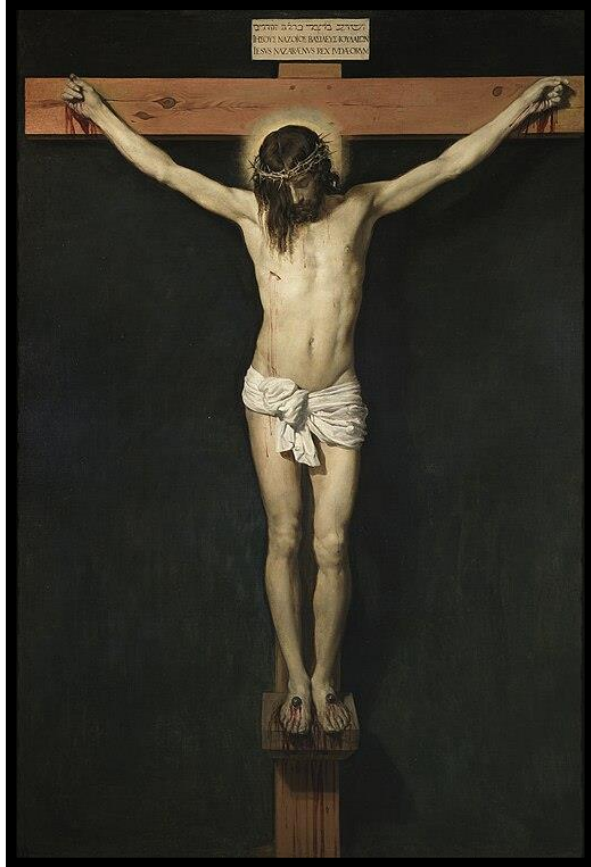


 COVENTRY
CATHEDRAL



The Liturgy of Good Friday

3rd April, 2026, 9am

Welcome to Coventry Cathedral

Welcome to this service for Good Friday. Good Friday is the most solemn day of the Church's year. On this day, we enter into the darkness and dereliction of the cross as Jesus cries out, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'

The liturgy shows us that Good Friday is also a celebration of divine love poured out in death, a thanksgiving for the victory of the cross. At the heart of this service stands the passion account of St John, for whom the cross of Jesus is, supremely, his throne, from where, 'lifted up' he reigns in glory as King. 'It is finished!' he cries: not in despair, but in triumph, as he accomplishes the work of salvation his Father sent him to perform.

The service attempts to capture this twofold aspect of Good Friday. It allows us to ponder the mystery of Christ crucified by inviting us to hear the Scriptures read and the passion preached, to keep silence, offer prayer, and enter into the meaning of the cross.

There are three sections:

The Liturgy of the Word

in which the cross is set forth through scripture and preaching.

The Proclamation of the Cross

enabling the worshippers to respond to the ministry of the word by an act of devotion and adoration before the cross at the Chancel step.

The Solemn Intercession

offered at the foot of the cross, in which the Church prays for the unity of all Christians through the death of Christ, and for the healing of the whole human family for which he died.

Presiding and preaching at the Liturgy today is the Right Reverend Sophie Jelly, Bishop of Coventry. The Cathedral Choir is directed by Joe Watson, Acting Director of Music.

The artwork on the cover is "Christ Crucified" by Diego Velázquez (1599–1660), Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, Spain.

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The Liturgy of the Word

We *STAND* as the choir and ministers enter in silence.

The Collect

The Right Reverend Sophie Jelley, Bishop of Coventry, presiding, says,

Almighty Father,
look with mercy on this your family
for which our Lord Jesus Christ
was content to be betrayed
and given up into the hands of wicked men
and to suffer death upon the cross;
who is alive and glorified
with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

The Reading

We *SIT* to hear the reading, read by the Very Reverend John Witcombe.

See, my servant shall prosper;
he shall be exalted and lifted up,
and shall be very high.
Just as there were many who were astonished at him
— so marred was his appearance, beyond human semblance,
and his form beyond that of mortals —
so he shall startle many nations;
kings shall shut their mouths because of him;
for that which had not been told them they shall see,
and that which they had not heard they shall contemplate.
Who has believed what we have heard?
And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?
For he grew up before him like a young plant,
and like a root out of dry ground;

he had no form or majesty that we should look at him,
nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.
He was despised and rejected by others;
a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity;
and as one from whom others hide their faces
he was despised, and we held him of no account.
Surely he has borne our infirmities
and carried our diseases;
yet we accounted him stricken,
struck down by God, and afflicted.
But he was wounded for our transgressions,
crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the punishment that made us whole,
and by his bruises we are healed.
All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have all turned to our own way,
and the Lord has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.
He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,
yet he did not open his mouth;
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.
By a perversion of justice he was taken away.
Who could have imagined his future?
For he was cut off from the land of the living,
stricken for the transgression of my people.
They made his grave with the wicked
and his tomb with the rich,
although he had done no violence,
and there was no deceit in his mouth.

Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him with pain.

When you make his life an offering for sin,
he shall see his offspring, and shall prolong his days;
through him the will of the Lord shall prosper.
Out of his anguish he shall see light;
he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge.
The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous,
and he shall bear their iniquities.
Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great,
and he shall divide the spoil with the strong;
because he poured out himself to death,
and was numbered with the transgressors;
yet he bore the sin of many,
and made intercession for the transgressors.

Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12

At the end, the Dean says,

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Silence is kept.

Psalm 22

The choir sings:

1. My God, my God, look upon me; why hast thou forsaken me: and art so far from my health, and from the words of my complaint?
2. O my God, I cry in the day-time, but thou hearest not: and in the night-season also I take no rest.
3. And thou continuest holy: O thou worship of Israel.
4. Our fathers hoped in thee: they trusted in thee, and thou didst deliver them.
5. They called upon thee, and were holpen: they put their trust in thee, and were not confounded.
6. But as for me, I am a worm, and no man: a very scorn of men, and the outcast of the people.

7. All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot our their lips, and shake their heads, saying,
8. He trusted in God, that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, if he will have him.
9. But thou art he that took me out of my mother's womb: thou wast my hope, when I hanged yet upon my mother's breasts.
10. I have been left unto thee ever since I was born: thou art my God, even from my mother's womb.
11. O go not from me, for trouble is hard at hand: and there is none to help me.
12. Many oxen are come about me: fat bulls of Basan close me in on every side.
13. They gape upon me with their mouths: as it were a ramping and a roaring lion.
14. I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart also in the midst of my body is even like melting wax.
15. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaveth to my gums: and thou shalt bring me into the dust of death.
16. For many dogs are come about me: and the council of the wicked layeth siege against me.
17. They pierced my hands and my feet; I may tell all my bones: they stand staring and looking upon me.
18. They part my garments among them: and cast lots upon my vesture.
19. But be not thou far from me, O Lord: thou art my succour, haste thee to help me.
20. Deliver my soul from the sword: my darling from the power of the dog.
21. Save me from the lion's mouth: thou hast heard me also from among the horns of the unicorns.

The Passion Gospel

We remain SEATED for the first part of the Passion Gospel. The Gospel is read in dramatic form, the congregation taking the part of the soldiers, priests and bystanders, printed in **bold** in the text.

Evangelist: The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.
When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples across the Kidron valley, where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with his disciples. So Judas, procuring a band of soldiers and some officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, went there with lanterns and torches and weapons. Then Jesus, knowing all that was to befall him, came forward and said to them:

Jesus: Whom do you seek?

Soldiers: **Jesus of Nazareth.**

Jesus: I am he.

Evangelist: Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. When he said to them, 'I am he', they drew back and fell to the ground. Again, he asked them:

Jesus: Whom do you seek?

Soldiers: **Jesus of Nazareth.**

Jesus: I told you that I am he; so, if you seek me, let these men go.

Evangelist: This was to fulfil the word which he had spoken, 'Of those whom you gave me I lost no one'. Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's slave and cut off his right ear. The slave's name was Malchus. Jesus said to Peter:

Jesus: Put your sword into its sheath; shall I not drink the cup which the Father has given me?

Evangelist: So the band of soldiers and their captain and the officers of the Jews seized Jesus and bound him. First they led him to Annas; for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. It was Caiaphas who had given counsel to the Jews that it was expedient that one man should die for the people. Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. As this disciple was known to the high priest, he entered the court of the high priest along with Jesus, while Peter stood outside at the door. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the maid who kept the door, and brought Peter in. The maid who kept the door said to Peter:

Maid: Are you not also one of this man's disciples?

Peter: I am not.

Evangelist: Now the servants and officers had made a charcoal fire, because it was cold, and they were standing and warming themselves; Peter also was with them, standing and warming himself. The high priest then questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. Jesus answered him:

Jesus: I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all Jews come together; I have said nothing secretly. Why do you ask me? Ask those who have heard me what I said to them: they know what I said.

Evangelist: When he had said this, one of the officers standing by struck Jesus with his hand, saying:

Officer: Is that how you answer the high priest?

Jesus: If I have spoken wrongly, bear witness to the wrong; but if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?

Evangelist: Annas then sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest. Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They said to him:

Bystanders: **Are you not also one of his disciples?**

Peter: I am not.

Evangelist: One of the servants of the high priest, a kinsman of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked:

Servant: Did I not see you in the garden with him?

Evangelist: Peter again denied it; and at once the cock crowed. Then they led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the praetorium. It was early. They themselves did not enter the praetorium, so that they might not be defiled, but might eat the passover. So Pilate went out to them and said:

Pilate: What accusation do you bring against this man?

Priests: **If this man were not an evildoer, we would not have handed him over.**

Pilate: Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law.

Priests: **It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.**

Evangelist: This was to fulfil the word which Jesus had spoken to show by what death he was to die. Pilate entered the praetorium again and called Jesus, and said to him:

Pilate: Are you the King of the Jews?

Jesus: Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?

Pilate: Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me; what have you done?

Jesus: My kingship is not of this world; if my kingship were of this world, my servants would fight, that I might not be handed over to the Jews; but my kingship is not from the world.

Pilate: So you are a king?

Jesus: You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice.

Pilate: What is truth?

Evangelist: After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them:

Pilate: I find no crime in him. But you have a custom that I should release one man for you at the Passover; will you have me release for you the King of the Jews?

Priests: **Not this man, but Barabbas!**

Evangelist: Now Barabbas was a robber. Then Pilate took Jesus and scourged him. And the soldiers plaited a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and arrayed him in a purple robe; they came up to him, saying:

Soldiers: **Hail, King of the Jews!**

Evangelist: Pilate went out again, and said to them:

Pilate: Behold, I am bringing him out to you, that you may know that I find no crime in him.

Evangelist: So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe.

Pilate: Here is the man!

Evangelist: When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out:

Priests: **Crucify him! Crucify him!**

Pilate: Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no crime in him.

Priests: **We have a law, and by that law he ought to die, because he has made himself the Son of God.**

Evangelist: When Pilate heard these words, he was the more afraid; he entered the praetorium again and said to Jesus:

Pilate: Where are you from?

Evangelist: But Jesus gave no answer.

Pilate: You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?

Jesus: You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore he who delivered me to you has the greater sin.

Evangelist: Upon this Pilate sought to release him, but the Jews cried out:

Priests: **If you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend; every one who makes himself a king sets himself against Caesar.**

Evangelist: When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Pavement, and in Hebrew, Gabbatha. Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews:

Pilate: Here is your King!

Priests: **Away with him, away with him, crucify him!**

Pilate: Shall I crucify your King?

Priests: **We have no king but Caesar.**

Evangelist: Then he handed Jesus over to them to be crucified.

We STAND.

Evangelist: So they took Jesus, and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Skull, which is called in Hebrew Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them. Pilate also wrote a title and put it on the cross; it read, 'Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews'.

Many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. The chief priests of the Jews then said to Pilate:

Priests: **Do not write, 'The King of the Jews', but, 'This man said, "I am the King of the Jews"'**.

Pilate: What I have written, I have written.

Evangelist: When the soldiers had crucified Jesus they took his garments and made four parts, one for each soldier. But his tunic was without seam, woven from top to bottom; so they said to one another:

Soldiers: **Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be.**

Evangelist: This was to fulfil the scripture, 'They parted my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots'. So the soldiers did this. But standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother:

Jesus: Woman, behold your son.

Evangelist: Then he said to the disciple:

Jesus: Behold your mother.

Evangelist: And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home. After this Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfil the scripture):

Jesus: I thirst.

Evangelist: A bowl full of vinegar stood there; so they put a sponge full of the vinegar on hyssop and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the vinegar, he said:

Jesus: It is finished.

Evangelist: And he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Silence is kept.

The Address

We remain STANDING until the Bishop has prayed, then we SIT. After the address, silence is kept.

Hymn

We STAND to sing, following the choir and ministers to gather at the Chancel Steps.

**There is a green hill far away,
without a city wall,
where the dear Lord was crucified,
who died to save us all.**

**We may not know, we cannot tell,
what pains he had to bear,
but we believe it was for us
he hung and suffered there.**

**He died that we might be forgiven,
he died to make us good,
that we might go at last to heaven,
saved by his precious blood.**

**There was no other good enough
to pay the price of sin;
he only could unlock the gate
of heaven, and let us in.
O dearly, dearly has he loved,
and we must love him too,
and trust in his redeeming blood,
and try his works to do.**

*Words by Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895)
Tune CP 123 Horsley William Horsley (1774-1858)*

The Proclamation of the Cross

Those who are able KNEEL at the foot of the cross. The Bishop proclaims, and everyone responds:

**We glory in your cross, O Lord,
and praise you for your mighty resurrection;
for by virtue of your cross,
joy has come into our world.**

Silence is kept, in homage to the crucified Christ. The choir sings the Reproaches.

O my people, what have I done to you?
How have I offended you? Answer me!

Holy God, holy and strong,
holy and immortal; have mercy.

1. For forty years I led you safely through the desert: I fed you with manna from heaven but you led your Saviour to the cross. What more could I have done for you? When I was thirsty you gave me vinegar to drink.

2. I planted you as my fairest vine, but you yielded only bitterness: and you pierced your Saviour's side with a lance. For your sake I scourged your captors and their first-born sons: but you brought your scourges down on me.

3. I led you from slavery to freedom and drowned your captors in the sea: but you handed me over to your high priests. I opened the sea before you, but you opened my side with a spear: I led you on your way in a pillar of cloud, but you led me to Pilate's court.

4. I bore you up with manna in the desert, but you struck me down and scourged me: I gave you saving water from the rock but you gave me gall and vinegar to drink. For you I struck down the kings of Canaan: but you struck my head with a reed.

5. I gave you a royal sceptre, but you gave me a crown of thorns: I raised you to the height of majesty, but you have raised me high on a cross.

Set to music by John Sanders (1933 – 2003)

Silence is kept before the Bishop proclaims, and everyone responds:

We glory in your cross, O Lord,
**and praise you for your mighty resurrection;
for by virtue of your cross,
joy has come into our world.**

Silence is kept before the Bishop proclaims, and everyone responds:

We glory in your cross, O Lord,
**and praise you for your mighty resurrection;
for by virtue of your cross,
joy has come into our world.**

Hymn

We STAND to sing the hymn:

**When I survey the wondrous cross
on which the Prince of glory died,
my richest gain I count but loss,
and pour contempt on all my pride.**

**Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast
save in the cross of Christ my God;
all the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.**

**See from his head, his hands, his feet,
sorrow and love flow mingled down;
did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
or thorns compose so rich a crown?**

**His dying crimson, like a robe,
spreads o'er his body on the tree:
then am I dead to all the globe,
and all the globe is dead to me.**

**Were the whole realm of nature mine,
that were an offering far too small;
love so amazing, so divine,
demands my soul, my life, my all.**

Words by Isaac Watts (1674-1749)

Tune CP 127 Rockingham melody adapted by Edward Miller (1731-1807)

The Solemn Intercession

We KNEEL or SIT, and the Bishop says,

Let us pray to the Father through his Son,
who suffered on the cross for the world's redemption.

Bless all who work and pray for the unity of the Church.
Give to Christian people everywhere a deep longing
to take up the cross and to enter into its mysterious glory.
Bless the bishops, the clergy and readers of this Diocese, our
Cathedral community, and the Community of the Cross of
Nails throughout the world.

Strengthen those who are preparing for baptism and
confirmation, together with their teachers, sponsors and
families.

Teach us what it means to die and rise with Christ,
and ready them to receive his Spirit.

Look in your mercy on this world for love of which
you gave your Son to suffer and die.

Bring peace to its troubled people, and healing to its wounds.
Strengthen those who work to share your reconciliation,
won at such a cost upon the cross.

Bring healing to all who suffer pain and injustice,
especially the poor and dispossessed, and those known to us.
Help the lonely and the betrayed, the suffering and the dying,
to find strength in Christ's companionship,
and in his passion to know their salvation.

Welcome into paradise
all who have left this world in your friendship.
According to your promises,
bring them with all your saints to share
in all the benefits of Christ's death and resurrection.

We SIT as the choir sings:

Salvator mundi, salva nos, qui per crucem et sanguinem redemisti
nos: auxiliare nobis, te deprecamur, Deus noster.

*O Saviour of the world, who by thy cross and precious blood hast
redeemed us: save us, and help us, we humbly beseech thee, O Lord.*

*Words from an Antiphon for Passiontide
Music by Thomas Tallis (1505-1585)*

Silence is kept before the Bishop leads us in the Lord's Prayer:

Kneeling at the foot of the cross, let us pray together:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

The Bishop says,

Most merciful God,
who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ
delivered and saved us all,
grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross,
we may triumph in the power of his victory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

*You are warmly invited to stay for a drink and hot cross bun after
the service.*

We invite those joining us for worship to contribute to the costs of mission at the Cathedral. Please use the cash or contactless donation points, or the QR code below. This will take you to the Cathedral's page for the Parish giving Scheme which will enable you to make a one-off donation, or set up a regular gift should you wish. Thank you so much for your support and generosity.



Daily Services at the Cathedral:

Regular services at the Cathedral follow this pattern. For special services and up-to-date information about one-off cancellations of the services below, please check the calendar on the Cathedral website:

<https://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/full-calendar>

Monday - Friday

8:30 – 9:00am: *Morning Prayer & Holy Communion*

12 – 12:10pm: *The Litany of Reconciliation*

(followed on Thursdays by BCP Holy Communion)

4 – 4:30pm: *Evening Prayer*

(or Wednesday and Thursday during school terms: Choral Evensong, 5:15 - 6pm)

Saturday

12 – 12:10pm: *The Litany of Reconciliation*

Sunday

10:30 – 11:45am: *The Cathedral Eucharist*

4 – 5pm: *Choral Evensong*

Safeguarding at Coventry Cathedral

We are committed to the safeguarding of all people. For details, please visit <https://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/safeguarding>

Our Safeguarding Team are:



Canon Kate
Chapter
Safeguarding
Lead



Jane Williams
Cathedral
Community
Safeguarding
Officer



Jo Brake
Safeguarding
Lead for Policy
and Process

You can report a concern to our Safeguarding Team by emailing cathedral.safeguarding@coventrycathedral.org.uk or phoning 02476 52 1360 Alternatively, you can contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Team led by Sarah Price by phoning 024 7652 1345 or emailing safeguarding@coventry.anglican.org

Safeguarding Survey

The Cathedral welcomes the INEQE Audit as an opportunity to learn. We want to understand how we can continue to improve our safeguarding culture and practice and keep everyone safe. You can help with this learning by completing an INEQE survey. We want to hear from as many voices as possible. The surveys are completed online. You can use the QR Code or go to: <https://ineqe.com/churchofengland/coventry/> You are welcome to complete more than one survey e.g. if you are a congregation member AND a victim or survivor, you are welcome to complete both surveys. If you would like to feedback to INEQE, but cannot complete the survey, there is more information about how to do that at the bottom of the webpage. If you would like to complete a survey, but don't have a computer or smartphone, ask us and we can help.



COMMUNITY NEWS

Acting Dean

Bishop Sophie has appointed Canon Kate as Acting Dean, working of course closely with Canon Nitano and Simon, taking up her role (in addition to her existing responsibilities) from June 1st. Bishop Sophie has full confidence in the Cathedral team and the well-established direction the Cathedral has been taking for many years.

It is also important to note that whilst only one person can hold the office of Acting Dean, this is in many ways a shared appointment, as Kate and Nitano, along with Simon's support, hold the Cathedral together through these coming months. Recognising the additional workload, the Bishop intends to appoint another priest to a temporary role to provide additional support capacity through this period.

The post of Dean is now advertised, and interviews are due to take place early in June. We all hope that a new Dean will take up their post before the end of the year. Please pray for the recruitment process and those involved.

Cathedral AGM

Sunday 19th April, immediately following the Eucharist in JLC

In advance of this anyone that considers the Cathedral to be their place of worship is encouraged to join the Electoral Roll so that they might take part in proceedings, as well as be nominated for any of the roles that require the meeting's approval. At the meeting we will be approving the roles of Churchwarden, members of the Deanery Synod, and members of St. Michael's Committee. Have a chat with Canon Kate or Canon Nitano if you want to know more about what the roles entail.

Dean John's Farewell Celebration

As we prepare to give thanks for Dean John's ministry among us, all members of the congregation are warmly invited to his Farewell Do on Saturday, 9 May at 7pm. This will be a joyful moment to gather, share stories, and offer our appreciation for his leadership and friendship.

Dean John's final Eucharist service will be on Sunday, 17 May at 10.30am and his final Choral Evensong at 4pm, where he will preach and preside. If you wish to attend either or both of these, please scan this QR code to register your attendance.

There are lists at the back of the nave, should you prefer to register that way. We hope many of you will join us for this special occasion.



HOLY WEEK AT THE CATHEDRAL

Stations of the Cross - 2pm

A simple journey around the ruins (weather permitting), tracing the “Way of the Cross”. Please wear comfortable shoes and a camping chair if you can’t stand for extended periods.

Stainer: The Crucifixion - 6pm

Join Coventry Cathedral Chorus for a moving performance of The Crucifixion by John Stainer, a much-loved meditation on the Passion combining reflective choruses, recitatives and congregational hymns.

Tickets: £15 adults | £5 young adults (18–25) | Children free.

Book at coventrycathedralchorus.com, or contact tickets@coventrycathedralchorus.com | 01676 532436.

EASTER DAY, 5th April

Dawn Eucharist – 6am

The Service of Light with Baptism and Confirmation, proclaiming Christ’s Resurrection at first light.

Cathedral Festal Eucharist – 10.30am

A joyful celebration of the resurrection with word, sacrament and song.

Festal Choral Evensong – 4pm

The Easter Day story is crowned with choral prayer and praise as the light of Resurrection lingers into the evening.

All are warmly invited to share in this sacred journey from the Cross to the empty tomb, and into the hope and joy of Easter.