

# THE VIRGER

The Official Magazine of the Church of England Guild of Vergers

Spring 2022 | Issue 314

## OSTIARIUS TO THE CONVOCAATION OF CANTERBURY

## THE BEATING HEART OF LINCOLN CATHEDRAL

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# FROM THE DESK OF THE EDITOR



**A**s I try to write my piece, I sit looking at the weather coming up the valley where we now live - dark clouds gathering in the west, heralding the next instalment of Storm Dudley. Storm Eunice is tomorrow's challenge, and it will bring the first "proper" snow of the year for us in the Borders. Meanwhile, spring is definitely perceptible - the snowdrops are particularly abundant this year - I doubt that the snow or winds will bother them as they remind us that there is a season for everything - to enjoy the present and not worry about tomorrow's troubles.

The same appears to be true in the Guild... the worst of the COVID restrictions are being lifted, life is beginning to return to almost normality. More services are appearing our churches, congregations are coming back "in person" and even processions are returning. I was particularly moved to see Stephen Haude's funeral procession being verged out of his church, led by a dear verger friend and a "guard of honour" gathered around the doorway - a very special moment.

The few reports that I've had this quarter are full of gratitude for "in person" meetings returning, fellowship renewed

and shared hospitality - I look forward to more, but would re-iterate the plea from the Executive Committee that we

now get into the habit of looking forward wherever possible, to anticipate future pleasures if you will... If we share our plans in the Virger, all of us can see what's coming up, where and when events are planned, thereby opening them up to other Branch members who may be holidaying or travelling in your area - particularly appropriate for this summer of Her Majesty's Jubilee celebrations. Although the official celebrations will be upon us by the time of the next edition, it would be lovely to know of your plans for July, August and September and further ahead.

**Jane Gorrie**  
**CEGV Media Officer**



## Cover photo

The Archbishop of Canterbury's Mace carried by the Ostiarius for the Convocation of Canterbury, more details can be found on page 18

Please note that all submissions for the next edition should reach Jane via email, [CEGVMedia@gmail.com](mailto:CEGVMedia@gmail.com) no later than the date here:

How should you do this....Submissions for all editions of The Virger should reach me before the set deadline. If they miss this date, they may be held over to the next edition. All articles should be sent in MS Word files only and photographs in JPEG format. Please attach text and image files separately in one email.



# FROM THE DESK OF THE NATIONAL CHAIRMAN



**A**s I write this letter, Christmas, New Year celebrations and Candlemas have recently passed. It is 2022 and the year has hiccupped with more Covid 19 restrictions and guidelines for us all to follow. Lateral Flow Tests and vaccinations are very much part of our daily lives to protect us and our loved ones from spreading the virus. Here in the northern part of the country, storms have battered the landscape, and many were without power for over ten days. The damage to our countryside was all too visible when I was walking through Glen Clova at the end of January. It was a bleak start to the year.

The winter is always a challenging time for everyone, but our faith keeps us going. From near the fallen trees, new shoots of small pine trees were seen at the side of the paths ready to take the place of the fallen. So it is in our spiritual lives. We prepare during the Lenten period for Easter which gives us all time to reflect and prepare for the death and resurrection of our Lord. A very sage priest gave me some sound advice a long time ago when I was in real difficulties. I was at an all-time low and I

invited him round for coffee and a chat, hoping to unload and hoped that he would make me feel better. What I got was this rather harsh statement from him, which I thought was singularly unhelpful at the time – “Of course you feel low and bad in yourself and so you should, it’s all Dying and Resurrection that makes us stronger”. Leaving me feeling rather nonplussed, he got up, gave me a hug and left. It took me ages to feel better in myself, but I have never forgotten his words.

Looking forward to the coming year, we as a Guild have two Festivals to enjoy, at Worcester and at Bury St. Edmunds. Plans for our Annual Conference and Retreat are taking shape and we look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at all our events.

This year is a very special year for our Gracious Majesty Queen Elizabeth who acceded to the throne on 6th February 1952. Although not our Patron, she is the Head of the Church of England in which we all serve. Many vergers throughout the country have had the privilege of verging at services in churches and cathedrals and led Her Majesty and the late Prince Philip during her reign. I am sure that many of you will have cherished memories of those occasions. In June, we will have opportunity to celebrate her Platinum Jubilee and I hope we can also take time to reflect on the duty and service that Her Majesty has given to the country and Commonwealth during her glorious reign.

**John Kirby-Shearer**  
Chairman



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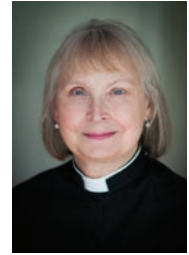
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# FROM THE DESK OF THE NATIONAL CHAPLAIN



*Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, in her Platinum Jubilee year. Jacob King/PA Wire/PA Images.*

**A**s I write this message, preparations are underway to mark the anniversary of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's accession to the throne on the 6th February 1952, with special services. Memory of this date is always tinged with sorrow, for the accession coincided with the death of The Queen's beloved father, George VI. We trust that in this Platinum Jubilee year, Her Majesty's private mourning will

be aided by the rhythm of the Church's calendar, leading us through Lent to the proclamation of Christ's victory over death at Easter.

A sure sign of The Queen's steadfast faith has been her commitment on Maundy Thursday, to the commemoration of Jesus washing the feet of the Apostles at the Last Supper.



*Her Majesty The Queen with His Royal Highness The Prince Philip arriving at St Paul's Cathedral for the Royal Maundy Service in The Queen's Coronation year, 1953.*



*Her Majesty The Queen distributing Maundy money gifts at Leicester Cathedral, Royal Maundy Service, 2017*

Over the years, many hundreds of pensioners, dedicated to serving their own communities and churches, have received Maundy money gifts from The Queen as part of that ancient tradition. With the cancellation of two Royal Maundy services during the pandemic, we can be especially glad that The Queen's Maundy Thursday tour of English cathedrals was completed in 2017.

The Queen is the first British monarch to reign for a full 70 years as Queen of the United Kingdom and Supreme Governor of the Church of England. So many have been strengthened by her constancy in faith and Christian witness, by her unifying presence across diverse people, even as her own position as Head of State over Commonwealth countries and dependent territories has evolved. Remarkably, The Queen has remained

above the political fray and as such, has been a stabilising influence. There is, quite simply, no one to rival her.

On the 17th April The Queen will be gathering with family members to celebrate Easter. The 17th April will also be a day of private sadness, remembering the funeral in 2021 of His Royal Highness The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. A year on, our thoughts and prayers will continue to be with Her Majesty, knowing that she would want nothing more than that the nation set aside all sorrow to experience the joy of families coming together on Easter Day.

In gratitude for a life of dedicated service and selfless commitment, we wish Her Majesty at the start of her Platinum Jubilee year, full satisfaction and delight. So, let us pray in unison



*The Lily, heralding Spring and sounding the message that Christ is risen.*

for an outpouring of love in and among the nations, for healing, restoration and renewed hope at Easter. In the words of the Easter Acclamation: Alleluia! Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

**Mthr Rosemary**



# FROM THE DESK OF THE NATIONAL TRAINING OFFICER



**N**ew to post, I was elected as National Training Officer at last year's AGM. It is a shared brief for me and Rev'd Rosemary Durward, our National Chaplain, to put together the Conference programme of speakers and service orders for this year's National Retreat and Training Conference to be held 15th -18th August 2022. Once again it will be in the beautiful setting of The Elim Conference Centre in West Malvern, and we are grateful for being allowed to use the parish church of St James West Malvern for our services. If we are lucky we will be able to use the outdoor swimming pool - all these facilities making West Malvern a gem of a venue.

It's a daunting task following in the steps of Canon Maureen, along with John Kirby-Shearer and Stephen Stokes, all of whose experience and service to the Guild over many conferences have been exemplary. We are also grateful to Stephen for adding the bookings and conference administration to his already demanding portfolio of rôles. We also wish our dear friend, the previous Conference Administrator, Margaret Burston, another stalwart, a relaxed summer in future years on her retirement.

Before I became a full-time verger at Leicester Cathedral following a 38yr career as a supplier of School Uniforms, I was a regular visitor to the former Malvern Girls High School as one of my accounts and I am pleased that the building has become a gem of a centre.

So what have we planned for our time together at Conference in FUN, FELLOWSHIP and PRAYER ?

This year's theme is Well Being and we hope to enable all delegates to step aside for a few days to reflect on who we are and discover what inspires us in our life

and in the beauty of our surroundings. Below is an outline of the programme for the four days:

## **Monday 15th The Annual General Meeting**

There is an article elsewhere in this edition regarding nominations for new officers of the Guild. Is it your turn to stand for election?

Following on from discussions at last year's AGM, the practical training session 'Sharpen up our skills', will now be held in Session 1, on Monday afternoon.

Monday 15th is The Feast Day of The Blessed Virgin Mary and later in the afternoon our Opening Eucharist and Guild Congregation service will incorporate this devotion. At this service we welcome Vergers as well as the supporting families and friends of those receiving their Certificates and Diplomas.

After dinner there will be an Evening Social with drinks and nibbles, possibly a quiz.

## **Tuesday 16th morning - Session 2 Living in Love and Faith**

This is currently a major topic within the life of the CofE and General Synod. We encourage you to take part in the courses that are available within your Diocese, Deaneries and Parishes. We are awaiting confirmation of a speaker from Synod on the history of this course and its exploration of Christian teaching and learning about identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage.

## **Afternoon - Session 3**

We welcome The Revd Canon Dr Roly Riems Canon Chancellor and Vice-Dean of Winchester Cathedral. Canon Roly is a leading educator on Vocations and integrity. The title of his session is "Being is Becoming".

Evening - there will be a Healing Prayer Service with Laying on of Hands and Anointing.

## **Wednesday 17th**

Early in the morning we hold our Guild Requiem to remember those who have died in faith and now rest in God's eternal peace.

## **Session 4 - morning**

We welcome Sophie Hacker, The Artist in Residence at Winchester Cathedral and specialist in stained glass to talk about her window in Romsey Abbey celebrating Florence Nightingale.

Sophie is the wife of Canon Roly

## **Session 5 - afternoon**

Finding the Beauty of Holiness in the Outdoors

Led by Revd Rosemary Durward National Chaplain  
Give unto the Lord the Glory due to his name,  
Worship the Lord in the Beauty of Holiness  
Psalm 29 v2

The Daily Offices and other services will be interspersed between the 5 sessions.

Last year we welcomed a number of first time delegates. Please encourage your fellow branch members to step out and join us for what will be another opportunity for fun and fellowship together in the service of our Lord.

I look forward to meeting you all in August, both old friends and new.

In the meantime stay safe and well.

Blessings

**Les Mitchelmore  
National Training officer**



# DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



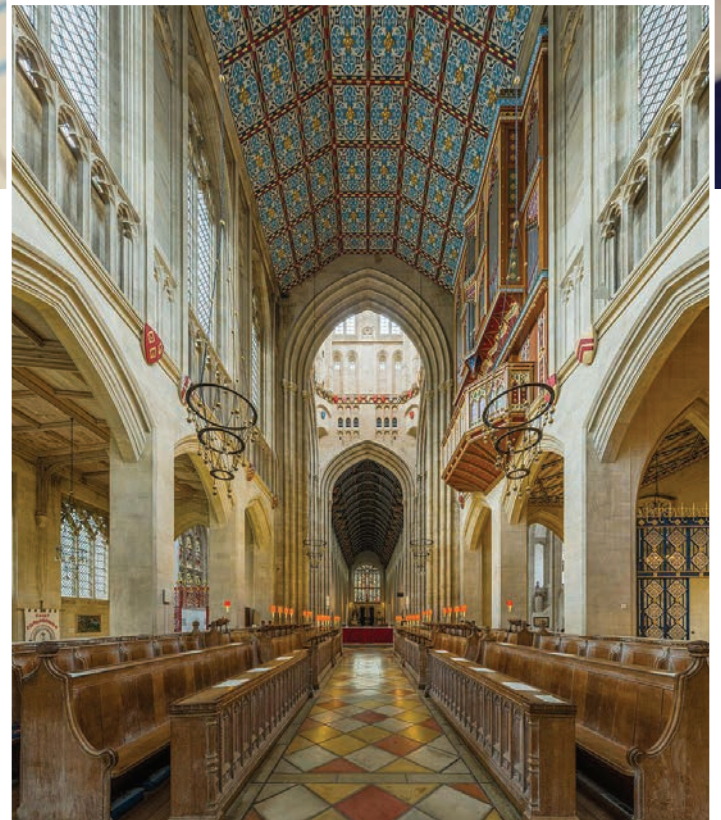
## Tuesday 5 May 2022

A Full Festival, Worcester Cathedral (provide your own lunch and no need to bring Robes)



## Monday 15 until Thursday 18 August 2022

Annual Retreat and Training Conference



## Wednesday 14 September 2022

A Semi-Lite Festival, St Edmundsbury Cathedral (provide you own lunch BUT Robes are welcome to be worn (hence the 'Semi')

If your Branch has any events that you wish to have advertised on this page please contact the Communications Officer [CEGVMedia@gmail.com](mailto:CEGVMedia@gmail.com)

# STEPHEN HAUDE



**S**tephen loved life. He lived it well but simply. No extravagance or frills. He was kind and generous to his small close circle of friends however with his big heart he loved his extended family at St Peter's Hammersmith, the Church of England Guild of Vergers, the Vergers Guild of the Episcopal Church, the London City Glee Club and just about every other organisation he came into contact with. Stephen was one of life's doers and would very quickly get involved. He wasn't one to sit on the side lines for long.

Stephen, Steve, Steevie! call him what you will, was born and raised in Brixton. An only child who was not fond of school on account of the fact he had a speech impediment and was teased by his classmates. In later years and with some speech therapy, he managed to overcome this.

On leaving school Steve first trained as a patisserie chef and began his working life at the Café Royal in London. He excelled with his pastry & cake decorating skills but after a while the long antisocial hours began to take their toll and he left to train as a bus driver for London Transport, subsequently driving the No 11 bus. It was on this bus route that he met Yvonne who was to become his wife.

Steve said that during his time driving the No 11 bus, Yvonne would often catch the last bus home so she could travel upfront with him and he would detour and drop her at her door. Steve and Yvonne married here in St Peter's Church in 1983, and both became valued members of the church family. Steve was protective of Yvonne's disability and they had a happy, devoted marriage. Steve was absolutely devastated when Yvonne passed away in 1997. They'd married late in life so had no children.

During their marriage, Steve & Yvonne owned a cake shop in Ealing, not far from their home in Hanwell. Steve's love

of cake decorating had won, and continued to win him prestigious awards and even a slot on BBC 1's 'Blue Peter' where he met Valerie Singleton (one of his heart throbs). Recently he displayed some of the photographs of his cake creations and if you haven't seen these photos please do ask someone to email them to you. He was extremely talented but humble with it.

In fact, there were not many things that Steevie couldn't turn his hand to. He was a creative carpenter, a whizz with anything electrical, as good with a hammer and saw as with a mop and bucket. He was the repair man, the go-to guy, the perfectionist. The Virge he carried was a homemade creation, made from a chair leg. He was truly inventive.

Not content with being the Verger, Sacristan & Server at St Peter's, he also sang in the choir taking pride on being the only Tenor voice. He was also a regular member of the Men's Group, enjoying their lunches out.

There was absolutely nothing Stephen wouldn't do to save the church a penny or two. He did ask, tongue-in-cheek, whether he could use the church savings to bet on the gee-gees. He and his long-standing friend Tony ran a small-scale online betting syndicate. Tony, who lives in Maidstone and sadly, due to ill health cannot be with us, did the research and Steve did the betting. They never bet large sums and if they lost, they would have a break, lick their wounds and then try again. Perhaps it was wise not to have let them loose on the church coffers, who knows?

Steven was an absolute stalwart of the Church of England Guild of Vergers. From the moment he joined he was a brilliant advocate, a wonderful chairman, area leader, secretary, correspondent and friend to many. He lived and breathed the Church and he promoted the Guild wherever he went. He was a regular attendee at the annual Conference but always the first in the 'Brewers Arms' in West Malvern (renamed 'the Vergers Arms' whilst we are at Conference),





dodging Compline and totally impervious to the disapproval of our recently retired National Chaplain, Rev'd Canon Maureen Palmer.

Stephen was fortunate to be asked to verge in prestigious places like St Paul's Cathedral, and the Bishop of Gloucester, the Rt Rev'd Rachel Treweek personally asked for him to verge her, when she was collated as a Bishop.

Not to be outdone, as a member of the Vergers Guild of the Episcopal Church, he has also verged in cathedrals in New York, Washington & Albuquerque. He was never possessive about these roles and was happy to stand aside for one of his friends. He made loads of friends within both the CEGV & the VGEC all who had wanted to be with us today. Many are with us in spirit, or via the internet. One such longstanding friend Nancy said that in 1970 her uncle and aunt, who were in their 70's, came over to England to visit relatives. Steve was persuaded to drive for them and he took them all over England. This forged a long friendship with the whole extended family. In 1982 Nancy visited England with her children & Steve has taken a keen interest in their lives and the lives of their children. Nancy, being the same age as Steve, said they had a lot in common. She visited England on a couple of occasions and Steve went out to Florida. Nancy says it was Stephen who got her involved with the Vergers. When Nancy's husband died in 2009, Stephen went out to Key West in Florida to help her sort out her finances and assist

with the funeral arrangement and he also visited her second home in New York. Stephen's commitment to his friends meant he would go the extra mile.

In these latter years he has pushed his friend Denise into the forefront of the VGEC. Talking about the VGEC, Stephen, Irene Money & Denise Mead are generally referred to as the 'Three Musketeers'. Possibly not by the CEVG (I think they refer to them as the Three Holy Terrors or on a good day, the Holy Trinity). In the US, Stephen & Denise were nicknamed Mr & Mrs Merlot, because of their love for the red stuff. Mind you, Stephen did like a good pint or two and he has his own pint pot across the road from St Peter's in the Cross Keys hostelry.

Stephen has been the best travel agent money couldn't buy. He has organised every Guild excursion that the Three Musketeers have been on. Printing maps, timetables, noting local Travel Lodges & Wetherspools. Irene and Denise will be totally bereft getting to the two Guild Festivals taking place this year and goodness knows what will happen if, and when, travel arrangements are required to go to the VGEC conference in New York?

Not content with all these roles, Stephen has also been Secretary of the London City Glee Club and only called time on this last summer due to dwindling numbers. He was also on his local GP Patient Forum and became their Zoom-master.

Nearer to his home, until the lockdown of 2020, Steve assisted with the monthly home communion at Hanwell House (a local nursing home, where he also entertained the residents with his singing and keyboard skills). A mention must be made of the 'YouTube Channel' Steve set up during the first lockdown. He would entertain us with popular songs which became real morale boosters and either brought us to tears with their sentimentality, or had us in fits of laughter.

They broke the mould when they made you Stephen. You could never have been repeated. Yes, sometimes you

got yourself into hot water. Don't we all! However, know that you are loved, missed and talked about every day. And, as Canon John Ackland, Chaplain of the London, Southwark & Chelmsford Branch of the CEGV said, quoting from the Vergers Prayer when Stephen passed away:

*'And on those who offer themselves for service as vergers in the house of God bestow the fulness of your grace'*

Rest in the Peace of God, dearest Stephen.



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## BLACKBURN, CHESTER AND MANCHESTER BRANCH

**A**t long last, the Branch has met in person for the first time since 22nd February 2020.

6 members were proud to form a Guard of Honour at the funeral of our dear friend and late member of the Branch, Geoffrey Timms, in October 2021.

On the 23rd November 2021, 14 members of the Branch met at St. Clement's Church in Urmston, Manchester for a Eucharist for St. Clement's Day. The Eucharist was celebrated by our Chaplain, Canon Adrian Rhodes. After the Service, we processed back to the Church Hall for a wonderful buffet lunch. There was time after lunch to look round the beautiful church and then a few members robed for Choral Evensong. There was, of course, the obligatory photo!

In December 2021, some of us attended the Liverpool Branch Advent Service and Christmas lunch at Liverpool Cathedral. In January 2022, 13 members attended the Branch AGM held at St. Clement's, Urmston. We robed and processed to the body of the church for the Eucharist

service, again led by Canon Adrian Rhodes. After the service we adjourned for lunch before going back to church for the business of the AGM.

Our Chairman, Gareth Screeton, and Treasurer, Elaine Screeton, had both decided to stand down this year which meant we had the difficult task of recruiting new post holders. Ronald Griffiths was voted in as Chairman by a majority of the members present, but finding a Treasurer was not so easy. After a lot of discussion, our newest member, Nigel Black, volunteered himself, for which we were all grateful. He will take over formally in May, following his admission to the Guild

which will take place at his church, St. Martin's in Ashton-on-Mersey, Sale on Saturday 26th February. It will be a full day out, starting with a fully robed Eucharist with Canon Adrian Rhodes and Father Robert Clack sharing the duties. Canon Adrian will admit Nigel into the Guild, then there will be lunch and a tour of St. Martin's Church and a trip up the tower for the more energetic. The day will close with Choral Evensong led by the St. Martin's choir.

The Branch hope to organise more events throughout the Summer months.

**Freda M. Murphy**  
**Branch Secretary**



## YORK BRANCH

**O**n the 6th September we had our first in person meeting since February 2020. The meeting took place at Holy Trinity Micklegate in York beginning with a Eucharist, led by Reverend Marian, followed by lunch and

a meeting at Jacob's Well, just out the back of the church.

On the 6th December, the feast of St. Nicholas, we met up at Holy Trinity Church again where our Chaplain,

Reverend Marian, led a very positive Eucharist service. We prayed for those too ill to be with us and remembered all Virgers in our prayers, after which St Nicholas' helper distributed chocolate and small oranges.



After a brisk walk into the centre of York we all sat down to a lovely Christmas lunch.

We discussed banking charges and the need to look at changing our account. We also discussed being braver this year by visiting churches further afield. Our AGM is set for the 21st February.

**Ben Elliott-Hill**  
**Publicity Officer**

## OXFORD BRANCH

**O**n Tuesday, 18th January 2022, at the Eucharist before our A.G.M., LLM Heather Searle was admitted to the Guild of Vergers, Oxford Branch, as an Associate Member. Heather was licensed as a Reader at Christ Church Cathedral on Saturday, 2nd November 2019 and serves her ministry with the team at the Church of Christ the Servant King, Booker. We welcome her into the Guild.

The Service was followed by a delicious light lunch before we carried out the official business of our A.G.M. It was nice that we were able to meet in person for our A.G.M. this year. The business was carried out efficiently and all officers were re-elected for another year of duty. The meeting concluded with a blessing from our Chaplain.

We look forward to a happier year now that we shall be able to meet again and enjoy face-to-face fellowship. Our next meeting will be our Spring Quiet Day at Douai Abbey, Woolhampton on Tuesday, 8th March. We will be meeting at 10am and our speaker's subject will be Modern Slavery. After their talk we will join the Brothers in worship in the Oratory followed by lunch in the Refectory. There will be some free time in the afternoon. Do please get in touch if you would like to join us.

### Heather Ringrose Branch Secretary



Photograph: L-R:  
Michael Golby, Chairman; Heather Searle; Revd.  
Marie Jackson, Chaplain; Heather Ringrose, Secretary

## PRAYER REQUESTS

If you know of someone for whom prayers would be of benefit, or someone who has been prayed for and has recovered shown improvement, please inform the **National Chaplain** or the **National Welfare Officer**.

Prayers for our Vergers during this time of half-open churches, for those who feel alone, are furloughed, redundant or struggling in new, unfamiliar and uncertain times.

### Somerset & Avon

Marek Barden, Mary Holway, Roger Lawrence, Trevor Llewellyn

### York Branch

George Cook

### St Albans Branch

Peter Hudson

### East Anglia Branch

Val Pizzey

### Blackburn, Chester & Manchester Branch

Patricia Platt, Margaret Scott, Freda Murphy, Frank Woodward

### Oxford Branch

Gerry and Hazel Knight

### Durham and Newcastle with Carlisle Branch

Jimmy and Margaret Guy

### Gloucester, Hereford and Worcester Branch

Margaret Burston, Paul and family

### R I P

We are sad to report that Raymond Fowler died on 11th February. As a former Chair of the Guild (2001-2004) there will be a full obituary in the Summer edition. It is expected that his family will likely invite robed vergers to attend his funeral, but as yet, details are yet to be confirmed.

May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

**And all people facing hardship and difficulties and who are facing uncertainties.**

**And everyone not specifically mentioned who needs the love, counsel and grace of our Lord.**

# FESTIVAL SEMI LITE ST EDMUNDSBURY CATHEDRAL WEDNESDAY 14 SEPTEMBER 2022



For nearly 1,000 years the site of Suffolk's Cathedral has been one of worship and pilgrimage. The death of Edmund, King of the East Angles, at the hands of the Danes in 869 led to the building of an abbey, a thousand years ago, to house the remains of the martyred monarch, who was soon regarded as a saint. The abbey became a major pilgrimage centre.

St James's Church, within the precincts of the Norman abbey, was built by Abbott Anselm in the 12th century. He was thwarted in his hopes

to make a pilgrimage to Santiago in Spain. Instead, he built a church for the people of the town and dedicated it to St James. It also served the people who lived on the north side of the town of Bury St Edmunds. The nave of today's church, started in 1503, is the successor of that church. Though little remains of the Benedictine Abbey following the Dissolution in 1539, St James's Church has continued to grow over the centuries. In 1914 St James's became the Cathedral Church of the Diocese of Saint Edmundsbury and Ipswich but it was not until after the Second World

War that architect Stephen Dykes Bower could start work on enlarging the building. The last 40 years have seen several additions to the church and its associated buildings, culminating in 2005 with the completion of a magnificent Gothic lantern tower. Other works, including the Chapel of the Transfiguration, and the Cloisters were completed in 2009. These latest works, known as the Millennium Project, were funded by grants from the Millennium Commission, The Stephen Dykes Bower Trust and the generosity of many kind people.

The East Anglia Branch is inviting you to join us at our Festival 'Semi' Lite, Tea and Coffee will be available all day (please provide your own lunch) and you are welcome to join us for a service of Holy Communion at 1pm. Robes are invited to be worn for Evensong and there is to be a photo taken.

So put the Date in your diary now – Wednesday 14 September, at St Edmundsbury Cathedral in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk.

The booking form is included in this edition.



# JOHN PETER PRUDEN



**J**ohn Peter Pruden (1778 – 1868) was born in Edmonton Middlesex, England and died in Winnipeg, Manitoba Canada. He was christened on 31st May 1778 in All Saints Parish Church, Edmonton, Middlesex and was an early pioneer of Canada. During his many years of employment as a fur trader with the Hudson's Bay Company, he had extensive interaction with such First Nations as the Cree and Blackfoot.

It is unknown how Pruden came to join the Hudson's Bay Company in 1791. It appears to be atypical amongst HBC 'servants'. It may have been through a possible link to Sir James Winter Lake, 3rd Baronet (c.1745–1807), whose family controlled the Company during most of the 18th century, and whose estate at 'The Firs' was near Tanner's End, in Edmonton. No other boys from Edmonton ever appear to have been taken into the Company's service.

Pruden's employment in the Hudson's Bay Company

began in earnest in September 1791 when he arrived at York Factory by the Company's ship, Seahorse III, a 13-year-old apprentice. He spent four years at York Factory. Four years later Pruden was an escort to James Curtis Bird who was being transferred to Carlton House, in the Saskatchewan District. He and Bird served in the Saskatchewan District under Inland Master William Tomison. In May 1796 Pruden moved to a post called Fort Edmonton or Edmonton House located at present-day Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta. In 1798 Pruden was given the job of 'writer' at Fort Edmonton. He moved to Buckingham House in 1799 and returned to Edmonton House the next year. Upon arriving at Edmonton House, Pruden found that his old friend Bird had been given charge of the post. Bird sent Pruden to build a house (fur-trading post) between Edmonton House and Rocky Mountain House. This new fort was on the site of present-day Edmonton, (now the capital city of Alberta, Canada).

The name Edmonton was originally suggested by Pruden as it was the home of both the deputy governor of the HBC Sir James Winter Lake and his own former residence.

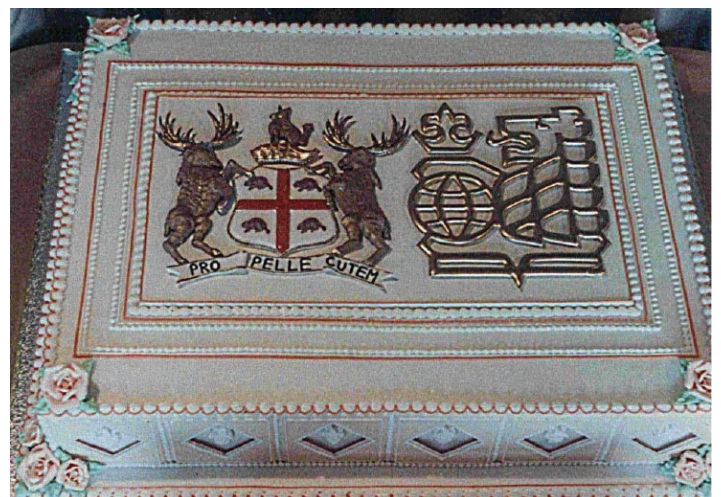
By 1832, Pruden had served 41 years with the HBC. By then he was chief factor (fort manager and boss).

No Chief Factor serving at that time had more service years, and only three of the Chief Traders then serving had accumulated more. A year after receiving his promotion to Chief Factor, Pruden, aged 59, retired and moved to the Red River Settlement) (now Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada). He was appointed to the Council of Assiniboia in 1839. In 1844, he became a member of the Board of Public Works, being the executive committee of the Council of Assiniboia. He served on the quarterly court as part of his office and in 1851, Eden Colvile, the Associate Governor of Rupertsland offered him an appointment as a magistrate. However by then 73 years old, Pruden declined, citing old age and ill health. Pruden went on to live more than a decade longer in his retirement at Red River where he died on 28 May 1868 after a lengthy illness, at the age of almost 90. He was laid to rest at St. John's Cathedral Churchyard, in the Red River Colony. His second wife Ann Armstrong returned

to England and died near Hastings, Sussex in 1887.

The reason for this bit of history is that this pioneer came from my church of All Saints Edmonton. Ironically, as a member of the Vergers Guild of the Episcopal Church, I hadn't received my new membership card, even though I had paid my subs so I contacted the Chair, and he said he'd look into it. Unbeknownst to anyone, it had been sent to Edmonton, Canada and not Edmonton, UK. Eventually the letter was returned by the US Postal Service to the Chair, who readdressed it and sent it on to me. What an irony! This co-incidence reminded me about John Pruden because in August 2012, the great, great great (and possibly more greats) grandson Doug Pruden came from Edmonton Canada to seek the birthplace of John Peter Pruden. I greeted him in church and took this snap of him.

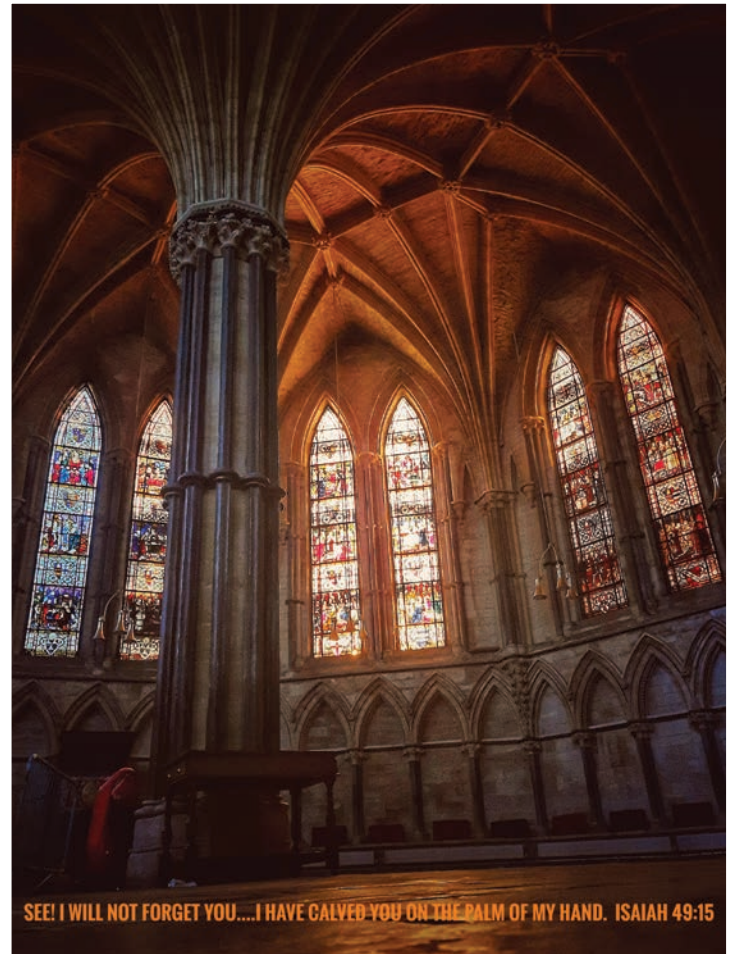
**Irene Money  
Chair, London Southwark  
& Chelmsford**



# THE BEATING HEART OF LINCOLN CATHEDRAL

The beating heart of Lincoln Cathedral lies at the centre of a humdrum of people.....its community. During lockdowns, this beating heart had to take a moment of rest and for most, those days felt very isolated. I know I lived for sunny days where you could find the colours from the stained glass dancing across the Nave floor, creating a sense of space but also give a much needed sense of life.

I would often walk to the Nave stone lip. There I found names carved into the stonework, echoes of past lives of the Lincoln Cathedral community....those lost voices gone



SEE! I WILL NOT FORGET YOU....I HAVE CALVED YOU ON THE PALM OF MY HAND. ISAIAH 49:15

by, the beating heart that was. Some may call it "graffiti" and thus feel it destructive and anti-social in nature. However, that may not be as it seems. In the Middle ages, "graffiti" was encouraged and also accepted within the church with the possibility it was about the people and their faith; perhaps, even more, about their prayers lying within the stone, silent and humble, waiting to be heard, devotional and religious at heart.

Their prayers were for souls, prayers for a good harvest or for a safe journey. The names carved here would have faced daily fears, worries, hopes and dreams, very similar to us now, living through a pandemic. Back when these names were carved by an individual, they could have provided the same solace as lighting a candle. As a person carved a name, they perhaps would be whispering their silent pleas and prayers. The "graffiti" then would become its own prayer offering, a sign of faith and a hope for comfort.

I often find solace lighting a candle whilst whispering a prayer, perhaps for another person, but always in the hope of finding the light of Christ to illuminate my heart and lighten both my and their burdens. It feels very comforting to share these moments together in Christ moving my and their worlds from darkness (of death, fear and sin) into a world of light (of hope, promise and life).

In lockdown, being based at the West End desk, these names soon became my own community, and a part of me and my prayers; an ever-evolving, ongoing

project; a community of faith through the ages, who, all together, expanded the dwelling place within us all. They all, like me, came to find comfort and strength within Lincoln Cathedral in their greatest times of need.

Today, in a world thrown into crisis by the Covid pandemic, we have lived our lives as never before - many still feeling the shadows of darkness and despair all around them. But hope springs eternal. Just like those lives gone past, I hope you find strength here, to not give into your fears....

When next looking at those names, I hope you can keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God; and pray that all who enter Lincoln Cathedral find the Peace of God, passing all understanding; and that all who enter can then leave with the Peace of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

**Joanna Blanchard**  
Verger 5, Lincoln Cathedral

## THE DIPLOMA COURSE

The Executive Committee of the Guild, at the recommendation of General Synod, formulated a course to cover the work and ministry of the Verger. The course is formulated in four units set in two stages:

The first stage is the **Foundation** Unit, which comprises sixteen assignments, covering preparation for worship, care of the building, record-keeping, and archives, care of the churchyard, and caring for the people of God.

The second stage comprises of the other three units:

- **The Verger as Pastor** covers the individual's personal development, their relationship with the people and God, care for others, and for Church resources.
- **The Verger as Historian** covers the history of church building, architecture, and the history of worship, including the Book of Common Prayer, and the Bible.



- **The Verger as Administrator** covers communication, forms and registers, and the structures of the Church.

Students who engage with the full four units are expected to attend at least one full CEGV Annual Training Conference prior to completion.

Those who complete the course successfully receive a diploma, an academic hood, and the right to use the post-nominal letters '**Dip GV**'.

If you are interested in learning more about the Course, please contact:

the **Training Registrar:**  
**Susan Ansell**  
[CEGVTrainReg@gmail.com](mailto:CEGVTrainReg@gmail.com)

or the **Training Officer:**  
**Les Mitchelmore**  
[CEGVTrainOff@gmail.com](mailto:CEGVTrainOff@gmail.com)



# THE GUILD SHOP

The Guild Shop has Guild branded articles available to all Fellows, Full and Associate Members. (Non-Members are invited to make contact with the General Secretary about joining the Guild: [CEGVGenSec@gmail.com](mailto:CEGVGenSec@gmail.com))

These will add a little something to every Verger's uniform, whether it's a Guild Fleece or a Guild Gown Badge to spice up your official Vergers robes. The Shop has something for you. For more information on the shops products, to order a catalogue or place an order contact:

Current Shop Stock		
GS002	<b>Embroidered Badge for Gown (Guild logo)</b>	<b>£17.00</b>
GS003	<b>Lapel Badge (full member)</b>	<b>£9.50</b>
GS004	<b>Lapel Badge (associate member)</b>	<b>£9.50</b>
GS005	<b>Guild of Vergers Name Badge</b> Please note, there are only two lines available on the name badge, eg. <b>Andrew Baker</b> <b>Salisbury Cathedral</b> The badge is now available with a pin or magnetic fixing	<b>£11.00</b>
GS006	<b>Cufflinks with Guild logo (pair)</b>	<b>£20.00</b>
GS007	<b>Seventy-Five Years Leading the Way</b> <b>A history of the Guild of Vergers by John Campbell</b>	<b>£2.00</b>
GS008	<b>Car Sticker (Guild logo)</b>	<b>£2.00</b>
GS009	<b>Bookmark</b>	<b>£1.00</b>
GS011	<b>Pen</b>	<b>£1.00</b>
GS012	<b>Paper Knife (Guild 75th Anniversary)</b>	<b>£5.00</b>
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GS016	<b>Silk Tie (blue, with Guild logo)</b>	<b>£16.00</b>
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GS022	<b>Blank Notecards (pack of 10 cards with 2 designs)</b>	<b>£2.50</b>
GS023	<b>Canvas Bag (Serving the Church, Leading the way...)</b>	<b>£7.50</b>
GS024	<b>Shoulder Bag (with Guild logo)</b>	<b>£2.00</b>



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# OSTIARIUS TO THE CONVOCATION OF CANTERBURY



I was pleased to be asked to be present at Westminster Abbey for the Inauguration of the Eleventh general Synod of the Church of England – so with robes in tow I set off to the Faculty Office, located next to the Abbey, to collect the Archbishop of Canterbury's Mace (pictured on the front of this magazine) and then on to the Abbey in preparation for the Service. As this was the Synod, both Provinces were in attendance, with myself as Ostiarius for the Convocation of Canterbury and Alex Carberry, as the Apparitor for the Convocation of York (different titles, but essentially the same role). Following an expert briefing by their Dean's Verger, Martin Castledine I then learnt how long the aisle is at the Abbey. We were in prime position at the front very close to His Royal Highness The Earl of Wessex who was in attendance for Her Majesty the Queen - if you look closely enough in the picture you can spot me by my shoulders and bald head! Following the Service we attended the opening of Synod in Church House.

Over lockdown (who would have thought that word would now be readily in our vocabulary) the Guild was approached to see if they could recommend anyone for the role of Ostiarius to the Convocation of Canterbury, following the stepping back of the previous holder of the role. John Kirby-Shearer submitted some names and after a few months I was contacted by the Archbishop's office and the appointment was bestowed on me. I am honoured - not only to represent the Guild, but also to follow some impressive footsteps.

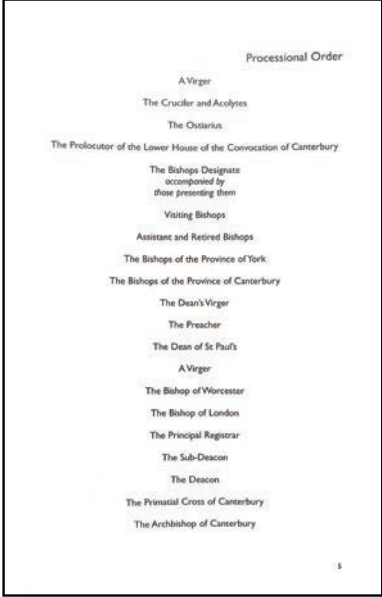
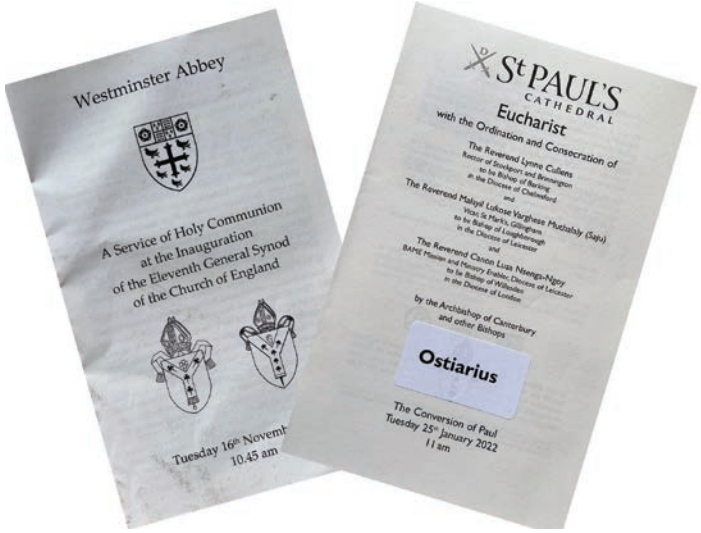
One of the main roles for the Ostiarius is to be present at the Consecration of Bishops within the Province of Canterbury and to Verge the Prolocutor of the Lower House, Canon Simon Butler. However, with the restrictions that have been in place until recent times, all Consecrations have taken place with much reduced numbers and have not been open to the public.





During Synod the position of Prolocutor of the Lower House was to be appointed and this fell upon the Archdeacon of London, The Venerable Luke Miller. On his Twitter feed (@ArchdeaconLuke) he put up a photo of the two of us, and just captioned it 'Ostiarius & Prolocutor' which Twitter gave a translation of 'Gatekeeper & Speaker' which I feel is very apt. As he put it 'The Ostiarius is the mace bearer of the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury, & Doorkeeper. It's now ceremonial; historically kept the door of the Lower House to ensure independence & attended the Prolocutor when summoned to the Upper House to report & receive messages.'

On the Feast of the Conversion of St Paul, 25 January, a cold morning I set off again to the Faculty Office to collect the Mace and then go along to St Paul's Cathedral for my first 'outing' as Ostiarius at a Consecration. It was a deeply moving service with the newly appointed Prolocutor. Neither of us having done these roles before we were deeply grateful for the guidance given by Canon James Milne, Precentor of St Paul's Cathedral. It was my privilege to be there for the Consecration of the new Bishop of Barking, in the Diocese of Chelmsford, the Rt Rev'd Lynne Cullens, the new Bishop of Loughborough, in the Diocese of Leicester, The Rt Rev'd Varghese Malayil Lukose (Saju) Muthalaly and the new Bishop of Willesden, in the Diocese of London, The Rt Rev'd Lusa Nsenga-Ngyo.



It is a huge honour to have been appointed to this role, and I look forward to representing the Guild wherever I go.

Stephen Stokes



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## The Guild Prayer

Almighty Father, from whom every family in heaven and earth is named,  
who has called us into the fellowship of your Church,  
grant, we pray, that in all our churches we may fulfil the duties  
and enjoy the privileges of our spiritual home.  
And on those who offer themselves for service as vergers in the house of God  
bestow the fullness of your grace,  
that, united in love to you and to one another,  
we may show forth your glory and hasten the coming of your kingdom.  
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.



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