



GUILDFORD
CATHEDRAL

Stag Hill REVIEW OF 2023

OPEN

a warm-hearted community,
open to **God**, open to **all**

I wish, on behalf of the Cathedral Chapter, to thank all our supporters for all you have given, both in time and financially, to the life of our Cathedral. In this report you will read a little of the extraordinary variety of activities we have been privileged to encourage and support in 2023.

2023 saw the retirement of Dean Dianna after ten years of loyal service. Much of what you read here is the fruit of her leadership and commitment. I have been “holding the fort” temporarily since September and wish to express my own thanks to colleagues and staff and so many from the Cathedral Community for your support and encouragement.



Stuart Beake, Acting Dean

2023 has been an exciting year for Guildford Cathedral. It has seen us celebrate a Coronation, install a Bishop, host the National Monument Against Violence and Aggression, be nominated and win an award for access and be voted Guildford's Favourite Building.

As a supporter, we would like to say a huge thank you for helping us this year and pick out some highlights to sum up 2023 for you to see what your support has helped us achieve.

A TOUCH OF GRANDEUR

As you know, our stunning building is a space of light and tranquillity, which really enhances acts of worship. It also acts as a spectacular venue for ceremonies. We have a long-standing relationship with the University of Surrey who use us for graduations twice a year at Easter and in July. We also celebrate with ALPS and SCITT (School Centred Initial Teacher Training) as their students graduate and host both the NHS Awards and the Lord Lieutenant's Awards Ceremonies.

Perhaps, then, it is no wonder we were voted Guildford's Favourite Building this year. We were also humbled and delighted to be awarded the Mayor's Bronze Award for Access. With good access for wheelchairs and those with mobility difficulties in and around our site, one of the stand-out comments was the fact that our wheelchair spaces in the seating rows are towards the centre aisle, allowing those who need to use them to feel included rather than pushed to the side. As a place that aims to be *Open to God, Open to All*, this award was acknowledgement for us that we are moving in the right direction.

OPEN TO ALL

Part of our mission is to be a place where everyone can find a welcome. In part, we do this through the welcomers at our services, but we also have a specific department for engaging with families. This new role has been made possible by the generosity of the Friends of Guildford Cathedral. It is with grateful thanks that we are able to employ our Family Engagement Officer. Together with our Head of Schools, they host school visits and workshops, and organise Family Fun Days and all age services (but both do so much more than that and have a very wide impact on the life at Guildford Cathedral)

We have run eleven school workshops linked with the church seasons plus five school visits teaching children about the building, how it was built and what it is used for, as part of the curriculum. We have also held leavers' services over five days in conjunction with the Diocese of Guildford, and eleven school carol services. This year we also welcomed WOOFYT (Wooden One-octave Organ For Young Technologists), a musical experience day where children were taught about the science behind music and given the opportunity to work together to play an instrument that is similar to an organ but broken down so they could see how the individual parts work to produce sound.

We also hosted a very successful Eco Day with the Diocesan Education Team. Church of England schools from across the Diocese took part in a day packed with activities including prayer and reflection stations so they could engage with this hugely important topic under the heading "Why does it matter for Christians to care for God's world?" Becki Hartley commented, "It was a pleasure to host and organise such a special day. It was a joy to see the children having fun, while learning such important messages about our environment."

We have also hosted schools' artwork for our exhibition throughout Advent. Schools are given a brief and children then work together to create something they think fits the brief. Their work is displayed around the Cathedral throughout December. This year, the brief was *God's Gift*.

We have also welcomed families to monthly services for toddlers called Tots Praise, where youngsters explore a simple bible story or theme with a couple of take-away crafts, and parents/carers also get the chance to enjoy the company of others with small children, a lifeline for some parents who can find the earlier years of parenthood isolating.

For older children, we have run five Family Fun Days, free activity days where children are given a pack with some craft basics and are encouraged to go to tables in the Cathedral where they will find instructions and some shared resources to make things around a specific theme. This year's theme were love, Easter/spring, summer holidays, creation and Christmas/everyone's welcome. These activity days are appreciated by all who come, some of whom are on a tight budget. Experiences like this are fantastic opportunities to do something with their children that parents and carers may not otherwise be able to do.

EVENTS

Across the year, amidst the services, school visits and family activities, we also act as a venue for events. We hold monthly Coffee Concerts welcoming local and professional musicians to perform and inviting the local community including care homes to come a listen and enjoy tea and coffee. This year, performers included a couple of local choirs - *The Rhythm of Life* and *Motivation by Music* - students from George Abbot School and professional musicians Erik and Jo Levi and Gina Kruger.

We also hold guided tours and tower tours. This year we trialled a Summer Series of Tower Tours, weekday tours throughout August, which were a sellout. If you missed out this year, keep an eye on our website for next year!

As well as running our own events, we also collaborate with others. As an example, we act as a venue for charity abseils. This year seven charities (including ourselves, but more on that later) used these abseils as a way of raising funds and awareness. Throughout May and June you would have been able to see people lower themselves off the edge of the tower and abseil down.

We also hosted a Charities Network Day for the second year, an opportunity for representatives from small charities to get together and compare notes and advice and listen to a panel of speakers around how to fundraise.

Another local charity we work with regularly is Phylliss Tuckwell. In December we host *Light up a Life* with them, where they names of departed loved ones are projected onto the West End of the Cathedral. We also hosted their Service of Remembrance. At a time of year where there is a lot of joy and laughter, it felt good to be part of something for those who may find this time of year hard due to loss and grief.

Others successful events this year include *Candlelight Concerts*, one with the London Film Orchestra playing an evening of John Williams and Hans Zimmer, and two with Concerts by Candlelight presenting an evening of music by Fleetwood Mac and Queen. We also hosted a fundraising concert for Saving Strays, with Rick Wakeman and Friends performing during the evening. The Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance Charity also held a Christmas Concert here to raise funds for their essential work.

KNIFE ANGEL

A highlight of this year has been the opportunity to host the National Monument Against Violence and Aggression, a 27-foot angel sculpture made from blunted blades taken off the streets of the UK during a knife amnesty. This sculpture has travelled around the country to raise awareness of the effects of knife crime and violence on communities. It pays tribute to those who have lost loved ones to knife crime and acts as a focal teaching point for young people especially to help them understand the true impact that violence and knife crime has. It was particularly poignant to host it here at Guildford Cathedral and work closely with Julie Somerville who lost her son to a knife attack in 2015. Even safer counties like Surrey can learn lessons from this monument.

Surrounding this, we had a special service at the launch and a vigil at the end. During the month the Angel was here, we linked with the University and local schools to put on events for everyone who wanted to engage. We teamed up with One Punch, a charity who raise awareness about how one punch is enough to kill, and a couple of local boxing clubs. One, Valentines Gym, is run by the best friend of Daniel Somerville, a young man who was killed in 2015. We hosted talks by Dean Cody, an ex-police officer who talked about being street-safe, and Dr Neville Lawrence, father of Stephen Lawrence who was stabbed to death in 1993, who gave a Q&A session around the impact the loss had had on him.

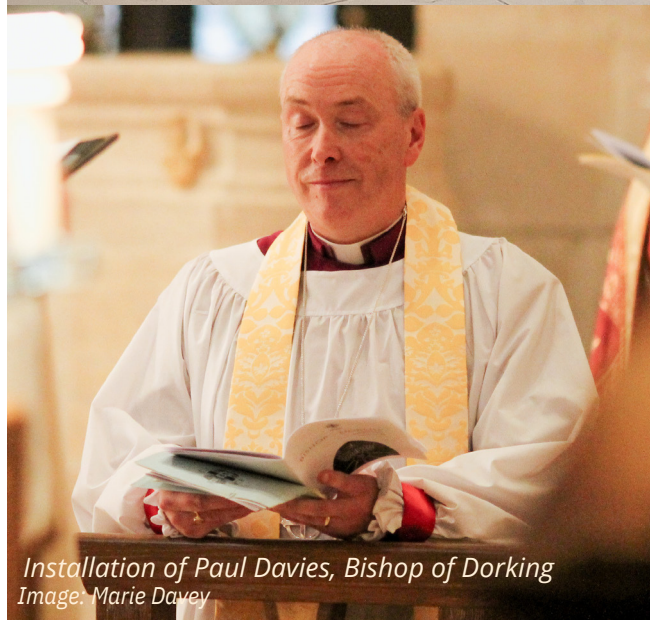
With the University, we put on *Court of the Future*, a mock court set up where three fictional but realistic cases of violence involving the possession and use of knives, one's punch manslaughter and domestic abuse were presided over by HHJ Fraser MVO DL, the Resident Judge of Guildford Crown Court.

In the middle of the month, the Rock Choir gave a free fundraising concert, with all proceeds going to the Knife Angel project and its aim to make Britain safer. Bringing the Knife Angel monument to Surrey was made possible by financial and in-kind donations from individuals, businesses and organisations.

We also extend our grateful thanks to our project partners: The Lord Lieutenant of Surrey, Mr Michael More Molyneux, The High Sheriffs of Surrey; His Honour Christopher Critchlow LL.B DL, (2022) and Mr Tim Wates DL, (2023), Caroline Breckell MVO DL, Deputy Clerk to the Surrey Lieutenancy & Under



Cantatrice Singers - Coffee Concert



*Installation of Paul Davies, Bishop of Dorking
Image: Marie Davey*



Leap of Faith - Matt O'Grady abseiling down the tower



*Service of Celebration for the Coronation of King Charles III
Image: Marie Davey*



*Dean Dianna's retirement service
Image: Marilyn Taylor*

Sheriff Surrey, Julie Sommerville, Mum of Daniel and Anti Knife Campaigner, Guildford Borough Council, The Mayor of Guildford, Surrey Police, Surrey Fire and Rescue, Guildford Town Centre Chaplaincy (Street Angels), Christ College; teachers and students, The Matrix Trust, Your Sanctuary, Stop Hate UK, The University of Surrey, I Choose Freedom. For more information about the Knife Angel in Surrey, go to <https://www.guildford-cathedral.org/events/knife-angel>

MAKING A JOYFUL SOUND

As we are sure you are aware, Cathedral musicians work extremely hard preparing and leading the music at the regular services. At Guildford Cathedral, that means six weekly services across the three choirs. In addition, in 2023, our musicians found time to go above and beyond. With much to celebrate and so many things to highlight, here is a whistle stop tour through the year.

In **January**, our choir were joined by student and professional instrumentalists from Charterhouse School to provide orchestral accompaniments for three evening services where they sang Cantatas by Johann Sebastian Bach that were written especially for the Epiphany Season. These Cantatas were written as reflective works, almost a musical sermon, with a hint of the dramatic world of opera in a church setting. They have solo and choral movements. The Cantatas sung were *Meinen Jesum laß ich nicht* (BWV 124) – I will not let go of my Jesus, *Alles nur nach Gottes Willen* (BWV 72) – Everything according to God's will alone, and *Jesus schläft, was soll ich hoffen?* (BWV 81) – Jesus sleeps, for what shall I hope? These musical offerings over Epiphany were sublime additions to Evensong and were a wonderful example of collaboration with musicians from Charterhouse.

In **February** we had reason to celebrate – 20 years since the formation of the Girls Choir! We celebrated by inviting former girl choristers. Our 23 girls were joined by 15 returning choristers for an evening of celebration, making music together.

In **March**, BBC Radio recorded and broadcast two services from Guildford Cathedral. On Wednesday 8 March to mark International Women's Day, Evensong was broadcast live, and a pre-recorded service was broadcast on Mothering Sunday morning.

Also in **March**, we gave young musicians a chance to perform with Young Students' Showcase Organ Recitals before Evensong throughout March, and our Organ

Scholar Marcus McDevitt performed in the monthly lunchtime concert, showing his talent at piano and organ to an audience of 160, nearly double the usual Coffee Concert audience number.

April saw the mountain of Easter services for the choir. On Good Friday, the musicians and choir supported the Solemn Three Hours and Liturgy of Good Friday in addition to Choral Evensong, On the next day they sang the Easter Eve Service with Baptism and Confirmation, and they finished with Easter Day Choral Eucharist in the morning followed by the Solemn Choral Evensong and Procession. But in case you think it's all work and no play, our Choristers also found time for their annual Easter Egg Hunt – a well-earned reward for a lot of extra singing. It was also a bittersweet occasion as we said goodbye to Sub Organist Richard Moore as he left to take up his post as Sub-Organist at Christ Church at the University of Oxford.

We were delighted to welcome Asher Oliver from York Minster to fill that post, and he had to hit the ground running. He has taken on all that has been passed to him and has made himself an invaluable part of the Cathedral family.

In **May**, there was a national occasion that hasn't happened in the lifetime of any of our musicians: a coronation. We were excited to sing at the County Service for the Coronation of King Charles III, with some appropriately British regal music from William Walton and Charles Hubert Hastings Parry.

June was a slightly quieter month which gave us an opportunity to hold an Open Night for Girl Choristers, an opportunity for interested girls to come and have a taste of what being a chorister is like and maybe sign up for an audition...

It also gave us time to get ready for **July** – Ordinations and Valedictories! The month started with Marcus McDevitt giving his Valedictory recital to a large audience, showcasing all he has learnt this year. To paraphrase Marcus, he didn't properly check but he thought he used every stop and pipe our organ had to offer. It was a versatile programme that showed both the instrument and the organist off to their best.



BBC Chorister of the Year Competition
Image: Tricia Yourkevich



Cathedral Tots



Diocese of Guildford Eco Day



Cathedral Clergy at the Advent Procession
Image: Marie Davey



National Monument Against Violence and Aggression
Image: Andy Newbold



Guildford Cathedral Christmas Fair set up
Image: Marie Davey



Lung Cinema



Flower Arranging for the Coronation



National Monument Against Violence and Aggression presentation



Girl Chorister 20th Anniversary Reunion

The same weekend saw the Ordination Services for Deacons and Priests, calling on our musicians once again to provide music that reflected the joyful occasion and made the service memorable to those who were being ordained.

The following weekend was the Choral Evensong with Installation and Valedictions of Choristers, an opportunity for probationary choristers to be made full choristers, and for us to say goodbye to choristers who were moving on, and to Marcus McDevitt who had completed his year's training with us. This year, we also said goodbye to two of our lay clerks. The service was a musical feast, featuring an introit by Vaughan Williams and Benjamin Britten's *Rejoice in the Lamb* as the anthem. It was a celebration of all that had been achieved over the academic year and a fitting send off for the musicians that were leaving us.

August was a month off for our musicians – choristers got the school holiday to relax, and the organists got a chance to rest and prepare for the next academic year.

With **September** came a new organ scholar, five new Lay Clerks, five new boy probationer Choristers and the appointment of new Head and Deputy Head Choristers. We were pleased to welcome Jeremy Wan as Organ Scholar 2023/2024 and Peter Hicks, Laurens Macklon, Oliver Turner, Fraser Ellson and Hamish Ellson to join Lizzie Post as Lay Clerks.

September also saw us say farewell to Dean Dianna Gwilliams, retiring after 10 years serving here at Guildford Cathedral, with a special service of Evensong.

Just a week later, in **October**, we welcomed Bishop Paul Davies during a Choral Evensong service in which he was installed as Bishop of Dorking. With music chosen by Bishop Paul himself, our musicians once again proved their versatility by providing music that fitted the occasion.

Moving into **November**, All Souls Day and Remembrance required two different Requiem Masses from our musicians, by Duruflé and Fauré.

Then we reach **December**. Already a busy month with Advent and Christmas services, this year we also had the honour of hosting John Rutter himself for a Christmas Celebration. The Choristers also put together a musical Advent Calendar which was released each day throughout December on our social media channels. The music at Advent and Christmas lies at the heart of the season, and our musicians always work hard to make all services and concerts a real joy to experience.

One final highlight – we know how amazing our musicians are, so it is with great pride we watch the nation also discover that. This year, one of our girl choristers made it to the final of the BBC Chorister of the Year Competition. Well done Annie!

There you have a whistle-stop tour through a year of music here at Guildford Cathedral. The musicians do so much more than we have highlighted here, this is just a snapshot of some of our favourite bits.

LIVESTREAMING

If you are unable to get to our services, we continue to livestream our Sunday Services via our Facebook page and YouTube channel.

MISSION PARTNERS

As a Christian organisation, we partner up with other good causes and support the work they do to help others. Currently, we have three Mission Partners. Here's a brief snapshot of the work they have done in 2023 so you can see where our support had gone.

Guildford Town Centre Chaplaincy

Our Mission Partner, Guildford Town Centre Chaplaincy has had another busy year offering compassionate support to the vulnerable through their award-winning Street Angel, Community Angel and Volunteer Chaplains Project. The Street Angel team was pleased to actively participate in many of the Cathedral's Knife Angel events in March, and was thrilled to be recognised, along with others, for the part they play in reducing violence and aggression in the community at a ceremony on Stag Hill by the High Sheriff of Surrey. The Chaplaincy currently has some 115 volunteers working across its three projects, supporting some 5000 individuals a year, offering some 8500 volunteer hours coming alongside the vulnerable, offering a patient listening ear in a range of settings. While the Street Angels provide a calming patrol late at night to reduce anti-social behaviour and care every Friday and Saturday, the Community Angels tackle loneliness and social isolation for adults of any age who are referred to the charity. Meanwhile, the expanding Volunteer Chaplain project now has trained individuals placed in a range of organisations, such as GPs Surgeries, the Police Station and at St Mary's Church in Quarry Street, with plans for a Nightclub Chaplain and a Chaplain to a Women's Refuge currently being finalised. GTCC are so very grateful to the Cathedral team and congregation for their regular prayers, their practical encouragement, and their long-standing financial support.

GTCC's growing responsibilities mean that it now costs over £110k pa to operate the charity to continue to make a positive impact on so many troubled lives. The Rev Noelle Coe, the Town Chaplain and CEO of the Charity said "We really appreciate the ongoing prayers and encouragement of our friends on Stag Hill. Just as the Cathedral's golden Angel is a beacon of light over the town, our volunteer Angels bless those we encounter – on the streets, in their homes or in the workplace. Thank you so much, and we look forward to continuing to work closely with you in 2024."

Seeds for Development

A message from Seeds for Development: So here we are, waving goodbye to 2023. Thank you to all of you who have donated, fundraised, supported, and challenged us over the last 12 months! Thank you so much, you are everything and we can't do anything without you. Please don't stop!

2023 was a year of celebrations - two nursery school graduations at the schools we have built and help build. A year of hardship, hunger, and awful levels of child malnutrition - hundreds of emergency food and medicine handouts.

A year of incredible resilience and determination by the people in northern Uganda. And a year that has given us ideas and inspiration for 2024, which is waiting round the corner and bashing on the door to get going. It's going to be tough, but we can do it and are excited to get going! Guildford Cathedral sponsors Amaro, and our support helps her to get a quality education and improves her prospects for the future

Homestart Guildford

Homestart Guildford help parents of children under 6 years old who are struggling with issues such as isolation, mental health difficulties, domestic abuse or difficult relationships. They support those families, offering practical support, a listening ear and helping them to know that they aren't alone. The latest figures show that they supported 348 children and 174 families over a 12-month period in and around Guildford.

FUNDRAISING

I promised a bit more about the charity abseil and I won't make you wait any longer. This year 14 brave individuals climbed 249 steps up the inside of the tower and made a Leap of Faith, taking the weight off their feet and enjoying the views on the way down. The individuals came from across the Cathedral community, with staff, volunteers,

congregation, chorister parents, and friends of congregation all signing up. They were presented with a medal when they reached solid ground, and all together our intrepid abseilers raised over £8,500 for the Cathedral.

Another successful fundraising event run this year was Quiz for a Cause, a pub-style quiz with a meal in Seasons, out on-site Cafe. This was a great evening with a brilliant atmosphere, and people are already asking for the next one. Rounds varied from the standard music and sport to animals and children's books. If you want to join in the next one, we'll be running another next Autumn, although the exact date is still to be decided. (Congratulations to our organists and Lay Clerks who came third out of 12 teams!) For this event we raised around £1,200.

These fundraising events help us to keep the lights on, but we are also supported by some trusts and foundations. This year, we have been given money by:

- Vibrated Corn (general funds)
- Atlas Fund (Organ Scholar)
- Golsoncott Church Music (Organ Scholar)
- Williams Church Music (Organ Scholar)
- Borrows Charitable Trust (Coffee Concerts, Family Fun Days and Cathedral Tots Refreshments, Families Art Outreach and Schools Music Outreach)
- Guildford Fairtrade (Contribution towards Sensory Disabled Tours)

In addition, the Music Development Foundation has contributed to the running of the music department, and the Friends of Guildford Cathedral have made donations to upgrading our livestreaming equipment and help with the general day-to-day running of the cathedral and helping with salaries.

Thank you for your support, we couldn't do it without you!



Image: Marie Davey

Across this year, we have also been generously supported by individuals, either with regular or one-off general donations, or with sponsorship for a specific project or event. To all of you, thank you. We couldn't do what we do without your generosity and support.

