

## THE CATHEDRAL CHAPTER REPORT

The 2021/22 year has been another unusual one for the Cathedral. While the Cathedral has remained open, the various restrictions caused by the pandemic has seen in-person congregations decline and online congregations increase. Visitors have been almost non-existent, and revenue has taken another significant hit.

### **CHRIST-CENTRED MISSION**

The Transitional Cathedral of Christchurch and its community is seeking to make Christ known to those who come through the doors of the Transitional Cathedral every day, and also to the many more who are regularly watching the services streamed to the world. Our prayer is that all who come, whether they be pilgrims or visitors, virtual or real, will encounter the love of God. Chapter has continued to work with Cathedral staff and community to provide a welcoming, open door and prayerful place to ensure we are a living witness to the Good News of God in Christ in the life of the wider diocesan and city communities.

The Dean refers to the Cathedral as “the tent with the wide-open door”, not only literally describing the large doorway but the fact that the Cathedral welcomes everyone, people of all faiths, or none. At times we could only welcome smaller numbers in person and had to run a booking system for Sunday services, but a warm welcome was extended to all.

The Transitional Cathedral is an icon in its own right and normally welcomes visitors in large numbers. Visitor numbers have continued to decrease with the on-going border closure. The short-term opening of the Australian bubble had a small positive effect, but sadly was far too short before having to close again due to the Omicron variant. As you will see below, this has had another significant impact on Cathedral finances.

For the calendar year 2021, we welcomed 22,847 people to worship services. This was down from 23,569 the previous year due to the on-going impacts of Covid. 769 worship services were held during the year (795 in 2020) with average attendances of 81 on Sundays (8:00am and 10:00am Eucharists and 5:00pm Evensong) and 16 at the services held during each week (Morning Prayer, Eucharist and Choral Evensong). 8,026 people received Holy Communion during the year.

During the year, we baptised two people, held five funerals and conducted two weddings. These numbers are not huge, but it needs to be remembered that the Cathedral is not a parish and accordingly does not seek to take

these pastoral offices away from local parishes. The Cathedral does receive many people, however, who are genuine inquirers about the Christian faith and they are supported on their faith journey.

We continue to live stream most of our choral services (six in a normal week) and these are widely viewed. Some of our regular worshippers who feel uneasy about worshipping with other people in the Cathedral are grateful to be able to participate. We ensure that the service sheets can be downloaded from our website so those watching online can fully join in. Weekday services of Choral Evensong are not always well attended in person, or even live on line, but they are watched in the days that follow, particularly by people overseas. A Facebook Choral Evensong supporters group often featured our services to a wide audience. Our grateful thanks go to a donor for funding a second camera, which enhances the viewing experience.

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

The Cathedral continues to be a place for community and public events, as well as for private functions. The number of corporate functions has declined significantly in the wake of covid, as conferences etc were cancelled and large public gatherings were not able to be held. Community and public events were similarly affected and we noted a large number of cancellations and postponements.

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

With the move to a red traffic light system, there were many restrictions placed on worship and this had an effect on our Lenten programme. The study groups met weekly online looking at Rowan Williams's book Holy Living and there was a Sunday evening series of sermons on 'Journeys of Faith'. The Choir was on leave for much of the first term and Lent, due to Covid affecting personnel. This meant that some of the choral services had to be

cancelled. We were lucky that the country moved to Orange just in time for Easter.

During the period where vaccine passes were in use, entry to the Cathedral was largely for those with a pass. However, we did hold two services each week which were open to all, regardless of vaccine status. One was on a Tuesday and one a Sunday. Both were well attended and appreciated by those who, for a variety of reasons, were not vaccinated.

The Theologians in the Cathedral preaching series was not held in 2021, due to the uncertainty of holding such events in these Covid times.

The Cathedral Choir has continued to take the Cathedral's mission out of the building and into the wider community. In the period leading up to Christmas, they took carols to the Public Hospital singing for patients and staff alike. There were fewer recitals held at outside venues, but the senior boys and girls did give mobile recitals on the punts on the river and the Christchurch tram. The passing sounds of Christmas carols did seem to puzzle some passers-by! These were opportunities to take the real Christmas story out into the community, and the Choir does hope to return to some of its previous haunts in 2022.

The Cathedral Singers also gave a very well-attended Christmas Recital in the Cathedral and has sung at choral services when the Cathedral Choir were on holiday or unavailable. Sadly, their rehearsals, as with the Choir, had to be curtailed. This meant that they were unable to sing on Palm Sunday.

In 2021, we were delighted to welcome members from the Parish of St Luke's. That parish was dissolved during the year and many of their congregation have joined the Cathedral Regulars. We have adapted our Wednesday lunchtime Eucharist to the more contemplative format that St Luke's used to run, and this is proving popular.

We are also grateful to St Luke's for donating some of their liturgical 'objet d'art' to the Cathedral. These are now being used to support Cathedral worship.

The St Luke's Trust also funds a newly created Inner City Chaplain position. The Rev'd Chris Orczy was appointed to that position in 2021. Chris is based at the Cathedral, but is not formally a member of the Cathedral staff team. His assistance in helping with the Sunday and Wednesday liturgies is very much appreciated. It is beneficial to the Cathedral to have this position based here.

## **RAISING UP YOUNG LEADERS**

The Cathedral has distinct groups to nurture into young leaders.

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

Kia Kaha's Friends largely continued to meet during Covid restrictions. We are lucky that the new Cube Cabins have doors that can be opened wide for ventilation and get plenty of sun!

The Cathedral has celebrated the baptisms of two people over the year and continues to offer flexible pathways for people who wish to become disciples of Christ. There were three confirmations in 2021. The Cathedral is committed to supporting Anglican Schools and the faith journeys of their students.

Our young servers continue to offer willing service and welcome new members to their ranks. This group of almost 20 young people juggle Cathedral commitments with their many educational and sporting ones, so it is a delight to see them learn to do so with commitment and understanding of the important role they play as young leaders in our community. Again, due to Covid restrictions, the servers were unable to attend as many services as in 2020 and we are hoping that a much fuller schedule will be possible in the second half of 2022. Chapter has been grateful to the Rev'd Cameron Pickering for leading this group in 2021.

The Cathedral Choristers have a unique role in the Diocese, singing at five choral services and several rehearsals each week during term times. Each year we welcome new younger members and farewell those in Year 8 heading to secondary school. It is heartening to see a number of the leavers return to sing with the adults in the back row. Being a chorister

has a significant commitment and Chapter is grateful not only to the choristers themselves, but also their families for the support they give.

2020 saw the launch of the Cathedral Girl Choristers and this new section of the Choir continues to flourish and is now integral to Cathedral music. Chapter was very grateful for the expertise of Alex Goodwin, the Girls' Director, and Cathedral Assistant Organist. Alex returned to the UK at Christmas and the appointment process for Alex's successor is well underway at the time of writing this report. Chapter thanks Ms Kimberley Wood for directing the girls and to Dr John Linker, the Cathedral's Director of Music, for taking on extra duties during the interregnum period. We are grateful to two significant donors who generously support the girls' scholarships.

Chapter continues to have a strong relationship with the Cathedral Grammar School which, of course, was founded in 1881 to educate the Cathedral choristers. The School continues to do well. There is a very positive atmosphere around the School and it is pleasing to note continued roll growth. Chapter maintains a close relationship with the School Board, and the Dean meets regularly with Board Chair, Dr Simon Wynn-Thomas. Chapter thanks Dr Wynn-Thomas and his Board for their on-going work for the School.

The School opened its new Boys' School building at the start of 2022 and were delighted that this project came in under budget and on schedule. It was much appreciated by last year's Yr8 leavers that they were able to have exclusive use of the building for their final two weeks at the School.

Chapter is delighted to welcome Cathedral Grammar to at least four annual services at the Cathedral. Cathedral staff and clergy often attend events at the School, and Chapter members are often invited to these as well. In 2021 not all of these were able to be held in person, but streamed versions were attended by all at the School.

We had fewer visits from other schools this year. The series of Christmas Carol services were all cancelled as the schools held smaller events on their own premises. We look forward to welcoming them back in 2022.

## **FAITHFUL STEWARDSHIP**

The Cathedral's finances continue to be a challenge to occupy a considerable amount of Chapter's time and energy. In 2020 Chapter

received \$126,000 wage subsidy, and a grant from St John's College Trust. However, this was not the case in 2021.

The stewardship of our finances has meant close attention to our expenditure as well. Chapter has shortened the weekend opening hours. Staff members took a 20% reduction in salary for six months in the 2020 year and Chapter is currently deferring the appointment of a second priest for the time being (this is to be reviewed by September 2022). We are grateful to retired clergy for assisting the Dean with preaching duties.

With the borders re-opening it is too early yet to see what effect that will have on our revenue, but Chapter is hoping for a busier summer tourist season than we have seen for a few years, and an associated improvement in finances.

Chapter's Works & Finance Committee continues to oversee stewardship of the building and finances. This arrangement is working well. With the project management skills of Elizabeth Kimberley, the installation of three 'Cube' cabins to the east of the Cathedral has been completed. These have provided a valuable increase in space. The Dean now has a decent office – with a window. There is a meeting room, also used for Sunday School, and an office for a second priest. The Parish of Ross South Westland funded this project out of insurance proceeds and Chapter is very grateful for their support.

The Committee would like to express its thanks to Jenny May who is a heritage consultant with a long association with the Cathedral. Her ongoing membership of the committee is much appreciated.

The concept of a Transitional Belltower at the Cathedral has come to a halt after expected funding from the Australian and New Zealand Association of Bellringers was disappointingly, and surprisingly, declined. An alternative location for the donated bells is being investigated. This project will allow for the training of new bellringers to start so that when we eventually get back into Cathedral Square a full team of experienced ringers will be able to ring for the opening services. In the meantime, the Cathedral bellringers are grateful to St Paul's, Papanui, for continuing to allow them to join their ringers.

The Rev'd Cameron Pickering was appointed as Assistant Priest from December 2020. We were delighted to have Cameron as part of the team

and congratulated him upon his appointment as Chaplain of Christ's College from the start of this year.

At the end of April 2021, the Ven Canon Helen Roud retired from Chapter and the Rev'd Canon Brenda Bonnett was appointed. Chapter thanked Helen for her work on Chapter. The terms of Rev'd Canons Mandy Neil and Mark Chamberlain and Lay Canons Carole Muir and Tony Hughes-Johnson were renewed each for a further term.

In 2016, Chapter was the first ministry unit in the Diocese of Christchurch to be officially certified as a Living Wage Employer. We have continued this into 2022 and all staff and long-term contractors are paid the living wage. We encourage other ministry units and the Anglican Centre to join us.

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

There have been much fewer events in the Cathedral this year because of the restrictions on numbers able to attend. We are grateful to Moveable Feasts for their ongoing co-operation and support. Many of the commercial events have been postponed and we look forward to them being held at some point in 2022. Wherever possible, we try to schedule events to impact as little as possible on the regular Cathedral routine of services, but there are times when this is not possible. Opening the Cathedral to community events has been part of the Cathedral's pastoral response to the City. It is also helping to keep the doors open for worship, welcoming all visitors every day of the year, and being a thriving symbol of hope in our recovering city.

Although many of these events do provide important income for the Cathedral, we do host community and not-for-profit groups for little or no charge. We aim to welcome as wider part of the community as possible to the Cathedral. Nine corporate events were held in the 2020 calendar year and 20 community events, similar to 2021 but down significantly from pre-Covid years.

Chapter remains aware of the many challenges facing the Reinstatement of the Cathedral in the Square. This year there has been a re-structure in the governance of the Project. CCRL (Christchurch Cathedral Reinstatement Ltd) now has responsibility for the fundraising as well as the project itself and has formed a fundraising subcommittee led by Mark Stewart. At the time of writing it is great to see work progressing very well on site.

Chapter is the body that will eventually take over governance of the re-instated Cathedral and the staff have the institutional knowledge of what happened there before the Quakes. The Dean is continually being consulted and he and Cathedral Administrator Chris Oldham are members of the Design Committee.

The project is on schedule for a 2027 completion.

The relocation of the War Memorial is underway and it is currently being re-erected in its new place in the Square, where the Police Kiosk previously stood. It is hoped that it will be finished later this year.

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

As we come to the end of our ninth full year in the Transitional Cathedral, we are aware that we are now (hopefully) well over half way through our residency in this building. We look forward to the next year, with all the challenges and rewards, highs and lows, delights and disappointments that will come with it. It would be nice, however, if the next 12 months had a greater degree of what we used to call normality!

*Chris Oldham, Chapter Secretary  
May 2022*