

# THE CHAPTER LETTER



9<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2008

**Philip Buckler, Dean    Gavin Kirk, Precentor    Michael West, Chancellor    Alan Nugent, Subdean**

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I recently heard the observation made that within 25 years, practising Christians would, in effect, be excluded from posts of seniority in both local and national administration. It was not suggested that this would be brought about by legislation. Indeed that would be unimaginable. Rather, it was suggested, that when a post such as Director of Social Services or a senior position in the Civic Service came up then anyone known to be a practising Christian would by subtle yet very effective ways within the appointing process be bypassed. This is basically because there is a widespread assumption that anyone who confesses a robust Faith must be an extremist or irrational or both.

To test this out pay particular attention to the epithets used by broadcasters when speaking of Christians, especially on news bulletins. Evangelicals are so often dismissed as fundamentalist or happy-clappy. Catholics usually attract the description 'anti-abortion' or opposed to advances in medical techniques that affect embryology. References to Christian activists of any tradition are usually pejorative. So very often Christian positions are held up to subtle ridicule.

Secularization has been going on for a long while and this has brought about the marginalization of the Christian Faith. Christian beliefs, instead of promoting the values underlying our society, are now simply regarded as a private life-style choice which should have no significant place in determining any aspect of social policy. There are many who seek to exclude Christian belief from social debate; because for them belief is synonymous with irrationality, prejudice and extremism.

I worry that this is so, and I worry more where it will leave Christian Faith in terms of British Society. Will it be just a recreational extra?

If there has been one consistent theme passing through my years of ministry I hope it has been the promotion of a Christian Faith which is at once both reasonable and a revelation. It is because I have been immersed in the Christian Gospel that I have discovered fresh and powerful understandings of humanity, of truth, of freedom; because each of these reflect the nature and mystery of God. Having caught the vision of faith I am deeply concerned that those people and pressures in our Society that will not be content until the Christian Faith is relegated to the border of irrelevance win the day. For in doing so they will destroy a unique vision of humanity and all that is best in it.

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**Bernard Lunn RIP.** Following a short illness Bernard died in the early hours of Monday 3 November. Our prayers go to Stanley and Bernard's family. Reception of the body into St Hugh's Choir on Thursday 13 November at 6.30pm. Funeral Service on Friday 14 November at 11.00am. All welcome to attend. Bernard had been a Server in the Cathedral for 38 years and for the last 15, Sub-Sacrist.

**On the Friday (5<sup>th</sup>) and Saturday (6<sup>th</sup>)** of the Christmas Market the Works Department will have a Craft Stall in the Cloisters. Items, made of material taken from the Cathedral, will be on sale. The workings going on at present in the South West Transept area have provided plenty of pieces of wood and other materials which have been artistically reworked into attractive items. That different Christmas present awaits you. Members of the Works Department will also be presenting demonstrations of their skills with wood, stone, glass and lead.

**Barbara Ashton writes:** I send my sincere love and thanks for all the prayers, letters and beautiful cards sent to me during my recent heart surgery – it gives one great comfort. My strength is returning daily but I know this will take time, patience and tender loving care of which I am fortunate. No doubt I shall be attending Cathedral services and functions in the not too distant future.

**Carol Hill writes:** Many thanks to everybody who supported the coffee morning. We made a grand total of £170. Thanks especially to the Chancellor and Mrs West for letting us invade their home.

**Catherine Dyas writes:** A big thank you to my friends and colleagues at the Cathedral for their kind wedding gifts; we had the most enjoyable and memorable day.

**The Flower Team writes:** Many thanks to all those who so very kindly donated money for chrysanthemums at All Souls' Tide.

**Janet Miles writes:** The new Cathedral Cookery Book should be on sale by the end of November. We will keep you all informed. It will sell at £9.99 and be a super Christmas Gift.

**The Sunday School** thanks so many people for their contributions for the provision of beanbags in the Common Chamber. The children enjoy sitting on them enormously. Also, thank you to all those who made contributions to the Samaritans' Purse shoeboxes, which have now been sent off.

**Organ Music at Lincoln Cathedral:** There will be an organ recital on Sunday 16 November at 5.15 p.m. This will be given by Wladimir Matesic from Bologna, Italy and admission is free but there will be a retiring collection for the Organ Recitals Fund.

**The Director of Music** would like to congratulate the following: Ted Mair, who will be made a Chorister on Saturday 8 November, Lydia Lallemand and Alice Jones, who will be made Choristers on Sunday 9 November, Tilly Mair and Zoe Dawson, who will be made Chantresses on Saturday 15 November and also Lincoln Cupples who will be made a Chanter on Sunday 16 November.

Alan Nugent, Subdean

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**Sunday 16 November** 10.30 Eucharist - an opportunity to say farewell to the Chancellor.

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### **Bible Readings**

#### Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> November

Eucharist  
10.40am  
Evensong

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday before Advent

Wisdom 6: 12-16, 1 Thessalonians 4: 13-end, Matthew 25: 1-13  
Festival of Remembrance  
Judges 7: 2-22, John 15: 9-17

#### Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> November

Eucharist  
Mattins  
Evensong

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday before Advent

Zephaniah 1: 7, 12-end, 1 Thessalonians 5: 1-11, Matthew 25: 14-30  
Daniel 10: 19-end, Revelation 4  
1 Kings 1: 15-40, Revelation 1: 4-18

#### Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> November

Eucharist  
Mattins  
Evensong

#### Sunday before Advent

Ezekiel 34: 11-16, 20-24, Ephesians 1: 15-end, Matthew 25: 31-end  
Isaiah 4: 2-5.7, Luke 19: 29-38  
2 Samuel 23: 1-7, Matthew 28: 16-end