

Sunday 23rd December 2018
Fourth Sunday of Advent

Highlights

Away in a Manger.... the words of this traditional carol warms hearts as little children wearing dressing gowns and with tea towels on their heads presents an image of a warm and clean stable on a beautiful starlit night. In reality it would have been dark and smelly and filthy. The animals would not have been gazing adoringly but making unpleasant smells and noises. Mary would have been exhausted, Joseph bewildered. As for Jesus being woken by the lowing of cattle and not making a sound - he'd have screamed like every baby.

It is very tempting to idealise Christmas into something which makes us feel cosy and festive. The reality is different for far too many people. The images of happy families, of feasts, of presents under beautifully decorated trees are as remote from some people's lives as *Away in a Manger* is from that very first Christmas.

In our city there will be many for whom Christmas will be at best just like any other day, at worst a painful reminder of difficulties and troubles.

People sleeping rough. Families with no idea where the next meal is coming from, who cannot give their children gifts because there is only enough money for the bills, if that. Lonely people who will spend another long day with no one to speak to.

Christmas is wonderful, to be celebrated and enjoyed but maybe we need to focus on the carol's last verse, about God being with us forever and loving us. For those for whom Christmas will be difficult the presence and love of God will be felt through what we do to help make it a little easier, a little special, something to celebrate.

Let's enjoy the season, the carols and the warmth but let's also make sure that we share that with as many people as possible, especially those most in need.

*The Revd Canon Peter Leonard
Acting Dean and Canon Chancellor*

TODAY

The Chapter and Cathedral Staff thank all those who have contributed towards our services and wish everyone a very blessed Christmas.

The List and new Events List are available in the Cathedral or on the [website](#).

NOTICES

Churches Homeless Action Many thanks to all those who responded to the appeal. Over one hundred £5.00 supermarket vouchers have been passed on for distribution through charities which support the homeless.

Christmas Fair Thank you to all those who helped raise £6,368.67 for the Cathedral and its associations.

The Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal Thank you to all those who generously donated £350.79 in the Cathedral during the autumn appeal.

Crib Services 2.30pm and 4.00pm Christmas Eve. Presents to be distributed through the Roberts Centre can be brought to the service.

Christmas Home Communion If you are aware of anyone who is unable to come to church over the Christmas season and would like to receive communion, please contact the Cathedral Offices.

Thank you We are very grateful to the Southwick Estate for providing the Cathedral with a Christmas Tree again this year.

Cathedral Offices The offices will be closed from Christmas Day to 2nd January. Voice messages and emails to info@portsmouthcathedral.org.uk will be monitored by staff on duty.

Cathedral Shop The shop will be closed on Christmas Day and Boxing Day and re-opens on 27th December with seasonal reductions.

Food Bank Donations The Roberts Centre supports families in crisis and at the moment is short of breakfast cereals, long-life milk, pasta, tins of meat based products, cleaning materials and toilet tissue. At Christmas they are also asking for additional items such as biscuits and chocolate. Donations for the Roberts Centre and for All Saints Asylum Seeker and Refugee Drop In can be left in the plastic tubs in the Cloister. Thank you.

Light Up a Lantern for a loved one. If you would like to remember someone who lit up your life by having the Cathedral Tower lit on the day of your choice please contact lantern@portsmouthcathedral.org.uk or see details on the website and in the Welcome Area.

A Gift in your Will Please pick up a leaflet about legacies. If you would like to talk more about making a will or changing your will, please get in touch with Tim, Head of Fundraising tim.sledge@portsmouthcathedral.org.uk.

Wise people followed the Star! If you are searching, or have questions about life and God or what the future holds, you are invited to share your questions with other searchers in the upper room of The Dolphin Pub starting on 8th January and then 15th, 22nd and 29th at 7.00pm.

Open Church If you would like to volunteer to support this initiative that will provide accommodation and meals for eight weeks during January and February for some of Portsmouth's homeless in Portsmouth churches, please contact the Cathedral Offices for information and application forms.

Living Faith Course - Reshaping Church This updated module, starting Wednesday 16th January, considers the challenges that face the contemporary church in the light of previous church history. For further details contact sarah.lovatt@portsmouthcathedral.org.uk.

EVENTS and SERVICES

'Sea of Souls' Hermitage Artist's Reception 7.00pm Thursday 24th January. A unique opportunity to hear about behind the scenes aspects of Pete Codling's art residency and to learn more about the stories which evoked each section of the finished work. The exhibition of charcoal and pencil 'Time' themed drawings suspended in the Nave runs until 1st March.

Lunchtime Live 1.10pm Thursday 10th January. Musicians from Kew House School, free with retiring collection. Refreshments available from 12.30pm.

'Living Well' Our Annual Theme in 2019 will be 'Living Well'. The launch event on Saturday 12th January **Ruby Wax "How to be Human: The Manual"** is sold out. Details of other events will be available in the New Year.



Epiphany Carol Service 6.00pm Sunday 13th January.

Muslim Christian Evening 7pm Tuesday 15th January. All are welcome to join us as we meet in fellowship with the Wessex Jamaat.

January Film Nights Friday 18th - 7.30pm "The Greatest Showman"; Saturday 19th - 6.20pm "Sister Act" and 8.30pm "The Life of Brian". Tickets available only from <https://www.derbyquad.co.uk> £11 adults, £9 concessions. Family ticket (2 adults and 2 children) £32.

Fish & Chip Quiz Night 7.00pm on Friday 25th January in Becket Hall. Please hold the date, tickets will be on sale in the New Year.

PLEASE PRAY FOR

All those in need including: Brian, Roger, Derek, Jane, Stuart, Gita, Jenny, Alan, Freya and Donald.

Sunday 23rd December, Fourth Sunday of Advent

- 0800 Holy Communion (BCP said)
1030 Eucharist *sung by the Cathedral Consort*
Preacher: The Canon Precentor
Readings: Micah 5.2-5a; Luke 1.39-45
(The Cathedral will be closed between 4.15pm and 6.15pm)
1900 Carol Service III *sung by the Cathedral Choir*

This Week

Monday 24th December, Christmas Eve

- 0740 Morning Prayer followed by Holy Communion
1430 Crib Service I
1600 Crib Service II
1830 Carol Service with Blessing of the Crib *sung by the Cathedral Choir*
(The Cathedral will be closed between 8.00pm and 10.30pm)
2330 Midnight Eucharist *with incense sung by Cantate and Consort*
Preacher: The Bishop

Tuesday 25th December, Christmas Day

- 0800 Holy Communion (BCP said)
1030 Eucharist *sung by the Cathedral Choir and Cantate*
Preacher: The Acting Dean
Readings: Isaiah 9.2-7; Luke 2.1-14

NO Evening Service

- Wednesday** 0900 Morning Prayer followed by Holy Communion
1200 Holy Communion
1600 Evening Prayer *said*
Thursday 0900 Morning Prayer followed by Holy Communion
1600 Evening Prayer *said*
Friday 0900 Morning Prayer followed by Holy Communion
1200 Holy Communion
1600 Evening Prayer *said*
Saturday 1600 Evening Prayer *said*

Sunday 30th December, First Sunday of Christmas

- 0800 Holy Communion (BCP said)
1030 Eucharist *congregational*
Preacher: Cllr, The Revd Andy Fitchet, *Picket Twenty Baptist Church*
Readings: 1 Samuel 2.18-20,26; Luke 2.41-end
1800 Evensong *congregational with hymns*
Preacher: The Acting Dean