Maintaining Hope

My 17-year-old granddaughter asked one simple question: ‘why?’ . Watching the news together, more questions followed as I attempted to articulate both history and current perspectives. One young person struggling to understand the adult world into which she is stepping. While her life has been far from easy, we see many other youngsters on our screens living and dying at the sharp end of conflicts, oppression and, indeed, the catastrophic results of climate change. What can we say?

Our Chapel of St George holds the history of the Leicestershire Regiment (Tigers). A window bears written testimony to the many conflicts in which they engaged. One word in that window particularly stands out right now, ‘Palestine’. I don’t fully know what the narrative behind that is, but I do know that we should attempt to understand and communicate how past relates to present (and, indeed future), and anchor this in the proud multicultural identity of our city. Particularly now.

Few people are more than one or two connections away from the current conflicts. Family, friends, neighbours – many know at least one person with direct connections with the conflict in the Holy Land or, indeed, in other places. Trauma is out there at so many different levels. Let’s recognise this and be gentle with one another. But also use what is happening as an opportunity better to understand. Listen to people with a personal perspective. Talk to those whose opinions seem very different from yours.

Articulating hope is difficult. And complicated in faith terms, given that the Biblical hope to which we might turn so poignantly speaks of Jerusalem and the land (which our Lord walked) which is now such a battleground physically and ideologically. Bethlehem, for example, is located on the West Bank. How, therefore, when we read Scripture, to wisely interpret what we hear? Or understand God’s activity and purpose?

On Thursday I met with Council colleagues and was taken aback by one person’s passionate need to unload. Trying to do his best in the context of diminishing budgets and increasing needs and suffering. Recognising the circle is well-nigh impossible to square – that rents are spiralling out of reach, that many services are not reaching enough folk, that there is a disconnect between national policies and local implementation, that many systems are not fit for purpose, that officials cannot please everyone... and so on. Maybe you don’t need to hear this, but it is reality. Structural struggle laid bare.

How to support this colleague and many others – including, for example, NHS staff – to keep going, doing the good they can and knowing they make a difference? I hope I gave my friend good counsel. How can each of us live out our Christian faith despite what we hear (or don’t, if we can’t face it) in the bleak despair of current news and future predictions?

Remembrance provides, paradoxically, a good focus. ‘Never again’ is the refrain and, as we consider not only the sacrifices made in the two world wars in the last century, but also the many conflicts since, and the sacrifices made by people of
all cultures and backgrounds, some of which remain quite hidden, perhaps we might recognise the power of true community. Right now locally and nationally we are edgy, but each of us could play our part in better reaching out, listening to and understanding those who have different perspectives on whatever in the world today. We here can do little to change the situation in the Holy Land, but, as Christians we have agency and can contribute to a local future which both eschews the ‘othering’ of both British Jews and those who peacefully support a Palestinian cause, and calls out language, attitudes and behaviours which polarise and shut down dialogue.

If we believe in a God who holds humanity in the palm of his hand and wants it to flourish, then we are called to nurture the flickering flame of hope in whatever way we can. Ukraine, the Holy Land, Yemen, Sudan... and many other places cry out for our prayerful and active attention. Even if we find it difficult to hear or read the news, and know we can do virtually nothing, let’s hold the people in our hearts. Before God.

Canon Alison Adams
Canon Pastor
News & Updates

‘Faith Conversations For Everyone’ workshop

Saturday 11 November
9.30am–3.00pm, St Wilfrid’s Church, Kibworth

A workshop to discover how we can create opportunities for people to explore their faith together, to listen and learn from one another and to encourage each other in their journey of faith. This workshop will be co-delivered as part of the Diocese of Leicester’s ‘For Everyone’ workshop series.

Our Discipleship Officer Jude will be discussing how we facilitate our monthly Questions Together group, offering tips on how you might use this model to facilitate faith conversations, too.

Book your free place on The Hub, or email liz.rawlings@leicestercofe.org for more information.

Friends of Leicester Cathedral

Supper at the Chef & Spice

Monday 27 November 2023 | 7.00 for 7.30pm
1 Andrewes Street, Hinckley Road, Leicester, LE3 5PG

You are invited to join us for another fun and food evening at the Chef and Spice! For £20 per person, of which £10 will be given back to The Friends.

Payment details

By Bank Transfer to: Friends of Leicester Cathedral
Acct No: 87203081, Sort Code: 60-60-06
Reference: CHEF followed by your name.

Please send an email to Colin at candent@btinternet.com advising the number of tickets and names.

By cheque made payable to: The Friends of Leicester Cathedral.
Please send to Colin Entwistle, Chapter House, 2 Quarryman’s Court, Markfield, Leicestershire, LE67 9XQ, including names. If you have an e-mail, please also provide this for acknowledgement. Otherwise, please include an SAE.
## 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.

### MONDAY 13 NOVEMBER

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<tr>
<td>8.30am</td>
<td>Morning Eucharist</td>
<td>(St Nicholas)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Choral Evensong</td>
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<td>5.30pm</td>
<td>Evening Prayer</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.30am</td>
<td>Sunday Eucharist</td>
<td>(St Martins House)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.30pm</td>
<td>St Nicholas Eucharist</td>
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### MONDAY 20 NOVEMBER

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We are looking to appoint a Lead Choir Chaperone, a proactive and conscientious member of the Music team undertaking the following key duties:

- Ensure the welfare requirements of choristers are met at events and activities organized by the Cathedral
- Ensure safeguarding and health & safety protocols and practices are adhered to
- Report any accidents/safeguarding concerns/general concerns regarding choristers to the Director of Music/Assistant Director of Music/parent when transferring responsibility for the care of choristers

This role requires satisfactory enhanced Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) clearance.

For full details please see the Job Description.

Salary
£3,723 (at National Living Wage of £12 per hour)
40 hours / 6 days leave (including bank holidays)

Tenure
Permanent, variable hours contract (0.17 FTE)

Primary Hours
Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 4.15–6.30pm during school terms.

How to apply
For full details and to apply, visit our website
The Revd Canon Karen Rooms, Acting Dean of Leicester, requests the pleasure of your company at

Our Community Pre-Opening Reception

in Leicester Cathedral
(entry via the North Porch on Guildhall Lane)

Tuesday 21 November 2023
from 5.00–7.00pm

Light refreshments will be served

RSVP by Friday 17 November 2023 to
David.Pepworth@LeicesterCofE.org
0116 261 5344
Why I believe in supporting Toilet Twinning

Over recent weeks, I have been reading *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* by T.E. Lawrence, better known as Lawrence of Arabia. In the book, Lawrence outlines his involvement in the Arab uprising against their Turkish rulers during the First World War, but what does stand out is the importance of access to water in this conflict, with lines of attack or retreat based on where one side or the other could access sufficient for their needs.

Lawrence also highlights the central role of wells in the Arabic culture of the time: a place where nomadic and urban communities would meet, a place of commerce and cultural interaction, with both inherent opportunities and challenges. Despite wracking my brain, I have yet to think of a comparable place in twenty-first century western cultures. In Lawrence’s book, each group seem to keep any interactions to the minimum, seemingly for fear of losing their identity. With wells being used for hundreds of years, behaviours would have become rigid custom, things people did without thinking. This was a world Jesus and the disciples would have recognised many parts of.

In modern day Leicester, the availability of water is taken for granted. The same could be said for toilets, yet that was not always the case in my lifetime. I was 11 before we had a toilet inside the house. I have a very vivid memory of going to the outside toilet on a cold winter’s night when I was about seven and getting frozen to the loo seat. My grandparents were all born in Victorian times, with my paternal grandfather not wanting running water installed in his Peterborough council house – it would give his wife too much leisure time.

Now, come to Victorian Leicester, which in the 1850s had the fourth lowest life expectancy in the country. It was commonplace for men and boys to wash in the River Soar, but the river was a constant source of disease throughout the nineteenth century. There was much debate in the second half of the nineteenth century about the need for public baths to improve the hygiene of the populace, but there was reported concern about the cost of providing such a facility.

The parish of St Martins has always tended to be a more affluent area, with New Street being mainly occupied by people such as doctors, surgeons, bankers, and solicitors. However, they did have large households because they could afford to employ live-in-servants. So, such households did not escape the epidemics when sickness and death would impact on all.
How did this situation change for the better? Step forward individual worshippers at St Martins Church like James Vaughan MD and The Revd William Watts, who were instrumental in founding Leicester Infirmary, and Dr George Shaw – a prominent Leicester doctor who also was a reformer in social issues regarding Leicester’s drainage & water supply and an agitator against a forceful Anti-Vaccination league. They sat, metaphorically, where you sit today.

So, as we prepare to cross the threshold from the Grand Hall of St Martins House back into the Cathedral building – knowing we will need to return to St Martins House for at least six months to use the facilities – now it is our turn to help neighbours we may never know. As Gandalf says in The Hobbit:

“\(\text{I have found that it is the small everyday deeds of ordinary folks that keep the darkness at bay. Small acts of love and kindness.}\)"

David Dewdney

WHO YOU'RE HELPING

CLICK THIS link to hear from those who will benefit from our fund raising:

YouTube
Updated video from the time lapse cameras outside the Cathedral show work to complete the reinforced concrete frame for our new Heritage & Learning Centre and to install the ground floor concrete slab in between this and the cathedral building.

The videos can be seen here:

External

Birds Eye View

Updated video from the time lapse camera inside the Cathedral shows grouting and final snagging work on the new limestone floor, getting the new pendant lighting operational, and re-installing wooden panelling and screens.

The video can be seen here.

The repair, restoration and renewal work to the existing Cathedral building is nearing completion and the Cathedral will re-open on Sunday 26 November 2023 for services, events and general visiting, including the Tomb of King Richard III.

Access to the Cathedral will be via the North Porch from Guildhall Lane until work on the new Heritage & Learning Centre is completed in late summer 2024 and the whole site including Cathedral Gardens will be open and accessible.

Sunday 26 November
10.30am: Eucharist
12.30pm: Open for general visiting
3.30pm: Choral Evensong

Daily opening times (including services)
Monday–Friday: 8.00am–6.00pm
Saturday: 9.00am–6.00pm
Sunday: 10.00am–4.30pm

Simon Bentley
Project Director
simon.bentley@leicestercofe.org
Saturday 25 November 2023 from 10am – 5pm

RECONSTRUCTING THE PAST
IN LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND

University of Leicester, University Road, Leicester LE1 7RH

A day of talks and displays revealing how archaeologists, artists and artisans collaborate to recreate the ancient past

Crafting with bark: experiments to remake the Enderby Shield
Matthew Beamish, Project Manager at ULAS

Taking stock of the pot: Creating and re-creating the Glenfield Iron Age cauldrons
John Thomas, Deputy Director at ULAS

Re-creating Britain’s Finest Roman Cavalry Helmet from Hallaton, Leicestershire
Helen Sharp, Archaeology Curator for Leicestershire CC Museums

New Visions of Roman Leicester: From holes in the ground to reimagined views of the ancient townscape
Dr Gavin Speed, Project Manager, ULAS

Recreating Grey Friars: Imagining the burial place of King Richard III
Mathew Morris, Project Officer at ULAS

Drawing the Rutland Trojan War Mosaic
Dr David Neal, Britain’s foremost mosaic expert

Tickets £15, students £10
(tea and coffee included, lunch not provided)

To find out more about the event and book a place, please visit https://ulasnews.com/reconstructing-the-past/
Hello everyone,

Earlier this week, I went to see a friend whose seven year old son, Dare, rang the ‘I’m cancer free’ bell. What an emotional, heart-warming, and precious moment it was. He got diagnosed at just four years old in 2020 during the Covid lockdown when things were anything but normal. What should have been an opportunity for a close cherished family time with a sister who had just turned one year old became the most trying period of Dare’s young life and his parents’ lives. For Dare’s mother, it was a surreal moment, like a bad joke, a nightmare that she desperately wanted to wake up from.

Dare’s mother tells me that during this crazy period, their lives were made easier by friends who rallied around them and supported them through it. Friends went shopping and left food in front of their door when it seemed like it was a death sentence to leave the house. If they had to go out, they would strip down to their underwear as soon as they stepped back into the house, run to the shower for a wash down before venturing anywhere near their son or the rest of the house. For Dare and his family, the hospital became the playground and the only opportunity for play dates with the nurses and doctors.

But God saw them through it. Dare’s mother has shed many tears in the past three years but the tears she shed on Tuesday when Dare rang the bell were sweet tears. Those were tears of joy. Her smile has always shone bright but on Tuesday, her face glowed like the sun.

Dare was playing with friends when I arrived in their home for a little Thanksgiving organised by his family. He was full of life – just a
seven-year-old boy jumping over chairs, laughing out loud, sharing or not as the case may be as children do :-) There were hardly any signs of the burden he had borne, the pain from the treatment to kill the germs in his blood. He was happy, joyful, and playful. Seeing Dare reminded me about God’s special love for little children. God loves them so dearly and keeps them near to him because they are so pure of heart. Children are so resilient, and we can learn so much from them. They simply get on with it and bear no grudges or hold onto pain and hurt.

People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.

Mark 10.13–16

Many others around the world had similar experiences as Dare and his family. Unlike children, it’s so easy to become engulfed in nothing but one’s own challenges and troubles. No one truly understands another’s pain and no pain could possibly be assumed to be less than another. It’s easy to become blind to everything else when all we see before us is the hurt and trauma embedded in our bones due to our experiences. But what a beautiful place the world would be if it was run by adults who bear no grudges, who do not hold onto pain but instead choose to laugh and play, seek and find, meet challenges head on without harm to others, deal with monsters like cancer and say to them, ‘not today!’; ‘not ever!’

They say when life gives you lemon, make lemonade, and I dedicate today to all the lemonade makers out in the world today, striving to make ends meet during these uncertain times, smiling when all they want to do is cry, laughing even when it’s all falling apart around them.

But I believe that the true beauty of life is exposed on the other side. After one emerges like a butterfly shimmering with new knowledge and strength after they have overcome.

May you overcome today, this month and the rest of the year. May God give you strength to say to any challenges that you are facing, ‘not today!’

And may God continue to keep Dare and his family safe and well.

Amen.

Chiamaka
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 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.