A place of belonging

Several conversations recently with individuals from different parishes all some distance away from the Cathedral really caused me to reflect in a very positive way. For these were grace-filled encounters with clearly enthusiastic folk. Many people ask us when the Cathedral will re-open, but few strangers exhibit such passion for the moment when ‘our’ Cathedral is available again and when they may visit.

Such a sense of ownership is not universal: there are, conversely, many places and people within the Diocese where one senses indifference towards the Cathedral and, indeed, the Diocesan oversight or even the Church of England. But our experience through ‘Together with Leicester Cathedral’ is that others value the bond which links us and are appreciative of the role the Cathedral holds as the mother Church.

I’m almost a cradle Anglican – not entirely as I was baptized and attended Sunday school in a Presbyterian Church which had Scottish roots. However, it was only when studying for ordination that I really began to appreciate the global breadth of Anglicanism and its diversity. Of course there are fissures which breed uncertainty over future trajectories. Yet for many of us the sense of belonging to something of God which is much bigger than our little preoccupations is well worth hanging onto.

One of my current tasks is to chair a working group entitled ‘Vision and Values’ which is examining how, going into the future, we – Diocese and Cathedral – work well together across the site which we are starting to call the Cathedral Quarter – the Cathedral, the Gardens, St Martins House, and St Martin’s Lodge. What is our joint vision under God? What sort of things would we like to develop? How can it best all run smoothly? And many other related questions.

That group thought it important to consider afresh how someone unaccustomed to coming into the city and from a parish some distance away from the Cathedral might or might not feel welcomed and at home when entering the Cathedral or St Martins House. Would they feel a visitor or part of our Diocesan family? How would those on duty that day greet them? And what could we do to strengthen their sense of belonging? For I’m sure you, like I, have had the experience of visiting somewhere where you hold a sense of attachment and yet are treated like a stranger.

This is a difficult issue to resolve because those on the door cannot know everyone and we don’t carry clear identifiers – except perhaps those wearing a clerical collar. But there is something here about taking a default position which greets everyone as a friend, rather than immediately asking the question ‘Where are you from?’ And, by extrapolation, we should consider this issue not just regarding parishioners from around the place, but people from within the local community, of other faiths and cultures. How can we help people feel this is their Cathedral?

I would go one stage further also, to look inward at ourselves as Cathedral community. Some of you are in the thick of Cathedral life and business and others on the periphery. That’s fine – we should all be enabled to find our level of involvement. But I worry about individuals who might be aching for greater belonging and yet
not knowing how to achieve this. Whom do you notice standing uncertainly on the sidelines? How could you, following Jesus’ example, gently invite them into a place of belonging?

Canon Alison Adams
Canon Pastor

4 News and Updates
6 Services this week
8 Safeguarding Coordinator
9 Images of the Trinity
10 LCR Update
12 Prayer Thoughts
14 Donating / Safeguarding
News from Leicester Cathedral

Skegness!
For the Community day trip on Saturday 17 June, please meet at the Cathedral between 8.00–8.15am so we can leave at 8.30am exactly. You may need to bring some snacks for the coach as the journey’s about two hours (though we will be stopping for a toilet break and stretching of the legs for 10 minutes).

The coach will pull into Skegness at the clock tower and probably pick us up back there. We will leave Skegness at 5.00pm, so please be back at the location where we get dropped off for 4.30pm. I shall give more instructions on the coach.

Nathan Morley

Friends of the Church in India – St Thomas Unity Lecture 2023

On Friday 16 June at 7.00pm, we are hosting a lecture on behalf of the Friends of the Church in India at St Martins House to which all are welcome.

Lecturer: The Revd Dr D. Isaac Devadoss, B.Sc, BD, MA, MTh, MPhil, PhD, Associate Professor of History of Christianity

Title: Hindu Nationalism and the challenges for religious minorities in India: An Ecumenical Response

Light refreshments will be available. There is no charge for attending this event, but there will be a freewill offering to support the Friends of the Church in India.

It would help with the arrangements if you can let us know that you are coming – contact Jonathan Kerry: jonathan.kerry@leicestercofe.org
Faith at Home: Anti-Racist Discipleship

Global Voices

Wednesday 14 June 2023 | 7.30pm

Join Bola-Alysia Ayonrinde, Alexandre Costa and Jessie Tang in an online webinar to explore what being anti-racist and intercultural in our worshipping communities looks like.

Book your places on Eventbrite now!

Cathedral Book Club

Our Cathedral Book Club meets online once a month over Zoom. In June, we will be reading Hope and the Nearness of God by Teresa White.

New members are always welcome – please email Jude (jude.taylor@leicestercofe.org) to be added to the Book Club mailing list.

Thursday 22 June
7.00–8.30pm | Zoom

Our Cathedral Book Club meets online once a month over Zoom. In June, we will be reading Hope and the Nearness of God by Teresa White.

New members are always welcome – please email Jude (jude.taylor@leicestercofe.org) to be added to the Book Club mailing list.

Janette at Christian Resources Leicester has again kindly offered us a 10% discount on the book if you mention that you’re a member of the Cathedral Book Club. You can purchase a copy in store or place your order via email: enquiries@christianresourcesleicester.com
Services this week

While the Cathedral is closed for building works, our services take place in St Martins House (Sunday mornings) and in St Nicholas' Church, Leicester (Monday to Friday). The Cathedral will also be Together with other churches on some Sunday afternoons.

All are welcome to our services. Services of Morning Prayer are also live-streamed.

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Together with

Our thirty-sixth service out with parish churches in the City and County, as part of Together with Leicester Cathedral, will take place on Sunday 11 June 2023.

Join us at 4.00pm for a Choral Evensong at the Church of St Mary Magdalene, Peckleton (Peckleton Hall, Church Road, Peckleton, Leicester, LE9 7RA).

The Cathedral Choir will sing J.S. Bach’s Jesu, meine Freude BWV227.

We are enjoying our visits to other parishes on Sunday afternoons for Choral Evensong with our Cathedral Choirs, clergy and members of our Cathedral community. 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 and spread the word to your friends too! The next few dates are below.

- **25 June:** Choral Evensong, at All Saints Church, Shawell, 4.00pm
- **2 July:** Choral Evensong for Petertide, at St Peter’s Church, Langton, 6.00pm
- **17 September:** Choral Evensong, at St Mary’s Church, Charnwood, 4.00pm

For information about future dates please visit the Cathedral website or contact Canon Emma Davies or Head Verger Bev Collett.
Safeguarding Co-ordinator (adults)

We have two excellent, faithful and diligent Safeguarding Co-ordinators in Kath Rowberry and Linda Green. We all benefit and, as Chapter lead for Safeguarding, I feel very blessed and privileged to work with them. However, after some years now in this position, Kath has indicated her desire to step down and therefore we are seeking someone to step into this role.

While there is a role description, this kind of role is very much shaped by the person. And I suspect that preconceptions of it might be way off beam. Kath, Linda and I have very creatively worked together, bouncing ideas around, formulating policy and generally trying to encourage and embed good practices.

Linda and I would be very pleased to hear from and talk with anyone who is interested in stepping into this role. We can then share both where we are at and where we might be going, alongside the role description.

On Monday last week a very grace-filled and blessed Diocesan Safeguarding Coordinators service took place in St Nick’s, which all three of us attended. The sense of ministry was palpable, and it is in that vocational context that I invite readers to consider whether this might be for them and email me if they are in that place.

Canon Alison
Alison.Adams@LeicesterCofE.org
Images of the Trinity

On Trinity Sunday (last Sunday) it is pretty obvious what the sermon topic might be. My main thrust was quantum physics – ask me if you want to know more – but I also mused on what visual images of the Trinity we carry with us. This was in part based upon one I had encountered in a rather obscure museum in Sicily, which was different from the more usual three figures around a table which we are used to.

All of this provoked discussion after the service and in the office about what other images might be out there. I am indebted to Carys who mailed me some interesting alternatives which we offer for below.

My question or challenge to readers is to ask what other images or constructs you hold, and particularly if they are different culturally or theologically from the more obvious well-known images or diagrams.

This is a challenge well worth undertaking – a ‘soft’ but creative way of exploring theology. After all, the Trinity is central to our Christian faith but, I suspect, few of us get even partially near to understanding it.

Here are some of Carys’ suggestions to challenge and inspire you:

- An indigenous American depiction
- A version of the traditional Rublev three figures reimagined
- Various interesting versions here in one place

Do email me with further ideas and/or discoveries!

Canon Alison
LCR Update

Internal stonework repair and restoration

Leicester Cathedral Revealed project elements vary in scale and one of the smaller scale elements is stonework repair and restoration to the southwest piers or columns inside the Cathedral that define the sanctuary.

Sections of stone mouldings and carvings were removed in 1926/27 when a new chancel screen designed by Sir Charles Nicholson was installed. The screen was relocated in 2015 to the eastern arch of the crossing as part of the re-ordering works for the reinternment of Richard III, thereby exposing the cut backs into the stonework where the screen had been located and fixed. So, it is satisfying to see these made good as part of the project works.

Simon Bentley
Project Director
simon.bentley@leicestercofe.org

Above: Northwest Sanctuary pier repair
Right: Southwest Sanctuary pier repair
Volunteering at Leicester Cathedral

Leicester Cathedral has a thriving volunteer team delivering across a range of roles.

In preparation for reopening, we’re keen to recruit volunteers to help in areas such as:

- School-visit volunteers
- Welcomers
- Guides
- Vergers
- Chaplains
- Choir chaperones

For further information email: Rebecca.Hale@LeicesterCofE.org or visit our website
Hello dear friends! Greetings and much love as ever from…

But before I launch into yet more stories from our latest “holiday” (we are ALWAYS on holiday), may I first ask you a question? Have you done what Alison Adams asked us all to do in her sermon on Sunday, namely to Google the Trinity? (No, neither have I) It was Trinity Sunday; I hadn’t realised there was such a day!

A good place to start might be the Wikipedia page – but let’s dig deep into this - there is good “meat” to be digested!! And as Alison said, let’s keep our thinking hats on! And continuing the Trinitarian theme, here is a beautiful AI-generated image based on the Rublev Trinity for you to meditate on as well (with thanks to Father Simon McMurtry from Durham and dream.ai apparently.)

But back to the latest “holiday”, this time on the beautiful Isles of Scilly (not Sicily!), probably our most happy place; we have been coming here for over forty years, since our honeymoon. We thought we knew the islands inside and out, knew every nook and cranny, but we had neglected the largest island, St Mary’s, preferring the remoteness and small size of the “off islands”, and particularly St Martin’s. This time however, we found ourselves in Trenoweth, a tiny hamlet at the very end of the track at the northerly tip of St Mary’s. We had never been here before. It was as if we had gone back in time two hundred years. The front doors of the few ancient houses opened directly onto the road with no pavement. The road became a deeply rutted track with a broad swathe of grass down the middle. In short, the sort of place one finds in rural France and parts of the wild west of Ireland, but rarely in the UK.¹

It was SO beautiful. (And the sea was only 500m away!) And it was SO quiet. Only that

¹ It was also quite a long way from any shops, which meant quite a strenuous bicycle ride, down and up Telegraph Hill, which was not for the faint-hearted in either direction!

² Cuckoo is easily identified but for all other birdsong there is the wonderful Merlin app!

³ I made sound recordings – in between the riot of birdsong, you can hear the gentle humming of the bees.

⁴ YouTube – Jeff Beck was a tremendous guitarist and is well worth listening to. The blackbird is not credited however.
it actually wasn’t that quiet at all, since there was a cacophony of birdsong from very early in the morning. One morning, we were serenaded by a nearby cuckoo! One of the loudest “offenders” was a tiny wren, but she/he was closely followed by a beautiful blackbird and quite a few other friends and relations. Birds are not only very vociferous but also very friendly on the Isles of Scilly.

Such memorable places and such memorable days are, to me, little ‘bisous’, little kisses from God, a blessing, which are seared into my memory and for which I am immensely and eternally grateful.

Birdsong is intensely joyous and it is not surprising it has inspired so much music. What else are birds for? Birdsong certainly inspired Olivier Messiaen for example. But two more recent songs came flooding into my brain as I sat in the sun-drenched garden at Trenoweth, both entitled “Blackbird”, but very different. The first by Jeff Beck is immense fun, essentially Mr Beck jamming with a blackbird, simulating the birdsong on his electric guitar using a dinner fork! The second is by Sir Paul McCartney and appears on the Beatles’ White Album. Whilst a lovely tune, based on a Bourrée for lute by JS Bach, the lyrics starkly reflect the racial tensions in the USA at the time:

“Blackbird singing in the dead of night
Take these broken wings and learn to fly
All your life
You were only waiting for this moment to arise.
Blackbird singing in the dead of night
Take these sunken eyes and learn to see
All your life
You were only waiting for this moment to be free.”

And yet, like the birds, this is what we have been made for; to sing praises to our God, who knows us individually and loves us, to his Son, who gave himself for us in order that we might have life, and to the Spirit who directs and guides us. Yes, and to sing even when the darkness threatens to envelop us – just like Paul and Silas! (I wonder what they were singing?)

Psalm 63 puts it like this: On my bed I remember you; I think of you through the watches of the night. Because you are my help, I sing in the shadow of your wings.

And Psalm 42.8: By day the Lord directs his love, at night his song is with me — a prayer to the God of my life.

Our song doesn’t have to sound like the Cathedral choir, or even a song, or for that matter a tweet! It is our song and it is precious to God.

“O Lord open our lips and our mouth shall proclaim your praise!”

Have a great week!

Martin
WAYS YOU CAN HELP LEICESTER CATHEDRAL

ONLINE GIVING
Donate online [here](#).

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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 ACTING DEAN and Chapter of the Cathedral are wholly committed to the safety, well-being and protection of everyone having contact with our community. We all share responsibility for Safeguarding.

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 Kath Rowberry, our Safeguarding Co-ordinators.

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

The Safeguarding Co-ordinators do not publish their contact details. Please speak to a verger if you wish to contact them. You do not need to explain the reason for your request.

All concerns will be responded to proportionately and with discretion.