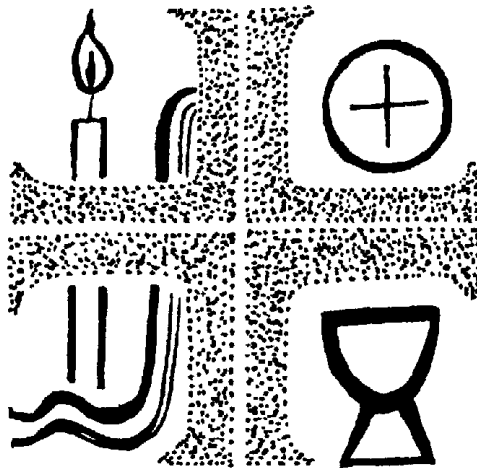
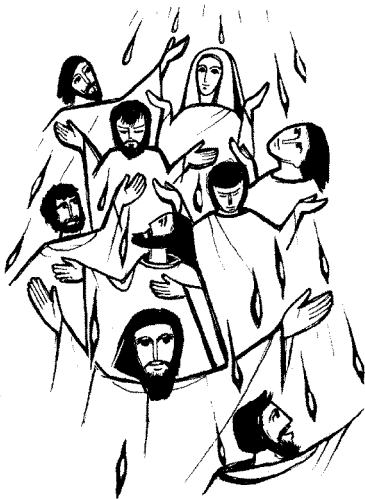
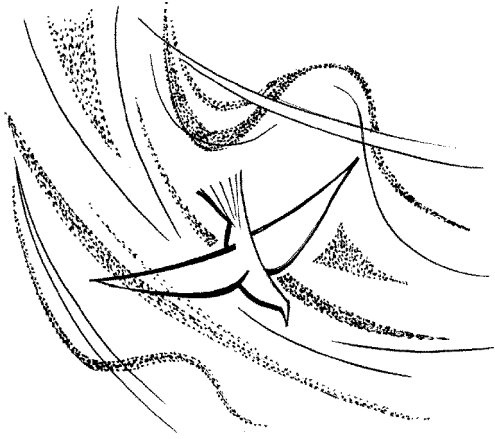


# LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL

## THE CATHEDRAL SABBATICAL 2007

### A SET OF REFLECTIONS BY THE CATHEDRAL CHAPTER



**PENTECOST 2007**

# THE CATHEDRAL SABBATICAL 2007

## A SET OF REFLECTIONS BY THE CATHEDRAL CHAPTER

### 1 The Reasons for the Sabbatical

The Cathedral is a busy, complex place, coping with many roles and demands. It seeks to serve one of the biggest Dioceses in the Church of England and reaches out to a wide number of organisations, groups and communities. The Sabbatical was a means for the Cathedral to take stock and reflect on how it was understanding these roles and responsibilities. Faced with staff changes and a major development plan (Lichfield InSpires) Chapter wanted to create a space in the Cathedral's life when serious conversations could take place and dedicated time and effort could be given to prayer, engagement with the Bible, and clarifying our understanding, under God, of the Cathedral's roles and tasks.

### 2 The Aims of the Sabbatical were threefold:

- To create a space in which to know God in Christ
- To create a shared sense of vision and purpose for the next phase of the life of the Cathedral
- To enable the whole community to know and shape the next phase

### 3 As preparation Chapter outlined four roles that seemed to catch the meaning of much of the Cathedral's life.

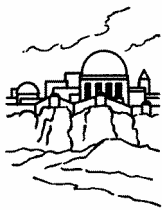
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**Cathedra**

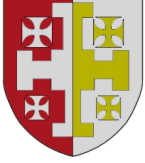

- seat of the Bishop, Mother Church of the Diocese;

2



**Icon**

- a place of encounter with the Sacred, with History and Beauty, available to a very wide public;

- 3  **Custodian of Tradition** - the care, development and transmission of faith, liturgy, music, art and architecture conceived as an expression of and response to faith;
- 4  **Community** - the Cathedral maintains a corporate life of worship, prayer, service and witness.

These four roles were the subject of sermons in Advent 2006.

#### 4 **The Sabbatical 'process'** (i.e. the things that took place to help the discussion, thinking and reflection)

- A Congregation Day on January 14<sup>th</sup> attended by over 200 people
- A series of three Sunday evening meetings in January and February to discuss the four roles of the Cathedral and how these were interpreted and understood; there were airings of concern and discussions about hopes and opportunities
- 'A Faith Lift weekend' to help us focus again on who Jesus Christ might be for us today.
- 'Pancakes and Peter' a Shrove Tuesday presentation on the first letter of St. Peter and a preview of the Lent Study Course.
- A House Group programme (which had 65+ participants!) meeting in homes across Lichfield throughout Lent.
- A series of meetings with each Cathedral Guild and Volunteer Group to listen to how each interpreted and responded to the four roles of the Cathedral.
- A Staff 'Away Day' for all the employed staff.
- A Chapter Residential to listen to all the comment and feedback that had been received.
- It culminated in Holy Week and Easter with the Cathedral marking the journey Jesus made through Jerusalem, through betrayal and death to the glory of Resurrection.

## **5 Reflections**

### **a) The Four Roles of the Cathedral**

- i) Chapter has been encouraged by the widespread positive feedback, through the Sabbatical process, that the re-statement of the Cathedral's mission in terms of the four roles (Cathedra, Icon, Custodian of Tradition and Community) has been helpful. All these roles are inter-dependent and have to be sustained in order that the Cathedral carries out its mission effectively.
- ii) Chapter has been impressed by the general and growing understanding that the whole Cathedral community, with the congregation at its heart, shares the responsibility to sustain, strengthen and develop all facets of the Cathedral's mission and ministry.
- iii) Chapter appreciates, with renewed force, that the congregation itself is something which must be nurtured and stimulated, not only for its own sake, but also so that it can make its full contribution to the roles of the Cathedral. Chapter hopes that the proposals in Section c) + 6 below will help with this process.
- iv) Chapter recognises the great advances that have taken place in the Cathedral's life during the last thirty years. This renaissance has also been experienced by almost all English Cathedrals. We thank God for it. Equally, the greater our public appeal the greater the demands made on us. Chapter therefore believes 'Lichfield InSpires' will help the Cathedral reach out to new audiences and deepen relationships with existing partners. (see Section 6c below)

### **b) The Leadership Chapter offers**

The Sabbatical has helped Chapter understand the kind of leadership it should offer. We believe that Chapter has an essentially mediatorial and envisioning role: it interprets what is going on in the environment (Church, World, Culture) for the Cathedral, and interprets the Cathedral and the Christian faith to the outside world. It is constantly helping the Cathedral to look at the task of mission, seeking to discern God's purpose, and enabling the interests, concerns and experience of the Cathedral Community to find a place and a role within the total ministry of the Cathedral and the wider Church. Chapter has legal responsibilities to govern the Cathedral as a Collegiate body (which it shares with the Cathedral Council and the College of Canons), to be accountable to the Church and State for the Cathedral's wellbeing and to uphold the Cathedral's interests, especially in safe-guarding its buildings and treasures.

c) **Aspirations for the Future**

Reflecting on all the feedback generated through the Sabbatical from the Congregation, employed staff, volunteers, the College of Canons and Cathedral Council, Chapter has been grateful for the hopes and visions that have been expressed about the Cathedral's future. Our Bishop has fully supported the Sabbatical process and wants to encourage the Cathedral to develop its support for the Diocese and its outreach to the region.

Chapter wants to celebrate all the signs of faith and the many acts of discipleship that have become apparent during the course of the Sabbatical. It is clear that we aspire to be a healthy Cathedral that:

- is energized by faith
- has an outward-looking focus
- seeks to find out what God wants
- faces the cost of change and growth
- operates with a sense of community
- makes room for all
- is focused rather than frenetic – discerns priorities and carries them out with excellence

These, Chapter believes, are the foundations of a healthy Cathedral 'culture' (a culture being a pattern of behaviour, belief and practice that people share).

It became apparent during the Sabbatical that these foundations had to be developed for the Cathedral's culture to flourish. If the Cathedral is healthy:

- ✓ gifts are shared and ministries are discerned and developed
- ✓ it is a prayerful place and a prayerful community
- ✓ it celebrates difference and diversity and handles conflict well
- ✓ it seeks partnership with others and expects collaboration
- ✓ it celebrates its foundation in faith and trust (by Baptism) and seeks to become less anxious
- ✓ it listens and communicates well
- ✓ it cares for its members and encourages mutual care
- ✓ it resources people for the pressures and challenges of life
- ✓ it nurtures spirituality and vocation
- ✓ it is always seeking to offer itself to God so that it may be transformed into Christ's likeness (cf 2 Corinthians 3 : 18)
- ✓ it is sacred ground for all who encounter it and an icon for this region

## 6 Priorities for Action

### a) **Mission Statement**

Chapter has set itself the goal of producing, between Pentecost and Advent 2007, a new mission statement for the Cathedral which expresses all the aspirations and zest of being a 'healthy' Cathedral.

### b) **Management Plan**

The Cathedral has an annual Management Plan. We propose to revise this in the light of the Sabbatical experience. Copies of the Plan will be made available to the Congregation. It will always be available on request from the Chapter Office.

### c) **Lichfield InSpires**

For the past three years Chapter has been working hard to produce a development project that will conserve and repair the Cathedral's fabric and make its treasures accessible to a new and bigger audience. The project will also include a considerable up-grading of the Visitors Study Centre, the creation of a new meeting and hospitality area and more lavatories. This £8.3m project is an ambitious but achievable goal and Chapter believes this is a 'once in a generation' opportunity to give the Cathedral all the facilities it needs to fulfil its mission.

Lichfield Inspires can be summarised under three headings: conservation, education and interpretation.

#### \* **Conservation:**

There is urgent need to conserve some stonework, as well as the mullions which support the Herkenrode glass – and the glass itself is in need of restoration. WE hope to re-install five panels of glass by Betton & Evans of Shrewsbury removed by C.E. Kempe in 1895, as well as conserving the Scott Skidmore choir screen, gates, choir stalls and pulpit. We also need to replace the brick paved path to the West Front in a more suitable material.

#### \* **Education:**

Our present resources (teaching rooms, IT equipment, toilet facilities and library space) are now in need of expansion, replacement and updating. The project will increase the number and quality of teaching rooms, enable us to equip the rooms appropriately, massively increase toilet and assembly accommodation, move the Dean Savage library to the new Education Centre (on the site of the present VSC) and appoint, for a five-year term, an Education Officer to oversee the development of our schools work. At the same time, we are developing partnerships with

Staffordshire University and Keele University to improve the offer we make in postgraduate education.

**\* Interpretation:**

It is time to overhaul the way in which we provide access and commentary to Cathedral visitors. The project will create a purpose built reception in the North West porch. Renewed interpretation media (including lighting, leaflets, sound cones, touch screens and new signage) throughout the Cathedral will help visitors to understand the spiritual as well as the historical significance of the Cathedral's architecture, decoration, lay-out and furnishings. Treasures from the historic library, including our world class collection of historic Bibles, will be displayed on the Cathedral floor, and the shrine of St Chad (adorned by the Chad Gospels and the Lichfield Angel) will be enhanced as a focus for pilgrims.

**d) Pastoral Care**

It is clear that the Cathedral needs to review how pastoral care can be provided. Chapter will hold a series of consultations in order to identify any sources of worry and sources of opportunity and resource. More work in this area is needed and Chapter believes that there are many people in the Cathedral Community ready to share in this ministry.

**e) Communication**

It is also very apparent that an urgent review of our communications systems is needed. This process is already under way and we will look to our new Chief Officer, Tim Pain, to assist with this task. By Advent 2007 Chapter will publicise some proposals. A Task Group will be given responsibility of advising Chapter how internal and external communications should be handled and how the Cathedral should use all available media for communication.

## **7 Finally**

The Sabbatical has been a unique experience. It has brought to light some things which had previously been invisible, and it has helped Chapter hear a wide variety of views about how the Cathedral is experienced by the Cathedral Community. The Sabbatical has clearly helped to expand people's horizons about the magnitude and complexity of the Cathedral's mission and how much the Cathedral belongs to the region and nation. It has also been a time for travelling together in faith, asking questions about the nature of the Good News of Jesus Christ and thinking carefully about how we follow him. Jesus himself calls a community around him, that is the essence of our being the Church – a

community of disciples that shares life and experience and learns to minister the truth that sets the whole world free.

With joy, peace and thanksgiving in the Risen, Ascended and Glorious Lord and in the communion of the Holy Spirit.

**The Chapter of Lichfield Cathedral  
Pentecost 2007**