

Cathedral in Touch

A Newsletter for our Community

9 March 2025 | 1st Sunday of Lent



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



He was in the wilderness

The other day, while sorting through some old papers on my desk at home I found a crumpled cloth mask. Immediately it took me back to the time of the pandemic, and I recalled those long months, even years, when grabbing a facemask along with keys, phone and glasses became part of the normal routine before leaving the house. Perhaps I should say 'usual' rather than 'normal' for it was not a normal time at all, and for long periods even the thought of leaving the house for any length of time felt strange.

Now it is almost 5 years since the first lockdown. I have had many conversations with people about how the perception of time was altered during the pandemic years. Even now, that first lockdown seems both closer and further away than 5 years. And my brain cannot somehow understand, as we approach the tenth anniversary of the reinterment of King Richard III that the pandemic was halfway between then and now. The first 5 years feel so much longer than the last to me.

This Sunday has been designated by the Government as a National Covid-19 Day of Reflection. Many of us may prefer not to look back at what we lived through – finding the cloth mask made me grateful that we are no longer in those times. But, where I felt thanksgiving, I am acutely aware that many others as they look back will reopen very painful memories and emotions – the loss of a loved one, continued ill health from long Covid, a permanent change in lifestyle, a worsening of their mental health... This

disease and the forced separation from others that it brought has left many in a desolate and difficult place.

This Sunday is also the first Sunday in the season of Lent when we remember that Jesus found himself in a desolate and difficult place too. Lent lasts for 40 days leading up to Holy Week and Easter – days which mirror the time Jesus spent in the wilderness. There he faced a time of trial, tested physically and mentally, separated from others and tempted away even from God. There are some parallels perhaps with the wilderness that many of us experienced in the Covid years. Many have said that the separation from others was the most difficult thing to bear during that time. As Jesus travels towards his death he becomes ever more isolated: his friends and allies desert and deny him and eventually he reaches his loneliest moment hanging on the cross when he senses even the abandonment of God, crying: *'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'*

At the heart of our Christian faith is the belief that God came in human form to live our life on earth. So, when we are at our lowest ebb, feeling tested beyond our limits, facing a wilderness place, lost in grief or experiencing hopelessness, God understands. God, in Jesus, has been in a similar place. Jesus himself was ministered to by angels when he was in the wilderness. We need to do the same for others in distress, to be like angels to those around us. Moreover, the death of Jesus was not the end. His resurrection means that he is still with us, through the Holy Spirit, with us always,

as he promised, to the end of time. As we minister to others we can be sure that he is ministering through and with us. Each of us can be channels of his life, enablers of hope, bearers of light in this dark world. We are never alone, and we need to stand together as the body of Christ in this age, bearing witness to a truth that crosses the distance between heaven and earth and lifts us ever assuredly heavenward whatever life on earth throws at us.

This Sunday at the Cathedral in both our 10.30am and 3.30pm services there will be an opportunity to gather with others to remember the time of Covid, and to bring whatever we carry, from thanksgiving to sorrow, before God. There will be candles to light to symbolise our thoughts and prayers, and a listening ear for those who need it. Everyone is most welcome to join us.

The Revd Canon 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



St Philip's Centre Job Vacancy – Office Manager

St Philip's Centre is an ecumenical Christian charity set up in 2006 and is rooted in the multi-faith environment of Leicester, the UK's most ethnically diverse city. Its primary aim is to help people learn how to live well together. We work to promote positive interfaith relationships and understanding.

We are recruiting someone to act as Office Manager and Company Secretary, to run our office and

administrative support functions. We are looking for someone who enjoys engaging with all kinds of people and who has patience, a calm manner, a good sense of humour, and can multi-task to meet the needs of the Centre.

Are you a motivated self-starter with an eye for both detail and planning ahead?

Do you enjoy working in a busy office?

Does the Centre's vision of helping people learn how to live well together inspire you?

Full details of the role can be found at [CharityJob](#).

Shortlisted candidates will be notified by Wednesday 2 April and interviews will take place on Monday 7 April.

It is hoped the successful candidate will start work in May, to allow time for a handover.

FRIENDS OF LEICESTER CATHEDRAL LUNCH AND SERVICE

SUNDAY 16 MARCH 2025

The annual Cathedral Eucharist attended by The Friends of Leicester Cathedral takes place this year on 16 March at 10.30am (all are welcome), followed by lunch in St Martins House (booking now closed).

If you are interested in joining the Friends and want to find out more, visit the [Cathedral website](#) where you can also find the application form.



Join the Friends

Participate
in social events and activities

Help
to support the fabric of this building and the work of the Cathedral

Receive
monthly newsletters and exclusive events with early booking

The week

SUNDAY 9 MARCH

LENT 1

- 10.30am **Cathedral Eucharist** (doors open 10.00am)
marking National Day of Reflection for Covid
- 3.30pm **Choral Evensong**

MONDAY 10 MARCH

- 8.30am **Morning Eucharist**
- 12.30pm **Lunchtime Recital:** Aisha Palmer, Harp
- 5.30pm **Choral Evensong**

TUESDAY 11 MARCH

- 8.30am **Morning Prayer**
- 1.30pm **Lent Course** (in-person)
- 5.30pm **Choral Evensong**
- 7.00pm **Lent Course** (online)

WEDNESDAY 12 MARCH

- 8.30am **Morning Prayer**
- 12.30pm **Lunchtime Eucharist**
Evening Prayer (said privately)
- 6.30pm **Light Up Leicester Late Night Opening**

THURSDAY 13 MARCH

- 8.30am **Morning Prayer**
- 12.30pm **Lunchtime Eucharist**
- 5.30pm **Choral Evensong**
- 6.30pm **Light Up Leicester Late Night Opening**
- 7.00pm **Cathedral Book Club** (online)

FRIDAY 14 MARCH

- 8.30am **Morning Prayer**
- 12.30pm **Lunchtime Eucharist**
- 5.30pm **Evening Prayer**
- 6.30pm **Light Up Leicester Late Night Opening**

SATURDAY 15 MARCH

- 9.30am **Morning Prayer**
- 5.30pm **Evening Prayer**
- 6.30pm **Light Up Leicester Late Night Opening**

SUNDAY 16 MARCH

LENT 2

- 10.30am **Cathedral Eucharist** (doors open 10.00am)
- 3.30pm **Choral Evensong**

Covid-19 five years on

National Day of Reflection

Sunday 9 March 2025

Prayers will be said at our
Sunday services

10.30am | Eucharist

3.30pm | Choral Evensong

Music sung by the
Cathedral Choir includes
Howells' *Take him, earth,
for cherishing* at Evensong





What's On

Lent & Easter

March–June 2025

Monday 10 March | 12.30pm

Lunchtime Recital: Aisha Palmer, Harp

Join us for a Lunchtime Recital performed by Philharmonia Fellow Aisha Palmer on the harp. Free admission (donations encouraged).

Tuesdays 11, 18, 25 March, 1, 8 April

In person, St George's Chapel, 1.30pm | Online, Zoom, 7.00pm

Stations of the Cross – 2025 Lent Course

A five-week course journeying through Mark Cazalet and Richard Leaf's *Stations of the Cross*.

Together we will use art, discussion and Bible study to reflect on the last days of Christ's life, considering how themes such as injustice, reconciliation and the cross may relate to our own faith and discipleship in today's world.

Please visit our [Eventbrite](#) page to book your free place, or contact Jude.Taylor@LeicesterCofE.org if you have any questions.

Thursday 13 March | 7.00pm

Cathedral Book Club

Our Cathedral Book Club meets online on Zoom once a month. This March, we will be reading *Wild Bright Hope: Reflections on Faith (The Big Church Read Lent Book 2025)*.

New members are always welcome – please email Jude.Taylor@LeicesterCofE.org.

Wednesday 12 – Saturday 15
March | 6.30–9.00pm

Late Night Openings for Light Up Leicester

Come and see **Light Up Leicester's** amazing projections on the front of the Cathedral – and then pop-in to our late night opening to hear the brand new soundscape *The Last Plantagenet: Stories in Sound* produced by De Montfort University students using recordings from our Richard III Oral History Project. A bar will be available.



The Last Plantagenet: Stories in Sound

Leicester Cathedral has commissioned students from De Montfort University to create unique sonic responses to the Cathedral's Richard III Oral History Project. This initiative, marking the 10th anniversary of the reinterment of King Richard III, will premiere as part of the city-wide Light Up Leicester festival (see below).

The Richard III Oral History Project has recorded reflections from individuals closely involved in the King's discovery, and reinterment at Leicester Cathedral in 2015. Using these interviews as inspiration, students have crafted immersive sound pieces that will be played through eight speakers positioned around Richard III's tomb.

This multi-directional audio experience will envelop listeners, offering a deeply evocative exploration of different aspects of the King's legacy and his final resting place within the Cathedral.

Find out
about
all our
special
services
and
events
on [our website!](#)





The Scoliotic Knight Reconstructing the Real Richard III

Thursday 20 March | 7.00pm

In this illustrated talk, **Dr Toby Capwell** explores how Richard III excelled in armoured combat despite a significant spinal condition and discusses his work on several reconstructions of King Richard's martial apparatus.

Tickets from £6–8 on [Eventbrite](#).



Concert: Music for Kings and Queens

Saturday 22 March | 7.00pm

The Cathedral Choir presents a programme of music for royal occasions. Including music sung at the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II, Judith Bingham's *Ghostly Grace*, premiered at the Service of Reinterment, and music from the Coronation of King Charles III.

Tickets from £12–15 on [Eventbrite](#).



Service of Compline

Sunday 23 March | 7.00pm

A solemn and contemplative evening service of music and prayer honouring the memory of the last Plantagenet king. The ancient office of Compline derives its name from the Latin word *completorium* ('completion').

All are welcome.

There is no charge for our services.



Richard's Women Their impact on his life, death and legacy

Monday 24 March | 7.00pm

In this talk, acclaimed novelist **Annie Garthwaite** - author of *Cecily* and *The King's Mother* - reveals the untold story of the women who loved Richard, the women who feared him, and the women who brought him down.

Tickets from £6–8 on [Eventbrite](#).



Civic Service on the Tenth Anniversary

Wednesday 26 March | 5.30pm

A Civic Service for the city and county on the day of the tenth anniversary, with music by the Cathedral Choir.

Following the service there will be light refreshments and the Cathedral Bell ringers will ring a Quarter Peal.

All are welcome. There is no charge for our services.



Revisiting the Discovery and Reinterment

Thursday 27 March | 7.00pm

In this special panel discussion, our assembled experts from the worlds of archaeology, history, and the Cathedral revisit the amazing story that captured imaginations around the world.

Expect lively conversation and new insights!

Tickets from £6–8 on [Eventbrite](#).

Medieval Banquet

Limited time
discount
code!
R3BANQ25



Medieval Banquet

Friday 28 March | 7.00pm

Transport yourself back to late medieval England, with feasting on four sumptuous courses and live entertainment fit for a King.

The York Waites perform a repertoire of medieval European music as well as their own arrangements of popular dance and ballad tunes.

Tickets at £90 on [Eventbrite](#).

Richard III Afternoon Tea

Limited time
discount
code!
R3TEA25



Afternoon Tea

Saturday 29 March | 3.00pm

An exclusive Richard III-themed afternoon tea – attendees will be sitting amongst specially invited VIP guests who were involved with the reinterment.

With a bespoke afternoon tea by Cocco and Delilah and live entertainment, this commemorative event promises to be a memorable and unique experience.

Tickets at £55 on [Eventbrite](#).



Church Action for Poverty Sunday

So why a designated Sunday for this, given that many of our Churches are taking action every week – through foodbanks and other kinds of support? Sunday 2 March was so designated by the organisation 'Church Action on Poverty'. They campaign and raise awareness – check out their thoughtful materials for today which offer insights into living with poverty in this country.

The statistics are stark. According to the Joseph Rowntree Foundation the number of people in really deep poverty is rising. The kind of poverty where even the most basic of essentials are unaffordable. Many others live precariously near that situation. Health, stability of living, school performance, wellbeing... there are huge knock-on negative effects of poverty, not least in terms of stress and mental health. And some groups of people are more affected – among them children, people with disabilities and informal carers.

Employment availability, zero hours and part-time contracts and the complexities of the benefits system make navigation and planning difficult for households, especially those juggling different priorities such as childcare or family members with particular needs. Check out the Joseph Rowntree 2024 report 'UK Poverty 2024: The essential guide to understanding poverty in the UK'.

The aforementioned resources are entitled 'Dreams and Realities'. Reflection and prayer around the stark contrast between these two for many people, together with any engagement we can offer to help create a more just society – these are good ways of marking this Sunday.

Pray for:

- People in your neighbourhood experiencing poverty and its' corrosive effects
- The work of Church Action on Poverty and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation
- Local organisations such as foodbanks and advice centres which help people in poverty

Revd Canon Alison Adams
Canon Pastor



www.church-poverty.org.uk

UK Poverty 2024: The essential guide to understanding poverty in the UK. Joseph Rowntree Foundation



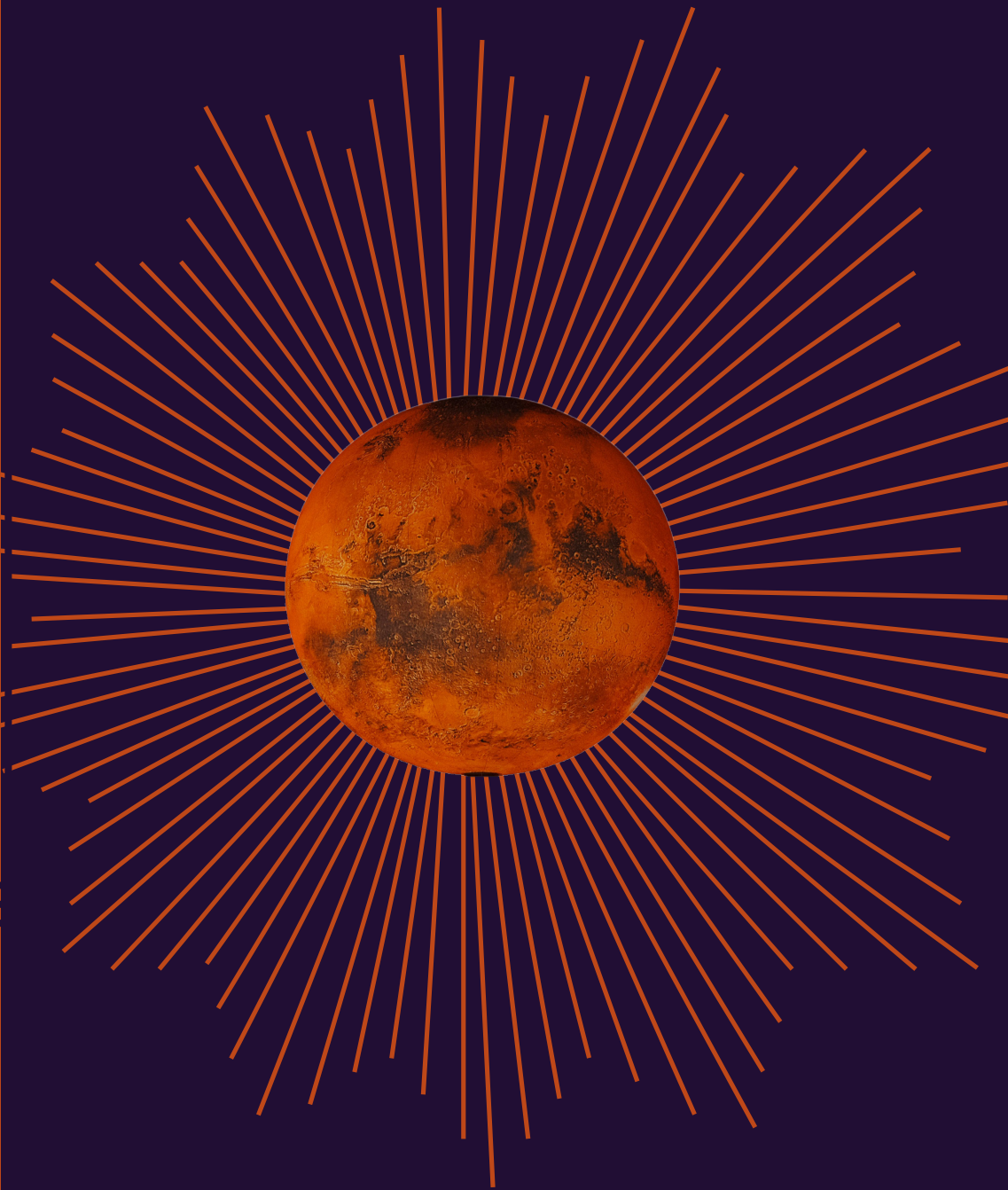
Luke Jerram

MARS

WAR AND PEACE

Following *The Museum of the Moon* and *Gaia*, Luke Jerram's *Mars* is coming to Leicester Cathedral

Find out more on our website here



**16 May -
8 June**

Wonder at the Red Planet as Luke Jerram's spectacular seven metre sculpture of Mars comes to Leicester Cathedral for the first time

Mars was named by the ancient Romans for their god of war because its reddish colour was reminiscent of blood – the artwork features detailed NASA imagery of the Martian surface and is on rotation, in the style of his other astronomical artworks of the Moon and Gaia.

A soundscape by award winning composer Dan Jones features the sounds of seas, deserts, and NASA missions, as well as distant bombing and people marching, as if to war.

Plan your visit during Cathedral opening hours to explore the installation. No booking is required to view it during the day. Entry is by voluntary donation, with a suggested donation of £8 per person to help support future events and installations like this.

Join us after hours for a unique programme of events that contemplate not just celestial beauty and the wonder of space, but also highlight injustice and the effects of war.



Friday 16 May | 8.00–10.00pm (doors 8.00pm)

The Launch to Mars

Be the first to see the amazing installation in the evening whilst enjoying a bespoke cocktail made for the occasion by the team at 33 Cank Street in Leicester. Don't miss this opportunity to see Luke Jerram's stunning artwork come to life as part of this unique launch experience.

It's the first chance to see *Mars* at night!

Tickets £15 (to include one bespoke cocktail made just for the occasion – alcoholic and non-alcoholic options) from Eventbrite.



Saturday 17 May | 7.30pm (doors 7.00pm)

London Concertante: Four Seasons & The Lark Ascending by Candlelight

The acclaimed ensemble return with their sell-out performance of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* and Vaughan Williams' *The Lark Ascending* performed with candlelight.

Tickets from £22.38 on londonconcertante.com.



Tuesday 20 May | 7.00pm (doors 6.30pm)

God of War meets Prince of Peace

Why is *Mars* in the Cathedral? On Tuesday 20 May, join our Canon Theologian, Revd Dr Tom Wilson, and a variety of Christian voices to think theologically about what Jesus, Prince of Peace, would say to all that Mars symbolises, whether war, human hubris in space exploration, or overindulgence in chocolate.

Free event – please book on Eventbrite to reserve your space.



Wednesday 21 May | 7.00–9.00pm (doors 7.00pm)

Mindful under Mars

Experience the wonder of Mars with a selection of mindful activities to leave you with a sense of peace and reflection. Refreshments available to purchase.

Tickets £8 on Eventbrite.



Friday 23 May | 6.30pm (doors 6.15pm) & 8.30pm (8.15pm)

Ceilidh under Mars

Celebrate the start of half term with us at our Ceilidh under Mars. Enjoy *Mars* in a completely unique way with live music, drinks and a friendly caller to guide you through the group dances.

The ceilidh sessions will last for 90 minutes and are the perfect spring evening activity whether you're a complete beginner or an experienced Ceilidh dancer.

Tickets from £8 on Eventbrite.



WATER



Tuesday 3 June | 7.00pm (doors 6.30pm)

The Sikh Contribution to the World Wars: A Story of Valour and Sacrifice

Join us for an enlightening and inspiring lecture by renowned historian Gurinder Singh Mann. Known for his extensive research on Sikh history and heritage, Mann will shed light on the extraordinary contributions of the Sikhs during the First and Second World Wars. A must-attend for history enthusiasts, students, and anyone interested in the legacy of the Sikh community's global contributions.

Tickets from £6 on Eventbrite.

Thursday 5 June | from 6.30pm

The Cathedral Annual Dinner

A celebratory evening featuring a drinks reception with canapés, sumptuous three-course meal, live music, auction, and talk – this year taking place under *Mars*. In support of the Cathedral's fundraising, 2025 marks the first dinner since 2019 to make full use of the Cathedral spaces and Gardens (weather permitting!).

For more information and tickets please contact

David.Pepworth@LeicesterCofE.org or call 0116 261 5344.

Family Fun under Mars

Soft Play under Mars

Saturday 24 May | 10.00am–2.00pm

Experience the Cathedral like never before when the Nave will be transformed into a large soft play area underneath the gigantic planet!

FREE – no need to book, just drop in! All children need to be accompanied by an adult and supervised at all times.

May Half-Term

Tue 27 May | 1.30–3.30pm & Thurs 29 May | 10.00am–12.00pm

Enjoy some special planet themed crafts to celebrate Luke Jerram's magnificent *Mars*.

FREE – no need to book, just drop in! All children need to be accompanied by an adult and supervised at all times.

Family Fun under Mars

Mon 26 & Wed 28 May | 4.30–7.30pm (doors 4.30pm)

See *Mars* and experience the Cathedral after hours – bring the family and join us for space-themed crafts and a special activity trail. Refreshments will be available to purchase. Tickets on Eventbrite.



The Queen's Six Mapping the Stars

Friday 30 May |
7.30pm (Doors 7.00pm)

The internationally acclaimed *a cappella* group, based at Windsor Castle, perform under *Mars* as part of their 2025 tour *Mapping the Stars*.

Known for their breathtaking harmonies, they sing a diverse repertoire, from Renaissance polyphony to contemporary pop.

Tickets from £15 on [Eventbrite](#).



As You Like It

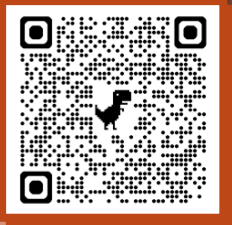
Friday 6 June | **7.30pm**
(Doors 7.00pm)

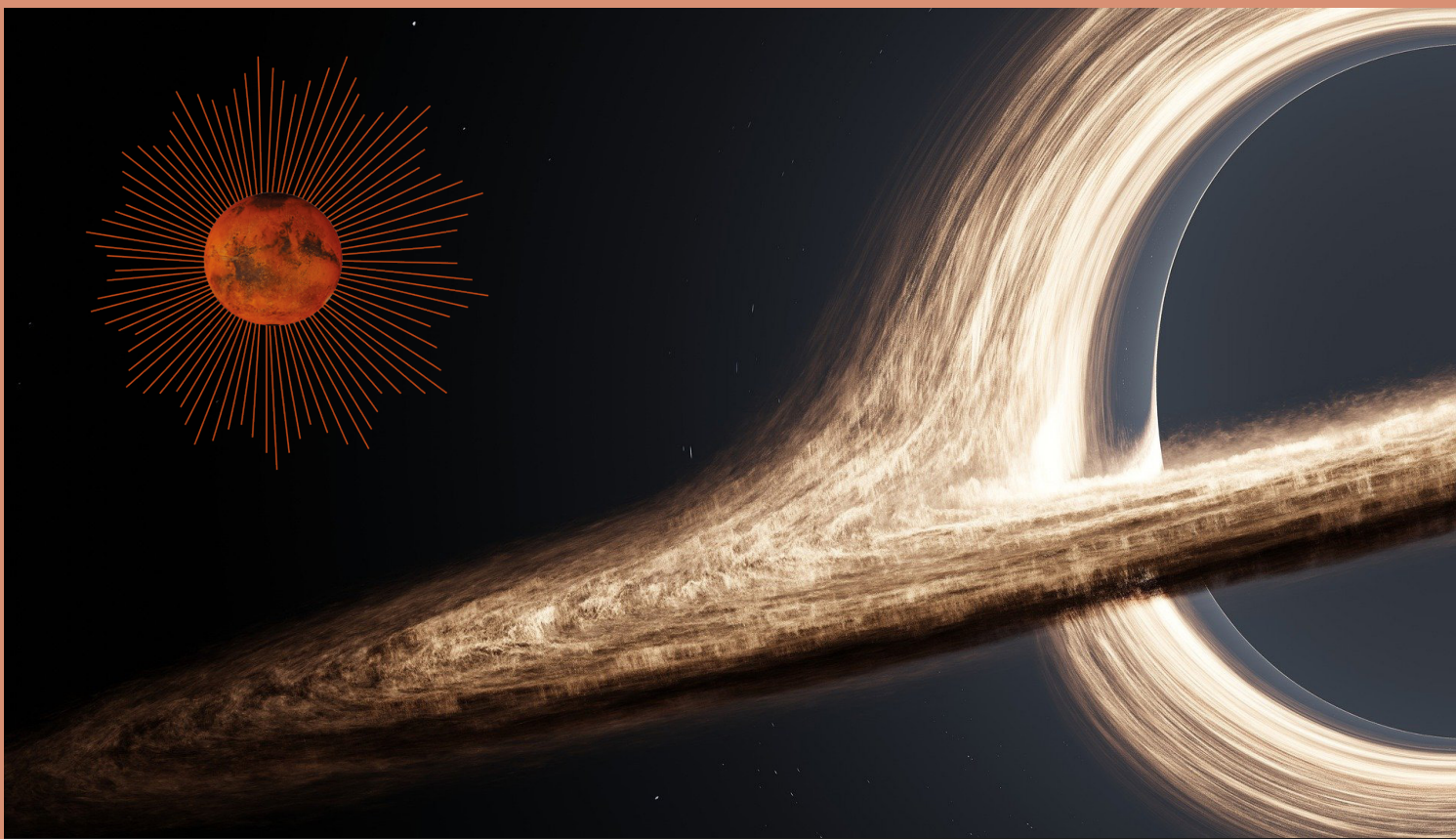
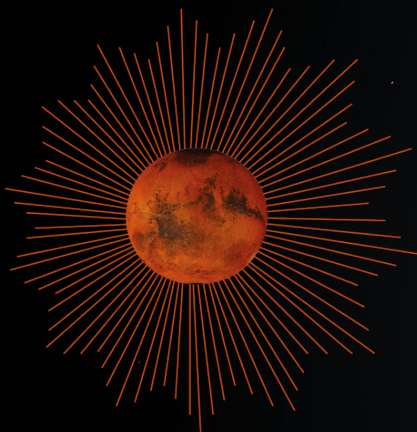
"All the world's a stage..."

The Festival Players perform Shakespeare's entrancing rom-com. Rosalind, the daughter of a Duke, is banished from court. Along with her cousin Celia, she escapes to the Forest of Arden and disguises herself as a man and teases Orlando, who does not recognise her as the girl he loved at a distance.

Meanwhile, the pastoral world of the Forest is inhabited with a colourful array of folk, all looking for love, in this delightful tale full of comedy and music.

Tickets from £14 on [Eventbrite](#).





Hans Zimmer's

INTERSTELLAR

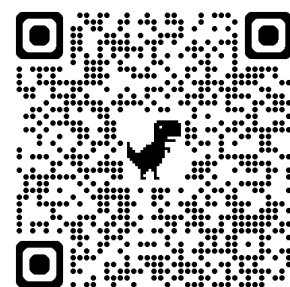
Saturday 7 June | 7.30pm (Doors 6.15pm)

Mark the final night of *Mars* with a special concert by organist **Roger Sayer**, returning to Leicester with his sell-out performance bringing the Oscar-nominated *Interstellar* suite to life on the Cathedral Organ.

Hear highlights from the film's iconic score, alongside intergalactic favourites from *A Space Odyssey* and Holst's *The Planets*, all while experiencing the majesty of Luke Jerram's *Mars* installation.

Sayer will take the audience on a journey through time and space, including a discussion and Q+A about his experience working with Christopher Nolan and Hans Zimmer.

Tickets from £15 on **Eventbrite**.





Chiamaka
Okafor

Prayer Thoughts



Ash Wednesday: More than just a Mark

As a child, Ash Wednesday always held a certain mystique. There was something special, almost exotic, about receiving that smudged cross of ashes on my forehead. It was a day that stood out, even among all the other days of church-going and prayer. It wasn't just another Mass—it was different. People walked around all day with visible proof that they had been to church, a symbol of something ancient and solemn. I remember looking forward to it, fascinated by the ritual, the priest pressed his thumb to my forehead and murmured, *"Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."*

At that young age, though, I didn't fully grasp the depth of what was being said. To me, the ashes were just a tradition, a mark that felt like a badge of honour. But as I grew older, I began to understand that this visible sign was meant to point

to something far greater—a truth about our human condition and our call to turn back to God.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, a season of reflection, repentance, and renewal. The ashes themselves carry profound symbolism. They are made from the burned palm branches of the previous year's Palm Sunday, connecting the joy of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem with the solemnity of his journey to the cross. The act of receiving ashes is a reminder of our mortality—of the simple truth that life on this earth is fleeting. It is a call to humility, to recognize that we are not self-sufficient but utterly dependent on God's grace.

Yet, Ash Wednesday is not just about acknowledging our human frailty; it is also about hope. The ashes form a cross on our foreheads, not just a

smudge of dust, but a symbol of redemption. The same cross that reminds us of death also points us to life—the life we have in Christ through His sacrifice. Lent is a time of turning back to God, of renewing our commitment to prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. It is a season to strip away distractions and refocus on what truly matters.

When I think back to my childhood excitement about Ash Wednesday, I now see that I was drawn to the ritual because it felt significant, even before I fully understood why. And in a way, that childhood wonder wasn't misplaced. Ash Wednesday is significant. It is a day that sets the tone for the journey ahead, calling us to introspection, humility, and transformation.

This year, as we step into Lent once again, let us receive the ashes not just as a ritual but as a genuine commitment to change. Let them be a sign of our desire to draw closer to God, to repent where we have strayed, and to embrace the hope of Easter that awaits at the end of this season. May we carry the meaning of Ash Wednesday not just on our foreheads for a day, but in our hearts throughout the year.



PRAYER DIARY

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

Sunday 9 March

World Orphan Week

Monday 10 March

Our partner Diocese of Mount Kilimanjaro

Tuesday 11 March

Roots IWC

Wednesday 12 March

Roots: Asylum Seekers

Thursday 13 March

Deanery of Framland

Friday 14 March

Deanery of Framland PTO Clergy

Saturday 15 March

Ember Day

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.

