

The Cathedral Chapter

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 significantly as the 2024/25 season started and we are delighted to still be welcoming large numbers when we enter Autumn.

Numbers attending worship have continued to increase too. For the calendar year 2024, we welcomed 29,059 people to worship services. This is up from 26,831 the previous year and 21,340 in 2022. 843 worship services were held during the year with average attendances of 114 at the main Sunday Eucharist (10:00am Choral Eucharist) and 23 at the services held during each week (Morning Prayer, Midday Eucharist and Choral Evensong), both well up from last year. 9,768 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. Weekday services of Choral Evensong are viewed on average between 70 and 100 times and Sunday services 150 times. There were 650 views of the Christmas Midnight Service. 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. Feedback tells us that we have regular viewers from all over the world. 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 online in the days that follow, particularly by people overseas. A few are also regular financial givers to the Cathedral. A Facebook Choral Evensong supporters group often featured our services to a wide audience. Thus, we continue to 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. With an increase of clergy on the staff team we have been able to restart a Monday Eucharist. 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.

We communicate regularly by Mailchimp to a number of databases. 174 Cathedral Regulars receive a weekly message outlining the services for the following Sunday and events coming up. Others receive communications less frequently. Overall, we communicate with 1,596 contacts by Mailchimp.

The Cathedral continues to be a place for community and public events, as well as for private functions. In 2024 we held nine corporate events and 32 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. We work with a local catering company, Moveable Feasts for catered events. We have noticed a slight decline in these as a wider variety of venues open up and the novelty of having a meal in a Cathedral has worn off over time.

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 sung 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. The full Choir gave a free concert at The Piano, which was very well attended. These were opportunities to take the real Christmas story out into the community.

In 2024, The Cathedral Singers went into recess. This Choir sang 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. At the time of writing another second choir is being formed and, in the meantime, congregational mass settings are used on Sundays, including one written for the Cathedral by former Director of Music David Childs. It is good to note that this setting is used in many parishes around the country and we continue to receive requests to have copies. We do not charge for these and only ask that our copyright of the music is acknowledged.

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 nine people (up from 4 in 2023), held seven funerals or memorial services, and conducted five weddings. Sadly, 2024 saw the loss of two former Directors of Music, Brian Law and Lennox Willet. 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.

Lent in 2024 again saw a full programme of services, bible studies, preaching series (this year looking at local Christian Podcasters) and other events. It was pleasing to note that all were well-attended.

The Cathedral has distinct groups that nurture younger believers. The structured Children's Church programme, Kia Kaha's Friends has not run since Covid, although a group of children does meet during some of the Sunday morning services. 2024 saw the creation of a designated children's area in the Cathedral with a range of soft toys and activity packs for older children. These packs are updated each week and focus on the Sunday Gospel reading. 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. Children and animals of all ages and descriptions had a

great time! Less so the clean-up crew. During the school holidays, there is a children's 'make station' to offer a visitor experience for children, which 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 2024.

The Cathedral Choristers have a unique role in the Diocese, singing at six 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 have generously supported the girls' scholarships. By the grace of God, as their funding ceases, we have been gifted two significant bequests which should be able to ensure ongoing funding to this programme. Chapter was delighted to appoint Ms Samantha Poh as Assistant Organist at the start of 2023. Mr Sea-am Thompson, our Organ Scholar, has now completed his secondary school studies. He has been awarded an organ Scholarship at Magdalen College, Oxford, and heads over there to start his music degree later in 2025.

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 flourish. 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 thanks, the Board for their on-going work for the School. Andrew Shaw was appointed Board Chair at the start of 2024. Chapter was delighted that the School Chaplain, Teresa Kundycki-Carrell was ordained into the diaconate in 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. The Cathedral staff team performed brilliantly at this year's Pancake races on Shrove Tuesday!

Several Schools visited the Christmas Tree in 2024, although it is sad to see that numbers are significantly down on pre-Covid years. 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. We also welcomed back Selwyn House School after a few years' absence. Many children continue to visit the Christmas Tree independently and have left literally truckloads 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.

Staff Changes

At the end of 2024 it was a delight to host the ordination of our curate Rev'd Matt Maslin to the Priesthood. Matt remains with us until later in 2025, when he will likely move to a Parish.

During the year we welcomed Dr Anne Shave to the staff as a part time Discipleship Developer. Anne was later ordained to the Diaconate and has taken on additional duties as Curate. It has been a delight to welcome Anne to the staff team.

On Chapter, Marcus Read was installed as a lay Canon in November. Marcus has been heavily involved in the Fendalton parish. Rev'd Canon Mark Chamberlain retired from Chapter at the end of 2023. Chapter is very grateful for Mark's contribution over his terms as a clerical canon. At the time of writing, there is a vacancy for a new clerical canon.

Strengthening Communities

The Cathedral Community continues to be challenged by the fall-out from the pandemic and the adverse effect this has had on Cathedral finances. Financial matters continue to be a challenge and occupy a considerable amount of Chapter's time and energy. However, things started to improve in 2024. Visitor numbers started to noticeably improve as did the revenue from them. Income from donations and the shop was almost back at pre-covid levels.

Chapter's Works & Finance Committee continues to oversee stewardship of the building and finances. This arrangement continues to work well. The longer we remain in the Transitional Cathedral, the more repairs and maintenance issues arise. In 2024 we replaced the lights in the upper level of the Cathedral. Most had blown, having gone past their expected life span. They were replaced with LED fittings, not available in 2013 which reduced cost and have a far more favourable environmental impact. At the time of writing, we are looking at having to replace some external doors, part of the security system, the bearings on the heat pump, and some exterior lighting.

Back 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 2025, 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 over 7,500 hours these people donated to the Cathedral in 2023.

The number of events has grown again in 2024 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. It is interesting to note that with a wider range of venues opening every year, the number of corporate events at the Cathedral has dropped off. 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.

The new Stadium being constructed on our doorstep is just over a year away from the published opening date. It has been a difficult year navigating noise pollution, road closures, and the loss of on-street parking, however we are also aware that the stadium opens up new financial and missional opportunities.

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 2024 calendar year and 32 community events, the latter up on 2024.

Chapter was disappointed that the reinstatement of the Cathedral in the Square had to be paused in 2024 but hopefully anticipates a re-start of the project in the not-too-distant future. In the meantime, Chapter works with CCRL to keep the project in the public eye. The Cathedral is now braced to 34% of code and has a public use certificate which means that short events with up to 50 people can be held. Fundraising is ongoing and conversations are alive with Government, Council and donors. CCRL staff now work on site so there remains a permanent presence in the Square.

At the end of 2024 the City Mission Christmas Tree was erected in the Cathedral and a concert held with Woolston Brass. This was not only good publicity but a great way to raise funds for another worthy cause: the City Mission.

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.

We are now into our second decade in the Transitional Cathedral and planning for a longer time here than originally anticipated. 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,
March 2025*