

## **THE CATHEDRAL CHAPTER**

The 2020/21 year has certainly been an unusual one for the Cathedral, seeing the closure of the building for the first time since the centennial restoration in the late 1970s and the relocation of worship to online forms only for the first time ever!

## **CHRIST-CENTRED MISSION**

The Transitional Cathedral of Christchurch and its community is seeking to make Christ known to the many who come through the doors of the Transitional Cathedral every day, and also to those who are regularly watching the services streamed to the world. Our prayer is that all who come, whether they be pilgrims or visitors, virtual or real, will encounter the love of God. Chapter has continued to work with Cathedral staff and community to provide a welcoming, open door and prayerful place to ensure we are a living witness to the Good News of God in Christ in the life of the wider diocesan and city communities. The Dean refers to the Cathedral as *“the tent with the wide open door”*, not only literally describing the large doorway but the fact that the Cathedral welcomes everyone, people of all faiths, or none. This has been more relevant since March 2019. Even when that physical door was closed due to Covid-19, we were still welcoming everyone. It is interesting to note that, for example, the Christmas Service of Nine Lessons and Carols attracted about 400 people in the building, and an additional 6,000 on line in the weeks following! Those 6,000 may not have been physically in the Cathedral, but were still witnessing the Good News and Christmas story with us.

The Transitional Cathedral is an icon in its own right and normally welcomes visitors in large numbers. 2020 started well with a busy first few months, but the national lockdown and subsequent travel restrictions has seen a huge decline in visitor numbers. As at May 2021, numbers are still nowhere near what they were prior to Covid, even taking into account the recently-opened Australian bubble. As you will see below, this has had a significant impact on Cathedral finances. The programme of charging for guided tours has not been re-started, although these are still offered on a donation basis.

For the calendar year 2020, we welcomed 23,569 people to worship services. This was down from 30,618 the previous year due to the impacts of Covid. 795 worship services were held during the year with average attendances of 195 on Sundays (8:00am and 10:00am Eucharists and 5:00pm Evensong) and 21 at the 16 services held during each week (Morning Prayer, Eucharist and Choral Evensong). 7,286 people received Holy Communion during the year.

During the year, we baptised four people of a variety of ages, held seven funerals and conducted two weddings. These numbers are not huge, but it needs to be remembered that the Cathedral is not a parish and accordingly does not seek to take these pastoral offices away from local parishes. The Cathedral does receive many people, however, who are genuine inquirers about the Christian faith and they are supported on their faith journey.

Services during last year’s Covid-19 closure took on a different flavour. Although the Cathedral was open for visitors from the start of Level 2, it wasn’t until Pentecost that we held the first service back in the Cathedral – over two months since the previous one. However, the routine of services continued with Sunday and Wednesday services being live-streamed. Services have continued to be streamed since our return to the Cathedral, and are being viewed by large numbers around the world. We are grateful to a donor who has paid for the camera and computer gear required.

Chapter appreciates the tremendous contribution all Cathedral Regulars make assist in maintaining the Christ-centred mission of the Cathedral. The resilience and support our Regulars show, added to their willingness to do what is asked of them, continues to humble us and remind us what an extraordinary community of which we are part.

Cathedral Regulars are active not only within our own community, offering service in a number of ways. Many demonstrate mission to the wider community – such as collegially supporting local parishes, and catering on occasions the evening meal at Ronald McDonald House. The Cathedral also supports the weekly community lunch held in Latimer Square by providing a wet weather venue. The Cathedral supports the Church Missionary Society project run by Miriam Tillman in Togo, West Africa and also Hamlin Fistula Hospital in Ethiopia. We have also provided the Cathedral as a venue free of charge for

events for Ronald MacDonald House, Hamlin Fistula, earthquake insurance claimants, workplace bullying seminar, climate change seminar, and as a place for debate in the lead up to the general election.

The Cathedral continues to be a place for community and public events, as well as for private functions. The number of corporate functions has declined significantly in the wake of covid, as conferences etc were cancelled and people reluctant to hold large public gatherings. Community and public events have continued, although there has been a noticeable reduction in those too

Whatever the nature of the event, a much wider variety of people experience the Cathedral than would through just worship services alone. Part of the Dean's welcome to these events invites people to think about their faith or a challenge to consider important issues facing our world.

After the 2020 Lenten and Easter programme was curtailed and reduced to an online presence only, it was a delight to be fully open for all of Lent and Easter this year. A series of well-attended study groups met weekly at the Deanery looking at the theme of "Christians, Muslims, and the Common Good", a series of seminars were held after Sunday Evening Evensongs on "Scripture in the Anglican Tradition". A seminar was also held on Palm Sunday was led by Professor David Tombs, The Howard Paterson Chair of Theology and Public Issues at the University of Otago on the topic of 'Confronting the Stigma of Naming Jesus as a Victim of Sexual Violence'.

The Theologians in the Cathedral preaching series was held again. A guest would preach at the Sunday service of Choral Evensong and lead a seminar after the service. Guests this year were the Revd Dr Christopher Holmes, Associate Professor in Systematic Theology at Otago University, the Revd Dr Sarah Harris from Carey Baptist College and the Very Revd Tony Curtis, Dean of Dunedin. This series was supported by Theology House.

The Cathedral has been an avenue for discussion on current issues of public concern, including the End of Life and Cannabis Law Reform referenda. These were also held in partnership with Theology House and we are grateful for their support. Public Meetings were held on a variety of issues including for EQC insurance claimants. The Dean had a significant role in the Memorial Service held two years after the Mosque shootings, as well as commemorations for Hiroshima Day

The Cathedral Choir has helped take the Cathedral's mission out of the building and into the wider community. The Choir have sung at a number of events at other venues. In the period leading up to Christmas, they took carols to both Burwood and Public Hospitals singing for patients and staff alike. There were recitals at Christchurch Airport, the Riverside Market, The Piano and at Ballantynes department store. These were opportunities to take the real Christmas story out into the community.

The Cathedral Singers also gave a very well-attended Christmas Recital in the Cathedral, and has sung at choral services when the Cathedral Choir were on holiday or unavailable.

### **RAISING UP YOUNG LEADERS**

The Cathedral has distinct groups to nurture into young leaders.

There is a devoted, Children's Church, *Kia Kaha' friends* that operates each Sunday morning during school terms. This group continues to grow, with an average attendance of a dozen or so. The Cathedral also ensures there is at least one service per school term that is offered with children in mind. These welcome children from all around the city and include: a *KidsFest* Service in July, a pet service in spring, and the Christmas Nativity service with animals in December. These services are well attended. During the school holidays, there is a children's 'make station' to offer a visitor experience for children. The 'make station' has crafts and activities on Christian themes for children to engage in. It was good to welcome back the children's "Stations of the Cross" service this Easter, having had to cancel it in 2019.

The Cathedral has celebrated the baptisms of a number of young adults over the year and continues to offer flexible pathways for people who wish to become disciples of Christ. There were no confirmations in 2020, but the Dean is running a programme in 2021. The Cathedral is committed to supporting Anglican Schools and the faith journeys of their students.

Our young servers continue to offer willing service and welcome new members to their ranks. This group of almost 20 young people juggle Cathedral commitments with their many educational and sporting ones, so it is a delight to see them learn to do so with commitment and understanding of the important role they play as young leaders in our community. Chapter has been grateful to the Rev'd Ben Randall and, in 2021, the Rev'd Cameron Pickering for leading this group.

The Cathedral Choristers have a unique role in the Diocese, singing at five choral services and several rehearsals each week during term times. Each year we welcome new younger members and farewell those in Year 8 heading to secondary school. It is heartening to see a number of the leavers return to sing with the adults in the back row. Being a chorister has a significant commitment and Chapter is grateful not only to the choristers themselves, but also their families for the support they give.

2020 was a highly significant year for the Choir. The Cathedral has had boy choristers since before the Consecration in 1881. This year Chapter announced the introduction of a separate group of girl choristers. As with the boys, this follows the tradition of the great English Cathedrals upon which our Choir is modelled and which have had girl choristers in some cases for over twenty years. The girls started towards the end of the year, their launch being delayed by Covid. At this stage they will not receive scholarships as do the boys, but will be awarded cash honoraria in recognition of their services. Chapter is particularly grateful to Dame Adrienne Stewart and Jenny May ONZM for their generosity and support as inaugural donors.

The girls currently sing every second Thursday with the Lay Clerks and Choral Scholars and sing the Sunday services once a term. This schedule will slowly expand with their experience. The girls will remain independent from the boys and will continue to sing services on their own and with the men of the Choir. Chapter is delighted with this new development in Cathedral music and we have the full support of the Board of The Cathedral Grammar School, which the girls attend.

The Cathedral was delighted that the girls were asked to sing at the ANZAC Day Dawn Service in front of a very large crowd.

Chapter continues to have a strong relationship with the Cathedral Grammar School which, of course, was founded in 1881 to educate the Cathedral choristers. The School continues to do well. There is a very positive atmosphere around the School and it is pleasing to note steady roll growth. Chapter is continuing to build a close relationship with the School Board, and the Dean meets regularly with Board Chair, Dr Simon Wynn-Thomas. Chapter and the School Board are currently working together on revising the School's Trust Deed.

Chapter is delighted to welcome Cathedral Grammar to at least four annual services at the Cathedral. Cathedral staff and clergy often attend events at the School, and Chapter members are often invited to these as well.

We have maintained our links with our two Anglican secondary schools, Christ's College and St Margaret's College. The confirmation programme, *Dialogue 2020*, run by the Dean for pupils from both schools, was unable to be completed last year due to Covid.

We have also welcomed St Mark's School, St Michael's School, Selwyn House, and Medbury School to the Cathedral, in addition to the many school groups who visit at Christmas time to leave presents under the tree and hear the Christmas story.

Throughout the year we hosted concerts for the Christchurch Youth Choir, Cathedral Grammar School & Watoto Ugandan Children's' Choir, and Burnside High.

#### **FAITHFUL STEWARDSHIP**

The Cathedral's finances continue to challenge us and to occupy a considerable amount of Chapter's time and energy. The first draft of the 2020 accounts shows a small operating surplus. However this is due to the Chapter receiving the Ministry of Social Development Covid Wage subsidy of \$126,200, receiving a grant of \$50,000 from the Diocese and a bequest of \$24,000. In addition to this, expenses have been kept as low as possible. Chapter is grateful to the Dean and lay staff for each taking a 20% cut in wages for half

of the year to assist with the Cathedral's finances. Without these measures, the year-end result would have been far more dire.

The result for the year 2021 is expected to be poor also and the Dean and Chapter are working on methods to increase income and further reduce expenditure.

The Cathedral Works & Finance Committee continues to oversee stewardship of the building and finances. This arrangement is working well. The Terry Stringer statue of The Risen Christ has been installed outside the Cathedral. This statue was located outside the main doors of the Cathedral and was a Diocesan gift to the City at the time of the Millennium. Chapter is immensely grateful to former Canon Jenny May for spearheading this project and getting the work done pro bono. Our thanks too go to SCAPE Public Art and Naylor Love for their generous support of this project.

The concept of a Transitional Belltower at the Cathedral is on-going and has reached the stage of having finished plans ready for consent. Expected funding from the Australian and New Zealand Association of Bellringers has disappointingly, and surprisingly, been declined. Alternatives are being investigated. This project will allow bells to be rung at the Cathedral and, equally important, it will allow for the training of new bellringers to start so that when we eventually get back into Cathedral Square a full team of experienced ringers will be able to ring for the opening services. In the meantime, the Cathedral bellringers are grateful to St Paul's, Papanui, for continuing to allow them join their ringers.

In 2019 Chapter approved the location of some "Cube Cabins" adjacent to the Portacom. These will vastly improve clergy office space and give a good room for meetings and for the Sunday children's church, study groups etc. These are relocatable so will be moved off site again when Cathedral ministry returns to Cathedral Square. The Parish of Ross South Westland is funding of this project out of insurance proceeds and Chapter is very grateful for their support. These are expected to be in place in the middle of 2021.

Cathedral staff: We were delighted that the Rev'd Ben Randall, our former Assistant Priest, was appointed as Vicar of St Mary's Parish, Timaru. The Rev'd Cameron Pickering was appointed as Assistant Priest from December 2020. We are delighted to have Cameron as part of the team.

In 2020 Lay Canon Rosemary Allison retired as a Cathedral Regulars' representative on Chapter. She was replaced by Canon Susan Rendall. We thank Rosemary for her service and support and welcome Canon Rendall to Chapter and look forward to working with her. At the end of April 2021, the Ven Canon Helen Roud announced her retirement from Chapter. The process is underway to find a new clerical canon.

In 2016, Chapter was the first ministry unit in the Diocese of Christchurch to be officially certified as a Living Wage Employer. We have continued this into 2021 and all staff and long-term contractors are paid the living wage. We encourage other ministry units and the Anglican Centre to join us.

The Cathedral volunteers continue to do a fantastic job. During the week these tireless people are the first face of the Cathedral and provide the warm welcome we expect all visitors to receive. From a financial perspective, it is a proven fact that a visitor who receives a warm welcome is more likely to make a donation, so the volunteers are essential for our financial viability. Without the volunteers, the Cathedral would not be able to function as the 7 day a week operation it is. Chapter is hugely grateful for the number of hours donated to the Cathedral.

There have been a wide variety of events held in the Cathedral. These have ranged from community meetings to concerts and recitals to the big catered corporate functions, albeit not as many as occurred before Covid. We are grateful to Moveable Feasts for their ongoing co-operation and support. Wherever possible, we try to schedule events to impact as little as possible on the regular Cathedral routine of services, but there are times when this is not possible. Opening the Cathedral to community events has been part of the Cathedral's pastoral response to the City. It is also helping to keep the doors open for worship, welcoming all visitors every day of the year, and being a thriving symbol of hope in our recovering city.

Although many of these events do provide important income for the Cathedral, we do host community and not-for-profit groups for little or no charge. We aim to welcome as wider part of the community as

possible to the Cathedral. Six corporate events were held in the 2020 calendar year and 22 community events, down significantly from the previous year.

Chapter remains aware of the many challenges facing the Cathedral in the Square. The body leading the representation of the Church in the project is the Church Property Trustees. One issue recently has been the relocation of the Citizens' War Memorial. The Dean and Chapter were the integral body when the memorial was located on the site. It has been heartening to see the various stakeholders uniting together to come up with a plan to strengthen and relocate the Citizens War Memorial on to land owned by the Christchurch City Council, and for the Memorial to be formally gifted to the Christchurch City Council.

At the time of writing is great to see work progressing very well on site. Chapter is the body that will eventually take over governance of the re-instated Cathedral and the staff have the institutional knowledge of what happened there before the Quakes. It is appreciated that the Dean and, sometimes, Cathedral Administrator are on design committees and that Chapter is being consulted.

Chapter and Cathedral staff work closely with the Bishop, Diocesan and CPT staff in the areas that concern both the Transitional Cathedral and its predecessor in the Square. Chapter is grateful to Bishop Peter for his warm support and advice.

As we come to the end of our eighth full year in the Transitional Cathedral we are aware that we may only be half way through our residency of this building. We look forward to the next year, with all the challenges and rewards, highs and lows, delights and disappointments that will come with it. It would be nice, however, if the next 12 months were uneventful!

*Chris Oldham, Chapter Secretary  
May 2021*