, guided through a series of reflections and prayers as we seek out the divine and sacred in the streets, shops, and waterways around us.

Like last year, Jonathan Kerry will lead us, and along our route we will pause at various locations to pray and reflect together. There will be breaks along the way, and plenty of opportunity for conversation with others as we walk together, too!

All are welcome, but children must be accompanied by an adult.

Please visit our [Eventbrite](#) page to book – or speak to Jude (jude.taylor@leicestercofe.org) if you prefer.

Tickets are free, but donations will be very gratefully received.

Together with...

Our forty-eighth service out with parish churches in the City and County, as part of *Together with Leicester Cathedral*, will take place on Sunday 9 June 2024.

Join us at 4.00pm for a service of Choral Evensong at **St Hugh's Church, in the Parish of the Transfiguration, Market Harborough** (Granville St, Market Harborough, LE16 9HF).

Together with Leicester Cathedral

While the building was closed for 22 months during our restoration project *Leicester Cathedral Revealed*, the mission and work of the Cathedral continued with our choirs, clergy, and community members visiting parish churches across Leicester and Leicestershire.

With the Cathedral now reopen, we are still enjoying our visits to other parishes on occasional Sunday afternoons for Choral Evensong around once a month. It is wonderful to connect with people across the Diocese and to make new friends as well as continue existing relationships. Do join us if you can!

For information about the *Together with* project, please contact Canon Emma Davies or Head Verger Bev Collett at CathedralBookings@LeicesterCofE.org





John Seymour

Canon John looks back sixty years to his time with the Bagworth Miners

Prayer Thoughts

“Wots’at, mister ‘omes?”

Bagworth? Perhaps I should more accurately say Bagguth – as that’s what the locals called the one-time mining village near Coalville, part of the North West Leicestershire Coalfield.

In June 1963 I was inducted as vicar of St Peter’s Thornton, and Holy Rood Bagworth: parishes which included three collieries: Bagworth, Desford, and Merrylees.

Earlier I had spent a night as a guest in Bagworth when the noise of machinery working under the house was quite alarming. At the time the National Coal Board was making a last big effort to extract as much coal as they could in as short a time as possible, causing devastating subsidence. Rows of terraced houses tilted dangerously. Doors

and windows wouldn’t open or shut and homes were impossible to keep warm. The doctor was deeply concerned about the

health of his elderly patients. Some questions of ethics still haunt me: homes, pubs, school – and church – were literally falling apart.

I was invited to visit each of the three mines – closely guided and instructed by the Safety Officers. At Bagworth, after a rapid descent in the rickety cage (leaving my stomach at the top) we were crawling on hands and knees some

200 yards along a very narrow seam. At Desford Colliery I was quite awestruck by the huge size of the pit bottom – a cathedral-like space some 300ft below the surface – with all the various ‘roads’, rail tracks and man-riders



leading from it. In an enclosed area something like a signal box, an operator sat pushing buttons to control the latest in mining machinery. Merrylees was a walk-in' drift mine.



Derek Holmes was a miner for whom I had great respect. He was coach of the local junior football team and decided it would be a good thing if his young team all came along to church one Sunday afternoon. In they all filed filling up a couple of pews, Derek showing them how to kneel down with heads bowed when the vicar (me) said "Let us Pray".

The service was traditional evensong. At the appointed time the organ sounded "G" and the vicar (me) intoned "O Lord, open thou our lips".



One lad was quite dumbfounded. His head appeared above the pew and in an anxious voice exclaimed "Wots'at, Mister 'omes?" The answer from Mister 'omes was a kindly but firm pressure on his head, returning him to a devout kneeling position. Perhaps it was a brief sense of "the other"; of the numinous? Or perhaps it just sounded a bit spooky. The young boy would be about 70 now: I wonder if he

remembers? (Incidentally, the same Mister 'omes kindly gifted our young family with two lovely cuddly pet rabbits).



The word 'big' was frequently used to describe not size or weight, but loyalty and hard work, and was particularly applied to women. So a woman might be referred to as *big church* or *big chapel*, also possibly *big WI* or *big MU*. Holy Rood Church was blessed with a good number of *big* women. One thing they did each year was to organize a Pork Pie Supper.

They provided an evening's entertainment and contributed useful cash to church funds. The menu was a large slice of pork pie, (donated by the local butcher) bread roll and pickled onions. This was followed by a good helping of apple pie, (more pastry!), cream, and lashings of tea. All for 2/6d!

One year about 60 of us were entertained by Jimmy, a local youngster who played the cornet with the Desford Colliery Band. Many years later I was present at the De Montfort Hall in Leicester to hear the same Jimmy, now James Watson, play the Haydn Trumpet Concerto with the Halle Orchestra. He became a Professor of Music at one of the London Music Colleges.



Gender roles were very clearly defined. Although women were never allowed down a mine the whole economy, both industrial and social, would have collapsed without them.

Similarly, men were not welcome in kitchens. One ex-miner installed a small greenhouse in his garden furnished with an armchair and a stove fuelled with plenty of

free coal. There he could sit, all seasons, and reminisce with former work mates, about pigeons, rabbits, and occasionally a chat with the vicar.

Church was for the women and children. Exceptions were funerals: when men would turn out in force and then all return to church the following Sunday for a memorial service. In order to encourage the men we laid on an annual "Men Only" service. With the help of the Ratby Band, some 60 men would come along for a good sing and a short but

(hopefully) lively sermon.

There was a trickle of Geordie miners being drafted south

as mines on Tyneside closed. I remember one family because I found myself in a Magistrate's court as a character witness on behalf of their teenage son. There was one murder in the village. I sampled the inside Broadmoor prison, but was fortunately let out half an hour later.

The three village pubs were in a state of collapse, so the main centre for social life, entertainment and a pint or two, was the Working Mens' Club. My visits had a problem as many there wanted to buy the vicar a drink. I solved this by 'circulating' and surreptitiously leaving drinks behind as I moved on to the next table.

The village had an unofficial squire, a Mr Shepherd, who lived in the historic moated house (hence "Bagguth Motts") in the 'Hollow' between Bagworth and Thornton.

On special occasions he would pay a visit to the WMC and order drinks for everyone. He was a very kindly gentleman, but after two family funerals (one particularly tragic) he was quite lonely and liked to take me in his vintage Rolls-Royce to the Grand Hotel in Leicester for lunch.

One sad day there was a tragic accident at Desford Colliery. Ralph Cooper, well respected and much loved, died after suffering severe electric shock. It was a time when the presence of the local vicar was much appreciated.

During my years the old Victorian church and the remains of the thousand-year-old Saxon tower, were demolished. It's a long and rather sad story. Briefly, Lord Robens (then chairman of the NCB) and the then-Bishop of Leicester, had agreed that the Coal Board would pay much of the cost of a new church. It was a sort of sweetener, to atone for the devastating subsidence.

It was my task to see this programme through – against strong opposition both local and national. Sir John Betjeman who managed to save St Pancras Station failed to save Bagworth's subsidence-ridden church. The local community was very unhappy and some protested quite vehemently. Legal delays (including a Consistory Court) at a



time when inflation was running at 14%, reduced rapidly the value of the NCB grant. The new church was built and *did* resist subsidence, but, (I never knew about this) was not designed to last.

Built in 1968, it became unusable in 2013 and was demolished in 2019. The ancient tower was inelegantly removed to make way for such a shorter-lived replacement. It was a poignant experience carrying out diocesan policy against so many odds; building a new church and then seeing it reduced to a heap of rubble and carted away. I learnt that even things that may be good at the time don't have to last for ever!

Thank you, Bagworth of the 1960s for introducing me to the realities of life in a busy hard-working, supportive, caring and generous community.

These stories reflect the long process of the ending of Britain's world-changing, coal-driven, industrial age. It was to continue for some years to and beyond the Thatcher/Scargill/'Brassed Off' age: deeply tragic news for so many mining communities across the country. But good news for the planet.

Canon John Seymour

This article will be published by the National Retired Clergy Assn Newsletter in June.

The Illustrations

- 1** The memorial to the Bagworth Miners in village centre.
- 2** A plate showing all the nine pits in the West Leicestershire Coalfield, with Bagworth in the centre, the last to close (1991).
- 3** Young vicar and son plus samples (far left) of The Saxon Tower, the corner of the Victorian nave, the Norman arch, and the 1960s shoring.
- 4** All that remains of Desford Colliery in the wonderful Bagworth Heath Woods.
- 5** The interior of the 1968–2019 Holy Rood.



PRAYER POINTERS

THIS WEEK, from the Diocesan Prayer Diary, we pray for

Sun 9 June and Mon 10 June
Link Diocese of Kiteto, Tanzania
(partner diocese)

Tuesday 11 June
Market Harborough and The Transfiguration – Little Bowden with Lubenham and Great Bowden

Wednesday 12 June
St Dionysius – part of Harborough Team

Thursday 13 June
Transfiguration St Hugh & St Nicholas – part of Harborough Team

Friday 14 June
Great Bowden St Peter & St Paul – part of Harborough Team

Saturday 15 June
All Saints, Lubenham – part of Harborough Team

For the Prayer Diary, see their [website](#).

WAYS YOU CAN HELP LEICESTER CATHEDRAL

ONLINE GIVING

Donate online [here](#).

By TEXT

To donate £5, text PLATE to 70970

To donate £10, text PLATE to 70191

INTO OUR BANK ACCOUNT

Account Name: Leicester Cathedral Chapter

Account Number: 03807282 | Sort Code: 20-49-11

BY CHEQUE

Payable to: Leicester Cathedral Chapter

Address: St Martins House, 7 Peacock Lane,
Leicester, LE1 5PZ



SAFEGUARDING

THE DEAN and Chapter of the Cathedral are wholly committed to the safety, well-being and protection of everyone having contact with our community.

If you have concerns about the welfare or behaviour of an adult, young person or child, please speak to one of the **Residentiary Canons** or to Linda Green or Amanda Fitchcett, our **Safeguarding Co-ordinators**.

The Residentiary Canons can be approached in person or contacted on **07399 523 330**.

If you would prefer to talk to one of the Safeguarding Co-ordinators please either write to them at the Cathedral office, or give the office your details and one of the Co-ordinators will contact you. You do not need to explain the reason for your request.

All concerns will be responded to proportionately and with discretion.

