



CARLISLE CATHEDRAL



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November 2020

Dear Friends

HOW CAN WE SING THE LORD'S SONG IN A STRANGE LAND?

As the fight against the pandemic continues, we find ourselves yet again in a strange place. To many of us it feels like a kind of exile: unable to attend worship and unable to join together in song. But like the children of Israel, in their exile those many years ago, we know we are not alone. As we sang on Remembrance Sunday, 'the Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge.' With that assurance uniting us all in Christ, we write to thank you for all your prayer and support for the Cathedral and we pray that, in the sure knowledge that God will work the miracle of bringing us all home, you will not only claim hope for your hearts, but also go on to radiate hope to others.

THE NEW LOCKDOWN PERIOD

The possibility of a second spike of covid-19 infection had been widely reported – but that did not make news of a further lockdown period any less unwelcome. Places of worship are again within HM Government's new regulations and the Chapter, after careful thought, has again had to make use of the government's Job Retention scheme until December 2nd. After the tremendous effort that staff had made to open our buildings safely, launch our new café and retail business and, above all, to reinstate the full schedule of sung worship in the Cathedral, it was with great sadness that public worship was again suspended and our doors closed.

WORSHIP

It was some consolation that we were able to hold, on November 1st, the service that the National Health Service in Cumbria had asked us to host. Together we remembered, gave thanks, reflected on, and celebrated all that is being achieved by the Health and Care sectors across the county. Material written by NHS and Care sector staff was included, along with scripture readings and musical items sung by one of the Cathedral Consort. The county's Church Leaders were present with a reading from Dr James Tebbutt, the Chair of Cumbria Methodist District, and with Bishop James and the Roman Catholic Bishop of Lancaster, Bishop Paul, sharing the address. The NHS had asked that the event be as inclusive as possible and people have written to say how much they appreciated the efforts that were made to make it so. The event was livestreamed and a link to it can be found on the Cathedral's website.

A congregation was able to attend the service on All Souls' Day on November 2nd. Faure's Requiem was sung. An additional piece, sung by the Lay Clerks, had been specially composed for the occasion in memory of Keith Maclennan, their former colleague who sadly died of coronavirus in the early days of the pandemic.

By Remembrance Sunday, however, we had had to close the Cathedral to the congregation. Clergy and choir were allowed to gather to livestream a Remembrance Sunday service which included the bugle calls from the Green Market and the Two Minutes' Silence – lest we forget.

Advent Sunday falls within the lockdown period and so will no longer be as we had hoped. We are planning to reschedule our farewell to Canon Jan as soon as we are able. We plan to announce our plans for Christmas services by the end of the month. Please watch the Cathedral website for details.

Arrangements are in place for the live streaming of the Sunday Eucharist for the rest of November. In addition, we hope to be able to livestream Choral Evensong on Thursdays and Fridays at 5.45pm. Please check the Cathedral's website and Facebook page for details.

FINANCE

In one of the letters Chapter wrote earlier in the year, we explained how severely the Cathedral's income had been reduced during the lockdown period. In this letter we can express the Chapter's tremendous thanks for the way those who give regularly to the Cathedral, through a Banker's Order or the envelope scheme, have sustained their giving during these uncertain times. These regular, weekly donations are hugely important to us again as we face a further loss of income from visitors and events as well, this time, as from the café which was launched to such widespread acclaim in July. **The Chapter thanks you for the generous support you are giving.**

PRAYER

One of the big differences about the current lockdown period is that places of worship can be open for quiet, stillness and private prayer. We are glad that this allows us to fulfil our first duty and our joy which has always been to pray for the city, the county and beyond. **Arrangements are in place for the Cathedral to be open for reflection and prayer each day between 11.30 and 14.00 every day.** We hope that people will value the Cathedral being open in this way.

The Archbishops and other church leaders are encouraging us to use this month as a Month of Prayer - with the suggestion that we should pause for a moment daily at 6.00pm. Some daily prayer themes are available on our home page or the Church of England website: www.churchofengland/resources/call-prayer-nation Prayers can also be posted on our own Cathedral Prayer Wall via the website: <https://carlislecathedral.org.uk/prayer-wall/>

This prayer is one that has been suggested for us all to use:

Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy;
sustain and support the anxious, be with those who care for the sick
and lift up all who are brought low; that we may find comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

This letter comes with the promise of our prayers for you and all those you love.

Yours sincerely

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Dean of Carlisle

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