

Chester

Diocesan News

October 2018

News, features, jobs...
chester.anglican.org

Growing stronger parishes

JOURNEY INTO LIGHT

Journey Into Light is an exhibition of art work created by prisoners from HMP Styal and HMP Thorn Cross, Cheshire.

The aim of the exhibition is to demonstrate the lived experience of prisoners and the stories behind their convictions and sentences. The hope is that by seeing the creativity of prisoners and hearing their stories people will be able to better understand some of the choices, mistakes and circumstances that they have faced in their lives.

Debbie Dalby, Director of Social Responsibility at the Diocese of Chester says: "We want people to view the exhibition and leave with a greater sense of empathy and awareness of prisoner experience. There is life beyond prison and we want to celebrate renewal and restoration and the hope of a brighter, more optimistic future."

Calling churches, schools and community groups.

Would you like to host the exhibition in your local community? Prisoners are often viewed as "the other" yet they live in our midst, are a part of our communities, and contribute to our societies. The Journey Into Light exhibition would be perfect for a village hall, church or school and could provide a focal point and an opportunity to bring people together.

If you would like to host the exhibition, please email hannah.jones@chester.anglican.org or call 01928 718834 Ext 271

Luke 4:8 "He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free."



Reflecting on the amazing reality of God



Dear Friends

I learnt from the chaplaincy at Thorn Cross HMP that October is Black History Month and that has prompted me, as a white man, to reflect.

I remember the experience of living in Handsworth Birmingham in the 1980's, as a solicitor, and then after ordination in a curacy and parish where over half the congregations and communities were black. Before ordination while at the New Testament Church of God in Handsworth (one of the largest black Pentecostal denominations in Britain) I was introduced for the first time, in any church I had been part of, to the washing of the saints' feet. Brother Lewis who ran the Majestic Singers and who drove West Midland Buses washed my feet, and I washed his. I had studied history at Oxford, I thought I believed all the right things, how was it that black history had really passed me by? I experienced two gifts from God through my brothers and

sisters, one being filled, overwhelmed, with the love of God for me through his Spirit; the other the enormity and extent of my sin, especially in relation to a racialism which was so deeply imbedded so as to be almost invisible to me, until then. The washing of the feet spoke both of filling and forgiving; Jesus "loving me to the end" (John13:1).

I reflect on the amazing reality of God in the gift of the worldwide church, and the exponential growth of Anglicanism across the world, especially, but not only in the cultures where ethnicity is pre-eminently black. It is one reason I have been keen to accept invitations to the Global South and Gafcon conferences over my years in the Diocese of Chester. I praise God for our links with Melanesia and Congo and the way that love of the Lord has been and is being expressed in our particular connection. So many gave so generously to the appeal for help following the outbreak of violence in Boga and Aru dioceses earlier this year.

As we come to the commemoration of the end of the First World War, it is a time to remember and reflect on the history of Britain and the world over the last century. It is a time to reflect on our own personal history and heritage and embrace the diversity of experience that adds to the fullness of life of which we all enjoy.

Perhaps you could pray that somehow in your remembering and reflecting the Lord Jesus may come and bring you the fullness of his love and the forgiveness of your sin, your knowing that he has loved you to the end. In that love is hope for the world, black and white, in the century to come.

+Keith

Repair fund helps cathedral prepare for First World War commemorations



A national scheme to conserve and repair England's cathedrals, from which Chester Cathedral was awarded £794,752, has significantly reduced immediate risks, a report has said.

The £40 million First World War Centenary Cathedral Repairs Fund, launched by the Government in 2014, invited applications from Catholic and Church of England cathedrals to address urgent repair works. The fund prioritised making buildings weatherproof, safe and open to the public as well as ensuring they would be in a safe condition to host acts of remembrance for the centenary of the First World War armistice in 2018.

Chester Cathedral received a total of £794,752 which helped complete high level repairs, cloister restoration and emergency lighting.

England's cathedrals contribute

more than £220m to the economy each year, drawing in more than 11 million visitors. Each cathedral has the responsibility for raising the funds required for upkeep. However, with no regular Government funding, each cathedral faces an ongoing challenge to maintain their fabric while ensuring comfort, safety and accessibility for all.

The Bishop of Worcester, Dr John Inge, the Church of England's lead bishop for churches and cathedrals said: "Cathedrals are at the forefront of the nation's acts of remembrance each year, and have huge economic, spiritual and missional impact on their communities. This fund has been an imaginative and welcome resource to ensure our cathedrals are fit for this commemoration, as well as underpinning the vital contributions they make to their communities."

Church helps festival-goers enjoy

Festival-goers were helped through their weekend at Creamfields this bank holiday by a team of 45 volunteers. The 'We are the Church' team offered a warm welcome and a listening ear to those attending the electronic dance music festival, and in need of support.

Now into its second year, the ecumenical team behind 'We are the Church' said 2018 was a great success and that many festival-goers appreciated them being there.

Revd Jane Proudfoot, Vicar of Grappenhall, Warrington, first put forward the idea to festival organisers four years ago but found there was little appetite for what she was proposing. She continued to ask and explain how they felt they could serve those attending until finally last year they were invited to attend.

Revd Jane Proudfoot said: "We just want to be a safe place and a listening ear and to serve people at the festival. Eventually, they [the organisers] started to see that we could be a part of their welfare system. They let us in for the first time last year, and what an adventure it's been.

"We've had some amazing conversations with people about faith, God and all kinds of different things. We found that a lot of young people say that they don't think they would be welcomed in church and that they have done things that they feel ashamed of and feel guilty about.

"We also helped people in real difficulty who couldn't find their way back to their tent. We came across people who had had too much drink or drugs and perhaps needed someone to keep an eye on them."

Messages of thanks and appreciation have been shared with the team on

social media following the event. One young man wrote: "This is the person you looked after who was very cold that was found in the tent. I'm ok now and eventually did find my friend, I just wanted to say thank you very much for taking care of me, you're all good people."

One of the security staff at the festival wrote on Instagram: "I just want to say what an amazing job you all did at Creamfields, especially treating us security staff so well and keeping us going! I think you helped and saved a lot of lives at the festival! Amazing work..."

Another festival-goer contacted the team following the event and said: "I'm thankful to you and honoured to have met you all!"

The team behind 'We are the Church' is made up of volunteers from Warrington, Runcorn, Widnes and beyond, and is supported by the dioceses of Chester and Liverpool, and Warrington Youth for Christ. They have also received advice from Warrington Street Pastors who are familiar with some of the challenges that arise from supporting late-night revellers.

Around 80,000 people travel to Daresbury each year to enjoy the latest in electronic dance music from around the world.

Revd Jane Proudfoot added: "We're there in a small way and making Creamfields a safer place to be. We hope that we help, and it certainly seems that we do to the organisers."

The team hope to return next year with a larger team and an increased presence. If you're interested in volunteering, contact Revd Jane Proudfoot: revproudfoot@hotmail.co.uk

by their weekend at creamfields



Thank you for lighting a Christingle and helping a vulnerable child

This year the Diocese of Chester will help the Children's Society celebrate 50 years of Christingle. The first Christingle service in England took place at Lincoln Cathedral on 7 December 1968. John Pensom of The Children's Society adapted Christingle, originally a German tradition, and introduced it to the Church of England. This involved children decorating an orange with a red ribbon, dried fruits, sweets and a candle to create a new visual representation of Christ, the light of the world, celebrated by the lighting of the Christingle candles.

50 years on and the tradition continues with thousands of churches taking part every year and, in the process, raising money to support young people across the country.

In the Diocese of Chester, Christingles celebrated through Advent 2017 to Candlemas 2018 have so far raised just under £45k.

Jemma Kinch works for The Children's Society across our region. She says: "On behalf of The Children's Society, I want to THANK YOU, your army of volunteers and those who support your Christingles. Your help enables so many projects across the North of England and the UK, where we are working with the most vulnerable young people. Christingle is a celebration of Christ, but it's also a meaningful event that raises awareness and funds supporting those young people we work with across the North of England."

This year churches across the Diocese of Chester will help to celebrate 50 years of Christingle from Advent

2018 to Candlemas 2019. There are resources available to parishes to help them celebrate. Go to www.christingle.org/50 for more information.

If you would like a speaker from The Children's Society to speak at your church service and to update you on the local projects that your contribution are helping, contact Jemma Kinch: jemma.kinch@childrenssociety.org.uk



Macclesfield churches unite to save the planet

Representatives from several of the Macclesfield churches showed their commitment to the 5th Mark of Mission by presenting the local MP David Rutley with a petition. Signed by 650 members of churches working together as Hope in North East Cheshire, the petition called for the Government to bring forward the date by which they plan to have net zero emissions of greenhouse gases.

Bishop Willy Alaha Pwaisiho, Honorary Assistant Bishop and Rector of Gawsworth, shared with the MP his own experience of the impact of climate change in the Solomon Islands,

where several of the islands have had to be abandoned because of rising sea levels and communities and livelihoods destroyed as a result.

Care for God's Creation is becoming a bigger part of the mission of many Macclesfield churches: St.Barnabas and St.Peter's both have community gardens; Cre8 has organised a re-cycling event; and St.Peter's Prestbury has met with children from the church school to discuss how the church can reduce its carbon footprint. St.Michael and All Angels' has received the Ecochurch Bronze Award, and installed a hive of bees on the church roof.

Chester Fair Trading - Can you help us spread our wings?

Would you like to have a Fairtrade stall at your Christmas bazaar, summer fete or even once a month? Chester's Fairtrade Shop based at the Wesley Centre, St John's Street is looking to partner with churches, community groups, and schools to sell Fairtrade goods in the run up to Christmas.

Lesley Mosley who helps to maintain the shop in Chester said: "We appreciate that not everyone can come into the shop in Chester, so we are looking for ways to spread our wings and bring these wonderful products directly to our churches and schools. Our products would be perfect for a Fairtrade stall at a Christmas bazaar. We can provide you, on a sale or return basis, with a box of Fairtrade products, food and crafts. We

can also offer you a 10% discount on goods purchased through us."

Chester's Fairtrade Shop is run by volunteers and open 10am - 3.00pm Monday to Saturday. It is stocked with a wide range of crafts, handmade gifts, unique homeware, cleaning materials and delicious groceries, almost all from Traidcraft.

Traidcraft was founded in 1979 as a Christian response to poverty and works with farmers, growers and producers as well as craftsmen and women around the world to help them to transform their lives and communities.

Interested? Please contact Sue Bownas: email sbownas@btinternet.com or call 01244 679270.

Women's Voices IV Conference

The fourth Women's Voices conference takes place on the 3rd November and is entitled 'Women Preaching: What's the Difference?' The conference will explore the different ways in which men and women preach, learn to preach and experience practical theology.

In recent years a wealth of research has been conducted into how women come to faith, and experience God, church and sin. The first Women's Voices conference was a response to women's experiences of preaching, from both sides.

A preliminary event on Friday evening will explore what we know about how women experience worship and preaching in church and is of particular relevance to ministers, preachers and pastoral carers who want to consider how we might tailor our own practice to be more inclusive of women.

The key note speakers at the main event on Saturday include Susan Durber, author of *Preaching like a Woman*, and *Surprised by Grace*. Other published work by Susan includes articles on parables, on poverty, on ecumenism and on preaching as well as collections of prayers.

Other speakers include Elaine Graham, Grosvenor Research Professor of Practical Theology at the University of Chester, who has written widely on gender and practical theology.

Liz Shercliff is Director of Studies for Readers in the Diocese of Chester. She writes on and researches women's preaching, particularly how women learn to preach. She said: "The Women's Voices conference is not a conference for women but about women. There's been a smaller number of men who have come along but they've really

appreciated it as well. We're not trying to find the bit of theology that's the same for men and women, but instead think about how we can make our theology and our God bigger for everybody."

Bishop Libby Lane was the first woman to be ordained a bishop in the Church of England. She said: "Just as women have had centuries of acclimatising and assimilating men's perspectives and men's voices into our own stories which has in some ways been constructive and fruitful and in other ways diminishing and abusive, similarly it is really important that men are able to assimilate women's voices into their theology and practice and experience, because that's how we get the whole. The image of God is both male and female and so if we're going to hear God's voice we've got to hear the voices of women and men."

The Women's Voices conference series is now into its fourth year and has grown in attendees. This year's event is being held at Foxhill but has already sold out.

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