



## From the Canon Chancellor



We have just had the joy of celebrating Holy Week and Easter. For the first time in three years, these services had something of the character and numbers we were used to before the pandemic. We should offer a huge thank you to everyone in our community who enabled these celebrations to happen: virgers, musicians, readers, intercessors, sidespeople, flower arrangers, and many more.

Throughout Holy Week we welcomed the Archdeacons of our diocese to speak about what resurrection means in 2022, and on Good Friday the Bishop of Crediton preached at the liturgy of the day. These services are heavy with the passion of Christ – that is, they allow us to acknowledge the pain of the world in which Christ shared. It was not difficult to name this pain: war in Ukraine, a refugee crisis, climate destruction, and global pandemic. But Easter sets this pain in the context of the promise of life. Whatever suffering is found in the world, this is not the final word; God's gift and hope is that life triumphs, that love wins.

Of course, after the festivities of Easter Day, Easter Monday was also busy. We welcomed many old choristers for their annual gathering, and they sang for a Choral Eucharist and Choral Evensong. At the latter service, Gordon Pike – only two years late – sang for the 100<sup>th</sup> time the tenor solo in the setting of The Magnificat by Harwood in A flat. This and his reading of the first reading with flourish were a warmly appreciated reminder of the over 50 years he sang in the Cathedral Choir.

Two other events are worth noting here. First the wonderful pilgrimage, St Boniface Way in a Day, that 28 people undertook on the Saturday after Easter Day. We had the perfect weather, and a well-organised timetable (thank you to Clare Bryden). We prayed, talked, sometimes walked in silence, and ate together. It was a really wonderful journey together – and was topped off by Choral Evensong at the Cathedral.

Finally, the conversation stage of *Living in Love and Faith* comes to an end this month. Groups have met throughout the Church of England over the last 15 months and discussed questions of gender, sexuality, and identity. After I've written this, but before you've read it, there is a day of reflection on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> April to offer this whole process to God. Bishop Jackie is leading a service in the middle of this day. Next the process moves to the national church and General Synod to discern a way forward, seeking how we can respond to the prompting of the Holy Spirit in our context. It is enormously contentious, but the conversation thus far has been well planned and thoughtful – at least the parts of it that I have observed. We are very grateful to all who've facilitated these conversations in the Cathedral, and we now entrust the next steps to God.

Every day when I walk to the Cathedral I see words by the seventeenth century priest and poet, George Herbert, 'Love bade me welcome' in the stones at the entrance to the Green. I love that poem. But my other favourite poem of Herbert's is his Easter poem. Here's a snippet, a reminder of the just how splendid is the risen Christ:

The Sunne arising in the East,  
Though he give light, & th' East perfume;  
If they should offer to contest  
With thy arising, they presume.

Can there be any day but this,  
Though many sunnes to shine endeavour?  
We count three hundred, but we misse:  
There is but one, and that one ever.

**Canon Chris Palmer**

## **Evensong for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee: Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> June at 4pm – Change of Date!**

The special Choral Evensong to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee will now be held on **Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> June at 4pm**. There's been a change of plan and the date has changed since the last edition of the *News*.

What has not changed is that we will raise a glass or two of fizz to Her Majesty after the service. All are welcome to this very special occasion; an opportunity to rejoice and give thanks for 70 years of devoted service. This is perhaps a good opportunity to invite family, friends or neighbours to come with you-who may not go to church regularly.



## From the Chairman of The Company of Tapisers:

I wonder which symbol of monarchy first comes into your mind? It may well be a Crown – the special headwear which represents power and sovereignty. Crowns as symbols of royalty go back into the mists of history ... the world's oldest crown, discovered in a cave in Israel, is more than 6,000 years old! A crown features in the Bayeux Tapestry in the panel showing King Harold's Coronation in 1066.

It is astonishing to realise that 887 years later, in 1953, when our present Queen had her Coronation that she carried the same royal symbols as Harold: a Crown, a Sceptre and an Orb!

A Platinum Jubilee is certainly an event to commemorate – what a landmark in our history! It seemed appropriate for the Tapisers to mark this special achievement. We have made commemorative spectacle cases – with a Crown as the main motif. The reverse side features EIRR and the dates 1952 – 2022. We respectfully offer these items as a 'limited edition' item: they will be on sale in the Cathedral Shop at £15 each from the middle of May.

We hope you will be interested in coming along to see them!

**Diana Symes, Chairman of the Company of Tapisers**

## The June edition of *Cathedral News*

We hope to publish the next edition of the News on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2022. The deadline for material is **Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2022**. Please send any contributions to [hmm53@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:hmm53@tiscali.co.uk) or to any member of the editorial team; Heather Morgan, Rosemary Bethell, Jenny Ellis and Sheila Atkinson.

## Congratulations!

Many congratulations to Laurence John, our Organ Scholar, on his appointment as Assistant Director of Music at St David's Cathedral.

## **Year of Invitation and Welcome:**

### **Getting to know the Cathedral Community Better: The Duty Chaplains**

The sight, sound and fellowship of the 10.00 Sunday Eucharist can create in me a sense that our beautiful Cathedral building has somehow come alive.

Contrast this with a visit to the Nave on a typical weekday morning, when the atmosphere is quite different; tourists wonder about, with varying degrees of understanding of what they are looking at, and there is a quiet business-like patter from the service desks, shop and 1050 van. The stones of the building appear frozen, and just as you start to draw parallels with a monumental and lifeless stately home, whose dynasty departed years ago, you catch sight of a figure distinctively clad in a cassock.

Suddenly Christian witness is alive in a tangible and accessible form and the building regains context and purpose!

Creating this *presence* is one of the core functions of the Duty Chaplain one of a team of twelve who take it in turns to be available on the 'floor' of the Cathedral from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. most days. Most, but not all, are retired clergy; some are lay people. All are organised by the Reverend Julian Ould, Priest Vicar.

The team meets twice a year to share experience and develop its aims. Julian is keen that everyone who comes to the Cathedral feels *welcome*, and he eagerly shares experiences with the team from his former career in the hospitality industry.

Visitors come for a wide variety of reasons and need correspondingly diverse engagement. Duty Chaplains are therefore encouraged to engage them gently, but not in a 'pushy' way. Some visitors want *Someone to Talk with*. Now and again a visitor will want *Someone to Pray with* and so these are also recognised duties of the Duty Chaplains.

The fifth and final duty is to conduct a very brief *Prayer* from the pulpit on the hour, gently reminding everyone that they are in a place of worship, and not just simply a historic building.

Julian is keen to extend the duty roster and hours of presence in the Cathedral; to that end he wants to recruit a further twelve Duty Chaplains. Please let him know if you are interested in volunteering or learning more. He can be reached at [julian.ould@exeter-cathedral.org.uk](mailto:julian.ould@exeter-cathedral.org.uk)

**David Owen**

## **Christian Aid Coffee Morning**

Join us on **Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May from 9:30am – 11:00am** for a Coffee Morning as part of Christian Aid Week. Bring along either homemade or store-bought cakes to accompany the tea and coffee provided by the Cathedral.

How can you help? Homemade or store-bought cakes can be dropped off in the South Transept of the Cathedral on Friday, 13<sup>th</sup> May between 14:00 – 16:00 or bring them along with you on Saturday morning. Helping hands are needed between approximately 8:30am and 12pm on Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> May to brew the coffee, and cut the cake. If you can spare some time for this good cause, please contact Heather in the Events office on [heather.hagen@exeter-cathedral.org.uk](mailto:heather.hagen@exeter-cathedral.org.uk)

## **Slow Book Group: *Everyday God* by Paula Gooder**

Paula Gooder has written a series of books exploring the seasons of the Christian year, including Advent, Lent, and Easter. In *Everyday God* she explores the longest period of the liturgical year, Ordinary Time. We live in a culture that revels in the special, the extraordinary, the new, the unusual. Yet, 'the ordinary' is the very essence of life. Gooder provides reflections on 33 Biblical texts reflecting on how God breaks into everyday life, and the hidden depths of richness and potential of ordinary times.

A slow book group, co-led by Clare Bryden and Revd Phil Wales, is being planned for those who wish to read and reflect on Gooder's writings together. There are six months of Ordinary Time from June to November 2022, and the reflections are conveniently divided into six parts. So meetings will take place on Zoom at 7.30-8.30 pm on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month.

We shall devote our time together to reviewing what we have read, sharing insights, seeking answers to questions and reflecting on how the Spirit is calling us to deepen our faith and prayer.

Places are limited. If you would like to sign up, or have any questions about joining, please email Revd Phil Wales, Assistant Curate ([phil.wales@exeter-cathedral.org.uk](mailto:phil.wales@exeter-cathedral.org.uk)).

## **Kingdom Calling - Vocations Sunday, 8 May**

We are all called to use our gifts and talents to serve God where we are. Vocations Sunday on 8 May is a great opportunity to celebrate different lay and ordained roles and to consider what we might be being called to now. The diocesan [Kingdom Calling](#) project is highlighting different vocations throughout 2022.

## Pilgrimage

“Pilgrimage is an opportunity to travel lightly, to walk free of daily routines, to meet people, to make friends, to enjoy and celebrate God’s creation. An opportunity, too, in the travelling, the conversations and the silences to reflect on the journey of our lives, and on our journey homewards to God.”



This quote is from one of the leaflets provided as guidance on the St Boniface Way. On 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 27 other pilgrims joined Canon Chris and me in walking its 14½ miles from Crediton Parish Church to Exeter Cathedral. En route, we paused at Shobrooke church and Holy Well, Newton St Cyres (*pictured left*) and Upton Pyne churches, and the University Chapel. At each stage we received a lovely welcome, refreshed ourselves, and shared a reflection before we continued on our way. Between Newton and Upton we walked in comfortable silence.

There are as many different ways of making a pilgrimage as there are pilgrims. According to the British Pilgrimage Trust, “To turn a walk into a pilgrimage, at the beginning set your private ‘intention’ – dedicate your journey to something that you want help with, or for which you want to give thanks.”

I generally like to walk alone, and my intention on pilgrimage might be to walk with others. I find it heartening to be alongside other people, all facing and travelling in the same direction for a period of time, an experience I have also had on Iona, and the Camino to Santiago.

We book-ended the St Boniface Way with Psalms 121 and 122. These are two of the Songs of Ascent, the 15 psalms from 120-134 that it is believed were sung by worshippers as they ascended the road to Jerusalem to attend the three pilgrim festivals.

I lift up my eyes to the hills; from where is my help to come?

My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth. -- Psalm 121.1-2

I was glad when they said to me, ‘Let us go to the house of the Lord.’

And now our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem; -- Psalm 122.1-2



For some pilgrims the journey will be important, for others the destination. Some will bring wounds and sorrows, others joy and gratitude. Some may choose to focus on the movement of walking, its rhythm in the body and the motion across the ground. Others may focus on being outside, in nature and the varying landscapes. Some might feel drawn to pilgrimage, others reluctant and fearful.

However you travel through life, it is good to set some time aside to travel purposefully.

**Clare Bryden**

Explore Prayer on the Cathedral website – <https://bit.ly/exploreprayer2022>

British Pilgrimage Trust <https://britishpilgrimage.org/>

Devon Pilgrim <https://www.devonpilgrim.org.uk/>



*The Pilgrims reach the Mary Harris Memorial Chapel, Exeter University*

## News from the Cathedral Flower Arrangers

Life in the Flower Room has returned to come sort of normality, despite the scaffolding, and monitors that don't work. We set up the Easter Garden on the Wednesday before Maundy Thursday, recalling where the "boulders" are placed from 2 years ago. We made it far simpler this year, and were very grateful for the help of the Works team and the Virgers, which hugely cut down the time it took. It was covered over until Sunday morning.



On Maundy Thursday we set up the Altar of Repose (*left*), once again making it simple, which was almost more poignant than being overdone.

On Good Friday, two of us cut foliage for Holy Saturday arranging, because we try to do a number of additional chapels for the festival, and you always need more than you expect.

Saturday saw nine arrangers working with lilies, carnations, alstroemeria, spray carnations and the quality was top grade, which made for wonderful displays. We all commented on how lucky we are to have such talent amongst us. I do hope you had a chance to look at them all as a great deal of thought has gone into the arranging. It was lovely to have so many compliments from visitors, the congregation and the Dean during the Eucharist on Easter Day. We are grateful for the donations towards the cost of the lilies from members of the congregation.

Sylvia is standing back as Chairman temporarily as she is undergoing treatment but nothing will change within the Cathedral. She needs to concentrate on getting well with no distractions for a few months. Flowers however, can be just that, so she will arranging from time to time as it suits her. We wish her well and personally hope she will return to the Chair when she is well again!

**Flick Evans, Temporary Chair of ECFA**



## Old Choristers' Reunion: Easter Monday

Canon Chris has already mentioned the wonderful gathering of Old Choristers on Easter Monday when they were, at last, able to pay tribute to Gordon Pike on his retirement from the Cathedral Choir. Choral Evensong was an outburst of Easter joy-the canticles sung to *Harwood in A flat*, *SS Wesley's Blessed be the God and Father* and Richard Sheppard's *The strife is o'er*.



In the evening, two former head choristers took centre stage at the annual dinner. The guest of honour was Andrew Nethsingha, Director of Music at St John's College, Cambridge, and the speaker was Simon Toyne, Executive Director of Music of the David Ross Education Trust.

Simon spoke with humour and passion about the musical and other benefits of singing and of the experience of being a chorister, shared some memories of his own time in the Cathedral Choir, and paid a moving and generous tribute to Andrew's father, Lucian Nethsingha, Organist and Master of the Choristers here from 1973-1999.

The whole day was memorable and enjoyable, as was the Grace before dinner, written specially for the occasion by the Dean.

We bid so-long to Gordon Pike  
For many here, quite Father-like,  
A chap we've all admired.  
For 50 years he's sung us proud,  
Always here... always loud.  
Now happily retired.

We miss his singing, and his beard:  
His doesn't shave – he has it sheared.  
We know he's earned his rest.  
But most we miss his constancy  
Looking out for you and me.  
We've all been hugely blessed.

We're grateful, God, for all he's done  
To make this annual feast such fun.  
For Gordon, then, three cheers.  
Bless us tonight and bless our food  
And fill our hearts with gratitude  
For so many happy years.  
Amen.



## Focus: Wendy Metson

### A professional 'Holy Duster' in the Cathedral

***'Let me tell you the secret that has led me to my goal, and my strength lies solely in my tenacity.'* Louis Pasteur**

There are few opportunities whereby members of the congregations, the clergy or visitors can see, let alone have a conversation with one of the two employed 'Holy Dusters'. Their official title is Cathedral Cleaner. I prefer the former. Wendy arrives for work at 7am, and Tristan her colleague begins an hour earlier.

So there was a considerable amount of serendipity involved when I was presented with the opportunity of meeting her early

one morning, just as she was about to finish her duty. I was delighted when she positively responded to my question *'Would you let me write about you in Focus, which will be published in Cathedral News?'*

And so it came to pass, we settled down in the Lady Chapel, the Cathedral being closed to the general public due to a Memorial Service being held in the Nave. Wendy, of petite stature was dressed in an outfit I coveted, full of glorious colours based on a pair of wow- factor trousers. It was elegance personified. How did she arrive at the Cathedral?

Life began when she was born in Eshwinning, County Durham, she is her parents' only child. Her father was an Officer in the Royal Navy. Unusually for the time, he was present at her birth. Her mother was tiny, and the labour was induced, rapidly proceeded and she delivered her daughter safe and sound at home.

*'I always felt very close to my father, and somehow my mother coped when he was re-called at the time of the Korean War crisis. She didn't want him to go to sea. "Tele-Communication Officers don't go to sea!" He was demobilised in 1949, returning to work for the Ministry of Agriculture setting up the Health & Safety Regulatory Department.'*

Wendy found his return a challenge; she'd mainly been used to living only with women. Who is he? Slowly they rebuilt their relationship and became very

close. He had a great love of nature and the countryside, often bringing home wounded or stray animals from the Animal Shelter; he was a crafts-man making her a desk, which she loved, and now believes that desk sowed the seeds for her later on becoming a Primary School teacher.

Their first rented house was in Sunderland, where she had her own bedroom, and remembered the suite of furniture in the living room, and the Welsh Dresser adorned with colourful china plates. The move from there into a flat above Walter Wilson's Food-Store was a change, it was sited in a beautiful square with views over the the countryside. There was a cinema, in which she watched the film of Her Majesty The Queen's Coronation.

Here she started at the local Primary School, made friends but was somewhat shocked at having to stay at school all day and not go home for lunch! It was not really a happy educational environment either. Wendy was / is left-handed, and the classroom teacher insisted on forcing her to use her right hand. Her mother complained, but nothing changed. (I, as a former Primary School teacher could feel my blood pressure rising as she told me this, and as I'm typing it now!! )

Her parents provided extra tutoring at home for the 11+ examination, but she did not reach the accepted grade. So she went to a Private Girls' School in Durham. She loved it, and began to blossom. The English Teacher, who loved teaching, introduced her to the works of Jane Austen, and they are a continuing passion. She eventually took and passed in eight subjects at GSC Level 1, and went on to take and pass in Biology, Domestic Science and English at A level.

*'I wanted to become a teacher, applied for and got a place to study at Rippon Teacher Training College on the three year Diploma in Education Certificate. After qualifying, I applied for and got a job teaching 7 year olds at Giles Gate Primary School, sharing a flat with a friend. Later on they applied to join the British Forces Education Service. She was interviewed, was successful and accepted a posting to Germany teaching 7 years old at the Delmold Military Base.'*

It was here that she met her husband, Richard who was a Second Lieutenant in the Royal Corps of Transport. *'He was very dashing and handsome!'* They got married and both pairs of parents were present at the ceremony.

*'My husband wanted to fly, so we moved back to the UK, to Middle Wallop, where he learned to fly in a Beaver, a fixed winged, single engine aircraft used for reconnaissance purposes. He became a Member of the Air Corps and we returned to Germany. Here our first son Jeremy was born in 1973. But, Richard wanted now to fly helicopters, so it was back to the UK. In 1976, Nicholas was*

*born. Richard, now qualified as an Army Helicopter Pilot, was sent back in Germany again!*

But life does not always go smoothly. The troubles in Northern Ireland erupted, and Richard was sent there. It was a very difficult, scary and dangerous time for everyone. Of course, for Wendy it was deeply personal. Each time the doorbell rang, she feared the worse. Eventually, the family returned to Germany, and Richard with his crew established a Musical Society for some light relief. They performed *The Pirates of Penzance* accompanied by the Band of the Coldstream Guards.

*'The crunch came when Richard decided to leave the Army. He did not want the boys to have to go to boarding school. We went to live in Durham, where Jeremy attended the Chorister School as he loved music, and is still singing! Richard got a job with Bond Helicopters servicing the North Sea Oil Rigs. Having lived for two years at Peterhead with the lingering smell of Branston Pickles (which are made there) on the air, we moved to Aberdeen, where I applied for a part-time teaching post at a Military School, again teaching 7 year olds. It was a very different experience meeting the families and not being full-time. We bought and developed a small-holding, and Richard being a keen gardener loved it. It was a kind of antidote. But then he became an Air Ambulance Pilot covering the whole of Scotland. A huge change and challenge....., the Air Base and our home was at Culdrose in Cornwall! He was away from home so much.'*

This sadly, brought about a very challenging and painful time. Wendy became the Special Education Needs Co-ordinator for Cornwall County Council and eventually she and Richard decided to separate, but remained friends. Richard died in 2021 after a lengthy period of ill health following a series of strokes. Wendy's mother came to live with her after her father died, remaining with her until her own death. It was a very difficult period in their lives. Moving to Exeter in 2014, Wendy was now on her own for the first time, but her sons' families are close by. She got a job at M&S, which she loved, and then, eight years later, she saw the advertisement for a cleaner at the Cathedral.

*I love the Cathedral, and the Choral Music...I listen to it as I work. To be alone with Tristan, who comes in at 6am, in the otherwise empty building is very special indeed. But alongside that there is no one to chat to whilst working. **We desperately need more people to join our happy team of two.***

How does this lady relax? As I've already said, she loves reading Jane Austen's books, but there are others; particularly travelogues and especially one entitled 'Garden of Evening' by TanTwan Eng. She loves the theatre, and for a special 70<sup>th</sup> birthday treat she was taken to see *Hamilton* on Broadway. Recently, she watched the film *Belfast* which she recommended, 'Magnificent'.

She enjoys Gilbert & Sullivan, but her favourite above all is Elgar's *Nimrod Variations*.

Her real treasure is being with her sons and their families, special joy is found in the times she spends with her grandsons, Alastair and Patrick. She is a member of the congregation at St. James's Church, and is involved with the arranging of flowers, and the provision of tea & coffee after Services. One could say she has a soft spot for Father Henry!

Thank you Wendy for all the time, effort and love you show in your work here in this Cathedral.

**Rosemary Bethell**

## **Cathedral Community Committee (CCC) 5<sup>th</sup> April**

At the meeting in April, the CCC began the task of refining the ideas and suggestions arising from the Awayday in March. We agreed to recommend to Chapter

- that the Cathedral should display a *Prayer for the Week* internally, externally, and on the website and social media.
- that the principle of having someone outside the building to invite people in to the 10am Choral Eucharist was a good idea
- that the induction of new staff should once again include information about the worshipping life of the Cathedral and its community
- that members of staff be invited to open meetings of the CCC to tell members of the congregations about their role
- that there should be regular meetings of the teams of the lay intercessors who lead the prayers at the 10am Choral Eucharist and Sundays@6 for mutual encouragement and support

The *Prayer for the Week* is now visible on noticeboards and in the Cathedral. Both the CCC and the clergy team are working on the implementation of the other suggestions.

**Heather Morgan, Chair of CCC**

## **Exeter Foodbank**

Please do remember to contribute to the Exeter Foodbank when doing your shopping. Most of the major supermarkets now have information about the items that are needed and have boxes to collect donations.



## Elizabeth Searle:

*We are very grateful to the Rt Revd Graham Tomlin, Bishop of Kensington, for sending us the address he gave at the Thanksgiving Service for Elizabeth's life in St Leonard's Church on 21<sup>st</sup> January, of which this is an edited version.*

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*Colossians 3. 12-17: Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.*

*Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.*

There are many lists of virtues in the New Testament. Yet when we read of such



qualities as compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience it can be hard to understand them. They seem like words on a page. What do they really mean? These virtues come to life when you see them. When you recognise an act of genuine humility, you think "Yes - that's what it looks like!" It's why the Christian Church has always remembered its saints of the past, because they help us to understand what the Christian life actually looks like in practise, rather than just as an intellectual idea

I was a curate at St Leonard's church from 1986 to 1989. Janet and I got to know John and Liz Searle very well during those years. One of my tasks as curate was to lead 'Contact' the youth group at St. Leonards. I remember thinking how I might teach these Christian qualities to these young Christian teenagers? How would I help them see what it meant to learn kindness, love, compassion and forgiveness? I began to think that if they wanted to learn this,

they would need to look at examples of what this looks like in practise, and as I did, I thought of Liz.

There are two qualities that stick out for me when I think of Liz's life. The first is kindness. In fact ever since then, whenever I have thought of kindness, I have thought of Liz. I even remember saying to the teenagers in the youth group that if they wanted to learn kindness, they might do a lot worse than simply watch or copy Liz Searle. If she sometimes felt stalked by teenagers hiding behind a bush as she went about her business, then that was all my fault!

I think I learned two things in particular from Liz about kindness and what it meant. The first was that kindness means anticipating people's needs. Unlike others, Liz would not wait to be asked for help but would offer whatever assistance she could. I remember when our second child was due to be born. I hadn't even thought about who would look after our baby Sam, who was nearly two years old at the time, during the birth. But Liz had. She rang up to offer. It would not have occurred to me to think ahead of someone else's needs in that way but that is exactly what she had done. She was constantly thinking "what can I do to make the life of my neighbours easier, better or richer?"

The second thing was about the power of words. Liz had a particular habit of sending cards, a note through the door with a word of wisdom, maybe a verse of Scripture, an assurance of prayer, or encouragement. You never asked for them, but they *always* lifted your spirits and your horizons.

Why was this kindness so valuable? It was because someone had noticed. It is after all what we all long for, someone to notice us, to think of us when we are feeling alone and abandoned. But I suspect there is a deeper reason as to why this was such a valuable ministry. That is because it echoes one of the key characteristics of God. Out of God's kindness, he has given us an extraordinary beautiful world to live in, every blessing we enjoy, family and friends to enrich our lives. Every breath we breathe is a gift from God, yet above all, he has given us the gift of Christ, the most precious gift of all - he has given us the gift of himself.

While it can be hard to understand the divine kindness and what it means, it helps when we recognise it in the life of his holy ones, his saints, of which Liz was one. From Liz, I learned what kindness meant, and I am grateful to her and to God for that.

The second quality I think of when I think of Liz is Love. Liz worked for many years as Matron at Exeter school, and one of the doctors there wrote: "what was special about her? Just good, old-fashioned love."

Again, however, Love can be just an abstract word. Yet you know it when you see it. When you sat down with Liz, she would ask “how are you?”, and as she did so, she would look intently at you. Unlike with most people, you knew she really wanted to know the answer. She was genuinely more interested in you than she was in herself. Conversations with Liz were mainly about you, not her. I suspect she didn't even know how unusual that was. A friend of the family who was widowed around eight years ago wrote; “she had the rare gift of making you feel you were the only person who mattered to her as she listened to you.” For Liz that was just normal. For the rest of us it was unusual and special.

She would ask us “how are your children? And the grandchildren?” And even more remarkably, she knew them by name, even though she had never met our grandchildren. I can hardly remember the names of people I met yesterday, and yet Liz knew their names and their story. I asked John how she could remember so well. He told me that she had a book, a notebook with a long list of names which she would pray for regularly, bringing them and so many others before God, day after day.

Liz loved her family deeply, but that didn't mean she had less love for others. In its purest form, love is the one thing that has no limits. The more you exercise love the more it grows. The purest love and therefore the love that reaches furthest is the love of God in Christ. As John the aged Apostle put it, the simplest definition of God is that he just IS Love. We are here because we all respected, valued, and loved Liz. Liz, like all God's saints, gives us a glimpse into the heart of God - a heart of kindness and love

Yet there is one last thing. A doctor who knew John and Liz when they were younger wrote: “She never knew it, but even in those days, she was an absolute role model with her Christian virtues of love, kindness (there they are again!) and an inner peace, and it was borne of her faith.”

How come Liz was full of kindness and love? Because she had meditated deeply on God's kindness and love. She had in the words of our reading from Colossians, “let the word of God dwell in her richly”. She was a regular reader of Scripture Union notes, working her way through books of the Bible. She and John would read Daily Light together, reading often of the kindness and love of God. It had gone deep into her soul and could not help but flow out of her life.

Today as we reflect on Liz's life, what lessons do we learn to take with us? It is perhaps, like Liz, to allow the word of God to dwell in us richly. To meditate and ponder the kindness and love of God in our lives, in our life's story, and supremely in Christ.

We can learn kindness. Take the initiative. Anticipate the needs of your neighbour as God has done for you. If you value someone, tell them. Don't leave it until it's too late to encourage and build up others. Use your words to build up rather than to tear down.

We can learn to love. As God knows your name, learn the names of your neighbours. Seek to become one of those people so secure in God's love that you don't need to talk about yourself all the time. Become free to become more interested in others than you are in yourself.

As Liz did throughout her life, "clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility meekness and patience. Above all, clothe yourselves with love which binds everything together in perfect harmony."

## **News of CTaX Events for May**

### **Monday 9 May and every second Monday of every month**

Pray for Exeter Street Pastors.

7.30- 9.00pm

Contact [taxexeter@gmail.com](mailto:taxexeter@gmail.com) you would like to join in praying for the ministry of Exeter Pastors

### **Saturday 14 May Inclusive Service**

10.30 am St Stephens' Church EX4 3LW

LGBTQIA+ inclusive service before the Exeter Pride march

### **Sunday 15 May**

10.30am St Sidwell St Methodist Church EX4 6PL

Christian Aid Week United Service with a Christian Aid speaker

Part of Exeter Christian Aid Week events.

### **Saturday 21 May – Chritain Aid walk starting at the cathedral**

11 am Exeter Christian Aid Group -sponsored walk beginning at the Cathedral .

Commissioning prayer and send off by the Cathedral. Walking any distance up

to 10 miles to the Turf Lock and back. Poster up on CCC notice board. Further

details from [maryellis@phonecoop.coop](mailto:maryellis@phonecoop.coop)

### **Sunday 22 May Great West Run**

YMCA are asking for participants to join their team to take part in this year's

Great Run to raise money for Exeter YMCA. Run 1 mile, 10 KM or a half

marathon. More details from [hilary.bush@ymcaexeter.org.uk](mailto:hilary.bush@ymcaexeter.org.uk)

There are more events happening in Exeter this May. Please consult the CTaX website

<https://ctax.chessck.co.uk> for more details.

**Maggie Morris, Lay CTaX link for the Cathedral Community**

## Prideaux Lectures

### ***Guard This Rich Trust: The New Testament and the Theology of Trust***

#### **The Revd Professor Teresa Morgan, University of Oxford**

Christians are called to put their trust in God; trust stands at the heart of Christian faith, and is one of the earliest meanings of the language of faith. We often meet trust language in liturgy, hymns, and prayers, but theologians have taken surprisingly little interest in it. These lectures explore three aspects of trust in the New Testament, and reflect on why trust was important to the earliest Christians, and why it is important today.

The lectures will be in-person at 7pm in the evening and we hope also to record or live-stream.

Please book individual lectures via Eventbrite links below:

#### **Wednesday 4th May (University of Exeter)**

##### **1: Trust and risk: God's trust and ours.**

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/311071201337>

#### **Friday 6th May (Exeter Cathedral)**

##### **2: 'Guard this rich trust': what Christians are entrusted with, and why.**

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/311101160947>

#### **Monday 9th (Plymouth Marjon University)**

##### **3: Stories from Galilee: the adequacy of imperfect trust.**

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/311104691507>

Teresa Morgan is Professor of Graeco-Roman History at Oxford University, McDonald Agape Professor-elect at Yale Divinity School, and a self-supporting priest in two parishes on the edge of Oxford. She writes about ancient cultural history and the history of ideas, the New Testament and early churches. Her books include *Literate Education in the Hellenistic and Roman Worlds*, *Popular Morality in the Early Roman Empire*, *Roman Faith and Christian Faith*, *Seasons of the Spirit*, and *Every-Person Ministry*. She is currently writing a trilogy of studies of early Christian faith.





## Events in May

### **Albion Quartet at the Honeymead Festival Thursday 5 May 2022 7:00pm**

The Albion Quartet return to the Honeymead Festival to play three wonderful string quartets: Haydn opus 33/5, Mozart A major k464, Dvorak no. 13 in G major.

A very special performance delivered in an intimate and accessible format, facing the stunning view of the Great West Window of the Cathedral.

The Albion Quartet include Tamsin Waley-Cohen and Emma Parker (violins), Ann Beilby (viola) and Nathaniel Boyd (cello).

#### **Tickets**

- Adults – £20
- Students and Under 18s – £5

[Book your tickets now](#)

Proceeds from this concert will support the Exeter Cathedral Music Foundation Trust.

### **Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May at 5.30pm**

Evensong and Commemoration of the Exeter Blitz in 1942.

### **Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> May at 5.30pm**

Confirmation Service by Bishop Jackie.

### **Letters for Creation Display From 14 May – 4 June 2022**

Submit your entries for the Letters for Creation Christian Aid Art Project! Create art, poems, songs or stories to tell us how you feel about climate change and share your hopes and dreams for creation. There will be prizes for the best entries in KS1 and KS2. Letters for Creation entries will be put on display in the South Transept of Exeter Cathedral from 14 May – 4 June 2022.

**The submission deadline is Thursday 5 May 2022.**

Send your entries to : Education Officer, Exeter Cathedral,  
1 The Cloisters, Exeter, EX1 1HS

[Find out more about Letters for Creation](#)

## **Walsingham Festival at Exeter Cathedral: Saturday 21 May 2022 from 11:30am**

Celebrate the centenary of the restoration of the Shrine and pilgrimage by Fr Hope Patten at the Walsingham Regional Festival at Exeter Cathedral on 21 May. The Image of Our Lady of Walsingham will be leaving the Holy House in Walsingham and travelling to Exeter for the regional festival.

### **11.30 a.m. Sung Mass**

Celebrant: The Rt Revd William Hazlewood, Bishop of Lewes  
Preacher: The Very Revd Jonathan Greener, Dean of Exeter

### **2.15 p.m. Ministries of Healing and Sprinkling**

### **3.30 p.m. Exposition, procession and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament**

### **Tickets**

Entry is by ticket only-free of charge. Please book on the Cathedral website.

## **21st Century Abba Saturday 28th May 2022 7:30pm**

21st Century ABBA will come to Exeter Cathedral in 2022.

This performance will be packed full of hit after hit, from *Waterloo* to *Take a Chance on Me*. The group faithfully recreates all the greatest hits of one of the world's most famous pop sensations combining stunning vocals, live musicians, and electric performances.

With opportunities for preshow drinks with family and friends, dressing up nights and singing along to favourite songs. Join us for an exhilarating evening of the dancing queens of 21st Century ABBA performances.

### **Tickets**

- Adult Ticket – £20.00
- Child Ticket – £17.00
- Family (2 Adults & 2 Children) – £68.00

Tickets are available at [www.seetickets.com](http://www.seetickets.com) or 0871 220 0260

### **[Book your ticket here](#)**

*Doors open at 18:30, performance begins at 19:30*

*This event was rescheduled from 22nd January 2022.*