

## Dean's Letter, 25 February 2018

Dear Cathedral family

We are, many of us, still in a state of shock and euphoria following the political shift that has taken place in our country on Ash Wednesday, and the gift to us all of President Cyril Ramaphosa's SONA address that followed a few days later. Also on Ash Wednesday (14th February) was the terrible high school shooting in Florida, USA, with 17 young people being killed. There is a poignant picture of a desperate parent at the school, and on her forehead is the Ash Wednesday cross of ashes. She had clearly been to church earlier that day, to receive the Imposition of Ashes, and now she was facing her worst nightmare, the possible death of her son or daughter. You and I carry the faith and love of God wherever we go. And at times we go into our own desperately dark places of despair and loss.

We are all vulnerable, with young people especially at risk from violence, alcohol, drugs, family breakdown. Let's do what we can do to help pick up the pieces of shattered lives, even when we are carrying our own burdens. We are "wounded healers" (Henri Nouwen), all of us; in need of healing; and yet we are channels of God's healing grace and love.

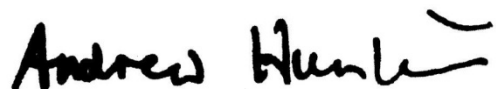
Our Annual Cathedral Vestry is only two weeks away, on Sunday 11th March 2018. We shall have a single combined morning service on that day, at 8.30 a.m., followed by our Vestry meeting in St George's Hall. (There will be the normal services of Choral Evensong at 5 p.m., and Student Service at 6.30 p.m., later that day). The Vestry booklets are available at the back of the church, with the agenda, and the minutes of both the 2016 and 2017 Vestry meetings, together with our 2017 audited financial statements and the 2018 budget. Please take time to read these through before the Vestry meeting. We shall be taking them as "read".

Also at the back of the church are nomination lists (on clipboards) for Churchwardens, Alternate Churchwarden, and Parish Councillors. We have been wonderfully served in 2017, as in previous years, by a faithful team – those elected at Vestry last year. I hope that a number of them will be available for re-election. We rely on their wisdom, experience and institutional knowledge. But we also, as always, need "new blood", fresh energy, those whose time has come to serve in this way. The work of governance is one of the responsibilities – and privileges – of membership. In many ways, being on PCC is part of the hidden ministry of the church. A great deal gets done behind the scenes. We don't see it – but it makes other ministries possible. Without good governance and wise hands and heads at this level, other things simply don't get done, or are hindered.

So please nominate wisely, and with discernment. My prayer is that we shall have a positive, happy vestry, and come away with a united, dedicated team for the year ahead.

Our Sub-Dean, Archdeacon Mzinzisi Dyantyi, is in East London for much of this week, leading the ordination retreat. He will also conduct the rehearsal here in the Cathedral on Friday and is preaching at the ordination service itself on Saturday. Please let us hold him in our prayers, together with those preparing for their ordination, their families and the parishes where they are serving.

My love to you all

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Andrew Hunt". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.