

VIGIL : “OUT OF BETHLEHEM – A CRY”
LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL 15th DECEMBER 2020, 7-9 pm

7 pm Welcome and introduction by the Dean, Rev Adrian Dorber.
Prayer and reading (Micah 5:2-4)
Music : Reem Kelani, ‘Sprinting gazelle’

7.25 Reading : An open letter from Bethlehem clergy (in full)
Music: Songs of the Nativity

7.50 Lament at the depth of misery and oppression
Psalm 88, Music : John Taverner: Lament for Jerusalem

8.10 Excerpts from “Cry for Hope,” prayer, Music: Songs of the Nativity

8.35 Reading extracts from a sermon preached in Norwich by the Rev Fiona Haworth on the UN day of solidarity 29th November:
“Imagine life for the Palestinians in Bethlehem today. Listen to the Cry for Hope from the depth of their suffering. Heed their call for decisive action.” Franciscan benediction.

8.45 The office of compline : Signing of Cry for Hope letter

For the vigil, the whole of the cathedral space was used. There were places for reflection and for symbolic actions. Lighting Bethlehem beeswax candles at the icon of the weeping Madonna who ‘breaks down walls’; a tree for placing messages to the people of Bethlehem; a cairn of solidarity. A film featuring Zhoubi ,Al-Rowad and Daoud Nassar of Tent of Nations was shown every 20 minutes in the Chapter House. An exhibition of photographs of the city alongside excerpts from ‘Cry for Hope’ leading to the exit where people were invited to sign the Cry for Hope letter and given details of how to sign the online petition. Two-thirds of the 100 visitors (63) signed the letter. The combination of symbol, art, music and word was very powerful. It might serve as a template for other cathedrals/churches to use.*

**The Bethlehem School of Iconography spent two 3-month periods in Lichfield between 2017-19 making icons which hang in the nave of the cathedral.*