

foccus

Friends of Canterbury Cathedral in the United States

February 2017

Dear Friends,

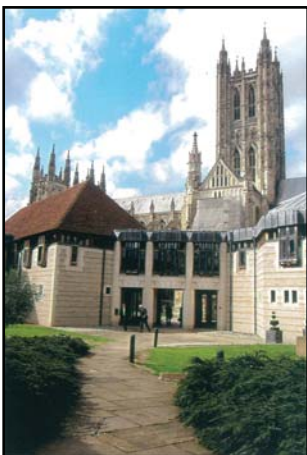
Immediately after the Christmas holiday, the Cathedral community braced itself for the beginning of the major restoration work on the Nave, Roof, West Towers, and the Christ Church Gate. We will also be building a new Welcome Centre which will transform our ability to give anyone coming here a welcome, providing both hospitality and information which will help them understand and appreciate the building and the life of Canterbury Cathedral.

Already the Nave, which is out of use now, is being filled with scaffolding as a safety deck is erected to cover the vaulting above. This work will continue for up to three months but is only a preparation for four years of massive activity on the building itself. The intention is to complete all this work by the Lambeth Conference which is scheduled to meet here in July 2020. It is hoped that the great Willis Organ of the Cathedral will have been totally restored by then and have new ranks of pipes to reinstate its vanished solo and choir stops.

All of this work requires meticulous planning so that worship can continue uninterrupted in the Quire of the Cathedral and later in the Nave equipped with its new safety deck. When completed, visitors will be able to appreciate not only the beauty of the restored east end of the Cathedral which in winter sunshine could not look more spectacular but can realize just how much work in terms of conservation it takes to preserve this precious heritage for the future.

As always, may I thank you for your support for the life, worship, and work of this holy place and particularly for your generosity through FOCCUS to the Canterbury Scholars. Needed financial aid is given to seminarians and young clergy from all over the world to spend time at Canterbury living, worshipping, studying together and gaining respect for one another. The future of the Anglican Communion is dependent on these scholars and your help is greatly appreciated.

The Very Reverend Dr. Robert A. Willis
Dean of Canterbury Cathedral



Join FOCCUS' Facebook

Friends of Canterbury Cathedral in the United States has a Facebook group. Facebook, the world's largest social networking site, allows users to share ideas, discussions and photos with people of similar interest.

The FOCCUS group is a great way to keep up with the latest news from Canterbury Cathedral. The creators search news sites to bring you news of interest concerning the Cathedral. In addition you can post your thoughts and share photos of your trips to Canterbury.

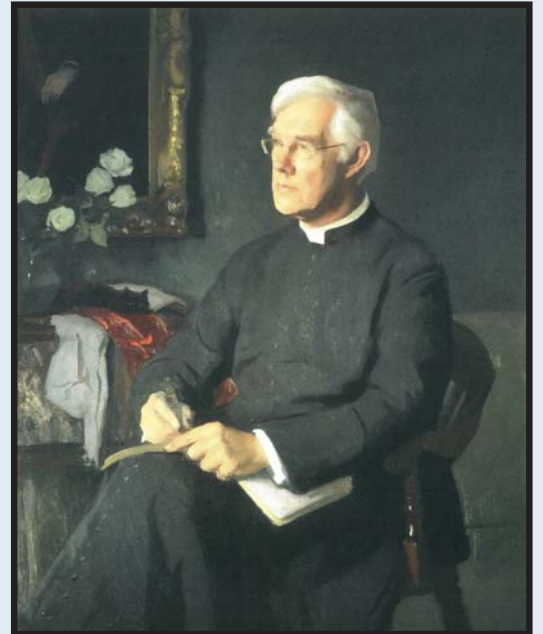
If you are not a member of Facebook, please consider joining and then become a member of the FOCCUS group. If you are already a member of Facebook, type Friends of Canterbury Cathedral into the site's search box.

www.facebook.com
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/90862204701/>

THE DEAN'S PORTRAIT

A stunning portrait of Canterbury Cathedral's Dean, Robert Willis, is now hanging in the Deanery in company with those of all previous Deans. This unique collection began in the 16th century with the portrait of the first Post Reformation Dean. A special treat for visitors to the Deanery is touring the gallery of portraits with Dean Willis who tells fascinating stories of the characters behind the pictures. What will future generations say about the inclusion of Monkey, the Dean's favorite cat, in the background of his portrait?

A young portraitist, Jamie Coreth, was chosen to paint the portrait of Dean Willis. It shows him seated in a chair in his clerical attire and wearing a more somber expression than one associates with the Dean but one that will wear well in the years to come. What a handsome man he is and how fortunate we FOCCUS Board members have been to know him.



The Board of Trustees of FOCCUS

The Rt. Rev. Peter James Lee, Chair
Barbara Q. Harper, Vice Chair
Eugene T. Johnston, Vice Chair
The Very Rev. Dr. Robert A. Willis, Dean of
Canterbury Cathedral

Commodore Martin Atherton
The Very Rev. Joseph H. Britton
The Rev. Ted H. Clarkson
The Rev. Canon Matthew T. L. Corkern
The Rev. Canon Carlson Gerdau
C. Powell Hutton
Ralph Olson
The Rev. Tom Purdy
The Rev. Dr. Anne Gavin Ritchie
Elizabeth F. H. Scott
The Rev. Canon Samuel Van Culin



The FOCCUS Board of Trustees meets twice each year, in the spring and in the fall.

Our 2016 fall meeting was held on October 19th at the Washington National Cathedral. Pictured here are some of the attendees that day.



Left to right: Eugene Johnston, Ralph Olson, Sam Van Culin, Chair Peter Lee, Dean Robert Willis, Barbie Harper, and Powell Hutton. Missing from the picture but also in attendance: Ted Clarkson.

NEWS on FOCCUS BOARD MEMBERS

C. Jackson Ritchie, Jr., FOCCUS Treasurer for the past three years, died peacefully in Washington, DC on December 23, 2016. He was 82 years old. Jack's extensive history in the banking and financial world, as well as his dedication to the Episcopal Church, made him a responsible, wise, and caring Treasurer. We were the beneficiaries of his depth of knowledge and practical experience. He will be sorely missed and hard to replace, both as a colleague and as a friend to the Board.



At our fall board meeting in October, Ralph Olson of Springfield, Virginia was elected to the Board of Trustees of FOCCUS. Ralph, an attorney and a retired colonel in the Air Force, has been a member of St. John's Church, Lafayette Square in Washington since 1972, where he has been an effective lay leader in many areas, most particularly in fundraising. We welcome Ralph to the board, and look forward to the knowledge and experience he will bring to our group.



Last summer marked the end of an era at Canterbury Cathedral when the Receiver General, Brigadier John Meardon, retired after serving in that position for 18 years. Before he was appointed Receiver General, John served with the Royal Marines for 34 years, both as a commando and as a helicopter pilot. As the RG, John was responsible for the Cathedral's day-to-day management in his role as the Cathedral's chief executive. John's wealth of knowledge and love for the Cathedral he so ably served will be missed by all. He was also a valued trustee on the FOCCUS board; his informative annual updates on the comings and goings at Canterbury can be found in past newsletters.



John's successor as RG, Commodore Martin Atherton, was installed last September. Commodore Atherton has spent 30 years in the Royal Navy, most recently as Naval Regional Commander for Eastern England. In his position as RG, he automatically becomes a FOCCUS trustee, and we look forward to greeting him in person at a future meeting.



JULY 2016 PILGRIMAGE TO CANTERBURY AND KENT

By Barbie Harper

In early July 2016, a stalwart group embarked on a Pilgrimage to Canterbury and the County of Kent. We were under the indomitable leadership of The Rev. Canon Matthew Corkern who had masterminded 30 previous Pilgrimages.

Although weary from the overnight flight across the big pond to Heathrow, we reveled in the picturesque landscape of Kent as we traveled to Maidstone for 3 nights. Stops en route were at the world famous ancient wall painting in the simple 11th century church at Chaldon and at Chartwell House & Gardens, the country escape for Sir Winston and Lady Churchill. The next day Marc Chagall's 12 brilliant stained glass windows in the medieval church in Tudeley stunned us with their beauty.

On Sunday we worshipped at the second oldest cathedral in England (Yes, Canterbury is the first, dating to 597). Rochester Cathedral was founded in 804 but its second building with its fine Romanesque façade and Norman interior date to 1080. Personally, I was extremely moved by the stone tablet in the nave floor commemorating the 27 year bishopric of The Rt. Rev. David Say, who was a mentor and father figure to John and me for over 25 years. In words that were inscribed on his tablet, Bp. Say was indeed an "Episcopal Giant".

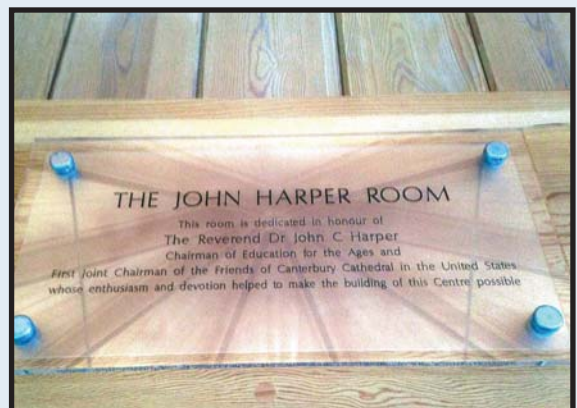


And then, on to Canterbury. We walked along the High Street of the medieval walled city to the Christ Church Gate into the Precincts ("Close" in American terms) where Dean Robert Willis gave us a warm welcome. For five nights we lived in great comfort in the Canterbury Lodge where every room has a view of the Cathedral. Our days were punctuated by matins in the mornings and evensong in the evenings. There was ample time to explore the Cathedral, the Precincts and the city. Of special interest to me was a plaque in one of the International Study Center classrooms in honor of John C Harper, founder of FOCCUS.

Daytime excursions included Dover with its striking White Cliffs and the largest of England's castles. It was exciting to stand on the Greenwich Meridian where one's feet could be in two different time zones and to admire the famous decorative fabric and wallpaper in the home of British textile designer, William Morris. A visit to Charles Darwin's home for 40 years gave us new insight into his theories of evolution by natural selection.

Our final evening at Canterbury was the highlight of our Pilgrimage. Preceded by drinks in his vast garden, Dean Willis hosted us to a scrumptious dinner in the Deanery where we expressed great approval of his new portrait. The climax of the evening was a candlelight tour with the Dean in the darkened and silent Cathedral.

And then it was time to head home with our bags packed with new experiences to ponder and renewal of our faith to be grateful for.



INTRODUCING ... "Canon Nick"!
by the Reverend Dr. Anne Gavin Ritchie

In early March 2013, a new Canon was introduced to the Canterbury community: The Reverend Canon Nicholas Papadopoulos, affectionately known as Canon Nick.

As Canon Treasurer his position includes all the ministerial responsibilities of a Residentiary Canon. He is a member of The Cathedral Chapter, the corporate body responsible for the management of the Cathedral. As Canon Treasurer, Canon Nick has oversight of all the Cathedral's finances and business activities. He also has responsibility for post-ordination training of new clergy in the Dioceses of Canterbury and Rochester.

Upon his appointment he wrote,

"I am thrilled to have been appointed Canon Treasurer of Canterbury Cathedral. It will be wonderful to return to the county in which I was born and in which I grew up. I am looking forward eagerly to working among the Cathedral community, and to all the challenges and opportunities that it will bring."

Since that time Canon Nick has been fulfilling his ministries with enthusiastic grace.

Originally trained in law and serving as a barrister, Canon Nick received theological training at Ripon College and King's College. He brings to his current position a depth of spiritual understanding that undergirds his daily life and ministry.

Along with his wife Heather and children Barnaby and Theodora, Canon Nick's presence greatly enhances the Canterbury community.



GEOFFREY CHAUCER, THE MAN BEHIND THE CANTERBURY TALES

By Powell Hutton

It is hard to think of Canterbury Cathedral without immediately associating it with *The Canterbury Tales*, Geoffrey Chaucer's classic account of pilgrims enlivening their travel with stories to entertain each other ... and spurred by the prospect of a free meal for the best. The stories, written in the 1380s, paint a rich, critical and often ironic portrait of English society and the Church at the time, told by pilgrims of widely divergent backgrounds and beliefs. It took an unusually observant man to capture the breadth of the spirit and tenor of the age.

England in the late 14th Century had endured multiple onsets of the plague, including the ravages of the Black Death, 1348-1353. Societal norms seemed overturned as both poor and wealthy proved equally vulnerable. The Church itself was riven by dissent—contenders for the title of Pope held court both in Rome and Avignon. The Lollards, an early reformation movement led by John Wycliffe, urged evangelical poverty in direct contrast to the extravagance of the Church. In short, it was a time ripe for pilgrims to seek solace from their saints.



Chaucer was born in London in this turbulent era, sometime around 1343, the middle class son of a wine merchant. He had good connections, which he maximized as page, then squire, finally public servant. Captured in France during the Hundred Years War, he was ransomed by King Edward III in 1360, a measure of Chaucer's worth even at age 17. He traveled several more times to Europe in various capacities as court official, secret agent, and pilgrim, thereby likely becoming acquainted with both Petrarch and Boccaccio, either in person or through their works.

His official functions were legion and demanding. As comptroller of customs for the Port of London, he had to certify the daily movements of wool, which accounted for a third of the Royal Treasury's revenues and to regulate wool merchants and profiteers in this lucrative, but often corrupt, trade. He seems not to have enriched himself, but was a casualty of scandal at the docks and of King Richard III's growing unpopularity. Later, as clerk of the King's works, he oversaw renovations at the Tower of London, Windsor, and Westminster Palace. Subsequent to either an injury or a robbery, he became a commissioner for roads and forester. In spite of these official demands (he was also a Member of Parliament), he was able to continue his writing, and his talents were such that in 1374 the King granted Chaucer "a gallon of wine daily for the rest of his life," an honor foreshadowing later poets laureate.

These varied responsibilities, with travel around England and across the Continent, brought him into firsthand contact with all sorts of conditions and people, providing grist for his tales. A man of extraordinary drive, perspicacity and wit, he captured these impressions in a set of stories that have come down to us across the ages as an enduring and vital record of life over six centuries ago.

It is perhaps fitting that Chaucer's last official record was to sign for a cask of wine in the summer of 1400, a spirited book end to a most productive life. He was buried at Westminster Abbey later that year.



Photo credits: wikipedia

BECOME A PILGRIM!

PILGRIMAGE PATHWAYS IN 2017

On The Pilgrims' Way: A Journey along the Canterbury Trail

co-led by The Reverend Daniel Simons and The Reverend Canon Matthew Corkern

Travel dates: 18 – 27 June 2017

(This pilgrimage is co-sponsored by Trinity Wall Street & the Friends of Canterbury Cathedral.)

We journey for several days along the ancient path known as "The Pilgrims' Way" – pausing at historic stops from Winchester to Canterbury. Travelers are invited to claim their time on the pilgrimage pathways through an all-encompassing rhythm. Moving from ancient to modern times – Augustine, Becket, Cranmer and Hooker call out to today's church to rediscover its call to holiness, prayer and study with laughter and good-will interspersed. You will explore the foundations and living history of Christianity and Anglicanism in Britain. (Note: Travel is by coach, but there will be options to walk the actual Canterbury trail before and during the pilgrimage.)

An Odyssey around Ancient Connaught: Explore Western Ireland

led by The Reverend Canon Matthew Corkern

Travel dates: 28 June – 11 July 2017

This journey opens new avenues of exploration in the fields of art, architecture, music, literature and history – alongside our living faith. As we travel through dramatic and breathtaking countryside, we will encounter opportunities to walk in the footsteps of great saints, cultural leaders, and fellow pilgrims. Come capture the spirit of the Irish people in generosity and hospitality!

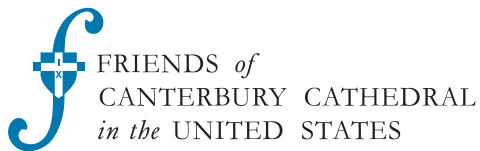
Visits include: The Cliffs of Moher, The Burren, Clonmacnoise Monastery, the Foxford Woolen Mills, the 'Quiet Man' Heritage Centre, the shrine at Knock; Cathedrals at Galway, Limerick, and Sligo; Baptismal Renewal overlooking the Atlantic Ocean; ancient archeological discoveries; places associated in the poetry & legends of WB Yeats; abbey wonders of Dysert O'Dea, Clonfert, Ballintubber, and Glenstal. Special events arranged at Lissadelle House, Ashford Castle and in the family-seat of the last High Kings – Clonalis House, as well as musical evenings to explore the depth of Irish cultural psyche.



Matthew Corkern, Pilgrimage Leader

Our ancient faith calls us to encounter the contemporary world through friendships formed across these native lands of culture, history and religion. To express interest or obtain further details, please contact Matthew Corkern by email mtlc101@gmail.com or call 908-277-1814.

****Please note this pilgrimage is priced as an all-inclusive package of everything except air-travel and insurance. This trip is based on double-occupancy, but singles may be accommodated upon sign-up.***



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Becoming a Friend

Enclosed in this Newsletter you will find an envelope we hope you will use to become a member of Friends of Canterbury Cathedral in the United States. Membership includes such benefits as free admission to the Cathedral and personalized tours, notification of FOCCUS events, as well as priority consideration for a place on future pilgrimages.

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