

THE CATHEDRAL CHAPTER

Annual Report to Synod for the 2023/2024 year

The Cathedral's Mission

To proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ and propagate the Gospel throughout the Diocese.
To be the mother Church of the Diocese and the seat of the Bishop, and
To be a visible witness to the Risen Christ within the Diocese of Christchurch.

The Cathedral Chapter supports the Diocesan Mission Action Plan,
the goal of which is to:

Regenerate our Diocese by growing in strength, depth and breadth,

and the focus of which is:

Making **disciples,**

Supporting **families** and,

Strengthening **communities.**

Proclaiming the Good News

The Cardboard Cathedral and its community is seeking to make Christ known to those who come through the doors of the 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, of any faith or none, will encounter the love, peace, and manaakitanga 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 Cardboard Cathedral is an icon in its own right and welcomes visitors in large numbers. Visitor numbers increased again towards the end of 2023 and we are delighted to be welcoming numbers similar to those in pre-Covid times.

For the calendar year 2023, we welcomed 26,831 people to worship services. This is up from 21,340 the previous year. 853 worship services were held during the year (843 in 2022) with average attendances of 101 at the main Sunday Eucharist (10:00am Choral Eucharists) and 20 at the services held during each week (Morning Prayer, Midday Eucharist and Choral Evensong), both well up from last year. 8,913 people received Holy Communion during the year. We continue to offer up to 13 services each week, although fewer during the school holidays when the Choir takes a break.

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 continue to feel uneasy about worshipping with other people in the Cathedral, or are less mobile, are grateful to be able to join our services in this way. 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 often attended by visitors and it is pleasing to note that people are returning to these services too. We also note that they are watched on-line in the days that follow, particularly by people overseas. A Facebook Choral Evensong supporters group often featured our services to a wide audience. Thus we have a global reach. We get average monthly viewing numbers of between 2,700 and 3,600 and 360 hours of content engagement.

We continue to offer a range of weekday services. The Tuesday Holy Eucharist has prayers of healing, the Wednesday service is contemplative in nature, and still well-attended by those from the former inner-city parish of St Luke. The Thursday Service is in Te Reo. It is good to see these services well supported, and we are thankful for the support of various priests in the Diocese that assist with these services.

Chapter appreciates the tremendous contribution all Cathedral Regulars makes in maintaining the mission of the Cathedral. The resilience and support of Regulars, along with their willingness to contribute in so many ways continues to humble us and remind us what an extraordinary community we are part of.

The Cathedral continues to be a place for community and public events, as well as for private functions. In 2022 we held 14 corporate events and 29 community, school or not-for-profit events. Whatever the nature of an event, a much wider variety of people experience the Cathedral than would through just worship services alone.

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 and Burwood Hospitals singing for patients and staff alike. The choristers sang carols at Ballantynes (and in the City Mall on the way to and from the store!), the Airport and the seniors sang again on the punts on the Avon. These were opportunities to take the real Christmas story out into the community.

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. Our thanks to them and their organist Paul Brown and Musical Director Jill Kerr.

The St Luke's Trust continues to fund the Inner-City Chaplain, The Rev'd Chris Orczy. 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. Chris also enhances the Cathedral's strong links with the City Mission.

To teach, baptise, and nurture new believers
To respond to human need by loving service;

During the year, we baptised five people, held eleven funerals or memorial services, conducted six weddings and confirmed three people. 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. It is interesting to note an increase in memorial services, often held after a smaller private family funeral has been held.

After Lent in 2022 again being curtailed due to covid restrictions, it was great in 2023 to have an unrestricted Lent & Easter programme. At the time of writing, Easter is days away and again we have run a full schedule of services, recitals, Bible studies, preaching series over Lent.

The Cathedral has distinct groups that nurture younger believers. The structured Children's Church programme, Kia Kaha's Friends has not run since Covid. There is a new designated children's area in the Cathedral with a range of soft toys and activity packs for older children. It is pleasing to note a number of families with younger children attending services, but this remains an area which we are working to grow

We welcomed children to special services aimed at younger folk: Stations of the Cross on Good Friday, a KidsFest Service in July, 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.

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. This team continues to grow, with several new members joining in 2023.

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 thanks Ms Kimberley Wood for directing the girls. We are grateful to two significant donors who continue to generously support the girls' scholarships. Chapter was delighted to

appoint Ms Samantha Poh as Assistant Organist at the start of 2023. Mr Sea-am Thompson, a former chorister now in Year 13 at St Andrew's College is the Organ Scholar.

The Cathedral is committed to supporting Anglican Schools and the faith journeys of their students. 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. Chapter thanks the Board for their on-going work for the School. Dr Simon Wynn-Thomas resigned as Board Chair at the start of 2023 and Chapter thanks him for his dedicated service. The then-Dean, Lawrence Kimberley, was Acting Chair until his resignation took effect in August 2023. Andrew Shaw has been appointed Board Chair at the start of 2024.

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. The Dean often participates in worship at the School too.

We had fewer visits from other schools to the Christmas Tree this year. It seems that the logistics of arranging EOTC trips is becoming time-consuming, and some schools no longer visit the Cathedral. However, we did welcome Medbury, St Mark's, St Michael's and The Cathedral Grammar School to the Cathedral for their carol services. Many children continue to visit the Christmas Tree independently and have left literally truck-loads of gifts to be distributed to children in need by the City Mission.

The Diocesan youth worship team hold a service each month in the Cathedral. It is great to see the Cathedral being used for a form of worship and music which is not part of our usual tradition.

One of the roles of a Cathedral is to host civic services for the wider community, often those who are not regular church-goers. In 2023 we held the usual services to commemorate ANZAC Day, Seafarers' Sunday, Commonwealth Day and to mark the start of the Antarctic summer season. We also held a service to mark the Coronation of King Charles III, having held a service of Thanksgiving for HM Queen Elizabeth the year before.

Staff Changes

On Passion Sunday 2023 Dean Lawrence Kimberley announced his resignation as Dean. He took study leave from Easter Monday and formally ended his tenure as Dean on 10 August. Chapter and the Diocese thanked Lawrence for his ministry. Chapter was grateful to Rev'd Bosco Peters for stepping in as Acting Dean during the interregnum and was delighted to announce the appointment of the Rev'd Canon Ben Truman as the 15th Dean of Christchurch. Ben took over the role just in time for Advent. He, Johannah and the children have been warmly embraced by the Cathedral community and we look forward to him leading the Cathedral's return to Cathedral Square.

The Rev'd Matt Maslin has joined the team as Cathedral Curate at the end of 2023, having just been ordained as a deacon. It has been a pleasure to welcome him and Zara to the Cathedral community. He too has brought young children to the Cathedral. The new clergy team has built on the atmosphere of regeneration started by Bosco and Helen, and we look forward to this continuing in 2024.

Francesca Rae resigned as Volunteer Manager during 2023. Lay Canon Susan Rendall took over in a temporary capacity, but must have enjoyed the experience as she was appointed to the full time position last in 2023. As such, she resigned from Chapter. At the time of writing this position remains vacant. When Ben became Dean, he resigned his elected position on Chapter. This was filled by Rev'd Canon Cameron Pickering, Chaplain of Christ's College. Jenny May was installed as an Honorary Canon in 2023 and we are grateful to Jenny's on-going support.

Strengthening Communities

The Cathedral Community continues to be challenged by the fall-out from the pandemic and the adverse affect this has had on Cathedral finances. Financial matters continue to be a challenge and occupy a considerable amount of Chapter's time and energy. [This being the fourth year I have written that sentence!].

For most of 2023 year, there was no Assistant Priest on staff and although this was beneficial to the budget, it did increase the workload of other staff. We are grateful to clergy who helped out particularly for the Sunday services.

Chapter's Works & Finance Committee continues to oversee stewardship of the building and finances. This arrangement continues to work well. There were no major items of repair and maintenance in 2023, but at the time of writing, we are about to embark on the replacement of the lights in the upper level of the Cathedral. Most have blown, having gone past their expected life span. We are replacing these with LED technology (which was not available in 2013) which will reduce cost and have a far more favourable environmental impact.

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 2024 and all staff and long-term contractors are paid the living wage. We encourage other ministry units to join us if they haven't already.

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 calculated 7,533 hours these people donated to the Cathedral in 2023.

The number of events has grown again in 2023/24, but are still not yet up to the levels seen before Covid. We are grateful to Moveable Feasts for their ongoing co-operation and support. 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, and was also one of the criteria Chapter laid down when planning the Cathedral after the earthquakes. 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 the 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. Fourteen corporate events were held in the 2023 calendar year and 29 community events, slightly up on 2023.

Chapter is delighted with work on the Cathedral in the Square. The project is currently undergoing a review to determine the programme of works and budget for 2024 and beyond. This is expected to be complete in April and will be discussed by Synod.

The first choral service was held in the Cathedral in 2023 with a service of Choral Evensong. Just the Choir and clergy were present in the building, and it was a truly moving experience. In March 2024, the King's Singers were in Christchurch. They too had the chance to sing in the old building, particularly poignant for one of their number, Chris Bruerton, who had been a Chorister and Lay Clerk here.

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. Work has started on designing the Visitor Experience, not only looking at the Visitors' Centre but how visitors will move round the Cathedral and the stories they will be told.

The Anglican Fundraising Campaign was launched in February 2024, with a target of \$2.5m. Again, an update will be presented to Synod later in the 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 begin our second decade in the Transitional Cathedral, we look forward to the next year, with all the challenges and rewards, highs and lows, delights and disappointments that will come with it.

*Chris Oldham, Chapter Secretary
April 2024*