



From the Dean

I was listening to a bishop the other day: “According to my chocolate Advent Calendar, there are just three days left till Christmas.” It is course why I never have a chocolate Advent Calendar - Pamela knows better than to think that the little apologies they offer for a chocolate will ever be sufficient to satisfy my chocoholic cravings. I much too readily devour a whole bar at a sitting, and could easily polish off the entire calendar in an evening. It goes

against the whole spirit of waiting in Advent.

But even without the calendar, I do my best to use this season as a count-down to Christmas: as a time to prepare for the extraordinary reality of God bursting into the world as a Bethlehem baby. And to reflect on the coming Kingdom of God at the end of time: which currently is easier to imagine, indeed feels much more likely, than it has at any previous time in my 64 years on earth.

Advent is, as we all realise, a particular challenge here at the cathedral when we are already surrounded by the sounds and smells and trappings of Christmas - indeed when the Christmas trees and lights were up in quire and have a good fortnight before Advent even started. But it's worth all the extra effort it takes to carve out our Advent worship and disciplines, since they play a key part in making sense of, and enhancing our joy at, Christmas. There are some useful props, of course. Daily evensong helps - with its array of Advent anthems, some of the loveliest in the year. You're always welcome to join us. For the Eucharist we vest in regal purple: representing repentance, a serious, eye-popping preparation for the coming of Christ, and the joy of anticipating his birth and future return as king. And on the third Sunday, we shall to gasps of horror and delight bring out the rose pink to signify our growing joy as Christmas approaches. And week by week we also light the Advent wreath, our liturgical Advent calendar, our visual reminder of where in the season we are.

Our Advent feels bitty, of course, with all those Christmas festivities interspersed. And four weeks is barely enough: the gestation period, I believe, for a parrot or a kangaroo. You'd have thought the living God might require

something of more elephantine proportions - the African version spinning it out for some 22 months. But, as our Principal at Theological College would tell us time and again: "If a job's worth doing, it's worth doing badly." Which means a bad Advent is certainly an improvement on no Advent. I'm not sure the way we keep it at Exeter Cathedral is anything to be proud of, but it is worth embracing as being the best it can be, all things considered. And it will lead, we pray, to a very joyful and peaceful Christmas for you and me and for the wider world.

Jonathan Greener

From the Company of Tapisers:

We have all heard of the Bayeux Tapestry, which has been in France since the 11th century – although it was made by English needleworkers! There are plans for this ancient artwork to be brought to the British Museum in 2026 as a mark of the friendship between France and England.

However, you don't have to wait ... in Reading Museum there is a Victorian copy of the Bayeux Tapestry. I recently visited this, with a couple of Tapisers, and it was well worth seeing. Amazingly, there were no queues to get in, no admission charge ... and few visitors. It seems this is an overlooked treasure!?

In 1885 an Elizabeth Whardle, a keen embroiderer, saw the Bayeux Tapestry – and had the ambitious idea to make a copy for England! She was leader of the Leek Embroidery Society in Staffordshire whose members quickly agreed to be a part of this undertaking. Under Elizabeth's direction and enthusiasm 35 women spent just over a year embroidering the panels of this impressive replica. Elizabeth was aided by the Kensington Museum where detailed drawings and photographs were kept. Her husband valiantly took on the task of dyeing the wools to match the eight original colours. It is testament to their commitment that they completed the work so quickly.

One of the main stitches – named Bayeux Stitch (because it is used so much in the original tapestry) – is one of the stitches that our Opus Anglicanum group of stitchers have had to learn. In the panel assigned to Exeter Cathedral's group are significant areas of Bayeux Stitch. (This is the special Circle of Life Project sponsored by the Worshipful Company of Upholders, which I wrote about earlier in the year.) So, it was really valuable to see close-up the versatility of this stitch – especially when creating horses... and there are two horses that our team have to work.

Thank you, everyone, for the support and interest you have shown towards the work of the Tapisers during 2025. We all wish you a peaceful and happy Christmastide.

Diana Symes, Chairman of The Company of Tapisers



Pilgrim Places: Lundy Island

The UK is seeing a resurgence of interest in pilgrimage, with many historic routes and sites experiencing renewed popularity. This revival is driven by a number of factors: a desire for spiritual growth, connection with nature and a sense of community.

Pilgrims are drawn to the UK's beautiful landscapes

and sacred sites, as well as our historic churches and cathedrals.

Back in August I visited Lundy for the first time, and from the very moment I set my foot onshore I felt a deep sense of connection with the place. The island is remote and exposed to the full force of 3,000 nautical miles of Atlantic Ocean yet, surrounded by deep and vast waters, I felt grounded; at home.

Located in the Bristol Channel, about 12 miles (19 km) off the coast of North Devon, there's lots to explore on Lundy for those interested in nature (birdwatching), archaeology or maritime life. But above all, Lundy can be a place of calm and peace for those seeking to 'escape' – liberate themselves – from frantic and often overwhelming/disorienting pace of modern life.

I walked the Lundy pilgrim's path which is a circular route around the island, with St Helen's Church offering space to rest and reflect as well as a refuge for visitors during bad (and good) weather. Don't forget to collect your pilgrim stamp from the welcome desk!

Jackie Searle, former Bishop of Crediton, wrote this about Lundy: "For many people Lundy Island is a special place, a place of pilgrimage and a place where God seems very close." I couldn't agree more, and can't wait to visit again.

*Back in December 2024, I embarked on a one-year pilgrimage – walking at least 12,000 steps a day – **in aid of the Devon Historic Churches Trust**. My pilgrimage will conclude on the 6th January 2026, the Feast of Epiphany. The total raised to date stands at 75% of the target (£1000). Donations can still be made until the end of January 2026, via JustGiving: www.justgiving.com/page/devonhct*

Robert Middleton



Making Room: Canon Deborah Parsons, Canon Chancellor

I once read of a person who bought a very large table for their home. So large that it only just fitted into the house. And above the table was an equally large poster. On it was written: "There will always be a space for you at this table."

People squeezed around the table for meals and for meetings and for meetings with meals. But it also became a dumping ground. A space

for stuff. The clothes pile waiting to be sorted; the items that had been unloaded from the car; homework and school projects waiting to be completed; the box of dog food waiting to be put away; the repository for broken toys or gadgets.

If anything went missing in the house, it eventually ended up on that table. And every so often she would feel an urge to purge. And on those days everything would be sorted out. Clothes and household items were put away; items we rehomed or rescued or recycled. And the table would be clear again. She used to love those days. There was something almost visceral about clearing space.

Earlier this year, I caught a snippet on Radio Four about clearing clutter. One expert recommended starting de-cluttering at the start of a month. Getting rid of one item on the first day, two on the second and so on. She said that by the time she got to day ten de-cluttering became easier. And instead of asking her children what toys or items they wanted to get rid of, she would reframe it differently. What do you most value? Those were the items that were spared the cull.

But how might de-cluttering also become part of our spiritual practice?

Advent is a time when we clear space, make room, prepare a dwelling place for God. For the Christ-child to be born in us at Christmas. A time when we create space to listen to the deeper longings that stir within.

As Advent progresses, perhaps we too can ask ourselves the questions:

What do you most value?

What are you making room for?

How might you make space for the Holy One of God?



In Conversation with Dr. Bridget Gillard

**Sunday 11th January 2025
at 6:30pm in the Chapter
House**

Refreshments from 6pm

“Mother of Invention”

The story of how a woman, the daughter of a bigamous marriage, with no money, connections or academic background, founded her own

religious order which at its height was visited by over 2000 people every year.

Bridget Gillard tells Grace Costin's story with warmth and clarity highlighting her remarkable journey and the unique community she founded.

Dr. Bridget Gillard was born and grew up in Devon. After studying history of art at the University of London, she worked and lectured in building conversation in London, Cornwall and Devon. As Executive Secretary of the Devonshire Association, she is privileged to explore the County's unique cultural identity.

Join us for a fascinating conversation followed by a short service of compline.

Welcome!

A warm welcome to Jason Watkins, our new Canons' Virger

Cathedral Community Committee (CCC) 11th November

At the November meeting, the CCC discussed details of the Chapter Strategy and pieces of work that would put it into action. We agreed that at the January meeting, the main focus would be on environmental matters, led by Canon Cate. We looked ahead to the next stage of the Development Project. We agreed to have a party on Shrove Tuesday.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 13th January. If you have any items for the agenda, any questions or any topic you would like to be discussed, please contact me or Ann Barwood amb@exeter-cathedral.org.uk

Heather Morgan, Chair CCC hmm53@tiscali.co.uk

What's On in December and January

A Study Course on the Gospel of Matthew with the Revd Canon Professor Richard A. Burridge

12 November - 25 February

Join Revd Canon Professor Richard A. Burridge to explore the Gospel of Matthew – the set text for the gospel readings on Sundays from Advent 2025 to 2026.

<https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/whats-on/events/richard-burridge-study-course/>

Exeter Cathedral Christmas Market

Open until 19 December

Nestled in the historic heart of Exeter, the Exeter Cathedral Christmas Market returns – bigger, brighter and more magical than ever.

<https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/whats-on/events/exeter-cathedral-christmas-market/>

Advent Series 2025 by the Revd Professor Christopher Bryan

30 November – 14 December

Get into the festive spirit with our Christingle service to tell the story of Jesus while the Exeter Cathedral Choir sing popular hymns.

<https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/whats-on/events/advent-series-2025/>

Roof Tours – December

4 - 20 December

Join a fascinating behind-the-scenes tour and visit the Cathedral's roof voice, wander high above the nave, visit the Lead Room and Ringing Chamber and enjoy the best views of Exeter and beyond from the North Tower.

<https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/whats-on/events/roof-tours-december/>

Handel's *Messiah* with Exeter Cathedral Choir

7 December | 2:30pm

The Exeter Cathedral Choir will be teaming up with early-music specialists Devon Baroque for a seasonal performance of Handel's *Messiah*.

<https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/whats-on/events/handels-messiah-with-exeter-cathedral-choir/>

Christmas with the Cathedral Choir

9, 11 & 13 December | 7pm

Enjoy a special performance of carols and festive favourites in the magnificent nave with Exeter Cathedral Choir.

<https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/whats-on/events/christmas-with-the-cathedral-choir/>

LaLa Choir

12 December | 7:30pm

LaLa Choir return to Exeter Cathedral for their annual festive concert and 10th anniversary.

<https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/whats-on/events/lala-choir/>

The Exeter Nativity

14 December | 4pm

Join the talented cast of the Exeter Nativity as they retell the Christmas story with warmth, humour and a few delightful surprises. From Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem, to the gossips of Nazareth and King Herod's handmaids, this lively production brings a fresh and funny twist to a much-loved story.

<https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/whats-on/events/the-exeter-nativity/>

Exeter Philharmonic Choir: Carols in the Cathedral

16 & 17 December | 7:30pm

Join Exeter Philharmonic Choir to celebrate Christmas at its ever-popular two nights of 'Carols in the Cathedral'. As usual, the audience will play its vital part by joining in with familiar carols.

<https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/whats-on/events/exeter-philharmonic-choir-carols-in-the-cathedral/>

Lunchtime Carols

16 & 18 December | 1pm

Take a break from shopping to enjoy a lunchtime carol concert in the festive setting of Exeter Cathedral.

<https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/whats-on/events/lunchtime-carols/>

Onwards & Upwards Tours – 18th December

Explore Exeter Cathedral at ground level to discover its finest medieval features before heading upwards into its fascinating roof space.

<https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/whats-on/events/onwards-upwards-tours-december/>

London Concertante: Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata by Candlelight

19 December | 5:30pm

London Concertante returns to Exeter Cathedral for a spectacular candlelit performance of Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata.

<https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/whats-on/events/london-concertante-beethovens-moonlight-sonata-by-candlelight/>

London Concertante: Christmas Movies by Candlelight

19 December | 7:30pm

London Concertante returns to Exeter Cathedral for a spectacular candlelit performance of Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata.

<https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/whats-on/events/london-concertante-christmas-movies-by-candlelight/>

Exeter Chamber Choir: Christmas by Candlelight

20 December | 7:30pm

Experience the magic of Christmas with carols by candlelight performed in the Cathedral by Exeter Chamber Choir.

<https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/whats-on/events/exeter-chamber-choir-christmas-by-candlelight/>

Grandisson Service of Lessons & Carols

23 & 24 December | 6pm

Join us for a unique service of lessons and carols which opens with Bishop John de Grandisson's service for Christmas.

<https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/whats-on/events/grandisson-service-of-lessons-carols/>

Christmas Services

In addition to the Grandisson Services above, Christmas Services include:

Christmas Eve

12 noon – The Crib Service

11pm – Midnight Mass with the St Peter's Singers

Christmas Day

8am – Holy Communion

10am – Choral Eucharist

11.45am-Choral Mattins

4pm-Evensong and Carols

An Old Chorister Remembers

We are very grateful to Mike Dobson for sending us details of the memoirs of a former chorister of the Cathedral, Denis Vercoe (1915-1995). He was in the choir from about 1925 to at least 1928. This is the first instalment of a series of extracts, in which Denis, whose full name was Denis Le Plastrier Vercoe, recalls his memories of Christmas as a chorister. You will see that he sang at the first performance of the Grandisson music as we know it today.

In passing, when I first went to the Choir School the organist was Dr Ernest Bullock. On leaving Exeter he went on to become the organist at Westminster Abbey. His place was taken by Dr Thomas Armstrong. Later he became the Professor of Music at Glasgow University, and later still the Head of the Royal College of Music in London.

Grandisson Service

I can't swear to the actual truth of this story but here goes. An old iron chest was discovered somewhere in the Cathedral and, when opened, the document it contained was the original copy of the setting for a special Christmas Service. I believe this chest still stands in the south aisle behind the Choir. Dr Armstrong took this music and made a new setting of it, and on Christmas Eve after a lot of practice, it was performed for the first time for many hundreds of years. In those days, we sang it in the Quire on a winter's afternoon just before Christmas. We had a boy called Rex Gibson with a beautiful voice and he appeared holding a candle at the high altar to sing the first lines, and the response was given by six other choristers, three on each side of the altar, all with candles. So the service went on, but with no processions or any of the ceremony that now takes place on Christmas Eve.

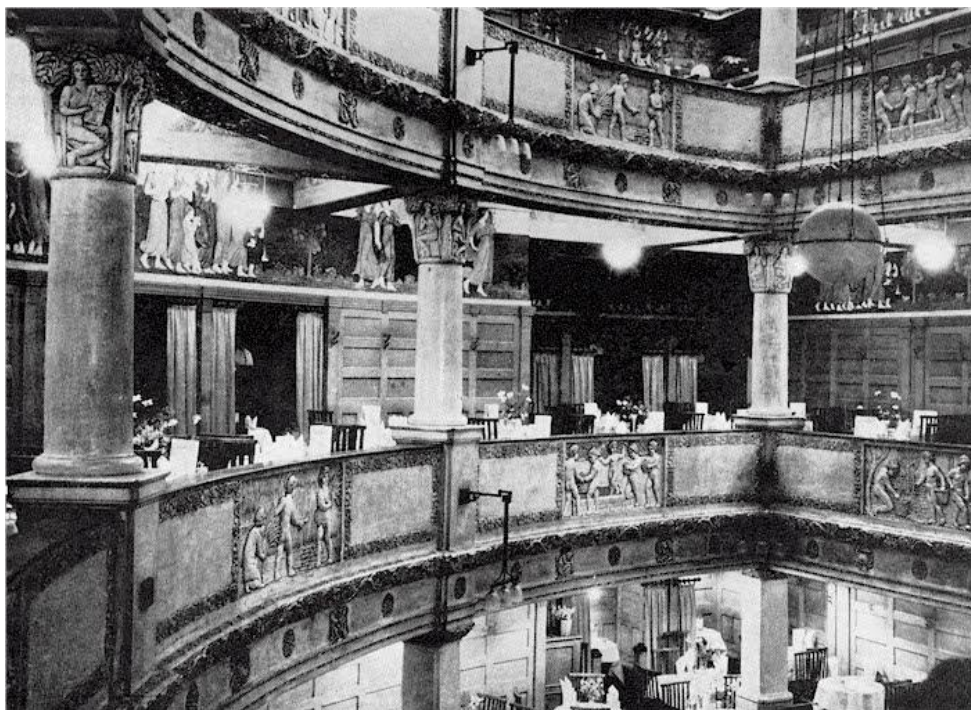
Christmas Parties

Our Christmas holiday began some time soon after the end of the first week in January; this, oddly enough, gave us a rather superior edge on our non-chorister friends who were at home for Christmas and went back to school for the Easter Term two weeks, at least, ahead of us. As far as I remember we experienced no deprived feelings at being stuck at school when all our non-singing friends were already at home on holiday. When we finally did get home we were able to boast so loudly of the wonderful parties we had had at Exeter over the Christmas period that many of our friends were undoubtedly extremely jealous of us. Of course there was always a school party held at the school and much enjoyed by everybody.

Most of the senior members of the Cathedral Chapter obviously felt compelled to lay on a party for the choir each Xmas. I imagine this had become a tradition and no party giver liked to break it. In those days on the Corner of Bedford Street where it abutted on the High Street, stood Deller's Cafe. [Sadly destroyed by bombing in 1942] Here it was that the wonderful gorging Christmas parties were held. It was really just a glorious feed with masses of cream cakes and other goodies stacked on the tables for us to tuck into. I don't remember much in the way of party games or anything like that. We used to go straight from Evensong across the darkened Close to the lovely food paradise of Deller's and spend a couple of hours making beasts of ourselves.

There used to be three or four of these parties during the Christmas period. One of the best on tap at this time was the night when we were all taken to the Pantomime at the Exeter Theatre, and back to school afterwards for hot drinks and mince pies.

Deller's Cafe





In Conversation with Tim Mirfin

**Sunday 8th February, 2026
at 6.30 pm in the Chapter
House**

**Refreshments served
from 6.00pm**

The Opera Singer Phenomenon - how (and why) do they make that noise?

That strange, loud noise that opera singers make, is it really necessary? Why do they make it? How do they make it? Is it something anyone can do or are they some race apart? The talk is liberally illustrated with picture, video and sound, both

live and recorded, and is likely to involve a small (unstressful) amount of audience participation. It is designed to entertain and interest those to whom opera has not appealed as well as the ardent fan.

Tim read Law at Cambridge and studied postgraduate singing at the Royal Academy of Music and National Opera Studio. He lives in Devon with his family, pets and chickens. As well as solo work, he teaches singing, gives choral and vocal masterclasses, lectures on opera and the voice, and runs a local community choir.

As a bass soloist, Tim has sung throughout Europe and in Australia, USA, Russia and the Middle East. He has performed major opera roles by Mozart, Handel, Britten, Puccini, Rossini, Verdi and others for companies including Hamburg Opera, Theater an der Wien, and the Bolshoi, Moscow.

Tim is well known and respected as a performer in Devon. Join us for a fascinating evening. Donations are for The Choir Association Fund.

My Heart Was a Tree with Michael & Clare Morpurgo, Carol Hughes and the Iddesleigh String Quartet

Tuesday 27th January 2026 7pm-8:15pm, doors open at 6:30pm

Immerse yourself in an enchanting evening of poetry and music inspired by the beauty of the British countryside in this special concert to mark the 50th anniversary of the charity Farms For City Children. Charity founders, Clare and Michael Morpurgo, are joined by Carol Hughes, widow of poet Ted Hughes, to share their most cherished poems in celebration of the natural world.

Their heartfelt readings are beautifully complemented by music from Vivaldi, Vaughan Williams, Haydn, and Max Richter, performed by the Iddesleigh String Quartet. The family-friendly concert features readings from his acclaimed book *My Heart Was a Tree*, alongside the Ted Hughes poem that inspired its title.

Find out more and book your ticket at bit.ly/heart-tree-exeter

All proceeds from this event will be shared between Exeter Cathedral and Farms for City Children.

This event is kindly supported by Rathbones.

Lady Chapel, Exeter Cathedral

Madonna and Child

Travellers come and go
light candles wonder why
white slips of paper
that might otherwise fly away
are posted by the chapel gate
people asking for help
offering thanks
Two thousand years of welcome
pilgrims drifters
lovers long ago in Rome
those who want to be quiet
or to talk
welcome –
resting here gazing towards
the east window
figuring how we are lit
blue on blue
from within and without

Jeff Skinner

Contemplating the Beatitudes: Hungry hearts will be truly satisfied by God.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.
(Matthew 5:6)

This beatitude is an example par excellence of Jesus drawing on everyday experiences when teaching his disciples. In the ancient world the body's all-consuming cravings for nourishment were a more regular occurrence for most people than they are today. The Bible is full of stories which have a good deal to say about our basic human need for food and drink. Today, however, the precariousness of life in agrarian societies is not something to which we may readily relate. In fact, for those living in economically affluent countries, lots of our struggles stem from the opposite problem: overabundance rather than life-threatening shortages.

The metaphor Jesus uses may not touch directly on our lived experience in the way that it would have done 2000 years ago. But **the spiritual hunger he describes** still saturates our culture. So much so that we have become numb to its ache and delude ourselves into thinking it no longer exists. Take, as one small illustration, Bruce Springsteen's well known song 'Hungry Heart'. As so often is the case with pop music, the catchy tune anaesthetises us to the lyric's pain. 'Hungry Heart' is about a man who abandons his family and embarks on a quest for a kind of satisfaction he will never find in the places he looks for it. The song, borrowing its title from Tennyson's Ulysses (a reimagining of the myth of Odysseus), shows what happens when we try to satisfy our deepest spiritual hunger with the wrong things. However much we try to fill ourselves up, we end up just as empty.

St Augustine of Hippo, whose life before his conversion was, to say the least, colourful, had known all too well that feeling of deep spiritual hunger. In his autobiography, *Confessions*, he addresses God directly: "You arouse us so that praising you may bring us joy, because you have made us and draw us towards yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you." To rest, in this context, does not mean simply to repose but, instead, finding a proper orientation towards God. This, paradoxically, increases one's appetite; the longing to stay properly oriented toward God. Once a restless heart finds its true direction, it then longs for what matters most: God's righteousness.

Later on in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus calls his followers to live in a way that is to exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees. But this is not about trying to excel in religious showiness. Jesus means we are to allow God to enter more deeply into our hearts. As God enters more fully into our soul, we **respond by being drawn** ever upward toward God and our lives **are expanded** outward toward others. Righteousness then is God's right-ordering of relationships, God's justice and God's mercy made visible. All this shows itself in a God-centred preoccupation with the bigger injustices of this world. **But it also** shows up in the moment-to-moment choices we make. For example, telling the truth when a small lie would be more convenient, or not cutting a corner when no one might notice the difference. These small, barely perceptible acts of discernment are where God's righteousness becomes visible.

Jesus continually blesses those who hunger and thirst for righteousness because the pursuit of God's righteousness is ongoing and grows the more we desire it. He blesses those who refuse to live complacently. Outwardly, such people may not appear to be blessed if we equate blessing with bland, syrupy contentment. They will be busy seeking to address the many injustices of this world.

As we move into Advent, the contrast between material abundance and real deprivation becomes ever sharper. Christmas gift buying, holidays, parties, and all manner of seasonal treats co-exist alongside poverty, homelessness, loneliness. For those who find this season difficult, the longing for things to be different than they are becomes greater. The beatitude meets us here. Our hearts long all the more for God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. And Jesus promises that those who hunger for righteousness will be satisfied.

*Lord Jesus,
You know our longing
for all to be made right,
for your will to be done on earth.
Increase our desire for You.
Fill us with your righteousness,
that others may long to seek their rest in You.
Amen*

Phil Wales, Priest Vicar

Thank you

A huge thank you to Shelagh Orrell and everyone who helped to prepare the hundreds of oranges for the Christingle Service. It was a great team effort, much appreciated by all who attended the service.

Bishop Mike's Advent Ad Clerum

Bishop Mike's Advent Ad Clerum can be found at [Read his Ad Clerum here.](#) It includes his reflections on Advent and on the Living in Love and Faith process

Congratulations

Warmest congratulations to Michael, our organ scholar. Congratulations to our Organ Scholar, Michael D'Avanzo, for winning Jesus College Chapel's 2025-2026 Hadfield Composition Competition! Applicants were invited to set words by 20th century Christian mystic Evelyn Underhill, author of *Two Carols*. This year saw a record number of applicants, with an exciting variety of approaches to the text of Underhill's second carol. The submissions were anonymous and judged by celebrated composer Cecilia McDowall and the College's Director of Music, Benjamin Sheen. On composing the carol, Michael said: "My aim was to contrast the action of the Nativity itself and the Latin exclamations of the angels with the stillness of the natural world around them, as though the listener is merely a visitor catching a snapshot of the unfolding events."

Michael's winning carol – entitled 'So may it be alway!' – will be premiered by the College Choir at a Christmas service in Jesus Chapel on Saturday 13 December, which will also be streamed live on the Choir's YouTube channel.

Dennis Whitehead RIP (1940-2025)

We were very sorry to hear of the death of Dennis Whitehead on 31st October. Dennis had served the Cathedral in many roles-sidesman, one of the Welcome Desk Team, and in the Cathedral Shop. He also threw himself into social activities, both as wine waiter and, on a memorable occasion, in song at a Burns Night party in the Chapter House, when he was resplendent in the tartan of his native Scotland. Above all, he was a wise and supportive friend to many people in the Cathedral Community, whose sense of humour shone through.

Dennis was one of the choristers chosen to sing at the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, and he developed a lovely tenor voice. For many years he was a Lay Clerk at Salisbury Cathedral. The large congregation at this funeral on 18th November heard recordings of Dennis singing as a treble, and of the Salisbury Choir, of which he was part, singing William Harris's *Bring us O Lord God*.

Dennis was a loyal supporter of Exeter Chiefs and a devoted follower of cricket; the Cricketer's Prayer was also included in his funeral service.

We send our sympathy, prayers and love to Helen and to all Dennis's family.

What's on in January

A Study Course on the Gospel of Matthew with the Revd Canon Professor Richard A. Burridge

Until 25 February

Join Revd Canon Professor Richard A. Burridge to explore the Gospel of Matthew – the set text for the gospel readings on Sundays from Advent 2025 to 2026.

<https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/whats-on/events/richard-burridge-study-course/>

The Art of Appreciation

Until 5 January

Visit Exeter Cathedral this December for a Winter Community Exhibition inspired by themes of gratitude and thanks.

<https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/whats-on/events/art-of-appreciation/>

The Storytellers: A Sound & Light Experience by Luxmuralis

7 - 10 January

Luxmuralis return to Exeter Cathedral with The Storytellers, a mesmerising light and sound installation that brings the rich history of storytelling to life.

<https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/whats-on/events/storytellers-luxmuralis/>

In Conversation with Dr. Bridget Gillard

11 January

Hear Dr Bridget Gillard tell Grace Costin's story with warmth and clarity, highlighting her remarkable journey and the unique community she founded.

<https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/whats-on/events/in-conversation-with-dr-bridget-gillard/>

The Old Document Reading Group

15 January

Enjoy contributing to improving cataloguing and access to historical materials in the Cathedral Archives as part of The Old Document Reading Group.

<https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/whats-on/events/old-document-reading-group-january-2026/>

Library & Archives In Focus: Stories and Storytellers

15 January

Discover the timeless tradition of storytelling in the collections of the Cathedral Library and Archives.

<https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/whats-on/events/in-focus-stories-and-storytellers/>

Environment Film Festival

17 January

You're invited to join us for this Environment Film Festival – an exciting opportunity to watch *Six Inches of Soil* and *Wilding* surrounded by the awe-inspiring architecture of the Exeter Cathedral nave.

<https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/whats-on/events/environment-film-festival/>

My Heart Was a Tree with Michael Morpurgo

27 January

Immerse yourself in an enchanting evening of poetry and music inspired by the beauty of the British countryside in this special concert to mark the 50th anniversary of the charity Farms For City Children.

<https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/whats-on/events/my-heart-was-a-tree-with-michael-morpurgo/>

Country by Candlelight

29 January

Featuring a spectacular cast of world-class vocalists and a live band, experience the biggest and best of country music, performed live by candlelight.

<https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/whats-on/events/country-by-candlelight/>

The Music of Pink Floyd by Candlelight

30 January

The Music of Pink Floyd by Candlelight returns to Exeter Cathedral. Join us on the Dark Side of the Moon for the ultimate tribute to Pink Floyd.

<https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/whats-on/events/the-music-of-pink-floyd-by-candlelight/>

The Music of Ed Sheeran by Candlelight

31 January

Calling all Ed Sheeran fans – the Music Of Ed Sheeran By Candlelight is coming to Exeter Cathedral.

<https://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/whats-on/events/the-music-of-ed-sheeran-by-candlelight/>

Bishop Mike's and Rachel's visit to our Link Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf

"There is something about the solidarity of Christians around the globe who are supportive of one another and praying for one another – from whom we are learning and others are learning from us. It helps us to understand that this is a global faith, it's something that goes way beyond anything parochial."

Bishop Mike has been reflecting on his recent trip to the [Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf](#), which has been in an official link with the Diocese of Exeter since 1984.

Part of the purpose of the visit was to 'renew and reimagine' the link.

Bishop Mike and his wife Rachel visited a number of Anglican and Greek Orthodox churches and cathedrals during their visit to Cyprus. They spent a week in Cyprus as the guests of the Bishop of Cyprus and the Gulf, the Rt. Revd Sean Semple.

During their trip they visited Anglican and Greek Orthodox churches in both the Greek and Turkish parts of the island, as well as visiting a number of historic biblical sites, including Salamis, where St Paul and St Barnabas first arrived on the island, and the nearby site of St Barnabas Monastery and tomb.

The two bishops also discussed the opportunities and challenges facing the two dioceses and explored areas for future collaboration and ways in which we can support each other.

Bishop Mike is considering whether some form of pilgrimage to Cyprus might be possible, as well as possible opportunities for clergy to locum in Cypriot parishes.

Bishop Mike is planning to visit the Gulf in the next few years and also has visits planned to our other link diocese of Thika in Kenya in January 2026, as well as to the Diocese of Melanesia in the Pacific later next year.

For the full story go to [Read the full story.](#)

The next edition of *Cathedral News*

We hope to publish the next edition of the *News* on Sunday 25th January 2026. The deadline for material is **Tuesday 20th January 2026**. Please send any contributions to hmm53@tiscali.co.uk or to any member of the editorial team; Heather Morgan, Rosemary Bethell, and Jenny Ellis.



Welcome to new members of the College of Canons

New members of the College of Canons were installed during Evensong on 23rd November:

The Revd Ruth Frampton (Teign Valley & Haldon Mission Community)
 The Revd Ed Hobbs (St Andrew's, Cullompton)
 Fr. Peter March (All Saints Torre & St Luke's, Torquay)

Fr. John Rolles (Holy Trinity & St Peter's, Ilfracombe) and The Revd Andy Humm (St George & St Paul's, Tiverton)

The Diocese of Exeter's Communications Director, Chloe Axford, was also installed as a Lay Canon of the Cathedral during the same service. As well as her professional role, Chloe is also a volunteer Licensed Lay Minister in the Ashburton and Moorland Mission Community.

Congratulations

Many congratulations to Jenny Ellis who has been appointed by Bishop Mike as the new SNEM, Senior Non-Executive Member of Chapter.

Jenny brings extensive senior public sector leadership, legal and management experience to the role. Her previous roles include being Chief Executive (SCS) to the Supreme Court and working with the Law Lords and a Ministry of Justice Implementation Team to establish the Supreme Court as an independent government department.

Jenny's various roles have also involved strategic planning and business delivery, corporate governance and risk and financial and HR management. She has been a Lay Canon of Exeter Cathedral since 2017 and is a regular worshipper at the Cathedral



Welcome

A warm welcome to Jeremy Rawlings who is to take on the role of Cathedral Safeguarding Officer on an interim basis, until the permanent post is advertised later next year.

Please join us in welcoming Jeremy to the Safeguarding Team and we look forward to working with him closely.

A Peaceful Crib Scene in the Chapel of St Andrew and St Catherine

