

FOCUS



on St. Andrew's Cathedral

April 2016



Happy Easter!

Inside:

- The Provost Ponders
- Easter Reflections
- Choir News

And much more...!

The Provost Ponders

By The Very Rev'd Isaac Poobalan

Hope – the Easter people of Aberdeen

One of the two paintings that hang on the South isle of the Cathedral is Hope. This was the theme of the Easter Greeting card from the Cathedral Trustees and I, which I hope reached the whole of the Cathedral family. Please note that we are in the process of updating our mailing list. If for some reason you have not received your Christmas and Easter Card, please complete the Green Card at the back of the Cathedral indicating that you are not on the mailing list. It is important that every member of the Cathedral family is on the mailing list and receives a copy of the Focus each time it is published. Please accept my apologies if for some reason your name is omitted and make sure you kept up to date with the news and developments. The fact that over 150 people were there at the Easter Sung Eucharist is an indication that there is new energy. Let us make that energy be fully used to the glory of God and the expansion of God's

Kingdom of love. Thank you and God bless you for your full part in it.

Hospitality of St Andrew

On Thursday the 17th of March 2016, seven families were received at the John Skinner Centre as our special guests who have made a long and arduous journey, seeking refuge from the ravages of civil war in Syria. The Cathedral was given the opportunity to welcome and serve our special guests and they were given a royal welcome indeed, thank you to the gifted (instant) hospitality team. Emma, Christine and Stanley Flett's granddaughter alongside Nigel Lammas, Pam, Christine and Ann made a splendid job of being with the families and caring for their young ones throughout the day filled me with joy and hope for St Andrew's.

Lent, Holy Week and Easter 2016

I have said this a few times in various contexts and I am delighted to be repeating it here. Thank you all for making our

The Provost Ponders

Lenten journey together deeply enriching and delightfully celebratory. At least 20 people gathered each Friday to break Lenten fast together with Eucharist, Soup and Bread, Talk in Discernment, discussion and Compline sung exquisitely and generously by the choir. I have given the reason for observing Lent in this fashion - it is a witness to who we are and what we believe. I may have thanked all those who contributed to this generously, in every aspect of the Friday events.

On Wednesdays, at the mid-week communion, we had good attendance and participation. And the Holy Week from Palm Sunday to Easter Celebration was special. We had guests and visitors on each occasion and they all rejoiced in their experience, some of them even wrote to the Bishop to inform how richly they felt blessed. The Palm procession was a new experience for everyone and the symbolism seem to have inspired many. The triumphal entry from the East end of the Cathedral at the Suther

Chapel is symbolic of a journey from light into darkness. The journey continued on through the centre aisle, past the baptismal font back to the East end again, this time to witness the passion. The presentation of the Passion narrative seem to have impacted people deeply that there was a clear sign on the faces of most people as they left the cathedral, that they know what their belief is all about. Many people made generous positive comments. Our thanks to all who took part in the Passion narrative, to the choir for concluding the reading with 'God so loved the world' and to Claire Morrisson for rehearsing. A lot of thought and meticulous planning resulted in good Passion Narrative with transformative impact on the whole community.

On Maundy Thursday the Bishop celebrated the Chrism Mass with a number of diocesan clergy and laity participating. Most people stayed for soup afterwards and commented on the deep sense of mission at the Cathedral. That evening, we

The Provost Ponders

were taken through the liturgy of *mandatum novum*, in its splendour which set us up for Good Friday.

Bishop Bob and Liz, led a gathering of around 50 people and more, through a Stations of the Cross for young people and children on Good Friday morning. It was an active and participative journey which the young people had a first hand experience of making a crown of thorns, hammering long nails through a hard wood, and making hand prints on the cross. Then followed the Walk of Witness of Aberdeen Churches Together who gathered at the Cathedral to begin the walk through the city. It was reported that there were a goodly number of around 70 or more people. The Provost led the first two stations of the cross. This then was followed immediately with our devotions at the cross led by one of our Cathedral Chapter, Canon Lisa Eunson. Canon Eunson made the most creative use

of the Cathedral space in moving people around linking the various parts and binding them together in prayer and movement. On Good Friday 2016, the Cathedral gained a new meaning and purpose and we hope Canon Eunson would continue to make the space, a place for retreat and prayers. The day came to a perfect end when the Choir sang the *Tenebrae*. *Tenebrae* or shadows did leave a deep sense of the darkness of the cross from which the light of the world shone with glory and splendour. The *Tenebrae* ended with thunderous noise reminding the final hours of crucifixion.

We were ready for Easter thunders by then. On the Holy Saturday the Cathedral was bustling with excited Easter people getting ready for the celebration. The altar party was busy preparing the sanctuary. The flower guild was busy filling the space with green and flowers. The Easter Garden was taking shape in one corner. The choir was rehearsing for the Easter

The Provost Ponders

acclamations. The day ended with solemn yet joyful kindling of the fire to light the Pascal Candle. The procession from the South aisle to the Suther Chapel was beautiful and joyous.

Easter day came as a surprise to many as the Cathedral looked full and the singing, most beautiful. Prof Tom Greggs moved the hearts and minds of the gathered into joyful thanksgiving for the wonder of resurrection. His sermon will be uploaded on our website in due course. There were over 150 people in the Cathedral. And the bake stall on the south aisle in aid of our Head Chorister representing the Cathedral and the Diocese at St Paul's launch of a Trust Fund for Choral Music. We raised well over £500 for the cause.

Christ is Risen. He is risen indeed, Alleluia.

Isaac

The COLT

By The Provost

The COLT stands for the Cathedral Operations Leadership Team. It was hoped that prior to the Extraordinary Congregational Meeting, one of the Trustees would gather the leaders of the various operations teams to explore the proposals for Cathedral Development and gather feedback to be presented at the EGM. However, it was not to be so, as there was not much time prior to my meetings with a few key people in the Episcopal Church (USA) in New York and beyond. I had a story to tell and the story inspired the key people and we are in the process of following up various conversations. In the meantime, the need for good conversations in the Cathedral family remains to be begun and continued. It is my hope that we could have these conversations on a more regular basis and engage with one another prayerfully and constructively. Keeping our conversations prayerful and constructive is a mandate we have received from those who were called to be the founders of

The COLT, Cathedral Communications, and the Provost in Transit

this community and which is at the heart of our Patronal saint, Andrew.

Andrew told his brother Simon, we have seen the Lord. Andrew brought the young boy with picnic to Jesus and became the instrument of divine hospitality. Andrew brought the searching Greeks to Jesus. When we meditate on the life of our Patron saint, as depicted in the gospels, the picture gets clearer that our thoughts, words and deeds must be like St Andrew, hospitable and seasoned with grace. This will not happen overnight and our established patterns of behaviours are hard to change. Please pray that the COLT will be good instrument in God's hands to bring hope.

Cathedral Communications – Focus and Occasional Letters
Communications is key to any dynamic community and the Cathedral is blessed with a good system of communication. There is always room for growth when it comes to

communication. And every effort should be made that anyone who has a sense of belonging to the cathedral should be informed of all that is happening. The Trustees are making great efforts to make our mailing list active and focused. Please help the Trustees reach their aim for good communication. Send in your mailing address to the cathedral office or fill a Green Card at the back of the cathedral next time you are in.

Provost in Transit

The Provost and the family are moving from their previous accommodation at 15 Ashley Road to a temporary accommodation on Crown Street while the sale of the house in Grandholm Village is completed and the idea of developing part of the Cathedral properties are converted into a dwelling house. The Cathedral Office will remain the point of contact for the Provost. Please continue in prayer that this transition would be as smooth as possible.

The Children's Story

By F. B. Cal-Anglia

Enraptured.
Children enacted
With beauty.
Solemnity.
Bold yet mild
Each little child
Hammered
Nailed
The wooden Cross
Crown of thorns
vinegar wine
Purple Robe
Spear to probe
Next toil
Holy Oil
Toy paints
Hand prints
Covering wooden Cross
Against the pillar
Near the altar
The Cross stands
With printed hands
Their reminder
To every sinner
Crucified
Christ died
Upon a wooden cross



Easter Flower Decorations

By Helena Thomas



This year the team joined by some additional people in our decoration of the entire Cathedral, which had been stripped in Lent on Maundy Thursday. Floral decorations were placed all over the Cathedral - from the Paschal Candle, when it was in the Suther Chapel at the Eastern end, to the windowsill in the porch at the West door. We hope that this enhanced the feeling of joy in all who came to the Easter celebrations.

The rota for the rest of 2016 is now on the wall in the porch, so do please select an available date if you wish to sponsor flowers for a week, add your name to the list and contact me with your specific request.

Helena Thomas
helenathomas26@gmail.com

Easter in the Cathedral

By Sylvia Simpson

No doubt about it Easter Sunday morning communion service was to put it mildly a "cracker"! Unfortunately for me I had another engagement which meant leaving the Cathedral before the end of the service. When the choir sang the Easter Anthems (chant - Macfarren) in the north aisle it promised to be a splendid musical service..... & it was! Thank you Andrew, Bill (at the organ console) & all the choral scholars, lay clerks, boys & girls in the choir. I must also mention Claire who does a power of work behind the scenes plus singing Soprano in the stalls. It was Provost Isaac's first celebration of Easter as official Celebrant, but equally nice for him & us to have his wife Amu, son Michael & daughter Elizabeth (in the choir) in our midst.

The preacher was Prof. Tom Greggs, University of Aberdeen (Divinity). His sermon

was quite enlightening - very listenable & dare I say entertaining.

However my own delightful experience was during the Peace when Christine Flett & other ladies brought the Sunday School children in to church. A little girl from one of our Nigerian families greeted me with a gorgeous smile & with her big brown eyes looking up at me she said so sincerely "Happy Easter". I replied "Happy Easter to you sweetheart". For me it gave me a true enjoyable feeling of peace on Easter Sunday. With that I extend my own good wishes for the season to all in the Cathedral congregation.



A big Thank You!

By Claire Morrisson

Thank you to everyone who variously baked, donated, bought and supported the cake stall after service on Easter Morning. A particular thanks to Amu for masterminding and organising it. The response from everyone was magnificent and the generosity of the donations on the day of the stall and beforehand was almost overwhelming. I can report that the stall raised £476.34p for Lewa's trip to sing in St Paul's Cathedral in London. She will go down on the 26th of April for the first of three rehearsals and the concert itself is on the evening of Wednesday 27th April. The money will be used to pay for her travel to London and accommodation and expenses whilst there. She will write a report on her experiences for Focus when she returns. The concert should also be featured on the Classic FM website. Thank you all very much indeed!



Choir News

By Andrew & Claire Morrisson

March was a very busy period for the choir, who were involved in many traditional and several innovative services in the lead up to Easter. Several of the Lay Clerks demonstrated unexpected thespian talents in the dramatized Gospel reading on Palm Sunday. The trebles sang at the main Eucharist on Palm Sunday and reassembled two hours later to sing at the Rubislaw Park Care Home. This is the second time they have contributed to a service of worship at the home and is an important part of the outreach of the cathedral. The Lay Clerks and Choral Scholars put on a special service of music for Passiontide in place of Evensong to help people start the journey through Holy Week.

The choir sang for the Maundy Thursday communion service and stripping of the altar. On Good Friday, Liz Gillies put on an all age service of worship based on the Stations of the Cross. Those trebles who were not at school

Choir News

participated, and several of the younger ones had major reading parts. The service was well attended and was very effective in engaging the congregation across all age-groups.

On Good Friday evening, the choir sang a Tenebrae service. This is a new format to the cathedral, based on the old Monastic order for Lauds. Seven pairs of candles were extinguished during the service, gradually reducing the cathedral to darkness. The one remaining candle was then hidden, to represent Christ's death and descent into hell. In a spine-chilling moment, the darkened building was suddenly filled with noise from the organ and the choir stalls, representing the earthquake and tearing of the veil of the temple on his death. All those present agreed that it was a very moving service.

The choir sang music for Holy Week at the lunchtime recital on Holy Saturday. The return

of several ex Lay Clerks and Choral Scholars for the Easter weekend enabled us to sing some more complex music than we can achieve with the forces normally available on a Sunday. We are grateful to the flower arranging team for putting up with our rehearsal while they prepared the cathedral for Easter Day and for completing their work by 11.30 am. On Saturday evening we sang at the service of the Lighting of the Paschal Candle, which marks the official start of Easter.

All the members of the combined choirs remembered to change their clocks and turned up on time for the rehearsal on Easter Sunday morning. We sang C V Stanford's Coronation Gloria in B-flat at this service, which has not been sung at the cathedral for many years. We also repeated the format of Intercessions from the Provost's installation, with four of the trebles leading the prayers. There was a very successful cake stall to raise money after the

service, as described in a separate Focus article. We ended Easter Day with a Festal Evensong, singing the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's Messiah.

With so many services, you might think choir members have no time for anything else in March, but several of them have squeezed in significant other achievements. Three of the senior trebles attended the Diocesan Youth Synod early in March. The Cathedral was the unusual setting for University of Aberdeen Opera Society's performance of Mozart's 'The Marriage of Figaro' under the musical leadership and direction of John Hudson. The nave was transformed with a large stage and orchestra pit including a high-tech backscene designed by Jillian Bain-Christie. A number of members of the Cathedral Choir had starring roles or were part of the chorus. A packed Cathedral enjoyed the highly-acclaimed performance which ran for three nights, culminating on the

Saturday night. The pictures give an idea of the scale of the transformation of the space and help to explain why work went on through the night to restore the Cathedral ready for Sunday worship.

Several of our choir members sang in Con Anima's Brahms German Requiem concert at St Machar's Cathedral on the 19th of March. Most recently, and perhaps most significantly, Our Head Chorister, Lewa, starred as The Youth in Aberdeen Choral Society's performance of Mendelssohn's Elijah at the Music Hall on the 22nd of March, directed by Alistair MacDonald.

After all that effort, the choir will take a well-earned Sunday off on the 3rd of April. The Lay Clerks will be back on Sunday the 10th of April and the trebles will return at the end of their school holidays on Sunday the 17th of April. *(Please see the next page for photos of the opera performance.)*

Photos of the performance of "The Marriage of Figaro"



Warden's Corner

By Mark Edwards (People's Warden)

One bonus of my move to Inverbervie is that the new office window faces west and out onto a small wooded area. With the sun streaming through the window, and the sound of birdsong filling the air, my mind is taken back to Easter Sunday morning when the Cathedral was flooded with brilliant sunlight, resplendent with colour from our flower arrangements and we were treated to another feast of ethereal music from the choir.

It was wonderful to see the Cathedral so full with friends and visitors alike joining us to celebrate the Resurrection! Easter Sunday was the culmination of many acts of worship, each reflecting in tone and mood our journey from Palm Sunday, through the Last Supper and betrayal on Maundy Thursday and the sombre remembrance of Good Friday to the triumphal celebrations of Easter Sunday.

Behind the scenes and over

many weeks, many of our number have been working away diligently to ensure that our acts of worship progressed seamlessly and I would like to take this opportunity to pause awhile and to thank everyone who, in whatever way, gave of their time and talents to help us celebrate as only we can!! To you all, on behalf of the whole congregation, "Thank you"!!

Over the coming weeks you will notice that we will be having some work done in and around the Cathedral and its precincts. All of this work relates back to the Health and Safety audit of which I wrote at the end of last year. We have sadly experienced another injury in the Cathedral in the past days and I am



Warden's Corner

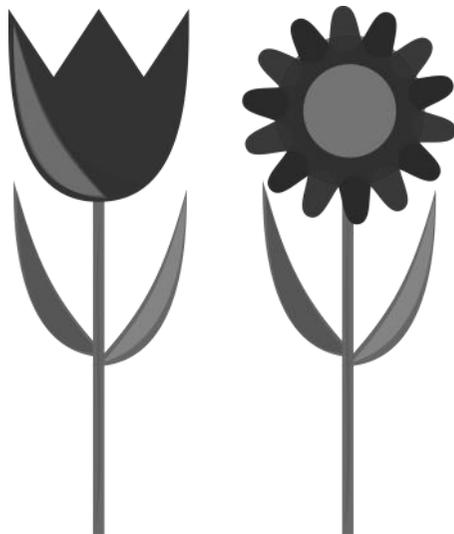
committed, along with the Board of Trustees to work to make the Cathedral as safe as possible for all of us. The works involve the installation of handrails at the Vestry door, the Suther Chapel steps and to the Lectern. We may look to relocate the Lectern too which will make access much easier and safer.

In the John Skinner Centre the floor level of the entrance porch will be raised to be flush with the door thresholds. There will still be a slight step in, but we are trying to remove as much of a trip hazard in the doorway as possible. And finally we will be raising the level of the concrete inspection covers in the pathway of the northern precinct to be flush with the path level.

The works should be completed with minimal disruption but, if during your comings and goings you do encounter the ongoing works, please do bear with us whilst we make our Cathedral safer for us all.

And finally! A very special "Well done!" to our younger members [and maybe some Mums and Dads too!] for finding all of those eggs!! I was secretly hoping that as I walked around at the end of Sunday's service that maybe, just maybe, an egg or two had been missed and that I might just find one for myself. Alas they had all gone and I hope that everyone had lots of fun finding them, and eating them of course!

Happy Easter to you all.



Informal Summary of the Trustees meeting on 9 March 2016

1) Three new Trustees

There are three new Trustees:

Canon John Walker, Rector of St Mary's Church, Inverurie (Diocesan Trustee)

Captain Derek Whatling, who attends St Ternan's Church, Banchory (Diocesan Trustee)

Mr Kelechi Nwajiuba (Cathedral Trustee)

There is one remaining vacancy for a Cathedral Trustee.

2) Repairs/maintenance

a) Mark Edwards has a meeting with the supervisor from Mutch on Friday 18th March to review the list of repairs and maintenance. He anticipates that some items will be costly and require competitive quotes.

b) The Trustees asked Derek Elliott-Jones to try to repair the loop system with Ian Flett as a matter of urgency.

3) Sale of 32 Grandholm Grove

Andrew Morrisson reported that we have received a firm offer of £340k for the property, which he has instructed our solicitor, Philip Anderson, to accept, on behalf of the Trustees. The buyers aim for a completion date of 29th April. Andrew has instructed Philip to deal with various routine enquiries from the buyers' solicitors: whether it is a house of multiple occupancy, the outstanding dispute with Aberdeen City Council over recompense for the compulsory purchase of common land for the 3rd Don crossing and an environmental report. The Trustees formally registered their thanks to Andrew for all the work he has put in to facilitating the sale of the property.

4) Identification of rented accommodation for the Provost and his family

Isaac is investigating various options for short-term rental

Informal Summary of the Trustees meeting on 9 March 2016

accommodation near the cathedral for his family.

5) Peacock Visual Arts (PVA) and the strategy for the Old School Building and JSC buildings

The Trustees and the Provost would like to convert part of the buildings adjacent to the cathedral into a rectory, which would require PVA to reduce their footprint. The Trustees have asked Philip Anderson to advise and act for them in this matter.

6) Update on roof repairs and grant applications

Mark reported that Cheyne have cleared the roof gullies and the moss from round the roof hatches, which should stop water ingress into the cathedral during heavy rain. Cheyne inform us that the nails securing the roof are made of copper and are not rusting, therefore the total cost of roof repairs is expected to be less than

£10,000. The architect (James Roy) has advised us not to seek Heritage Lottery funding for this, because they would stipulate the use of lime mortar, whereas modern mortar will be more durable. The Trustees asked Mark to get Cheyne to quote for a maintenance contract, including 6-monthly roof inspection and cleaning, for a period of 3 years.

7) Constitution

Isaac reported that he has received input from Michael Stone, Omobolanle Amure and Derek Elliott-Jones on revising the Cathedral Constitution. He will circulate a draft revised constitution to the Trustees before their next meeting. Once agreed, it can go before the congregation at the EGM on 1st May, where the changes to the quorum passed at the EGM on 31st January can be ratified before being put to the Bishop.

Informal Summary of the Trustees meeting on 9 March 2016

8) PVG matters

Victoria reported that members of the congregation attended a PVG training session on visiting the housebound and people with dementia which was held at Westhill Church on 4th March. She will try to arrange a similar session at the cathedral provided enough people express interest in it.

9) Report on Diocesan Synod

Andrew reported that matters covered were a reduction of the minimum age for Vestry members from 18 to 16 and the church's position on same-sex marriage. Three trebles from the choir attended Youth Synod.

10) AOCB:

- a) Car parking
The Trustees agreed that we should offer two spaces in the Old School car park to office workers, Monday to Friday from 8 am to 6

pm only, for an annual cost of £600, payable to the Cathedral, and that the car owners would be responsible for paying the associated council tax direct to Aberdeen City Council.

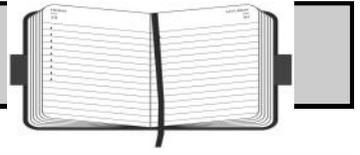
b) Syrian refugees

Isaac reported that the first contingent of Syrian refugees has arrived in Aberdeen and several families will be processed by the local authority in the JSC on 17th March.

Claire Morrisson
(Provost's Warden)
On behalf of the Trustees



April Diary



Weekly Services

Wednesdays at 10.00 am	Holy Communion
Sundays at 8.00 am	Holy Communion (1970 Liturgy)
Sundays at 10.45 am	Sung Eucharist (1982 Liturgy) followed by coffee in the JSC
Sundays at 10.45 am	Crèche available in the JSC
Sundays at 6.30 pm	Choral Evensong

Weekly Events

Tuesdays at 6.00 pm	Fellowship, JSC
Fridays 10.00 am to 12 noon	Cathedral Coffee Shop (Teas/ Coffees, and a whole range of homebaking, as well as sandwiches available)
Saturdays at 12 noon	Cathedral at Noon (30 minute recital followed by refreshments)

Cathedral at Noon - April

- 2 Apr Ngoni Masiyakurima, Music for Solo Piano
- 9 Apr Tamsin Raitt, Music for Soprano Voice
- 16 Apr Niall Anderson, Music for Bass Voice
- 23 Apr Sam Paul, Popular Music for French Horn

All are welcome to attend the Cathedral at Noon performances held every Saturday at noon! This is a free event, with a light lunch provided afterwards.

Upcoming Event

We are hosting another **Cowdray Hall Lunchbreak Concert:**

Thursday 21 April 12.45pm-1.30pm (with a light lunch available)

PLAINCHANT AND ORGAN

Aberdeen Schola sing a selection of medieval Plainchant with Organ pieces interspersed, directed by Roger B. Williams



The deadline for the May issue of Focus will be the 28th of April.

Please send your articles to Amber at a.shadle.07@aberdeen.ac.uk, or hand them in to the Cathedral office.

Many thanks to all those who contributed to make this issue of the Focus Magazine possible!

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