

BEACON

The regular newsletter from the Development Office of Rochester Cathedral

DECEMBER 2019

From the Vice Dean's desk...

A recent report from the Church of England on cathedral statistics demonstrates that record numbers of visitors and worshippers flock to England's cathedrals, and there was an increase in 2018 of over 10 per cent on the previous year.

At Rochester Cathedral we can also reveal the good news that we have seen an increase in visitors. To the end of October this year, we have seen a 15 per cent increase in visits compared to the same period in 2018.

For many people this was the first time they stepped foot into Rochester Cathedral, clearly Adventure Golf and the Knife Angel were great attractions.

As a cathedral with a Benedictine foundation we do well to remind ourselves of some of the Rule of St Benedict, where St Benedict writes a faith community exists to do two things: first to help its members find God, in making God the orientation of their lives and secondly to be a living, visible and

tangible witness to the love that God has for each and every person and especially those seeking hospitality. But what is this hospitality and how does Benedict define it? In Chapter 53 of the Rule Benedict wrote: *Any guest who happens to arrive at the monastery should be received just as we would receive Christ himself.* Note the use of the word 'any'; note that Benedict is saying how we meet and greet people is directly correlated with how we 'meet and greet Jesus'. He goes on to say: *Guests should always be treated with respect and deference* and that 'the greatest care should be taken to give a warm welcome to the poor and pilgrim, because it is in them above all else that Christ is welcomed.

Someone recently tweeted 'I am not a religious man, but Rochester Cathedral keeps challenging my stereotypes of the CofE, with their community led approach. This time supporting Abigail's Charity with the use of this amazing place. It's opening my mind to you. Well done.'

As we move into the seasons of Advent and Christmas, let us ensure that we continue to welcome visitors, pilgrims and worshippers as if they were Christ. Whilst we will continue to offer a variety of activities to attract people to the Cathedral, it is vital that we remember the importance of daily prayer and Eucharist offered here for centuries. It is this that makes the Cathedral what it is today – and you are most welcome any day.

The Rev'd Canon Christopher Dench

The Dean, Chairman and Trustees of Rochester Cathedral Trust would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy Christmas, and to again thank all our donors who have been so generous over the past year.

Christmas Cards available to purchase

Rochester Cathedral Trust Christmas cards are once again on sale in the Cathedral Shop in the Crypt. They cost £6 for a pack of 10. All profits go to support the Music Endowment.

We will again be printing a Community Christmas Card this year. The card will be distributed at the 10.30am Eucharist on Sunday 22nd December and if you wish to make a donation and have your name included on the card, please contact the Development Office on 01634 810074 or lynne.bax@rochester-cathedral.org

Rochester
CATHEDRAL
Growing in Christ since AD604

Please note: You are receiving this newsletter because we think you have an interest in Rochester Cathedral and its events. If we have got this wrong please let us know by emailing development@rochester-cathedral.org or telephone 01634 810074.

In order to process your kind donations, keep you updated with news and events, and carry out our work effectively, we will need to store and use the information you have provided to us. We are committed to treating your information with respect and in a transparent way. To find out more, please read our fundraising promise at <https://www.rochester-cathedral.org/cathedral-trust/>

Pledges and gifts from 1st January to end October 2019 total **£265,261**

Quire/Clerestory Trust funded project



You may remember in the last edition of the Beacon we mentioned the project that urgently needed attention in the Quire/Clerestory area. We are pleased to say that this work is now fully funded and we start work next February/March. We are so grateful to The Headley Trust and to a very generous private donor.

We then concentrated on the windows along the North aisle. Repairs are needed to cracked, distorted and flaking sections caused by water penetration. Outer arches are disintegrating and there are windows in danger of blowing in. Urgent restoration is needed before stonework is lost. The cost of this project is £210,000 and we are delighted to say that this

project is also fully funded and we are very grateful to the very generous individual that funded this work.

The next project is the external masonry of the nave, the deterioration of the stone at the west front and of course the heating!

The challenge of conserving, restoring and sustaining this enormous medieval structure is immense, and every five years a major survey of the condition of the cathedral's fabric is undertaken. Since the last report, in 2018, the Trust has raised over £560,000, tackling the most urgent repairs.

Recent Purchases

made by Rochester Cathedral Trust

Some of you may have noticed that the Cathedral now has a Defibrillator for emergency use. It is in a cabinet in the South Quire Transept and we hopefully never have to use it! But in the event of someone being seriously unwell it can save a life.

The radio system being used in the cathedral was desperately in need of replacement and the Trust was happy to be able to provide funds to purchase 20 new units.

New vestments for children

The Education Department have invested in some beautiful new vestments for children. They were paid for from kind donors of dedicated Education gifts. The new copes were painstakingly designed by Annie Lucas, our Interpretation manager during the first HLF project.



We are currently displaying vestments in the Exhibition Space by our new mirror so that children can try on the vestments and learn a little about the different colours.

The copes and mitres are also useful for teaching activities and will enhance learning sessions for years to come.

We are very grateful to the donors that made this possible.

Cooling Castle Barn Quiz Night

Friday 10th January 2020

Now's the time to book your team table for what has turned out to be an annual fundraising quiz night at Cooling Castle Barn. Our grateful thanks go to Rebecca Collins for supplying such a fabulous venue.

10 seater tables are available at £10 per person (please note: they go very quickly!) with a delicious Ploughman's supper included in the ticket price and a cash bar.

Reserve your team table by contacting lynne.bax@rochestercathedral.org or telephone 01634 810074.

Contributions to the raffle appreciated.



Experience Benjamin Britten's

A CEREMONY OF CAROLS

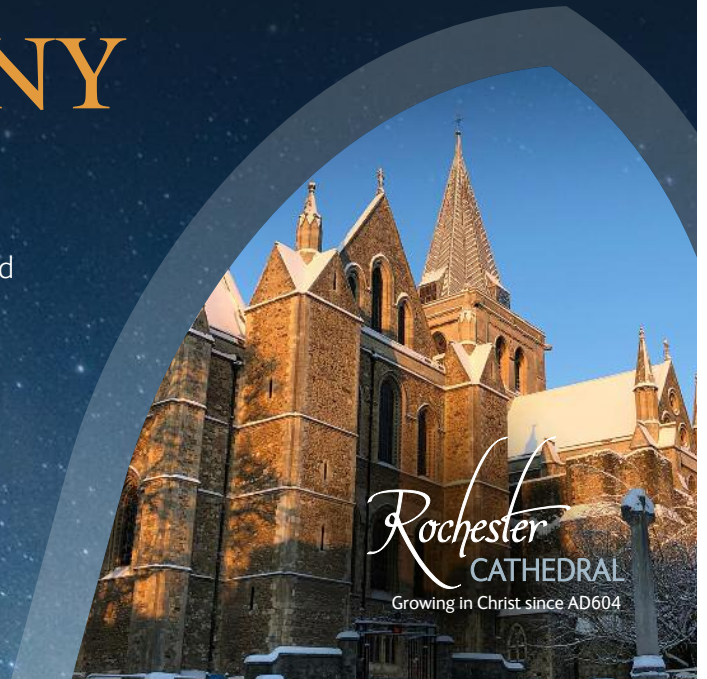
in the atmospheric setting of our medieval crypt.
The Rochester Cathedral Choristers, accompanied
by harpist Carys Hughes, will perform Britten's
stunning arrangements of medieval carols.

Saturday 14th December 2019, 7pm

Doors: 6.30pm, unreserved seating

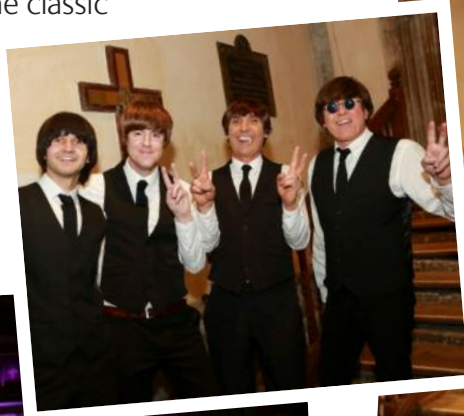
Tickets £20 including drinks reception
immediately after performance

Tickets available in the Cathedral shop and
www.rochestercathedral.org



Beatlemania strikes Rochester

The Abigails Footsteps "Beatlemania" concert, held on 1st November, showcased the outstanding Counterfeit Beatles. An amazing performance had everyone out of their seats and singing along to the classic Beatles hits we all love – an especially great evening for Beatles fans! In particular, Jamie Johnson's beautifully sung rendition of *Long and Winding Road* was a triumph.



Diary of 2020 Events

The first of our 2020 events is firm in the Diary, more to be added so please watch this space!

Friday 10th January 2020

Quiz Night at The Cooling Castle Wedding Barn Tables of 10 and tickets at £10 each. Ticket price includes a delicious Ploughmans Supper.

Raffle and cash bar. Contact Lynne Bax on 01634 810074 or email Lynne.bax@rochestercathedral.org for tickets.

They usually sell out quickly so don't delay!

Events are open to all and for further information and tickets for any of these events, please contact Lynne Bax on 01634 810074 or email development@rochestercathedral.org

Christmas Services this December

Saturday 7 and Sunday 8

12.30pm and 3pm

Dickens Carol Services

Come and sing your favourite carols during the Christmas Dickens Festival

Saturday 14

12.30pm Christingle Service

7pm Ceremony of Carols by Benjamin Britten

*Tickets £20 including drinks reception

Saturday 21 and Sunday 22

7.30pm A Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols

Christmas Eve

3pm Children's Nativity Service

4.15pm Christmas Eve Carol Service

in the Quire sung by the Choristers

11.30pm The Eucharist of Christmas Night

(Doors open at 10.45pm)

Christmas Day

8am Holy Communion (BCP)

10.30am The Eucharist of Christmas Morning

*tickets available in the Cathedral shop and

www.rochestercathedral.org

Could you gift us 1% in your Will?

If the time is ever right for you to remember a charity in your Will, please remember Rochester Cathedral Trust.

Registered charity number 291616

- Research shows that on average, people who leave a gift to a charity in their Will, live eight years longer!
- Every gift in every Will however large or small makes a difference whether it's a few pounds or 1%
- £4 out of every £5 gifted to Rochester Cathedral Trust goes directly to a project.
- It costs £500 per day to fund the ancient music tradition at Rochester Cathedral. This money comes from voluntary contributions including gifts in Wills.

Imagine the difference a gift in your Will would make to secure the future of this cathedral, its fabric and its music, for generations to come.

For more information, please contact the Development Office on 01634 810074 or lynne.bax@rochestercathedral.org