



December  
2013

*Welcome and  
Farewell!*

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### A New Precentor

In mid-November we were delighted to announce the appointment of Nicola Stanley (right). She will be installed as Canon Precentor by the Bishop on 1st March at 3.30 p.m. Nicola is currently Vicar of All Hallows in Twickenham. She is also a Director of Ordinands for the Kensington Area. The church is lively and engaged with the local community and worship has long been a key priority for Nicola. Her previous experience has included a curacy at St Michael and All Angels in Bedford Park and a career in HR and administration. She has good Italian and an interest in art. Nicola is married with two grown-up sons.

After an interview process that did not lead to an appointment, we worked with the Lord Chancellor's Department (the Lord Chancellor appoints our Precentor) and the Bishop in a head-hunting exercise. Nicola's gifts as a priest and liturgist, and her understanding of the complexity of life in an institution like a Cathedral will be welcome in both Chapter and the wider community.



*Nicola writes:* Now that the announcement of my appointment has been made and I've been able to share the news with others, everyone I've spoken to has commented on what a fantastic city Bristol is to live in! It'll be a great privilege to worship in the Cathedral whilst working alongside such a gifted team of colleagues and I'm excited about the challenges that lie ahead. Whilst I'm very much looking forward to moving to Bristol in the New Year and taking up the post of Canon Precentor, leaving All Hallows after seven very happy and fulfilling years will be hard and this Advent and Christmas will be particularly poignant as we prepare for my departure. Please pray for me, as I shall be praying for you.

### Canon Tim Higgins

On Sunday 8th December we announced that Canon Tim will be leaving us early next year. Tim came to us from Aylesbury (where he had been Team Rector) in 2006. He has had an extraordinarily fruitful ministry in the city centre and with the Parish of St Stephen. That church is now a lively focus for a dispersed community with an excellent café and bookshop. The church is a focus for thoughtful contemporary worship and art. Tim has been a champion of social justice in the city and Cathedral, and the driving force behind some of the events which have helped us connect with city communities who did not know the Cathedral. We will miss his wisdom, his



friendship and his sustained enthusiasm for our life and work. Tim is looking forward being able to give time to his new responsibility with the Franciscans as he and Pauline move to their home in North Wales. We wish them every happiness in their new life and we will be announcing the arrangements we will put in place to celebrate his work soon.

## Canon Tim writes

From the day the Bishop instituted the role of City Canon I have lived with a clear call. Each day has found me with city people disturbed to seek the difference made by Christian hope. There have been watershed initiatives. Commemorating the legacy of the slave trade brought together in the Cathedral people of difference. Our current call to commit to justice and creation, beyond 'fixing the environment', comes with the Bristol award of European Green Capital. The energy of Cathedral Fairtrade Fashion shows now opens Big Green Week for this remarkable city.

I shall continue to give thanks for open doors of opportunity; and the listening to a city divided by roads and rivers, poverty and patronage.

## A Volunteer writes

The day after I was called up to carry out my two years National Service in the Gordon Highlanders in the early 50s I was given the following sound advice: "Whatever you do never volunteer for anything!"...

Since coming to the Cathedral however, about forty years later, I must have suffered an attack of amnesia. It all began when Roy Knill who was Head Steward at the time asked me if I could help with serving at a dinner which was going to be held in the West End of the Cathedral. As a free meal was also on offer, of course I said yes. Without realising it I had taken my first step on the slippery slope. Not long afterwards Roy suggested that I join his stewarding team which I duly did. Becoming a Steward must have given me an air of respectability as a couple of years or so later the Canon Treasurer, Peter Johnson, asked me if I would help with counting the collections and other cathedral income by joining the Counting Rota. He explained that this would only involve every

In this listening comes the constant call to join with others and then find the voice of the One who reveals life. With the life this international community, working with Christian Aid and the Cathedral strengthens that life through forums such as faith and global finance.

I spotted recently a man playing a violin while tight-rope walking between two lamp posts near the city centre fountains. I stopped to reflect on his vocation and mine! So much has been possible, and all depends on the quality of our commitment together. The humour, patience and devotion of colleagues will remain with me. There will be a heaviness in moving from Bristol, but Pauline and I look forward with new energy and huge thanksgiving.

4th Monday morning (now in fact it is every 6th as the counting team has increased). Can you refuse a request from a Canon – of course not!

Not so long afterwards Dean Robert Grimley asked me to take over the Planned Giving Scheme - if you cannot refuse a Canon, how can you turn down a Dean? The Planned Giving Scheme, however, really runs itself but I have been its 'supervisor' for the last 10+ years. Finally, when News and Notes contained an item asking for people to train as Cathedral guides I could not resist and have been a guide for about 5 years. As a guide I do 3 – 4 'Open Tours' on Saturdays every half year and help with special visits by schoolchildren to the Cathedral such as the Big Draw, Moving On and various 'trails' devised by the Cathedral Education Officer. Being a volunteer is most worthwhile and I can thoroughly recommend it.

Martin Christie

## A year of travelling in hope

December brings the end of the Cathedral's financial year and we are now setting a budget for 2014. We are being ambitious. As Amy White has left we have taken the opportunity to review our Education work and increase the funding. We aim to step up our work with secondary schools as well as continuing with our work with primary schools. At the same time, we acknowledged the need for another colleague, perhaps a recent graduate to increase our ability to start

something new. There are some necessary repairs and a plan for new ladies toilets. All this means we are setting a deficit budget for 2014. We are indebted to the Trust for their support and to all those members of the congregation and community who support us. We look to a new fundraiser and to others to help us as we raise our ambitions. Then we will talk about replacing our heating and completely overhauling the cathedral organ.

**New  
colleagues,  
fresh plans**



## Comings and Goings



We are simultaneously proud and a little bit sorry that our Finance Manager, Matthew Hall, who has divided his time between us and the diocesan office has been promoted and become Diocesan

Director of Finance. We have enjoyed Matthew's company, benefitted from his skill in the management of our budget and revelled in his command of the intricacies of cathedral finance (intricacies that give the seraphim headaches). We welcome Andy Webb to the office as our new Finance Manager.

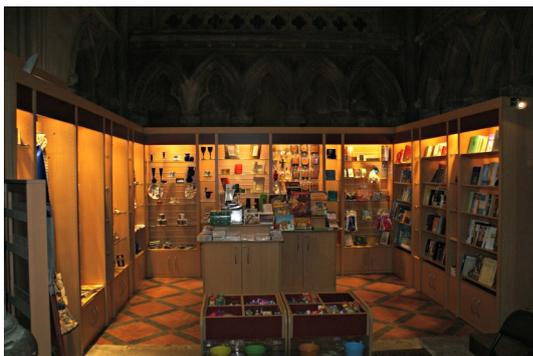
Amy White has been our Education Officer for a number of years and has overseen endless school visits, Moving On days, The Big Draw, a maths tour and all sorts of other occasions. Calm and cheerful, good on detail and with the gift of making children feel welcome she has done great work here.

### Aslan in Bristol Cathedral

Over the summer months the Cathedral Shop underwent a major refurbishment. Old stock was parcelled up and some tired and worn-out fixtures and fittings were shipped out. Tireless vergers scraped years of darkening polish from the floors and a wonderful carpenter performed miracles fitting new shelving units. A new range of gifts, cards, branded products, children's toys and books was unveiled at the launch on Doors Open Day.

We are now in partnership with Aslan Books and their staff and our volunteers keep the newly refurbished shop open. We are grateful to them and to the Friends of the Cathedral who have paid so generously for this work to be done. We have already seen a big increase in sales and expect better profits in 2014.

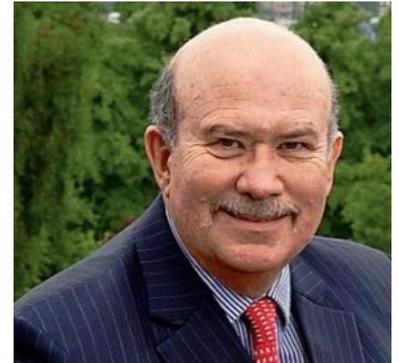
Why not visit and stock up on gifts and cards for Christmas.



Amy goes on to a post in her own church community. We wish her well and we have begun a process to appoint a new Education Officer.

Meanwhile, the Cathedral Trust has a new Chair in Stephen Parsons (once a Cathedral Chorister and now Chair both of the Quartet Community Foundation and of the Governors at the Cathedral Choir School). We said 'farewell and thank you' to Hugh Pye, the outgoing Chairman, in the

summer, after years of dedicated and stylish service. We are delighted and grateful that the Trust has generously offered to pay for a Cathedral Fundraiser and, at the time of writing, we are about to interview for that post. That means that our friend and colleague, Chris



Harries, will be leaving the Trust Office in the new year. We will miss his dedication, his deep learning and his ability to keep us abreast of the cricket scores.

### A joyful noise

In July's newsletter we looked forward to the arrival of a Chamber Organ, a staggeringly generous and welcome gift. It is now here and it is a thing of beauty. At a number of evensongs and on other occasions it has added its own distinctive voice to our worship blending wonderfully with music from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. You may see it hiding discreetly beneath a black cover, but you would do better to come and hear it.



Eight bells in the north were given to the Cathedral after Temple Church was destroyed in 1940 and were last overhauled in 1958. Bell-ringers, Chapter and Trust worked together and we have replaced the ball races and bearings in each bell and had them re-tuned in time for Christmas.



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## *Keeping Faith*

### **Looking ahead**

There will be a Study Course on Tuesday evenings in Lent

The Easter Vigil will once again be held on Easter Eve

## **Christmas in the Cathedral**

Wednesday 18th December at 7.30pm  
Bristol Cathedral Concert Choir and Orchestra\*  
Carols and Music for Christmas

Friday 20th December  
7.30pm Carols by Candlelight\*

Sunday 22nd December  
3.30pm Carol Service with Blessing of the Crib  
(A service suitable for young children)  
7.00pm La Nativité Messiaen

Monday 23rd December  
6.00pm Service of Nine Lessons and Carols

Tuesday 24th December Christmas Eve  
3.30pm Service of Nine Lessons and Carols  
11.30pm Midnight Eucharist

Wednesday 25th December Christmas Day  
7.40am Matins  
8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)  
10.00am Festival Eucharist with Orchestra

Monday 6th January 2014 Epiphany  
6.00pm Sung Eucharist for Epiphany

[www.bristol-cathedral.co.uk](http://www.bristol-cathedral.co.uk)

## **The Dean writes**

At Nelson Mandela's funeral, President Obama spoke with flourish and flair 'Nelson Mandela reminds us that it always seems impossible until it is done...' It was a stirring challenge to live up to an ideal, and to make an effort. Meanwhile, another story (now a film) is also catching the headlines, a story that begins 'In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit'. That story, equally stirring in its way suggests, in place of effort, we escape and imagine.

Christmas, all too often, is either effort or escape: hours in the kitchen, hours stunned in front of a television. Life after Christmas lurches between endeavor and dreams of a sunlit beach (or a tent on Dartmoor if you are a bit more rugged).

What we celebrate at Christmas however, is neither effort nor escape. The baby in the manger is not a 'once upon a time' kind of story and nor is he a good example that we must strive to copy. At Christmas God does not ask more from us, and does not take us

through the looking glass. Instead, God takes our life and lives it. At Christmas God declares that he meets us here not over the rainbow. God comes close now and not when we have tried a bit harder. That is why we celebrate. Because whatever we do and wherever we are it is good enough for God. The difference has been made, we do not need to look for it or work for it.

Happy Christmas