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The inclusivity of Anglican cathedrals and the coronation of King Charles III: embracing explicit religion, civic religion, and implicit religion

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ABSTRACT

Judith Muskett's analysis of metaphors employed to characterise Anglican cathedrals draws attention to the inclusivity of these locations within secular and religiously diverse societies. They are positioned as places where sacred space and common ground collide and coalesce. Drawing on Edward Bailey's discussion of implicit religion and civic religion, alongside explicit religion, the present study reports on an analysis of the 43 websites of Anglican cathedrals in England and the Isle of Man to map how these cathedrals orchestrated their response to the coronation of King Charles III. The websites provided rich exemplification of engagement with explicit religion (incorporating coronation-related music and prayers within their routine liturgical provision), with civic religion (arranging special services involving civic dignitaries and uniformed groups), and with implicit religion (welcoming within the sacred space a wide range of community-focused events, installations, and activities).

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Introduction

Identity of Anglican cathedrals

Muskett's (2019) ground-breaking book on the role of metaphors in cathedral studies recognises that no one metaphor is adequate for capturing the rich, diverse, and distinctive place that Anglican cathedrals now occupy within the distinctive landscape of English society. The 2021 census, set alongside the two earlier censuses in 2001 and 2011 that also included a question on religion, makes it clear that the 'religious nones' are on a trajectory to become the largest religious group in England, the position that they already occupy in Wales (Francis 2023), alongside the growing visibility of religious diversity among young people (Arweck 2017). So what metaphors are best able to capture the rich, diverse, and distinctive identity of Anglican cathedrals in this context?

From the myriad of metaphors sourced by her search of the relevant literatures, Muskett (2019) selected five for special attention. In different ways each of these five

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images draws attention to the inclusivity of Anglican cathedrals within secular and religiously diverse societies. The first metaphor is the 'shop-window' image, brought to prominence by the Archbishops' Commission on Cathedrals (1994). Muskett sees the shop-window metaphor as indicating the capacity for attracting the attention of the people on the street and for drawing them in across the threshold. Shop windows arouse curiosity and enhance footfall in the marketplace. The second metaphor is the 'flagship' image, brought to prominence by Platten and Lewis (1998) who selected the image as the title for their edited collection of essays. Muskett draws with approval on Platten and Lewis' rationale for the metaphor. They argue that the image of flagships captures the notion that cathedrals are 'seen as significant by people of any Christian Church or none' and express the 'loyalty of people to their city, county, or region' (xii). More than this, flagships indicate the serious intention of their operators to be effective in what they set out to achieve. The Report of the Church Buildings Review Group (Church of England 2015) picked up this metaphor to argue that these buildings demonstrate most visibly the importance of the Church in the life of the nation. These are 'very significant buildings that have a high profile and are used by the public for a range of civic, community, and cultural purposes' (12).

The third metaphor is the 'beacon' image, brought into prominence by Richmond-Tulloch (2013). For Muskett, the power of this image resides in the capacity for 'beacons to shine out in darkness' (78). As such beacons exude confidence, excellence, and public esteem. Beacons symbolise timeless stability and serve as a reference point for values and for things that matter. The fourth metaphor is the 'magnet' image, drawn into prominence by Platten (2006). Platten conceptualised cathedrals as magnets for people, drawing in visitors generated by the 'explosion of tourism' (2). Jenkins (2016) conceptualised cathedrals as economic magnets, bringing prosperity to their host locations. For Muskett magnets are about 'force fields' (80). They have a life of their own.

Muskett's fifth metaphor is more complex and draws into conversation two images: 'sacred space' and 'common ground'. Muskett (2019) argues that the collision of these two images had been 'employed to capture the vocation of churches and cathedrals to be both a spiritual and community utility' (86). Muskett points to the use of this compound image by Percy (2015) in relation to Christ Church Oxford:

Cathedrals are sacred spaces and common ground. Cathedrals stand as signs of God's love and grace in the midst of a distracted world. They provide serious spaces and places for prayer and contemplation in a busy world. (7)

Attention is also drawn to the use of this compound image within Truro Cathedral. Barley (2015) explains how Truro Cathedral focused on 'sacred space and common ground' to establish itself as 'a place where people of all backgrounds can come together to experience sacred space in their lives' (409). It is this fifth metaphor, linking the notions of sacred space and common ground, that opens the way for dialogue between the role of metaphors in cathedral studies and Edward Bailey's notion of implicit religion.

Implicit religion

Edward Bailey's concept of implicit religion (see Bailey 1997, 1998, 2002) was introduced to the field of cathedral studies by Hammond (2007). Bailey's concept

of implicit religion softens the boundaries between the sacred and the secular, between sacred space and common ground. For Bailey the softening of these boundaries permits the concepts and analytic tools refined within departments of theology and religious studies to be employed to explore phenomena that others may conceive as secular. Bailey demonstrated a first aspect of this understanding of implicit religion to good effect when he took up residence behind the bar of an English pub and employed his skills as a student of religious studies to explore and to interpret what he was observing among the staff and patrons (see Bailey 1997, 129–192). Bailey demonstrated a second aspect of this understanding of implicit religion to good effect when he took up residence as rector of a residential parish and employed his skills as a student of religious studies to explore and to interpret what he was observing among those engaging with the parish church at various levels (see Bailey 1997, 193–262). For Bailey implicit religion may be characterised by (but is not limited to) three key qualities: implicit religion displays *commitment*, *integrating foci*, and *intensive concerns with extensive effects* (Francis et al. 2013, 953).

Hammond (2007) selected the cathedral in Siena, Italy, to illustrate his claim about the field of implicit religion. For Hammond (2007), in 1968 the Saint Ansano festival took on a ‘dramatically’ new feature (283) as the life of the cathedral embraced and incorporated characteristics of the local civic festival, including a horse race around the central plaza. Hammond’s point is that, as a consequence of the softening of the boundaries between the sacred and the secular, both the sacred space of the cathedral and the secular character of the festival were transformed.

Building on the earlier work of Hammond (2007), McKenna et al. (2022) drew on Bailey’s theory of implicit religion to explore how Anglican cathedrals were actively softening the boundaries between sacred space and common ground through innovative events and installations. Stimulated by the way in which high profile (and controversial) events and installations, like the Helter Skelter in Norwich Cathedral and the Crazy Golf Bridge in Rochester Cathedral, have drawn attention to innovative public engagement with cathedrals, McKenna et al. (2022) undertook a detailed review of the websites of the 43 Anglican cathedrals within the mainland dioceses of the Church of England and the Isle of Man to map the range and extent of such activities between 2018 and 2022 (a period also significantly interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic). Analysis of these data identified two analytic frameworks, both of which reflected theoretical perspectives informed by Bailey’s concept of implicit religion. The first analytic framework focused on the nature of the event as exemplifying the juxtapositioning of the secular and the sacred within the cathedral. This framework identified eight themes: scientific exhibitions, festivals, musical events, art exhibitions, theatre, markets, charity events, and installations. Each of these themes suggests ways through which the location of such events within the cathedral softens the boundaries between the sacred and the secular. The second analytic framework focused on the *integrating foci* that display meaning and generate purpose. This framework identified seven themes: social justice and social conscience, migration and sanctuary, violence and reconciliation, nature and environment, personal wellbeing, remembrance, COVID-19 and lockdowns. Each of these themes suggests opportunities for *commitments* to develop, for *integrating foci* to furnish

meaning and to generate purpose, and for *intensive concerns with extensive effects* to shape lives.

Civic religion

When Bailey was developing and refining his concept of implicit religion, he noted the dialogue with other related constructs. In particular, Bailey (1997, 40–41) discussed how the lens of implicit religion may interact with common religion, civil religion, civic religion, and folk religion. Of particular relevance for the field of cathedral studies is the notion of civic religion as the site on which, in Bailey's language, there is the 'formal' or 'official' (41) expression of implicit religion. It is on this site of civic religion that the coronation was enacted in Westminster Abbey and on which a number of cathedrals may have acted when they were inviting their local communities to engage with the coronation celebrations within that distinctive location where sacred space and common ground collide. Civic religion *per se*, however, is not a theme that has actively developed within the community of researchers engaged in the study of implicit religion as exemplified by the journal, *Implicit Religion*. The cognate, broader, and more popular notion of civil religion has been more actively pursued, especially in relation to the notion of 'American civil religion' (Campana 2007, McDonald 2013, Swatos 2006) and the Nordic Churches (Sundback 2007, Warburg 2017).

Research question

Against this background, it is the broad aim of the present paper, set within the science of cathedral studies (Francis 2015), to scope the engagement of Anglican cathedrals with the coronation of King Charles III on Saturday 6 May 2023. Here was an ideal occasion on which the trajectories of conventional explicit religion (doing what cathedrals do as centres of Christian spirituality and worship), civic religion (enacting the complex intersections between an Established Church and the affairs of the State), and implicit religion (softening the boundaries between the sacred and the secular) may converge, and do so in a way that resonates with Muskett's five privileged metaphors. On the occasion of the coronation, just how were the 43 Anglican cathedrals of the mainland dioceses and the Isle of Man operating as 'shop windows' for the Church of England, as 'flagships' for the people of their city, county or region, as 'beacons' exuding confidence, excellence, and public esteem, and as 'magnets' drawing people in? Most of all how were these cathedrals operating as 'sacred space and common ground' where explicit religion, civic religion, and implicit religion can coexist side-by-side? Following the earlier study reported by McKenna et al. (2022) this broad aim will be focused and crystalised by basing the enquiry on a systematic search of cathedral websites.

Method

Analysis of the content of Church of England cathedral websites is a small but growing field of research (ap Siòn and Edwards 2012, Bondi and Sezzi 2021, Curtis 2016, Edwards and ap Siòn 2015, Francis et al. *in press*, McKenna et al. 2022, *in press*). In the present study data were collected over two days, during the first week of May 2023, from the

websites of the 43 Anglican cathedrals within the mainland dioceses of the Church of England and the Isle of Man. This was a time critical data collection window affirmed by the fact that a number of cathedrals removed their coronation material from their websites immediately after the event. Worshippers and the wider public were invited into the cathedral sacred space to experience this significant moment in history with a series of special services, events, and activities throughout the coronation weekend. Some events were taking place just over the weekend, others throughout the month of May, and some beyond. At eight cathedrals only one event was hosted, whereas at others a series of five or six were offered. For some cathedrals, the information about these events could be found dispersed across different locations on their websites, including the 'Home page', 'What's on', 'Events' or 'Calendar', while several cathedrals had created a dedicated page for the coronation.

All coronation information was located and saved into a separate Word document (using either the cut and paste or screen shot facility). This datafile of just over 15,000 words was then subjected to content analysis (Cohen et al. 2018; Robson 1993). According to Cohen et al. (2018) content analysis is 'the process of summarizing and reporting written data – the main contents of data and their messages' (674). This was a thematic activity consisting of reading, re-reading, categorising, and grouping the data. The focus was examination of these coronation events set against the conceptual framework distinguishing among explicit religion, civic religion, and implicit religion. Through three stages of iteration, the data were reduced to 4,500 words comprising event themes and sub-themes. Three main types of events were identified that exemplified the conceptual framework and provide the structure for the results section.

Robson (1993) identified a limitation of content analysis in terms of the issue of 'information availability' where 'information which is difficult to get hold of gets less attention than that which is easier to obtain' (374). Two cathedrals failed to include any mention of the coronation. It is possible that these two cathedrals may have held events but had simply failed to publicise them on their websites.

Results and discussion

Explicit religion

The majority of cathedrals were acknowledging and celebrating the coronation within the context of their routine liturgical provision, as a clear expression of explicit religion. At many cathedrals, services of Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, Choral Matins, Choral Evensong, Holy Communion, and Choral Eucharist across the weekend included special themed prayers, readings, and music to mark the coronation of King Charles III. A morning service with special prayers was offered at Wells, and St Albans held a celebratory service of Choral Matins. Services of Eucharist were held at the cathedrals of Birmingham, Carlisle, Chelmsford, Hereford, St Albans, and Winchester. At Birmingham, the service incorporated 'prayers for King Charles III, the Queen Consort and the Royal Family', while at Carlisle the service reflected 'on the King's commitment to service for all in prayer, music and preaching'.

The service most frequently chosen to mark the coronation was that of Choral Evensong with prayers for the King and for the Queen Consort taking place either before

6 May as preparation for the coronation (Chester, Derby, Exeter, Lichfield, Ripon, Worcester, York Minster), after 6 May in thanksgiving for the coronation (Birmingham, Canterbury, London St Pauls, Portsmouth, Southwark, Wells), or sometimes for both (Norwich, Winchester). At some cathedrals, this service of Choral Evensong was livestreamed (Canterbury, Chester). The music chosen for this service often featured celebratory works associated with the coronation, such as ‘I was glad’ by Parry, ‘Zadok the Priest’ by Handel, and ‘O Lord Make thy servant Charles our King’ by Byrd. Portsmouth designated their Choral Evensong as part of the national Sing for the King initiative. Canterbury dedicated Choral Evensong on 8 May to The Big Help Out ‘to celebrate the work of volunteers and voluntary groups, including the Cathedral’s own community of volunteers’.

Many cathedrals hosted additional services to celebrate (Chester, Chelmsford, Chichester, Coventry, Exeter, Lichfield, Oxford Christ Church, Portsmouth, Salisbury, Wells), commemorate (Derby), or give thanks for (Ely, Norwich, Rochester, Winchester) the coronation of King Charles III and The Queen Consort. Most of these took place on 7 May (the day after the coronation ceremony) although a few were held on 5 May. These services were often described as ‘special’ with readings, prayers, reflections, and music specifically selected for the historic occasion. At Winchester the service of thanksgiving was described as:

the event of the season ... a majestic service ... joyful occasion ... the cathedral will be transformed with greenery, shrubs and trees, a nod to King Charles III’s love for nature.

Musical choices reflected those of the Choral Evensongs. At Wells Cathedral, the celebration service consisted of ‘triumphant coronation-themed music’ and featured an address given by ‘Jonathan Dimpleby, who has known King Charles for over 30 years as a friend and as his biographer’.

Civic religion

Several cathedrals were clearly engaging in civic religion. Services conducted within this category included the involvement of a variety of religious leaders and civic dignitaries (local mayor, Lord Lieutenant) and organisations (sea scouts, military cadets), where some of those attending may be motivated to do so through a sense of civic engagement. These services were specifically advertised as ‘Civic Evensong’ (Carlisle, Durham, Peterborough, Wakefield, Worcester), ‘Civic Eucharist’ (Portsmouth), and ‘Civic services of celebration, commemoration, and thanksgiving’ (Bradford, Carlisle, Gloucester, Guildford, Hereford, Peel IOM, Leicester, Liverpool, Newcastle, Ripon, Sheffield, Southwell, St Albans, St Edmundsbury, Truro, York Minster). At Civic Evensong services those in attendance included, for example: The Lord Lieutenant and Bishop of Leeds at Wakefield; the Lord Lieutenant, the High Sheriff, the Chair of the County Council and the Mayor at Worcester; the Lord Lieutenant of Durham at Durham; and the Lord Lieutenant of Cumbria at Carlisle.

Sometimes the civic services of celebration, commemoration or thanksgiving were described as a ‘Civic’ or ‘County’ service (Bradford, Guildford, Hereford, York Minster) to include representatives from the ‘County, City, and District’. Others, as with Civic Evensong, included details of those civic dignitaries to be in attendance. These services

included prayers and music chosen with royal connections. At the cathedrals of Ripon, Southwell, St Edmundsbury, and Truro these civic services were also livestreamed. At Peel Isle of Man, the thanksgiving service was ‘led by Bishop Peter Eagles in the presence of Lieutenant General Sir John Lorimer and Lady Lorimer’. At St Edmundsbury, the County Service was hosted for the Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk, Clare, Countess of Euston, and at St Albans a local community choir was welcomed along with uniformed organisations. Such organisations also attended the Liverpool Commemoration Service along with ‘civic and faith representatives’, while at Ripon the service was hosted by the Lord Lieutenant of North Yorkshire and the Dean of Ripon. Most of these services were held on 7 May, the day after the coronation. However, at Gloucester Cathedral the service was held on 8 May and was aligned with The Big Help Out to mark both the coronation and to thank all volunteers. Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal and Vice Admiral Sir Timothy Laurence were in attendance at this service, where the focus was ‘to highlight the positive impact of volunteer organisations across the city, county and diocese’. As part of the service, young people from The Music Works (a local charitable organisation) gave a performance and the bishops interviewed volunteers from across the diocese.

At a small number of cathedrals, the Civic Evensong or Civic Services of Celebration were preceded by a parade or procession including civic and judicial dignitaries, standards, and local musicians (Southwell, Truro, Worcester).

Implicit religion softening the boundaries between sacred space and common ground

Many of the cathedrals marked the coronation of King Charles III in style with unique events that were drawing people into the religious space and were softening the boundaries between the sacred and the secular. Some of these events were linked with national initiatives such as the live screening of the coronation ceremony, Sing for the King, Ring for the King, The Coronation Big Lunch, The Big Help Out, and Lighting up the Nation. A further group of events were individual to the cathedrals hosting them: musical concerts, exhibitions, tours and trails, talks, and community and family fun activities.

Events linked to national initiatives

Live screening the coronation. On 6 May, many cathedrals screened live within what were described as their ‘beautiful’, ‘magnificent’, ‘gothic’, and ‘historic’ settings (usually the nave) the BBC’s coverage of the coronation service taking place at Westminster Abbey in London. The public were invited to be part of the celebration and to experience history in the making with King Charles being crowned alongside the Queen Consort (Birmingham, Bradford, Bristol, Canterbury, Carlisle, Chester, Chichester, Derby, Ely, Manchester, Norwich, Peterborough, Portsmouth, Ripon, Rochester, Salisbury, Sheffield, Southwell, St Albans, Truro, Wakefield, Winchester). Those attending could enjoy the pageantry and tradition of the event from the build-up, the coronation service itself, the King’s Procession, and the appearance of the King, Queen Consort and Royal Family on the balcony of Buckingham Palace. Described as a family event, several cathedrals provided refreshments throughout the day (Derby, Ely, Ripon, Wakefield) while others encouraged families to bring their own picnics (Chichester, Rochester, Southwell, St Albans). At Rochester, as well as being able to watch the ceremony on screen, some groups were

invited to picnic within the nave seated around ‘The Jubilee Oak Table a 13 m long table made from the wood of a 5,000-year-old fossilised black oak tree and previously dedicated to HM Queen Elizabeth II for her Platinum Jubilee’ giving them a ‘one-off chance to eat around this “Table for the Nation”’. Continuing the family theme some cathedrals provided coronation themed arts, crafts, games, and face painting for children to enjoy (Carlisle, Chichester, Derby, Southwell, St Albans, Truro). At Southwell a Maypole and Country Dance Team from a local infant school performed and a professional harp teacher provided free ‘have a go’ harp sessions for children. At Salisbury a barbecue and Swing Big Band were booked to provide an ‘afternoon of free music, singing and dancing’, while at Ely a Coronation Tea Party was held in the Lady Chapel.

Private reflection. Rather than offer a lively live screening event, two cathedrals reserved their space for private prayer and reflection. At Chelmsford, visitors were invited to ‘take some time for private prayer, enjoy our coronation display and add your message of congratulations to The King to send to Buckingham Palace’ (5 May) and ‘to pray and light a candle for King Charles III on the day of his coronation’ (6 May). At Lichfield, it was announced that, ‘as many will watch the coronation at home or on large screens around the region, the Cathedral will be a place of calm and peace for reflection’.

Sing for the King. Sing for the King was an open invitation for all choirs across the country to join in song to celebrate the coronation of King Charles III. In Bristol the Cathedral joined with a local music venue, St George’s, for a special ‘Sing for the King’ event to pay tribute to King Charles III and to celebrate the 650th anniversary of its status as a city. A massed choir of 650 voices from across Bristol and the South West came together to sing Handel’s ‘Zadok the Priest’, as well as other prominent coronation pieces within the Cathedral. At Lichfield, the cathedral choir was joined by over 250 local school children to ‘join the nation in a World Record attempt at simultaneous singing’.

Ring for the King. Over the coronation weekend several cathedrals took part in a bell peal in honour of the new monarch (Bradford, Canterbury, Carlisle, Chelmsford, St Edmundsbury, Worcester, York Minster). At some cathedrals this took place on the day of the coronation and lasted from up to one hour (a quarter peal) at Bradford and Carlisle, to over three hours (a full peal) at Canterbury, Worcester, and Chelmsford. At York Minster and St Edmundsbury, the bells were rung over two and three days. At St Edmundsbury, a quarter peal took place on both 6 and 7 May followed by a full peal on 8 May. At York Minster, the public were invited to listen to this ‘real test of bell-ringing virtuosity’ and to ‘bring a picnic . . . and enjoy the space whilst listening to York Minster’s expert bell ringers mark this historic occasion’.

The coronation big lunch. Established in 2009, The Big Lunch brings neighbours and communities together to share friendship, food and fun, and to raise money for good causes. The Coronation Big Lunch was an official nationwide act of celebration as part of the coronation weekend with more than 65,000 Coronation Big Lunch events taking place across the UK. Some cathedrals combined this event with the live screening of the coronation ceremony that took place on 6 May. Other cathedrals held it the following day (7 May) as a separate event either on its own or

following the services of celebration and thanksgiving (Canterbury, Carlisle, Chester, Derby, Durham, Hereford, Leicester, Lichfield, Newcastle, Portsmouth, St Edmundsbury). Most events were 'bring your own' picnics or pre-ordered afternoon/cream teas, open to the whole community, often with added musical performances from local organisations, and with activities provided for children. At Canterbury, a Salvation Army Band played and the event included a notice about supporting the local food bank, 'If you would like to support Canterbury Food Bank whilst you picnic with us, please bring your gifts to the yellow donation bins at the Cathedral'.

Lighting up the nation and the coronation concert. There were 10 iconic locations across the UK chosen for the Lighting up the Nation event, the centrepiece of the coronation concert at Windsor Castle on the evening of 7 May. Norwich Cathedral was the only cathedral to screen live the BBC coverage of this concert and those attending were welcome to bring their own refreshments to enjoy in the Cathedral during the concert. A live sequence of projections, lasers, drone displays, and illuminations saw the country unite in celebration. Two cathedrals (Durham, Ely) took inspiration from this national event and lit up their cathedrals. Durham Cathedral was illuminated in red, white and blue, 'which you will be able to see for miles around', and at Ely, the famous Octagon Tower was also lit in red, white, and blue, with Union Jack bunting adorning the main entrance.

The Big Help Out. To mark the coronation, an extra bank holiday for 8 May was decreed, and the country was encouraged to take part in The Big Help Out. Thousands of organisations across the country promoted opportunities for people to help in their local communities. At those cathedrals taking part (Bradford, Chichester, Derby, Durham, St Albans, Truro, Worcester) it was a chance to: improve the cathedral environment and local area, to showcase what volunteers within the cathedral did, to sample the activities provided by volunteers, to recruit more potential volunteers, and to say thank you to all volunteers, whether working within the cathedral or more widely in their local communities. At Chichester, people from the local community were invited 'to come and volunteer to help us shine the brasses; dust the Cathedral chapels; and deep clean the choir stalls to keep those moths away!', while at Bradford and St Albans a litter pick of the streets around the cathedrals was followed by a shared packed lunch. At Derby, it was a day of activities and taster sessions with the cathedral volunteers. Children were invited to 'have a go at playing the Cathedral organ, culminating in a royal-themed concert!', while other visitors could 'watch a demonstration from the Cathedral Embroiderers'. At Truro, the invitation was to create a decorated fabric square to add to the 'Volunteer Celebration Tapestry' with the suggestion that those participating 'might like to share why you volunteer, what you enjoy about volunteering or what you would aspire to do if you could offer your time'. At Durham, the chance to meet current volunteers was combined with an informal tour of the cathedral site, while at Worcester the offer was to meet with volunteers and to 'find out how you could help to enhance our visitors' experience and play your part in preserving over 1,000 years of history and heritage'.

Individual cathedral events

Musical concerts. Across the week of the coronation, some cathedrals hosted musical concerts ranging from organ recitals and orchestral performances to invited bands and choirs (Canterbury, Hereford, Peterborough, Coventry, Portsmouth, Southwark, Wakefield). At Coventry and at Southwark, coronation themed organ recitals featured the music of Elgar, Handel, Boyce, Purcell, and Walton. At Hereford, the Cathedral joined with the choirs, concert band and symphony orchestra of the Cathedral School to present ‘an evening of uplifting, celebratory and patriotic music’. At Canterbury regal music both classic and contemporary was provided by the Central Band of the Royal British Legion with the invitation to ‘come ready to wave your flags and raise the roof in celebration of our new King!’. At Portsmouth, music was provided by the Royal Marines Association Concert Band, and at Peterborough a concert combined a mezzo-soprano soloist, a pop choir, a community gospel choir, and a dance troupe.

Exhibitions. Several cathedrals celebrated the coronation with week long, month long or in one case (York Minster) six-month-long exhibitions, reflecting the history of the monarchy, drawing attention to royal associations, and showing historical items telling the story of their historic relationship with the monarchy, including some items never before seen by the public (Carlisle, Chelmsford, Chichester, Ely, Exeter, Hereford, Salisbury, St Edmundsbury, Worcester, York Minster). At Carlisle, the cathedral’s endowment charter from Henry VIII, dating from 1541, could be viewed for the first time. At Chichester, a copy of the Death Warrant of Charles I, signed by the then Mayor of Chichester, and service sheets from the coronation of former monarchs were available. At Exeter, there were Earl and Countess’ coronation robes, replica crown jewels, and drapes from Westminster Abbey, commissioned for the coronation of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth in 1937. At Salisbury, a replica of the Late Queen Elizabeth II’s coronation robe made from purple pampas grass, gilded dried foliage and ferns was on display. At St Edmundsbury, there was an exhibition of English Royal Heraldry from just before the Norman conquest to the present day, with examples of the arms of the Kings and Queens. At York Minster, its royal connections could be explored in a selection of objects including a Bible and matching Prayer Book, ‘bound in red velvet and finely decorated in silver with the keys of St Peter, purchased by York Minster with a grant from King Charles I’.

At Hereford, a photographic exhibition of pictures taken by the Cathedral Photographer, over almost 40 years, commemorated visits made to the Cathedral by members of the Royal Family. Alongside these, local primary schools were invited to take part in an artwork competition, with the theme to ‘draw what King Charles values most – for example the environment, volunteering, young people, diversity’, and these were displayed in the Cathedral. At Ely, a flower exhibit, in the shape of the coronation emblem was on display and at Worcester, coronation-themed floral arrangements were placed around the Cathedral to be viewed throughout the weekend alongside the installation of a piece of visual art based on the life of King Charles III which took inspiration from the Cathedral’s stained-glass windows and was created by a local artist working with students from a nearby college.

Tours/trails. Some cathedrals offered specific guided and self-guided tours highlighting fascinating royal connections and exploring royal influence on cathedral history and buildings (Gloucester Peterborough, Portsmouth, St Albans, Winchester, Worcester). At Gloucester, the Royal Connections guided tour explored ‘William the Conqueror and his Domesday Book, to the grand tomb of Edward II and the grisly story of his murder, for over 1000 years the history of Gloucester Cathedral has been intertwined with that of royalty’. At Peterborough, described as ‘a significant power in the medieval period’ and ‘the burial place of two queens’, a similar tour explored the link between Peterborough Abbey and those who ruled.

At Winchester, a special interest This Royal House of Saxon Kings and Saints Tour, allowed those visiting the Anglo-Saxon Minster to learn about ‘its role in the birth of the English nation, the historic figures who ruled, reigned and are remembered here, and the traces of their world which remain visible today’. At Worcester, the Royal Tour explored royal links through visits made from the kings and queens of the twelfth century, through Tudor, Stuart and Victorian times, to visits made by more recent members of the Royal Family, including Queen Elizabeth II, and the then Prince Charles when he visited in 2017. A family trail included exploration of King John’s tomb and Prince Arthur’s chantry chapel.

Talks. At a small number of cathedrals, a talk with a royal connection was offered (Peterborough, Southwark, Canterbury). Peterborough Cathedral hosted an online talk on Royal Psalms where the Vice Dean looked back at the ‘musical setting of psalms used in British coronations through the last five hundred years’. At Southwark, a Defenders of the Faith talk, led by Catherine Pepinster, explored the powerful link between religion and the British monarchy from its earliest times to the present day. Questions addressed included, ‘Why does the Church have such prominence in state affairs, and should it keep this privileged position in twenty-first century, multi-faith Britain?’ Southwark also hosted the launch of *God Save the King – A Guide to the National Anthem* published by Hodder Faith. The Dean of Southwark was in conversation with Anne-Marie Minhall, from Classic FM, who provided the introduction to the publication, and local artist Rosie Brooks who provided the illustrations. At Canterbury, the day after the coronation the Archbishop of Canterbury offered ‘Reflections on the Coronation’, detailing his thoughts on crowning the new king.

Community and family fun. Many cathedrals also offered a range of community and family activities over the coronation week and beyond (Gloucester, Lichfield, Ripon, Salisbury, Truro, Wakefield, Worcester, York Minster). At Lichfield craft activities explored the symbolism of the crown, orb, and sceptre, while at Salisbury a Community Bunting Making session welcomed visitors to decorate bunting with messages for the new King, which were then displayed in The Cloisters.

There were opportunities to dress up and make a record of the moment. At Gloucester, visitors were invited to ‘Don your gown and fix your crown’ and ‘get selfie ready on our throne fit for a King or Queen!’ A historic chair was positioned under the stained-glass window depicting the coronation of Henry III accompanied by regal costumes, so that all ages could ‘sit in state and pose for a photo to remember this

exciting time'. Similarly, at York Minster visitors were invited to 'try on regal robes, bear a crown and sceptre, and pose for a majestic photograph showing off their best royal wave with a soft-toy corgi'. At Salisbury, parents and carers were invited to bring children to the Cathedral to make their own crown, to dress up in cloaks, and to have their photo taken on a special throne.

At Ripon, a Coronation Beer Festival was hosted over the weekend with 'live music, a range of guest ales and barbecue food'. Children attending were invited to create their own coronation portrait of King Charles III and Queen Camilla and create their own coronation crowns to wear.

Conclusion

Set within the broad field defined by the science of cathedral studies (Francis 2015), the aim of the present paper was to scope the engagement of Anglican cathedrals in England and the Isle of Man with the coronation of King Charles III on Saturday 6 May 2023. The conceptual framework for this study was set by consideration of two initiatives within cathedral studies. The first initiative was Muskett's (2019) analysis of the metaphors currently employed to characterise the activity of Anglican cathedrals, namely as shop windows, flagships, beacons, magnets, and sacred space and common ground. It was argued that in different ways each of those five metaphors draws attention to the inclusivity of Anglican cathedrals within secular and religiously diverse societies. The second initiative was the work of Hammond (2007) and McKenna et al. (2022) that had drawn on Bailey's (1997, 1998, 2002) concept of implicit religion to illuminate ways in which cathedrals have the capacity to soften the boundaries between the sacred and the secular, between sacred space and common ground. In particular, Bailey's analysis provided an additional nuancing of civic religion within secular societies as the formal or official expression of implicit religion.

Within this conceptual framework, an analysis was undertaken of the ways in which the 43 websites of the Anglican cathedrals in England and the Isle of Man described and positioned their various engagements with the coronation. Three main conclusions can be drawn from this analysis. The first conclusion concerns how this engagement exemplified, in ways that varied from cathedral to cathedral, a blend of explicit religion provision, civic religion provision, and implicit religion provision. Here were locations in which sacred space and common ground collided and coalesced. In terms of explicit religion, the majority of cathedrals clearly incorporated within their regular rhythm of services special themed prayers, readings, and music to mark the coronation. In terms of civic religion, many cathedrals arranged special services designed to engage civic dignitaries, uniformed organisations, ecumenical collaboration, and inter-faith engagement. In terms of implicit religion, there was a wide range of initiatives designed to engage wider local and regional communities. Such initiatives included: live screening of the coronation; offering space for private reflection; Sing for the King; Ring for the King; Lighting up the Nation and the coronation concert; The Coronation Big Lunch; The Big Help Out; musical concerts; exhibitions, tours and trails; talks and presentations; and community or family fun. Here explicit religion, civic religion, and implicit religion can indeed coexist side-by-side and interact for the Glory of God (explicit religion), for the

celebration of King and Country (civic religion), and for the enrichment and flourishing of local people and the local economy (implicit religion).

The second conclusion is that Muskett's (2019) decision to privilege and to profile five key metaphors to characterise the activity of Anglican cathedrals was a wise and illuminating choice. In 2023, within an increasingly secular and religiously diverse society (see the 2021 census), these cathedrals retained the capacity at the time of the coronation of King Charles III to serve as shop windows into the Church of England, as flagships of the Established Church, as beacons that shone out into their local communities, and as magnets that drew people into these engaging places. Most of all these cathedrals displayed their capacity at the time of the coronation of King Charles III to demonstrate how sacred space and common ground may collide and coalesce for the enrichment of their host secular and religiously diverse communities.

The third conclusion is that this fourth study has added further weight to suggestions previously advanced by Hammond (2007) and by McKenna et al. (2022) that Bailey's (1997, 1998, 2002) concept of implicit religion offers to the science of cathedral studies a powerful lens through which to conceptualise the wider religious engagement of Anglican cathedrals. Further empirical work is now needed to build on these initial studies, with the focus being less on the provisions offered by cathedrals and more on the expectations and experiences of the people who engage with these offers.

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No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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