



# St Woolos Quarterly

## The Newsletter of Newport Cathedral

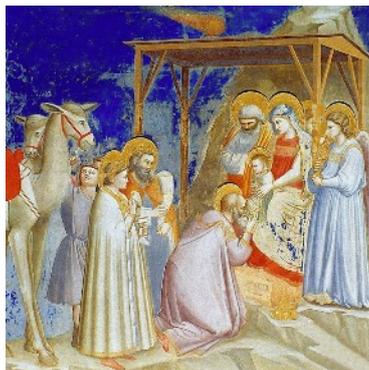
*Llythyr Newyddion Eglwys Gadeiriol Casnewydd*

Christmas 2016

### Christmas Message from the Archdeacon



Life can be full of the unexpected. It is certainly true in the political world. Who would have predicted that the UK would decide to leave the EU and the US would elect Donald Trump as President? One wag has suggested that the third political surprise would be Ed Balls winning Strictly Come Dancing! At a more local level being in a Cathedral brings the unexpected. You never know who is going to walk through the door and what might result. People of different nationalities and different languages alongside locals who have lived near the Cathedral for many years but have only now stepped inside for the first time.

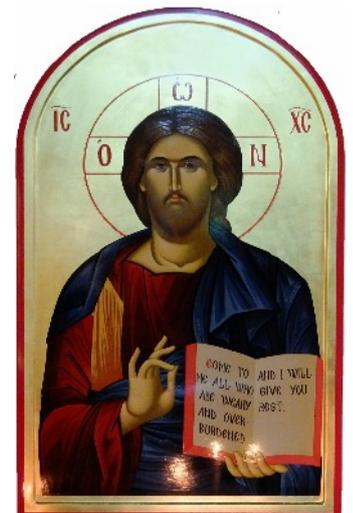


Christmas is a festival of the unexpected. Mary did not expect to be bearing a child let alone one from God. Joseph hadn't banked on travelling to Bethlehem with a pregnant fiancée. Shepherds going about their business could not have known they would be drawn to a new born baby. Mysterious Eastern astrologers had not thought that they would head off to visit a child in a far off land.

The most unexpected thing is what God chose to do – be born among us as a baby. God is expected to arrive on clouds of glory surrounded by a great retinue. There should be fine clothes and majestic music. But no – God shows himself in human form in an obscure corner of the Roman Empire. And God continues to do the unexpected by mingling with so-called sinners and calling ordinary folk to be his messengers.

And God still calls us to the unexpected. To love even when we are hated, to reach out even to those who reject us, to welcome the stranger and the outcast. And maybe this Christmas you might do something unexpected which reflects the unconditional love of God shown in the child born in Bethlehem. And continue to be open to God in unexpected ways.

Jonathan Williams



### Prayer Requests

Is there someone on your mind, perhaps ill or in trouble, anxious, bereaved? Through our website ([www.newportcathedral.org.uk](http://www.newportcathedral.org.uk)) you can request prayers to be said during weekday morning services. This will be via one of the clergy team, and in complete confidence.

## Worship at St Woolos

Regular service times are below: on special occasions these may change

### Sunday

8.00 Holy Eucharist  
10.30 Sung Eucharist (also Sunday School)  
6.30 Choral Evensong

### Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday

8.00 Morning Prayer 8.15 Holy Eucharist  
5.00 Evening Prayer

### Thursday

8.00 Morning Prayer 8.15 Holy Eucharist  
10.30 Holy Eucharist  
5.00 Evening Prayer

### Friday

8.00 Morning Prayer 8.15 Holy Eucharist  
7.00 Choral Evensong

## Worship at St Martin-in-the-Gaer

Sunday 9.30 Holy Eucharist

*The Cathedral Shop* is open :

**Mon - Fri 2pm - 4pm, Sat 10am - 12 noon, Sun -before & after services**

The shop sells a wide range of greetings cards for all occasions, gifts and jewellery as well as a children's corner.

*'We have signed the Fair Trade Pledge'*

## Who were they ? Who are we?

In the congregation of St Woolos today there are representatives of various occupations and professions. There are several teachers and members of the medical profession. Office workers and local government officers are represented and even the Inland Revenue to name a few. However, I wondered how previous generations earned their wages or were there captains of industry amongst them?

One way to answer these queries is to look at the memorials around us on the walls and floor of the building. Henry Lewis was a 'perwigg maker' but Richard Davies preferred the spelling periwig. No doubt their creations served the same purpose for the people of the town.

John Thomas lived at the Glaziers Arms and was probably the landlord. However, I have not found the location of the establishment although his memorial is very near the font. Charles Robinson and Wakin Richards are recorded on the same stone and were a merchant and harbourmaster of this port, respectively. The comptroller of the custom in the port of Newport was at one time a David Jones.

Other occupations which brought wealth enough to pay for memorial stones included farrier, bricklayer, shopkeeper, innkeeper, saddler, iron master, surgeon and solicitor. If you take your time they can be found. One profession outnumbers all others and that of course is the clerical staff of the church and they were not shy about their achievements!

Not all those with memorials here at St Woolos were native to the town. People from Friendship, Maine and Dungarvon, County Cork are buried next to people from Cornwall and Gloucestershire. People have always been on the move.

Maureen Mahoney

## Upcoming events at St Woolos Cathedral :

December 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7pm - Seasonal Music Extravaganza - The Newport Orchestra with Cathedral and local childrens' choirs  
December 8<sup>th</sup> at 7pm - 'Lovelight' Christmas Concert - Tenovus Cancer Care  
December 10<sup>th</sup> at 12 noon - Music@StWoolos: Ellen Williams (soprano), a recital  
December 15<sup>th</sup> at 7pm - MIND Christmas Concert  
January 5<sup>th</sup> at 7.30pm - St Peters' Chorale - Youth choir from St Peter's Lutheran College, Brisbane, Australia  
January 14<sup>th</sup> at 12 noon - Mackenzie Paget (Piano)  
February 11<sup>th</sup> at 12 noon - Guitar Ensemble - Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama

Please see the website [www.newportcathedral.org.uk](http://www.newportcathedral.org.uk) for other events and details  
(Enquiries re concerts and recitals at St Woolos, to: [brian.a.cox@sky.com](mailto:brian.a.cox@sky.com))

### Restaurant



Station  
Approach,  
Bassaleg

Junction 28 is a tastefully decorated converted railway station, with the lower part of the restaurant decked out to represent an old-fashioned railway carriage. The restaurant is tucked away in a quiet corner of picturesque Bassaleg, on the outskirts of Newport, overlooking the River Ebbw. We aim to give you an excellent dining experience.

**Reservations 01633 891891**  
[www.junction28.com](http://www.junction28.com) [enquiries@junction28.com](mailto:enquiries@junction28.com)



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your church

through the Church-in-Wales 'Gift Direct' scheme  
Pick up a leaflet in the St Mary Chapel, or go to  
<http://www.churchinwales.org.uk/resources/gift-direct/>  
or phone 029 2034 8216

**The Cathedral is open to visitors:**

**Monday to Thursday 8am until 5pm**

**Saturday 9am until 4pm**

**Friday 8am until 8pm**

**Sunday 10am until 8pm**

**Rossini: Petite Messe Solennelle**

In October the Newport Philharmonic Choir sang Rossini's Petite Messe Solennelle before an appreciative audience that filled the Cathedral.



Rossini was born in Pesaro in Northern Italy in 1792, and was a feted composer in both Italy and France. He is probably best known for his thirty-nine operas, especially their glorious overtures. After writing William Tell in 1829, suffering poor physical health and depression, he retired from composing. Years later, largely recovered, he returned to Paris and built a villa in the suburb of Passy. He started composing smaller, lighter works for piano, chamber or vocal ensemble, for performance at soirees he hosted in his home.

Amongst these he wrote his third religious work, Petite Messe Solennelle (1863), following Messa di Gloria (1820), and Stabat Mater (1842).

Friends noted that he spent an unusually long time on this composition – he took great trouble with it and it clearly meant a lot to him. It is dedicated to his friend Comtesse Louise Pillit-Will and he probably wrote it for the consecration of her private chapel. The first performance was in her and the Comte's

home in Passy.

The work was scored for a choir of eight, four soloists, two pianos and a harmonium. Rossini directed rehearsals himself and turned pages for the first pianist in the performance. People there were deeply moved by the work, trembling with emotion and occasionally in tears.

Later Rossini was pressured into producing an orchestrated version for performance in a cathedral. It was never sung in Rossini's lifetime because the Pope would not allow female singers in church and Rossini did not like the sound of boys' voices. He said that he much preferred the original version with pianos and harmonium.

It is a product of deep faith expressed with a light touch. We should not be misled by the title, Solemn Mass, which does not refer to mood, but means complete or high mass. It is whole-hearted, but also light-hearted. Five years after its performance, in 1868, Rossini died in Paris, greatly loved, highly respected and honoured, he was given a grand funeral.

So in October a packed cathedral were treated to a performance of this work by the Newport Philharmonic Choir. The seventy-strong choir easily filled the cathedral with a glorious sound. The pianist played with style the complex and beautiful piano part and the organ took the harmonium part. The soprano soloist in particular produced a beautiful sound, though struggling with a cold.

I have heard only performances by large choirs and would love to hear one with a choir nearer the size envisaged by the composer, which would reveal the intimate nature of the work and the lightness and joy with which Rossini expressed the faith of the Church and his own faith.

Bob Paul

(Newport Philharmonic Choir - [www.nptphil.org.uk](http://www.nptphil.org.uk))

 **Archway Vehicle Repairs**

Tel: 01633 254717  
Mob: 07949674727



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## Who's Who at St Woolos

<b>The Dean</b>	The Very Revd Lister Tonge	01633 259627	listertonge@gmail.com
<b>Precentor &amp; Archdeacon of Newport</b>	The Ven. Jonathan Williams	01633 215206	archdeacon.newport@churchinwales.org.uk
<b>Associate Priest St Martin's</b>	Canon Jennifer Mole	01633 258556	revcanjen63@btinternet.com
<b>Associate Priest &amp; Dir. of Ordinands</b>	Revd Dr Paul Thompson	01633 252046	revpaulthompson@btinternet.com
	Canon David Neale	07912 104902	revdneale@googlemail.com

## NEWPORT CATHEDRAL CHOIR

### We continue Emma Gibbins' report on the Cathedral Choir -

The cathedral has been considering starting a separate girls' choir for some time: in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, there is no excuse for not providing equal opportunities for both girls and boys, especially as the church now allows women clergy and women bishops! Following recruiting in schools, we had a hugely positive response and the new group met for the first time last October and had its debut performance on December 6th. The girls are working hard and it's really exciting to watch their progress. They have now sung with the men several times and joined with the boys at Pentecost and at the end of term. They are looking forward to becoming more involved in the life of the cathedral in the coming months, as they grow in confidence and learn more repertoire. Longer term, the plan is for the girl and boy choristers to share equally the responsibility for leading the worship, singing with the men: so one Sunday the girls might sing the morning service and the boys the evening service, and vice versa the following Sunday. Friday Evensong will continue to be sung by the men and boys and we may introduce an additional weekday sung service for the girls at some point in the future.



*The Choir rehearsing while on tour at St David's Cathedral*

The Cathedral choir's year ended in July with a celebratory end of year Evensong during which one boy chorister was promoted to "full chorister", we said farewell to three retiring choristers, medals were presented and the girls sang in their new robes for the first time. All followed by a splendid tea party held in the Cathedral! Following this, the men and boys spent five days on choir tour in the beautiful surroundings of St David's Cathedral in West Wales. Choir tours offer extensive opportunities for more concentrated rehearsals, extending the range and repertoire of the choir and allowing the choir to grow and develop as a group: the bonding provided by sharing activities can translate into an increased musical unity as well as forming the basis of long-lasting, hopefully life-long friendships. Tours also have an ambassadorial role and, I think, everyone felt proud to represent Newport in St David's.

So what does the future hold for the music at Newport Cathedral? Well, I hope to continue developing the boys' choir, girls' choir, men's choir and voluntary choir, hopefully expanding each group. I hope to develop an outreach programme, taking the choir out and about round the diocese. We have an exciting project planned for next year: a production of a one-act children's opera by the British composer Benjamin Britten: "Noye's Fludde" which recounts the biblical story of Noah, the flood and the ark. In the opera, a large children's chorus represents the pairs of animals who march into and out of the ark. I'm hoping that this will be a fantastic community project, bringing children from all over the area together to perform in the Cathedral. The "new-look" cathedral, now that the pews have been removed, is the perfect venue for an imaginative staging of this exciting and accessible opera.

The success of the choirs is reliant on the commitment and enthusiasm of everyone involved: boys and girl choristers and their parents and families, choir men and voluntary choir and also the dedication and hard work of the music team and clergy and the support of the congregation. Can I end by saying thank you to everyone for supporting the music at the Cathedral in so many different ways. I am really looking forward to the coming year and am excited to continue to be involved in developing the musical life of Newport Cathedral.

(See the Autumn 2016 Newsletter for the first part of Emma's report)

Please feel free to send us items of interest that relate to the Cathedral - its past, current activities, or news. Articles should be kept short (300 words or less, as a rule) - they may need to be edited prior to publication.

Contact: Brian or Siân King - [contact@newportcathedral.org.uk](mailto:contact@newportcathedral.org.uk)