



# THE CROSS STREET TIMES



## View from the Vestry

By Rev. Cody Coyne

We're approaching now the second anniversary of Covid's impact on the chapel. We have closed our doors, tentatively opened them, taken a couple breaks, explored the world of Mixlr, Zoom, Slack and YouTube. Mental health and physical health have been pushed to the limits, as well as sociability and perhaps even irritability. I'm sorry this isn't the New Year's message you were perhaps hoping for.

We sometimes feel forced to make choices: do we risk physical health for the sake of mental well-being, or do we limit social interaction knowing it may protect us and loved ones, but with a toll psychologically? How do we choose between two incomplete lives?

What is forgotten amidst these binaries is the possibility of a third way. With patience, reflection and perseverance we may find a way to enjoin both sides. To safeguard ourselves as much as possible, but in a way that continues to enrich our spiritual lives.

With this outlook, we can seek to continue the goodwill of the chapel safely. We can continue to be a voice of liberal faith in the city, available in-person and online; we can serve the forsaken in our communities through collective acts of charity and compassion. We can strengthen the bonds between each other, and other faiths, becoming part of that web of support in our city. None of these opportunities need be halted by Covid; we are called to respond to the world as it is, and at present Covid is still a significant pressure in our lives. It may make our tasks more challenging, but with this challenge we will find a nuance that is hopefully more compassionate, more tolerant, more loving. I hope our chapel can continue this core responsibility, giving love and care to an injured world.

## Music Matters

By Catherine Coyne, Director of Music

January 2022



Every year Cross Street holds an *Anthems for Advent* concert in which members and friends of the chapel provide musical performances and readings, with audience donations helping to raise money for a chosen charity. Our December 2020 *Anthems* event raised funds for the charity *Help Musicians*. At this time, we were all confined to our homes as in-person events weren't

taking place at all. 2021 felt more complicated, with carefully distanced gatherings running alongside streamed or online events. Our *Anthems for Advent* concerts are always very popular, packing out the sanctuary, and for many of us the thought of gathering in crowded spaces still feels risky. We decided to remain online and streamed the service on Christmas Eve. There has been a lot in the news recently about the hardships and tragedies faced by refugees attempting to reach the UK. We have also seen some very unkind reactions to those seeking safety and this forced us to consider what our response needed to be. Wanting to find a compassionate and meaningful way to show practical support, Cross Street chose *Care 4 Calais*, a charity that works across Europe to provide services and security to refugees, for our Christmas appeal. Reflecting on the Christmas story, the journey taken by Mary and Joseph, we heard a selection of readings and music that called on us to consider the plight of those seeking safety and lodging, for "no-one should ever be denied lodging." We reached our fundraising target and raised £160 for the charity. It is still possible to donate to the appeal via our page at [tinyurl.com/care4calais](https://tinyurl.com/care4calais). Thank you to all those who contributed to the event and the fundraising appeal.



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## Cross Street Means Business

By Janet Wolstenholme, Lettings Manager

Dear Friends,  
 Happy New Year from the Lettings Staff, Janet, Hil and Ben! As I reflect on the past year, I realise what a strange and bumpy ride it has been. We are looking forward to a more hopeful year with a wide variety of chapel lessees, who will be featured in coming editions of this newsletter. Serendipitously, we now have two new choirs renting the Chapel space, a West End musical choir and one for elders called Golden Voices. As I write this, I can hear the Manchester Lesbian and Gay Choir doing vocal warm-ups. They occasionally use our chapel if their regular room is not open.

Over the past year we have been happy to host an Age UK funded group of elders from the Manchester LBGTQ community and Afro Cats, who run a dance and drama activities with disadvantaged children. Two monthly mental health peer support groups have also recently started to meet.

Many of our long-standing groups are beginning to book sessions again, including The Gaskell Society, City of Sanctuary and one of our new regular lessees, The Manchester Literature and Philosophical Society. This is only a snapshot of the diverse people and groups who meet in our wonderful building.

I am always happy to answer any questions or listen to any input or interest from the congregation on the Chapels Lettings Life, please feel free to ring me. My number is 07483321602.

Love, Janet

## Dates for your Diary

Recitals: 25<sup>th</sup> Feb, 25<sup>th</sup> Mar

Faith in Life: 27<sup>th</sup> Feb, 27<sup>th</sup> Mar

Challenging Hate Forum public event at the Cathedral: 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 2pm

Communion (after service): 6<sup>th</sup> Feb, 6<sup>th</sup> Mar

Cross Street AGM: 20<sup>th</sup> Mar

**Continued from front page...** In other music news, our Friday lunchtime recitals have resumed on the last Friday of each month, 1-2pm. In November we were treated to a performance by international pianist and friend of the chapel Ugnius Pauliukonis. On Friday 28<sup>th</sup> January we welcomed pianist Daniel Ropota, who got our recital schedule off to a fantastic start. Our February recital will be given by cellist Daria Dorothea. We also look forward to re-starting choir rehearsals and, we hope, in-person performances in 2022. Please visit [CrossStChapel.org.uk/Music](http://CrossStChapel.org.uk/Music), join our Facebook page @CrossStMusic or email [music@crossstchapel.org.uk](mailto:music@crossstchapel.org.uk) for information about our events.

## A Letter from the Secretary

By Joe Calvert

If you thought minutes had just sixty seconds, then you are sorely mistaken, they are a work of magic put together, with élan, wit & painstaking drudgery to chronicle the inner workings as well as the slow machinations of hours of discussion, debate & deliberations.

Yes, as you may have guessed, dear reader, the work of the secretary is both interesting (such as discussing new lights & lighting systems) & exciting (going out to buy yet more paper for the photocopier). I joined the committee as an ordinary member just over two years ago in March 2019, as all of the committee is elected each year, for only a year, at the Annual General Meeting.

Though it is just in the last few months since stepping into the metaphorical shoes of our previous secretary, Paul Evans & the many meetings since that I have come to see the impact that the committee, on behalf of the congregation can make. From the sense of community created by organising a Wedding Anniversary card amongst others through to deciding a part of our harvest festival food bank donation would be better given to a person in acute need.

So do, dear readers, get in touch either via email ([secretary@CrossStChapel.org.uk](mailto:secretary@CrossStChapel.org.uk)) or in person, with myself or any of the other committee members if you'd like to talk about the work of the committee or about how to join it in 2022.