

Winchester Cathedral to feature in BBC's Easter Schedule

Winchester Cathedral is to broadcast BBC1's Easter Service this year, followed by recordings of two programmes for Songs of Praise on Easter Monday.

Christmas being well and truly behind us, Winchester Cathedral is readying itself for Easter, but before that comes Lent, traditionally a time of prayer and reflection before Holy Week, when Christians throughout the world recollect the suffering and death of Jesus, and his resurrection on Easter Day.

Ash Wednesday this year is on 17th February and there will be a Sung Eucharist at 5.30pm - this will be the first appearance of the Cathedral's new Chamber Choir.. As Lent continues, there will be a sequence of lectures in the Undercroft (10A, Inner Close) on Thursdays at 7pm from 25th February to 25th March, giving an opportunity to find ways of deepening and refreshing how we pray using creative imagination. Full details are on the Cathedral's website: www.winchester-cathedral.org.uk and there is a listing below.

Other activities include a Christian Basics course on Tuesdays from 23rd February to 30th March, again in the Undercroft, when the Cathedral's Canon Missioner, Steve Pittis, will explore aspects of the Christian faith and on Saturday 13th March Canon Roly Riem, Canon Chancellor, will lead a study day on The Drama of the Eucharist, the Christian church's central act of worship. Concerts by Southern Voices (6th March, 7.30pm) and The Waynflete Singers (20th March) complement the worship which will be led by the Cathedral Choir throughout Lent and Holy Week.

The climax begins with the Palm Sunday procession on Sunday 28th March when, at 10am, the Cathedral engages in a re-enactment of Jesus's triumphal entry to Jerusalem. On Maundy Thursday, 1st April, at 7pm, the focus tightens with the celebration of the Last Supper and the next day, Good Friday, there is a three hour service of meditation and worship marking his death on the cross; then to Easter Day.

The Cathedral is delighted to be welcoming the BBC to Winchester this Easter, firstly for the broadcast of its main Easter Day service, and then for Songs of Praise, last taken from Winchester Cathedral in 1998. The Cathedral Choir regularly broadcasts on BBC Radio 3 – including a service of Choral Evensong for Easter in 2008 – but more rarely on television, and with preparations well under way already, it will be an exciting addition to their schedule this year.

All are welcome to the live broadcast of the service on Easter Day, and free tickets for the Songs of Praise recordings are available from songsofpraise@bbc.co.uk or by post to Songs of Praise (Winchester), Room 5012, BBC, Oxford Road, Manchester M60 1SJ by 15th March, which are to be broadcast in June this year and January 2011. You can also find out more at www.bbc.co.uk/songsofpraise