

# Southwell Minster

*The Cathedral and Parish Church  
of the Blessed Virgin Mary*



*Annual Review 2017*





# The Dean's Welcome



Cathedrals were in the limelight in 2017, under the gaze of the wider Church of England's concern to understand more completely why some are flourishing as centres of mission and worship, while others are facing severe financial and organisational difficulties. Southwell Cathedral is categorised by the Church Commissioners as 'just about managing', but nevertheless the Chapter has not been complacent. Our work has focused on planning for financial sustainability, ensuring good governance and compliance in the ever-changing areas of risk management, cash flow monitoring, safeguarding, health and safety and human resources. The Chapter has completed a self-evaluation process in preparation for developing a renewed five-year strategic plan supporting mission, ministry and growth. Our Diocese is clear in its aim to 'Grow Disciples: wider, younger, deeper' and we are committed to be at the heart of the Diocese sharing this ancient Minster church as a prayerful, welcoming and resourcing well of spiritual refreshment and pilgrimage.

Unexpected but wonderful news came of the successful bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a grant to develop the first phase of the £2.2 million scheme of conservation, repair and interpretation of the stunning Chapter House. Much hard work combined with exciting opportunities lie ahead (see p. 10).

The annual Southwell Lecture was revived in November after a few years' lapse and, appropriately in the 500th anniversary year, the title was 'The Reformation and why it matters'. The Rt Revd Dr Graham Tomlin, Bishop of Kensington and notable church historian, drew a good-sized audience from across the Diocese. Theological engagement and learning is pivotal to the Cathedral's ministry. During the Patronal Festival weekend, Professor John Milbank gave an open lecture to the College of Canons entitled 'Populism: Danger or Opportunity?', reflecting on the fast-moving socio-political changes across the western world and how the Church can connect to this sometimes-bewildering new context.

In July, the Justice Action Group made a vital link with Syrian families who had recently come to the county, organising a special visit to the Minster, children's activities and a splendid tea for over 90 people; they

made it a memorable occasion and one that we will build on as we continue to focus outwardly, connecting with those most in need of support and hope. We have renewed our partnerships within the worldwide Church during the year, in particular with the Diocese of Jerusalem through the visit of Canon Dr Fadi Diab and a group of Palestinian Christians, and with Bishop Dino Gabriel and the Diocese of Natal.

We hosted over 50 'special' services, many of them reoccurring annually and important for the Minster serving a varied diocese and county. We are exceptionally well supported by the Lord-Lieutenant, Sir John Peace, as well as the High Sheriff and many civic leaders and dignitaries, and we plan to build and expand our links and partnership.

The year ended with a busy December, with encouraging numbers at carol services, including a successful new carol service for Framework that highlighted their impressive work with the homeless. Southwell Minster, as a cathedral and parish church, has unique opportunities to intrigue all our visitors and worshippers with the Christian faith, presenting it as joyful, life-giving and utterly relevant to the challenges of the 21st century. The community of dedicated staff and volunteers make all of this possible, and for each one I am profoundly thankful.

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*Dean Nicola (r) with Bishop Paul (l) and The Rt Revd Dr Graham Tomlinson, who gave this year's Southwell Lecture*



# Worship and Liturgy

Resilience is one of the words that comes to mind when looking back over 2017: the need for it both nationally and much closer to home, and the creative response to many of the challenges facing us.

At the start of the year, Simon Hogan and Ed Turner continued in their positions of responsibility as Acting Rector Chori and Assistant Director of Music. Friends and colleagues filled in when needed, but it was a punishing schedule that they oversaw with grit and flair in equal measure! They innovated when they thought it would add to the quality and excitement of worship, while the more pressure there was, the more they responded, with outstanding playing and thoughtful direction. Since then, it has been a great delight to welcome Paul, Ruth and little Martha into the life of this place. All three together have made such a contribution already, with both Paul and Ruth contributing to Friday Lunchtimes and Martha adding to the prayers occasionally at Evensong!

The changes within the Music Department do not minimise the continuous work of producing vast quantities of services and the continual pressure to alter and correct them. Jasmine Oakes has weathered this often-thankless task for some years now, with quiet resolve and extraordinary grace. Vincent Ashwin also continues to support and help in gently assisting with eagle eye corrections; it has been such a reassurance to be able to chat through nuances of personal approaches to Eucharistic liturgies with a wise and gracious guide.

Two very different services came my way during this last year. First of these was the national gathering of the British Anglican Cursillo movement in September. With the theme of pilgrimage very much in their DNA, it was fun to write a couple of prayers specifically for the service. Secondly, from 2014 I have been drawn more into the events and anniversaries surrounding the First World War in order to produce meaningful commemorations and services not only for local people but representing the county and the region's own collective memory. We held a commemoration service for the Battles of Knightsbridge and El Alamein, both of which are of great regional importance, and the Quire was filled on this occasion by

from serving men and women, veterans and family members. I was particularly proud of the Choristers, many of whom are quite young, as they listened carefully to the two moving accounts of both battles.

The country suffered setbacks this year in the shape of terrorist attacks and the Grenfell Tower fire. At the Minster, we have tried to respond through our coming together in prayer; holding those most affected continually within the frame of our major services. It is a time where we need to support one another and show resilience not only in how we live and how we think but also in how we express our beliefs and our worship for the strengthening of our communities. Though security of our buildings increases, we are still fortunate we can open our doors every day thanks to the dedication of the Vergers and our volunteers – vital for all who come and pray and wish for a world transformed.

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*Celebrating all of Creation at our Animal Blessing Service in October*



*One of our Cathedral Carol Services in December*





# Cathedral Choirs



The Choirs of Lincoln Cathedral and Southwell Minster rehearsing for Evensong together



Rectors Chori past and present: Paul Hale (l) and Paul Provost (r) after the latter's Admission Evensong



The start of 2017 was an unusual one for the Minster's Music Department, as for the first time since 1989 it included the appointment of a new Rector Chori in January. After the interview process, the term got into full swing with the Patronal Festival weekend. As is customary, Evensong with Admission of Stewards was sung on the eve of this Festival – on this occasion by the Girl Choristers and Lay Clerks – and included Macmillan's wonderful *Tota pulchra es*. Following an energetic Schubert *Mass in G* the following morning, boys, girls and Lay Clerks all joined forces for an epic Festal Evensong with music to match.

Joint services were a feature of the Lent term, providing a wonderful opportunity to meet and work with musicians from other local churches. The Minster Chorale began February half term singing our Sunday services with the choir from St Peter's, Nottingham. Meanwhile, the Boy Choristers and Lay Clerks joined with their opposite numbers from Lincoln Cathedral for Evensong; and the Boy Choristers sang Evensong with the Choristers of St Mary Magdalene, Newark. Adding to this busy schedule was a performance of Stainer's *Crucifixion*, a fitting mid-Lent devotion. The Lent term concluded with an astounding Passiontide Procession – Finzi's imaginative setting of *Lo, the full, final sacrifice* its climactic point – and all of our choirs playing their part in the Holy Week and Easter services.

At this point, my thanks are due to Simon Hogan and Edward Turner for their tremendous hard work and dedication throughout the two terms when they were "acting up". It is always a tough job, but their skill and ambition resulted in a large group of musicians in good heart and ready for the next chapter.

The summer term began only a week after Easter, and with a new Rector Chori to admit! Colleagues, Chorister parents and the whole Minster Community made us immediately welcome, so it was great to see the full Cathedral Choir (as well as a few interlopers from Surrey) at my Admission Evensong. There was then a very full term to negotiate, including multiple weddings, the Rogationtide Procession and the Ascension Day Tower Service. A particularly spectacular occasion was during the half-

term break when Simon Hogan played all six of Vierne's Organ Symphonies in one day as part of an anniversary celebration.



The Cathedral Choir at the top of the tower on Ascension Day

At the end of the summer term, we came together once more for the final Evensong of the year, at which we were to say farewell firstly to a few Choristers, but also to Edward Turner. Ed's valediction was of note as it was the second time he had left the Music department: indeed, he was proudly wearing his Chorister medal and a Tippet for this second valediction! The music, including Howells's *St Paul's Service* and Walton's *The Twelve*, was sung with real enthusiasm and was a fitting send-off for those leaving.

We were extremely busy in the new academic year with a number of important occasions, including the annual St Cecilia Concert. To celebrate Francis Jackson's 100th birthday, the Cathedral Choir (Boys, Girls and Lay Clerks), together with Simon Hogan on the organ and Owen Sparkes as narrator, performed his extraordinary monodrama *Daniel in Babylon*, alongside anthems by Benjamin Britten.

At the start of December, the Boy and Girl Choristers went to sing carols at Norwood Park and the Workhouse respectively. Although this is a busy time of year, the opportunity to take our talented youngsters out to sing elsewhere is one not to be missed, and I know that both organisations appreciated our taking the time to make this happen. It was, however, a little odd singing Christmas carols even before the Advent Procession! Two weeks later, the Minster Chorale delighted a packed Nave with a performance of Handel's *Messiah*. Christmas itself felt joyous, if exhausting, and saw for the first time the inclusion of the Girl Choristers in our Cathedral Carol Services. Music at the Minster is thriving and



*'Absolutely fantastic celebration of singing and music. Thank you for offering our son this wonderful opportunity.'*



*The Minster Chorale's performance of Handel's Messiah in December*

extremely busy, thanks to the hard work and dedication of the Organists; Choristers and their parents; Lay Clerks; members of the Minster Chorale; SMCA; and so many others. There is much that can be achieved, and it is exciting to look forward to 2018.

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*Above: Children from Coddington Primary School at the 'Celebration of Choral Outreach' in October*

*Below: The High Sheriff of Nottinghamshire alongside Outreach leaders Michael Gregory (l) and Erik Sharman (r), two Choristers, and children from Forest Town Primary School*

## Choral Outreach

The 'Celebration of Choral Outreach' held on Wednesday 11 October was the highlight of 2017. The team had previously run projects at Coddington and Carnarvon Primary Schools for entire year groups. On this occasion, we welcomed the choirs from the two schools for a day of singing activities and storytelling in the Archbishop's Palace, finishing with an afternoon performance in the Minster.

The day had a Tudor theme, reflecting the history of the Archbishop's Palace, with songs and stories about Henry VIII, Anne of Cleves and Cardinal Wolsey. For the concluding concert, the school choirs were joined by the Minster's Boy Choristers – all children and singing leaders wearing a special blue Choral Outreach T-shirt for the occasion. An enthusiastic audience of over 100 attended the performance, made up of families and friends of the children taking part, members of the wider Minster Community and invited guests. Feedback from the event included one child saying, 'I loved this morning and I'm excited to sing here', while a parent wrote: 'Absolutely fantastic celebration of singing and music. Thank you for offering our son this wonderful opportunity.'

The regular pattern of school projects and singing sessions for children attending Time

Travelling continued in 2017 in addition to the numerous extra events in which we participated. Choristers continue to take part in Choral Outreach as young leaders and as ever we extend our warmest thanks to their families for their encouragement and support. It was also a particular pleasure this year to have the support of the High Sheriff of Nottinghamshire, Col. David Sneath, who attended sessions at three of the schools in which the team worked, as well as the October Celebration.

The Choral Outreach Programme remains indebted to the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund for specific projects, as well as to The John Pilling Trust for their continuing support of our wider work.

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# Education

*'The day was amazingly put together and I can't thank you enough – the children were engrossed.'*



A calligraphy lesson at 'Palace Tales'

One of the many rewards of my work in the Education Department is bringing people together through both our formal and informal learning events. At our Interfaith Day for Primary Schools back in March, a panel of adults representing six faith groups was asked by a child: 'How can you all be friends when you believe different things?' Standing together in the Cathedral, having spent a morning of laughter, sharing food, clothes and customs together it seemed to be a strange question to ask – and yet, it brought up some truths about society. How wonderful for the Minster to be a place where honest questions may be asked and answered, friendships made and barriers broken down. In truth, I can't remember what was said in answer to the question, but that day nearly 200 children made a pledge to build and strengthen relationships across different faith communities.

On that note, I was part of a team which arranged for local Syrian families to come to visit in July. We had planned a beautiful afternoon tea and games in the Education Garden, sitting on the grass among the trees and getting to know one another... But the weather had other ideas, and our 70+ visitors, plus a team of staff and volunteers, squeezed into the State Chamber for tea following crafts, games and activities in the Minster. These lovely families were delighted to make the trip to Southwell, and seemed to enjoy our hospitality. We were equally delighted to meet them and spend time with them and, despite language barriers, new friends were made.

The team of nearly 200 Education volunteers is drawn from across the county and beyond, bringing together people of all walks of life and backgrounds. It is a huge privilege to work with these amazing people, to discover where their skills and interests lie and to encourage them to bring out their best in delivering high quality learning to our visitors. Their input is appreciated by children, school staff and families alike, who love meeting them and working with them. We received this feedback from a Foundation Stage teacher: **'The volunteers were wonderful. They had a lovely manner and their prior experience of working with children clearly shone through.'** Our volunteer team supported us in welcoming around 8,000 visitors this

year at 65 events. I would like to thank each and every one for their kindness and support to me, Matt and Donna, and for their generosity with their time.



Key Stage 1 Time Travelling in June

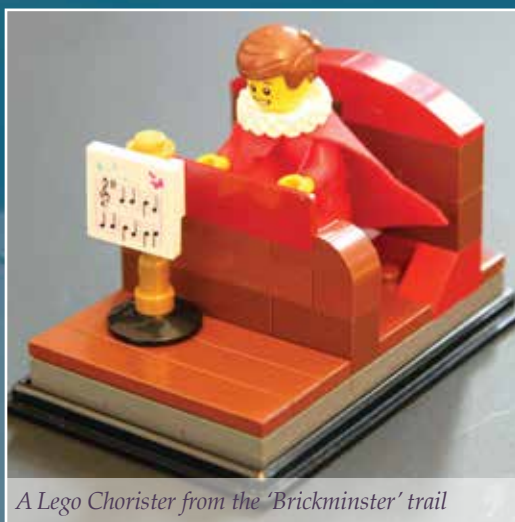
School visits were a delight in 2017, covering RE, History, Story-telling, GCSE revision, Art, Architecture and our new Medieval Investigation (to name but a few). The Time Travelling pilgrimage days for primary schools were well attended, with the consensus from teaching staff being that the quality of activities was excellent – this is a real testimony to the hard work and commitment of the team. We were delighted to receive a generous gift of £1500 from the MU's Easter 'Count Your Blessings' fundraiser towards the work of Time Travelling.

We piloted our new 'Palace Tales', written as part of the HLF Archbishop's Palace project, with 200 children attending over three days early in the year. We wrote with quills, handled artefacts and, through the stories, learned about the Palace's story from Tudor times through the Civil War and into the Victorian era. In the early autumn, we enjoyed learning about uses of herbs in medicine and cookery, and had a wonderful time cooking a modern pottage in the State Chamber. According to one parent helper, **'The day was amazingly put together and I can't thank you enough – the children were engrossed.'**

Along with two of our Stewards, I have been reviewing materials for visiting children and families. Back in the autumn of 2016, we agreed an action plan to phase



in new leaflets and to have completed the task by the end of 2018. Eventually this will mean that we have some permanent themed trails available for casual family visitors at the weekend or in the school holidays, along with seasonal or 'special' trails at certain times of year. This plan led to the introduction of a new permanent trail launched in time for February half-term, along with a special exhibition of beautiful pictures from the historic library: 'Fabulous Beasts'. Seasonal Lent/Easter and Advent/Christmas trails were also introduced, but then a special summer Lego trail called 'Brickminster' proved to be the blockbuster, with 1000 trail leaflets being used over its six-week run during the summer holidays, and around 350 people coming to the drop-in family day of crafts, games and activities on the theme. I had a wonderful time creating the trail, with the talents of local father-and-son team James and David who created the models for us. Feedback for the trail included the following: **'We came on a cold damp afternoon... our granddaughter was entranced from the moment she was handed the torch and binoculars! We had as much fun as she did.'**



*A Lego Chorister from the 'Brickminster' trail*

Family learning events have become a regular fixture in our calendar, and this year saw Donna (Learning Assistant: Palace Project) introduce a new Civil War-themed day in May, when the Sealed Knot re-enactors set up an encampment in the garden, and children could meet King Charles and demand new laws to be made! We had a repeat of the Romans-themed crafty morning in February and an extremely well attended medieval-themed



*The medieval-themed day in August*

day in August, when Robin Hood, Maid Marian and some merry outlaws popped along for the day. With archery, music, medieval wood crafts, picnics and sunshine, it was truly a day to remember.

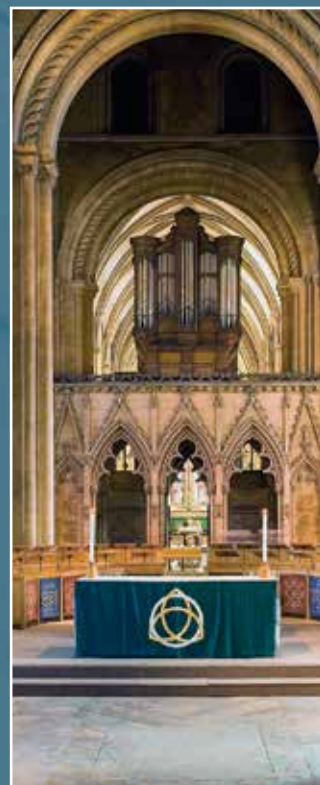
One of my favourite events in the calendar is our annual September Discovery Day, an informal day of workshops, tours and talks for adults. This time the keynote speaker was local archaeologist Andy Gaunt, from Mercian Archaeology. A highlight of the day was meeting artist Nicholas Mynheer, designer of the new Great War Window. Delegates were delighted to hear about the creative process which led to the final design, and privileged to see his drawings as the project evolved into the stunning window we see today.

Thank you to the Minster Community for allowing us to continue to reach out to families and schools, enabling them to experience a little of the wonder of this extraordinary place.

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## Pastoral Care

The occasional offices offer significant opportunity for ministry at important times both of joy and of sorrow. This year there have been 23 baptisms, 18 weddings, a service of prayer and dedication after a civil marriage, 17 funerals and 7 memorial services.

The Pastoral Group, coordinated by Elizabeth Yule, continues to help where needed with those who are housebound or unwell and need of help. They often advise on the appropriateness of a clergy visit and whether Home Communion would be valued. The group has also supported the annual Bereavement Service, Harvest

distribution, Westgate Services and Mothering Sunday. Barbara Tittensor continues her valued ministry at Burgage Court and Highfields.

Much of our pastoral care is exercised through the Minster's many different fellowships; a notable example is the House Groups, whose hosts and leaders play an important role.

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*One of the many weddings in the Minster last year*  
© Hannah Hall Photography

## Churchwardens and Sidesmen

The role of Sidesmen at the Minster is firstly to welcome, seat and make sure that all members of the congregation have all that they require for a particular service, and secondly to ensure, as far as possible, that services run smoothly without interruption. This role is provided at the main services each Sunday and for most other bigger services; it is particularly important in respect of visitors and newcomers who are not familiar with the Minster. It is hoped that worshippers will feel that they were made most welcome and that they will leave Southwell saying that this was the case.

There is currently a team of around 50 active Sidesmen, including Churchwardens past and present. We are considered to be the "eyes and ears" of the Minster, providing feedback from congregation members which may not have been recorded formally or referred to members of the clergy or the Vergers. In some respects, Sidesmen assist the Vergers, whose advice and general help is always greatly appreciated.

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## Vergers

During 2017, the Vergers were as busy as ever. Just to give a flavour of the services and events that we were involved in, we had the usual run of Daily Offices every day of the year together with 23 baptisms, 18 weddings, 15 funerals, seven memorial services, 27 diocesan events, 51 special services and 93 other events such as conferences, concerts and meetings, attracting over 24,000 people. Our duties for each of these included preparation for the service, tidying away afterwards and of course participation during them: leading processions, working the sound system, providing first aid cover and the regular moving of chairs and putting up stages. We have also provided staff in the Archbishop's Palace and Education Garden, meeting and liaising with organisers and setting out for events such as wedding receptions, conferences and parties, often until the small hours of the following day.

I would like to thank my colleagues and just as importantly our families, who support us tirelessly behind the scenes.

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*Andrew Todd leads the procession at the Queen's Birthday Service*



# Minster School Chaplain

2017 has been an exciting year for chaplaincy at the Cathedral and the Minster School, with several new projects as well as building on ministry already underway.

The year started with the fun Playful Cathedral week in January: 'Kings, Creatures and Angels'. 200 local primary students spent an afternoon at the Minster exploring our inspiring medieval stone carvings, especially those on the Pulpitum. The students learned about the Gothic style and how it embraced a vision of all things held under the wings of God's love: creatures and plants, imagination and humour.

Creation Sunday in February saw a special all-age service attended by local Brownies, who also took part in the sermon slot. 'Messy Minster!' continued to be popular with local families, meeting in Trebeck Hall once a month, with worship in the Minster followed by food together back in the hall – encouraging quality time with parents/grandparents and children together is a great gift to all. 'Messy Minster!' has become our prime local children and family ministry for the Minster as a parish. Our regular pre-school group, 'Mini Minsters', met once a fortnight in the Hoskyns Room throughout the year, hearing Bible stories and making crafts.



*Rembrandt, David at Prayer, etching, 1652, which was prayed with as part of the 'Rembrandt's Passion' Quiet Day at Sacrista Prebend in March*

In March, I led a Quiet Day at Sacrista Prebend entitled 'Rembrandt's Passion', which was a joy to share with those taking part and was well supported. We explored his life and ideas and prayed with Rembrandt's works, including three original Rembrandt etchings displayed in the chapel.

In November, Year 8 Minster School student and flag-enthusiast Mattie Bridges was given the honour of raising the flag at the top of the Minster Tower for Prince Charles's birthday.



*Mattie Bridges flies the Union flag from the Minster Tower, assisted by Deputy Head Verger Michael Tawn, Fr Matthew and SEN teacher Mrs Jo Woodhouse from the Minster School*

The Minster School changed its timetable from September and the chaplaincy team in school took up the challenge to re-think some of our ministry and to offer two new regular events: an 'Explore' drop-in during lunch time has proved to be immensely popular and has increased chaplaincy contact with students significantly, and a half-termly student communion service has also been very popular. The Confirmation Group in school this year was full and went well.

Prayer Week in July was expanded somewhat from the previous year and all chaplains took part. Thank you to our ecumenical volunteer chaplaincy team in school for all you do; it's hugely valued! Whole-school end-of-term services took the themes of 'Faith Journeys' (Easter), 'Family' (Summer) and 'Jesus: Light of the World' (Christmas). The Foundation Service continues to grow and the talk was led by Mr Parris. I supported and attended the new school Ethos Group as we steer the school in articulating our Christian foundation in clearer ways.

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# The Leaves of Southwell



A significant starting point for a review of 2017 is the earthquake at Lincoln in 1185. It led to the rebuilding of Lincoln Cathedral in 1260 and the introduction of a radical new style of architecture now described as Gothic. Whilst pioneered in France, in England it became more elaborate, ornate and elegant. Ribbed vaulting, flying buttresses and pointed arches enabled larger windows, and greater light could now draw attention to detail within the building. This led to a particular development in England, where detailed decoration of more expressive religious art and sculpture within the building became a notable feature. This included carefully observed natural foliage, symbolic creatures and smiling human faces that signified a living church coming into bloom. When work began on the Chapter House of Southwell Minster in 1287, the artistry and skill of the stonemasons was at its zenith. By common consent, the Leaves of Southwell are the finest medieval example of naturalistic foliate carving in the country. In the words of Simon Jenkins in his 2016 book on English cathedrals, Southwell Minster's Chapter House 'played host to a burst of genius. A corner of Nottinghamshire was seized by a collective magic.'

It is over 70 years since Sir Nicholas Pevsner wrote his classic King Penguin monograph about the Leaves. The book is rightly celebrated but Pevsner limited his attention to only half the carvings. Further, it was not his brief to write about the artistic, religious and mythological significance of the sculptures. Thanks to the Cathedral's archaeologist, Philip Dixon, we now know a great deal more about the construction of the Chapter House and its positioning near ancient well springs that supplied baptismal pools. This may well prove to have a significant bearing on the interpretation and symbolism of the carvings.

There are many lines of enquiry to be pursued. It could, for example, be a visual metaphor of the *Beatus Vir* ('Blessed is the man': the opening words of Psalm 1), where the green men offer symbols of human flourishing. They are 'like trees by pools of water that produce fruit in due season and leaves that do not wither' (Ps. 1: 3-4). It could be that the Cathedral's dedication to the Blessed Virgin Mary also offers a clue. The enclosed garden described in the Song of Songs is the place

where the beloved is to be found and many of the leaves such as hawthorn are traditionally associated with her. Or again, the eight sides of the Chapter House may point us to a new Garden of Eden and a new creation. An eight-sided building, the presence of water, leaves traditionally associated with curative properties: all suggestive of a garden that is a place of healing for the nations and a place of renewal.

Times have changed, but there are still lessons to be learnt from the close attention of the artist to nature and their understanding of what constitutes human flourishing. The author Robert McFarlane notes that the latest Oxford Junior dictionary omits words such as 'ash', 'buttercup' and 'cowslip', because they are thought to be no longer relevant to modern childhood. 'Blackberry' has a new meaning as a smartphone, not as a fruit. Might not the Leaves of Southwell, with their close observation of the natural world, help us all to reconnect and ensure it is seen as of intrinsic value and not simply to be exploited? Further, man and nature are understood as part of the same creation and the carvings are used as metaphor as well as decoration. Health-giving plants are chosen; there is vibrancy and liveliness;



Ancient architecture explored afresh with the help of modern technology



there is imagination and realism, order and diversity; all expressive of a living, growing and joyful community.

There is much of interest that we think should be made accessible to a wider public and which can be developed. The Leaves are not only a wonderful gift from our architectural heritage but an extraordinary resource in our present culture. Regrettably, however, they are currently at risk: they need protection from leaking roofs and lack appropriate heating and environmental controls. Further, there is no lighting. Our aspiration is to offer a lighting scheme that will enhance the carvings and show what the Chapter House might once have looked like. It may even depict the work of individual masons. Together with an imaginative interpretation scheme we hope that the project might ensure that the Chapter House be enjoyed by future generations.

The Minster is delighted that all this been recognised by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), which has awarded an initial grant of £352,697 to develop a project in a way that will protect, interpret and better present the medieval carvings to a wider public. Sir Peter Luff, chair of HLF, notes that the grant

is both to 'ensure the fabric of this marvellous building is secure and enable more people to visit and enjoy it.' A further grant of £2.2 million to implement our plans is contingent on the success of the development phase and the need for the Minster to provide partnership funding and meet ineligible costs. Thanks to generous pledges and gifts from the Friends of Southwell Cathedral, the Chimes Trust and the Simons Minster Charity Repair Fund, along with initial private benefaction, we close 2017 only £180,000 short of our target.

Many centuries have passed since the earthquake in Lincoln with its unforeseen consequences for a corner of Nottinghamshire. Our Chapter House represents a moment of perfection that defines the highpoint of a movement from which we have much to celebrate and to learn. It is telling that we call the carvings not the Leaves of Southwell Minster's Chapter House but the Leaves of Southwell itself. They are a defining characteristic not only of the town, but emblematic of Sherwood Forest at the heart of England. They are of national significance as a masterpiece of medieval art, a celebration of human flourishing amidst the natural world and an icon of religious faith.

For future updates, please visit our new project website:  
[www.leavesofsouthwell.org.uk](http://www.leavesofsouthwell.org.uk).

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A visitor explores the Chapter House with a Steward





Above: Rebecca Mercer, Adam and Eve in the loving shelter of the Tree of Life, displayed as part of *The Adam & Eve Project*



# Adult Learning

## House Groups

House Groups are an important part of the Minster's life. They provide an opportunity for members of the congregation to learn and grow, get to know each other, share concerns about life and faith, and engage with issues being addressed by the Minster as a whole. In the early part of the year, House Groups completed a series of meetings on 'Let Loose with the Bible', while from September, 80 people took part in 7 groups. The focus of the series has been 'Prophetic Voices': learning about the messages of Old Testament prophets, in particular Jeremiah, Isaiah and Ezekiel, and seeking to interpret their relevance to our lives and times. Discussions have been challenging and stimulating and, as in previous years, have been valuably complemented by related sermons.

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## Historic Chapter Library

This year, a highlight among the many significant books displayed in the Chapter House Passage was the commemoration of 500 years since the start of the Protestant Reformation. Works of Erasmus and of Luther were displayed, including our copy of Luther's *Table Talk*. At other times, illustrated books delighted visitors, depicting for example 'The Garden of Eden' during *The Adam & Eve Project*. To demonstrate the variety of topics contained in the library, we have also displayed scientific works, maps, Bibles and examples of English literature, all of which have attracted keen interest.

**Christine Whitehouse,**  
Librarian Historic  
(until December 2017)

**Enquiries to Marion Oswald,**  
Librarian Historic  
(from January 2018)

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## Sacrista Prebend Book Group

This ecumenical group continues to thrive and, as usual, to welcome new members, while the books we discuss, both theological and otherwise, are as varied as our members. Since last February, we have considered a book by Billy Graham on how to cope with and transform our experience of old age; Dietrich Bonhoeffer's famous *Letters from Prison*; John Williams's beautifully crafted post-war novel *Stoner* about finding dignity and worth in a rather sad and apparently undistinguished scholar's life; a novel by Rose Tremain about the life of an eastern European immigrant to the UK who eventually returns to a successful life in his own country; *Harvest* by John Crace, a novel set at the cusp of the Enclosure movement, where the arrival of three strangers leads to disaster for a whole village; the much loved 12th-century classic *On Loving God*, by St Bernard of Clairvaux; and finally, Philippa Gregory's *The White Queen* about the eventful life of Elizabeth Woodville, wife of Edward IV, mother of the 'Princes in the Tower' and grandmother of Henry VIII.

Next time, we shall be studying *Hanging by a Thread*, a small book written by Dr Sam Wells, Vicar of St Martin in the Fields, famous for its work among homeless people, about how to interpret the Crucifixion within the context of our modern world.

With gratitude to all our members for the richness and depth of their contributions,

**Olga Hudson, Secretary**

Tel: 01636 814434



*Martin Luther's Table Talk*



# Mission and Outreach

The Mission Partnership Group continues to focus on God's mission outside the Minster in partnership with other Christians. This focus comes from visiting speakers, regular articles in *Southwell Leaves*, daily prayer, and by sending money. The Minster gives away 10% of planned giving each year, and special collections in 2017 meant we could send further money to help projects in Yemen, Myanmar, Ethiopia and Palestine, as well as Family Care in Nottingham and an international climate change campaign group.

There were many occasions in 2017 when Minster members learned about our partners: Bishop Dino Gabriel from Natal preached at Evensong in the Minster in July, where the Bishops of Natal and of Southwell and Nottingham signing a declaration of friendship and commitment. In addition, Stewart Ayling, of the Mission Aviation Fellowship in Tanzania, spoke to members of the congregation after a Sunday morning service in August, and the preacher at Harvest Thanksgiving was the Revd Professor Michael Northcott, a theologian of climate change.

Meanwhile, the Minster/St George's, Jerusalem Partnership was delighted to welcome Canon Dr Fadi Diab, a priest from Ramallah in the West Bank, to the Minster, where he preached on Mission Sunday. He was here as part of a visit by a delegation from the Diocese of Jerusalem to this Diocese in October. The group of six leading Christians spoke movingly about their challenges not only to public audiences in local churches and Nottingham University, but also in an important meeting with local MPs. Their talks were all the more poignant as 2017 marked the centenary of the Balfour Declaration. This British government initiative in November 1917 called both for a Jewish homeland and for protection of the rights of the indigenous population, including the 90% majority who were Arab. The Partnership felt strongly that it should mark this event and compiled an exhibition, 'Promises, Promises', in the Chapter House in October, which portrayed the complex history of events in Israel/Palestine around and following the Balfour Declaration. It also demonstrated strong local links between the history, both past and present, and the lives of people with local connections (e.g. General

Allenby, T.E Lawrence, Rana Tannous) who were and continue to be influenced by the events of the last 100 years. The exhibition was attended by many local people and visitors over a fortnight and culminated in a conference entitled 'Unfinished Business' which was attended by 75 people.



*The visit of a delegation from the Diocese of Jerusalem to our own Diocese*

The Mission Partnership Group also discussed the ambitious project to enhance the Chapter House with its unique sculpted leaves, and expressed a hope it might include a mission focus. This might be based on (a) the leaves as a sign of Creation, and showing how Church people are involved in conserving the planet for the future; and (b) the leaves reflecting the Biblical saying that 'the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations', in which today's Christians work for world peace.

**The Revd Canon Vincent Ashwin**  
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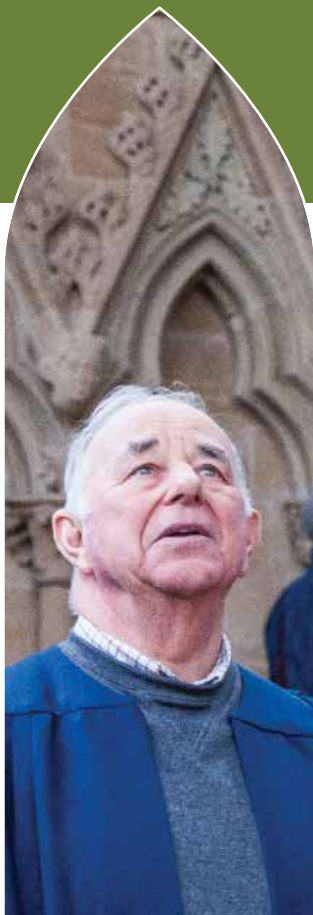
**Helen Sills**  
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*Children at St Matthew's School, Forbes Reef, Swaziland, which we support*



# Guild of Stewards



This last year has been, predictably, a busy and challenging one, and it is gratifying to see the Guild grow in strength in delivering an excellent quality of welcome. In most cases, we are the first and last image that visitors have of our outstanding Minster. Membership of the Guild now stands at 130, of which 28 have been trained as guides for the Cathedral itself, six for the Archbishop's Palace and nine as tower guides.

The challenge facing our guides is increasing, as we are seeing an increase in requests by special interest groups from all over the country. We have shown guides from other cathedrals – Lincoln, Wells and Peterborough this year – the wonders of our own building. In turn, we have visited Ely and York, seeking to discuss and learn how they organise themselves and how their tours are run. 1,250 visitors came as part of organised tour groups, while we also ran Open Days offering internal and tower tours on selected Saturdays and bank holidays, at the BBC Big Day Out in April and at the Heritage Open Days in September. More than 150 people climbed the tower across the year.

This year, we have recruited nine new Stewards. However, our training focus is not solely on our new recruits: we have launched a new training programme for all of our Stewards. Over 80 of our membership are participating in this, which is a statement

to its quality and success. In addition, we organise Development Days, the first of which took place in February. As part of this, Charlie Leggatt and Nigel Coates updated us on the progress of the Southwell Leaves Project; Jacqui Jones discussed her role as Canon Precentor; Diana Ives explained her educational role; and Andrew Todd looked at his position and the challenges of being the Head Verger. In November, we were joined by Mike Painter, a wood carver of national repute whose commissions have included Westminster Abbey and Windsor Castle; he focused on the outstanding quality of the Simpson pews in the Quire. T J Murfin then explained and discussed the complex challenge she found in repairing one of the carvings. More than 80 of our members attended both of these fascinating days.

Our role is to provide a consistent and outstanding quality of welcome for all our visitors – a responsibility that we do not take lightly. A constant review of our organisation is essential and we have been recording the number of visitors day by day since March. The information we are collecting is proving extremely valuable, as it will enable us to improve our organisation and the cover we provide for particularly busy periods.

**Shaun Boney, Chief Steward**  
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# Bellringers Association

Once again this year, the bells of Southwell Minster have rung out regularly for divine service. Following the major work carried out on the Minster bells in 2016, we have had the privilege of ringing one of the finest ring of bells in the world.

The demand for bellringing at Southwell has not diminished. In 2017, our band of 14 bellringers rang for 18 weddings, one funeral, Palm Sunday (quarter peal), the dawn service on Easter Sunday, Ascension Day, a 90th birthday (quarter peal), a diamond wedding anniversary (quarter peal) and the Masonic Service. A particularly busy and demanding time is Advent and Christmas, with the Emergency Services Carol Service, Carols for Everyone, the two Cathedral Carol Services, Christmas Day and finally ringing the old year out and the new year in. Two full peals were rung by outside ringers, one of which was rung as part of the national recognition of bellringers who fell in the Great War.

Only bellringers really appreciate that there comes a time to retire, and sadly Doreen Stevenson has decided that time has come. Doreen learned to ring at the Minster in 1985 and has been an absolute stalwart; we will miss her every Sunday morning. She has also left us with a very comprehensive scrapbook, documenting all the special events and weddings we have rung for. Thank you, Doreen.

Members of the Southwell band have consistently supported the surrounding churches by assisting with training and bolstering practice evenings. This reciprocal arrangement continues to benefit all parties, and we are grateful to all those who have visited us throughout 2017.

We are also delighted to have been chosen to host one of the eliminator rounds of the National 12-Bell Striking Competition on 24 March 2018. By the time you read this, we will have heard some excellent bellringing by the teams from Bristol, Guildford, Melbourne, Norwich, Oxford and Wimbourne Minster!

**Trevor Bryan, Tower Captain**  
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*The bellringers in action in the Ringing Chamber*



*Christmas design by  
Tim Kirkham, a member  
of the Guild*

## Flower Guild

This year has been rather quiet in terms of extra services that required flowers other than the normal pedestals. Our numbers have remained at 16. Kathy Hocking continued with the wedding flowers (of which there were quite a few) and also, with the help of Ann Bristow, organising the Easter and Christmas flowers. Jan Winson continues to take care of the Pentecost and Harvest designs; meanwhile, Jenny Mellors sponsored the flowers for the Southwell Music Festival, as she has done from the very beginning. Lastly, Rachel Tew has taken responsibility for the Remembrance Service flowers.

There have been many favourable comments throughout the year, which we always appreciate. My thanks are due again to the Vergers for all of the jobs that we ask of them, big or small.

**Barbara Green**  
Tel: 01636 812709  
Email: [barbarafgreen@dsl.pipex.com](mailto:barbarafgreen@dsl.pipex.com)





image © Simon Bull



Adele Poulson, our new Cathedral Administrator

## Sacrista Prebend Retreat House: A Quiet Space in the Heart of Southwell

Throughout 2017, Sacrista Prebend has continued to provide a quiet space for all who wish to step aside from the “busyness” of everyday life, to spend time in prayer and to wait on God. As part of the mission of the Cathedral, the Retreat House has hosted a wide variety of groups and individuals for personal retreats and other events. We also have a regular congregation attending our Eucharist services on Monday and Wednesday.

It is encouraging to report that, as in the previous two years, 2017 has seen a slow but steady growth in the number of groups and individuals who have visited Sacrista Prebend. In a new venture, we welcomed the Southwell and Nottingham Diocesan Training Course in Spiritual Direction, which took place at the Retreat House over a number of months. Sacrista was able to offer a safe and prayerful space for those who attended the course.

Our programme of Quiet Days (eighteen in 2017) has continued to attract a good number of people from across the region, many of them for the first time. Some days explored the life and work of notable figures such as Teresa of Avila and Evelyn Underhill; others explored ways in which our relationship with God can be enhanced by art, literature and the use of our own creative gifts.

The members of the Retreat House’s management committee are extremely grateful to the Cathedral Chapter and to all of our Friends and donors for their financial support. The House would also not be able to function at all without the dedicated work of its volunteers, whose time and gifts have been much appreciated.

**The Revd Erika Kirk, House Warden**

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## Fabric Advisory Committee

The major focus of work during the year was of course the Leaves project (see centre pages). Further to this, work on the North and South Quire Roofs started in May and finished in December, thanks to successful bids to two rounds of the First World War Centenary Cathedral Repairs Fund. In total, Southwell was awarded £586,000. This project was very successful, with excellent contractors who completed the work on time.

Members of the Fabric Advisory Committee in 2017 were Mr Allan Joyce (Chair), Mr Chris Perrett, Dr Martin Duffy, Mr Chris Richardson, Dr Jeffrey West, Professor Will Bowden and Mr Brian Ayling.

**Enquiries to Adele Poulson, Cathedral Administrator**

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Email: [administrator@southwellminster.org.uk](mailto:administrator@southwellminster.org.uk)

## Staff

This year, we said goodbye to John Briggs and Kathryn Anderson from our Marketing Department, resulting in a complete overhaul of our marketing provision. Interviews were held in October for a new position: Head of Marketing and Events. Glenn Formoy was appointed, and we look forward to welcoming him in January 2018. Liam Bagguley left his post as Gardener in March; the decision was taken to use a contractor rather than appoint a new member of staff to replace him. In April, we were pleased to welcome our new Rector Chori, Paul Provost; this major new appointment followed the resignation of Paul Hale six months previously. The Cathedral Administrator, Caroline Jarvis, retired at the end of December, and we look forward to welcoming her successor, Adele Poulson, in February.

**Enquiries to Adele Poulson, Cathedral Administrator**

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# Friends of Southwell Cathedral

The Friends have enjoyed another year of varied events and outings, the first of which was a trip to Thaxted in Essex on Tuesday 2 May. We visited Thaxted Parish Church, where an organ recital took place over tea; we also had a guided tour of the John Webb windmill – now in full working order – and also the Guildhall. Both of these buildings have been carefully restored and are well used today.

Our 70th Festival was held on Saturday 17 June on a pleasant, sunny day. Coffee was followed by a lecture in the Nave given this year by Peter Day, retired correspondent from BBC Radio 4, who was born and brought up in the East Midlands. His talk, titled 'From our ex-correspondent', was both entertaining and thought-provoking. The audience could have continued listening to him for a lot longer!



*Peter Day, who spoke at the Friends' Festival in June*



*The Mompesson Window at St Lawrence's Church, Eyam*

Our September outing was to Eyam, the Derbyshire plague village, chosen by Bishop Paul and his wife Sarah. We were able to visit the museum before making our way for lunch. We were then welcomed by the Revd Mike Gilbert to the Church of St Lawrence and we were given a talk about the history of the church and village, including the self-sacrifice of the villagers. This was followed by a short service conducted by him and Bishop Paul.

In October, two of our Council members, Malcolm Stacey and Roy Pearson, attended the Conference of Friends of Cathedrals and Greater Churches, held this year in Ely. This is a good opportunity to meet delegates from other cathedrals and to share their experiences.

On Thursday 16 November, we were delighted to hear another of Charlie Leggatt's talks, this time on Dulwich Picture Gallery, where he was the Director of Fundraising. His beautifully illustrated talk was both informative and most entertaining. Again, we could have listened to him a good deal longer.

The Friends continue to support the Needlework Guild and Flower Guild as well as making specific financial contributions to the Minster. In particular, we have pledged significant support towards the 'Leaves of Southwell' project for a five-year period.

Finally, our grateful thanks must go to Malcolm Stacey, who has been the long-time editor of the Friends' annual report and of our biannual *Pepperpots* magazine. Both he and his wife Mary were sincerely thanked at the AGM and given a token of appreciation. We are extremely fortunate that Charlie Leggatt has kindly offered to take over the reins from 2018.

We would be delighted to welcome more Friends, who are an important part of the life of the Minster. If you would like to join, either pick up a leaflet from the Minster or contact me at the Friends' office in the Minster Centre.

**Alison Salter**

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*image © Simon Bull*



*Below: Bishop Paul and the Revd Mike Gilbert leading a service at St Lawrence's Church, Eyam*







## The College of Canons

The College met three times during the year and has opened up fresh discussion as how best to release gifts and expertise from the College to engage its members more fully in the life of the Cathedral, and likewise the Cathedral with the life of the Diocese.

The College bade farewell to Kathryn Herrod (Team Rector of Hucknall Torkard, Dean of Women's Ministry and Canon of Eaton since 2011), who left the Diocese in October to take up a new post in the Diocese of Sheffield as Priest-in-Charge of Bilham and Barnburgh and also Assistant Diocesan Director of Ordinands; and Paul Bentley (Canon of Rampton since 2011), who retired. Pam Bishop (Canon of Lenton since 2013) has moved away from the Diocese. We welcomed Fiona Shouler to Norwell Overhall stall, Peter Huxtable to Woodborough stall and Bronwen Gamble to Normanton stall in February; and Nicolas Spicer to Beckingham stall in April. All are parochial clergy in the Diocese.

In October, Dr Alison Milbank (Assistant Professor of Theology and Literature at Nottingham University and Priest Vicar of Southwell Minster) was installed as Canon Theologian into Kelham Stall, and Canon Nigel Coates (Canon Pastor) was made Canon Chancellor.

**The Very Revd Nicola Sullivan, Dean of Southwell**

Tel: 01636 817282 (Dean's PA)

Email: [dean@southwellminster.org.uk](mailto:dean@southwellminster.org.uk)



Above: Fiona Shouler, Peter Huxtable and Bronwen Gamble being installed as Canons in February.



Above: The College of Canons at February's Installation Service



## The Cathedral Council

The Cathedral Council has continued to meet as expected over the past year; our joint meeting with Chapter is always the highlight, where members of the Council do feel more involved in Minster affairs than perhaps we do for much of the time. Nonetheless, we do have a good and close working relationship with the Dean as well as our Bishops, and are kept in the loop about the major issues affecting the Minster. (We shall miss Caroline Jarvis's considerable help with this!) The Council is not intended to be an upper house or "critical friend" to Chapter and members do need to bear this in mind.

Our other role is to be ambassadors for the Cathedral across the Diocese. There is room for improvement in this area, and this is under discussion with both the Dean and Bishop Paul. The role is an opportunity to celebrate, across a much wider area, all that goes on at the Minster, all that is good about it and the witness and celebration of God's love for us all. Therefore, if you would wish to be considered for the role or may know of someone to fulfil it, do please contact the Dean.

**HH Judge Tony Mitchell, Chairman**  
c/o The Minster Office

Tel: 01636 812649 Email: [office@southwellminster.org.uk](mailto:office@southwellminster.org.uk)



## Visitor

The Right Reverend Paul Williams, Bishop of Southwell & Nottingham

## High Steward

Sir John Peace, H.M. Lord-Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire

## The Chapter

The Very Revd Nicola Sullivan, Dean of Southwell (Chair)

The Revd Canon Nigel Coates, Canon Residentiary and Canon Chancellor

The Revd Canon Jacqui Jones, Canon Residentiary and Canon Precentor

**Elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting of Southwell Minster**

Mrs Vicky Thorpe and Dr Hugh Middleton

**Appointed by the Bishop of Southwell & Nottingham**

The Revd Canon John Bentham

Col. Tim Richmond MBE TD DL

Canon Philip Blinston

Mr Richard Vigar

Mr Shaun Boney

Mrs Caroline Jarvis, Chapter Clerk

## The College of Canons

The Very Revd Nicola Sullivan, Dean of Southwell (Chair)

The Revd Canon Nigel Coates, Canon Residentiary and Canon Chancellor

*from October 2017*

The Revd Canon Jacqui Jones, Canon Residentiary and Canon Precentor

The Right Revd Anthony Porter, Bishop of Sherwood

The Ven. Sarah Clark, Archdeacon of Nottingham

The Ven. David Picken, Archdeacon of Newark

The Revd Canon Dr Alison Milbank, Canon Theologian

## The Honorary Clerical Canons

The Revd Canon Mark Adams

The Revd Canon Peter Huxtable

The Revd Canon John Bentham

The Revd Canon Dr Richard Kellett

The Revd Canon Paul Bentley

The Revd Canon Dr Alison Milbank

The Revd Canon Bronwen Gamble

*from October 2017*

The Revd Canon Julian Hemstock

The Revd Canon Fiona Shouler

The Revd Canon Kathryn Herrod

The Revd Canon Steve Silvester

*until October 2017*

The Revd Canon Nicholas Spicer

The Revd Canon Barbara Holbrook

The Revd Canon Phil Williams

The Revd Canon Alan Howe

## The Honorary Lay Canons

Canon Michael Arlington

Canon Elizabeth Rose

Canon Philip Blinston

Canon Nigel Spraggins

Canon John Loughton

## The Ecumenical Canons

The Revd Canon David Shearman

The Revd Canon Christian Weaver

## The Cathedral Council

Judge Anthony P. Mitchell (Chair)

Councillor David Mellen

The Right Revd Paul Williams, Bishop of Southwell & Nottingham

Mrs Jenny Mellors DL (*elected by the APCM*)

The Very Revd Nicola Sullivan, Dean of Southwell

The Revd Loraine Mellor

Col. Tim Richmond MBE TD DL

Mr Roy Pearson

The Revd Canon Nigel Coates, Canon Chancellor

Mr Christopher Perrett

The Revd Canon John Bentham

The Ven. David Picken

Mr Peter Gibbins

Mrs Jan Richardson MBE (*elected by the APCM*)

Mr Brendan Haigh

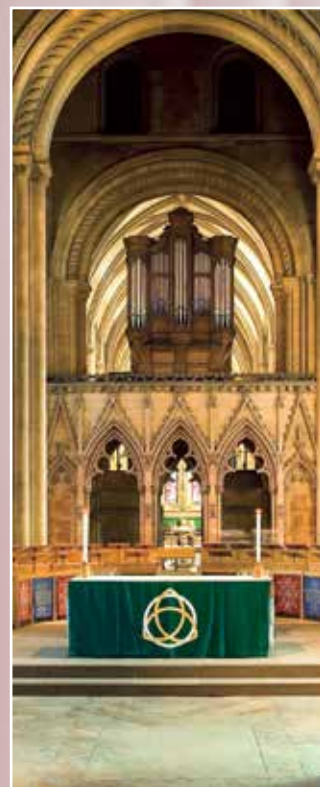
Mr David Shannon

Prof. Eunice Simmons

Mr Richard Vigar



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*Children enjoying our Interfaith Day in March*



Photographs:  
Design:

Unless otherwise stated, Richard Jarvis and our contributors  
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THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND

Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham