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**Southwell
Minster**

*The Cathedral and Parish Church
of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

Thank you to those of you who have given feedback on the first edition last month of this new Chapter Newsletter. Many of us feel saturated with information just now so thank you for getting this far and opening another email! We hope this missive is informative and helpful, whether you are living close to the Minster or have interest from afar.

Chapter's developing plans

The Chapter spent a day together earlier in the month as well as meeting last week. We are developing a vision for the Cathedral to exist as *a living well of spiritual refreshment celebrating a rich heritage, following Jesus Christ, and caring for God's creation*. We know that given the far-reaching impact of the pandemic into all our lives our purpose is to be a community of hope and inspiration which is outward facing. We have identified three main priorities from which our mission and ministry will flow. They are around welcome and hospitality, sharing and deepening faith, and wider community engagement. Over the next weeks we will be talking with the staff, volunteers, the Minster's worshipping community and other stakeholders about these priorities and how we can embrace all the numerous opportunities to share the love of God in who we are and what we do. We made some mention of these plans at the Annual Meeting last Sunday and will use this monthly newsletter to give updates.

The Leaves Project

If you live locally you will have seen the work beginning outside the Minster

to introduce new external lighting and to repair paths. Work continues in the Chapter House with the preparation of the floor for the introduction of underfloor heating. We are finalising plans for the garden and paddock work, which will enhance the interpretation of the naturalistic stone carvings and includes an outdoor learning space. At the start of this project, we could not have foreseen how vital to our wellbeing outdoor space and beauty is, but we are now seeing possibilities for more events and activities in the garden. Our first ever open-air Animal Blessing Service at the end of September was a great success and on Saturday 31 October a special 'Saints and Lights' activity is planned for families and children in the grounds. There are a few places left – please book online, wrap up warm and bring a torch!

Welcome news of a grant to help recovery

We were delighted to announce at the beginning of October the Cathedral will receive a grant from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport Recovery Fund amounting to £400,900. This is a lifeline ensuring we can bring staff back from furlough and implement plans for new income streams and growth. It sounds a lot of money – and it is – but there are necessary restrictions, and the grant must be applied by March 2021.

Visitors and the Cathedral shop

Since this area moved into Tier 2, we have seen a decrease in visitor numbers although with the two-week half term break there have been busier times. Those who come continue to give positive and appreciative feedback. The opening times of the Minster are likely to remain reduced over the autumn and winter months. The shop will increase its opening hours and trade Tuesday to Sunday in the lead up to Christmas. Please support it and remember there is also an online ordering facility in place.

Sacrista Prebend

The House remains closed but thanks to the dedicated voluntary team the

gardens are looking beautiful this autumn. The new Warden, The Revd Dr Michele Hampson, will be licensed during Evensong on Sunday 8 November and we are very much looking forward to welcoming her as a new colleague. She has some great ideas about how to widen the connections of the House to the diocese. Her arrival is well timed as the Chapter makes plans in response to the new opportunities despite the challenges and restrictions of the pandemic. Michele will be part time and you can read more about her in the October/November edition of *Southwell Leaves* on the website.

IICSA report and the Church of England

The recent publication of the Report made for difficult and unpalatable reading, facing us with the reality of the depth of pain experienced by survivors and victims of abuse in the face of church hierarchy and culture. While many lessons have been learned over the last years, we must never be complacent. Cathedrals were mentioned in the Report as having vulnerabilities when not linked to the Diocesan Safeguarding team. I can reassure everyone that for several years the Cathedral has been within the training and referral systems led by the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and as Dean I sit on the Diocesan Advisory Panel for Safeguarding. We heard this week that the postponed audit by the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) is rescheduled for 7/8/9 September 2021. As vital as training is, together with the value of good policies and procedures, it is the culture of any organisation that makes it a safe place and we are committed to ensure that all who come to worship, work or visit in the Minster are safe.

Remembrance, Advent and Christmas

We are almost ready to publish our plans for the next few weeks. Please check the website and the weekly publication *Pew News* for upto date information.

As I write, it has been announced that all of Nottinghamshire and the city of

Nottingham will go into Tier 3 on Friday. These are difficult and uncertain times. I share with you a prayer I have written:

Our Father God,

a very present help in time of trouble,

watch over and protect all the people of Nottingham and

Nottinghamshire affected by the coronavirus.

Give wisdom to all who lead,

give compassion to all who offer care,

give courage to all who are afraid,

give comfort to all who grieve,

give friendship to all who are alone,

give hope to all who despair.

Bind us together in love and peace.

We pray for the light and hope of Christ to shine brightly across our communities in these uncertain times.

Amen

Please visit the website for further details www.southwellminster.org



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