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**PRESS RELEASE**

**‘STATIONS OF LAMENT’ OPENS UP  
OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRAYER IN NEW  
SENSORY EXHIBITION FOR LENT 2019**



*Artist Louise Carr and an example of one of the ‘Stations of Lament’ soon to be displayed in Bradford Cathedral, entitled ‘Comfort’.*

Louise Carr is making her artistic debut at Bradford Cathedral with her first ever exhibition, entitled ‘Stations of Lament’, which will be showcased at Bradford Cathedral through the period of Lent. Louise is a Methodist Minister who took up working with colour and textiles as part of her prayer journey, which evolved into the new installation.

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**HOSPITALITY. FAITHFULNESS. WHOLENESS.**

'Stations of Lament' consists of eight pieces of work, in varying sizes. 'Desolation', which consists of two pieces, is relatively small at 18 inches, whilst other pieces are much larger.

Louise explains what the exhibition is about:

"'Stations of Lament' is an opportunity to explore an ancient prayer form; to experience it with all of your senses; and to be able to find places where you can pray. It will open you up to parts of God that you hadn't realised were there."

"Each of them presents an aspect of what it is to lament. For example 'Weeping' talks about the stage where people weep and grieve and the major sign is tears, and how God honours those tears. 'Protest' is about how the world is not how God would have it, and so who do you protest to? You protest to the creator, saying 'Make this world what you said it would be!'

"There's also the sense of chaos and confusion when all is not well. Chaos and confusion are a very common set of feelings. If you look at the book of Jeremiah, and how it is written, it is quite a difficult book to make sense of. There are a fair number of forms, poems, historical events, personal prophetic stories, and wise words to get its point across.

"Each of the prayer stations in 'Stations of Lament' reflect one of these themes."

Louise has a background of working in cross stitch and embroidery. "They were good to relax with and to use for prayer at the end of the day. I then thought about doing more, and exploring the theme of lament: what colour would it be, for instance, and I've worked on these ideas for a number of years."

Each of the stations can be interacted with in many ways, starting with looking at them. The main seven pieces will be located in the Cathedral's Artspace with an eighth, based around the crucifixion, displayed opposite amongst the themed stained glass windows. There will also be prayer stations located around the Cathedral, allowing visitors to make a pilgrimage into lament.

“My expectation is that the artworks will draw people in and allow them to start their pilgrimage from there. It won’t be a linear experience.”

There will also be an opportunity to engage with ‘Stations of Lament’ as part of a pilgrimage in March, led by Louise Carr herself. Louise will introduce the pieces and answer any questions, as well as setting the group off on their own personal pilgrimage. “Doing all seven stations in one go will be very hard work. This is tough prayer, and people may want to just sit with one station for the afternoon, and then come back again to see the others.

“There will be time for people to immerse themselves in the exhibition, and prayer, at their own pace.”

The exhibition is important from a theological perspective. “Lament is the other side of prayer. There’s a strong sense in churches that God is someone to be praised but in many ways, in the Christian church, we’ve lost the lament capacity and we’re not so keen to say to God ‘it’s not working as it should. How should it be?’ and to be truthful to God, which the narrative of Lent allows you to be.”

For Louise, creating ‘Stations of Lament’ has been a hard, but enjoyable, experience. “I’ve enjoyed being able to put something across and learning more about it. I enjoyed that it took me into part of the Bible that I didn’t know very well and on my sabbatical I was able to spend six weeks reading and doing the work that backs up the pieces, sharpening up some of the later pieces in the process.”

Looking to the future, Louise has been wondering about what’s next for her artistic side. “I’ve spent more than 7 years working on this, alongside being a full-time minister. Pieces had to be worked on during days off, and evenings in. It takes time! But the idea I’m starting to float is what grace means in the context of lament and prayer, and to some extent the piece on the crucifixion

is a bridging piece between where we are now with lament and where we would be in terms of the grace of God.”

*‘Stations of Lament’ opens at the Ash Wednesday Choral Eucharist at 7pm (Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March) and will run until the 21<sup>st</sup> April. Louise Carr will also lead a pilgrimage around the exhibition on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019 at 2pm as part of the monthly ‘Monday Fellowship’ group meeting.*

## **ENDS**

### Notes for Editors

#### **About Bradford Cathedral**

Bradford Cathedral has been a place of worship in Bradford since the first millennium. It is the oldest building in the city and, alongside being a place of worship, hosts events, arts projects and much more. Bradford Cathedral celebrates its centenary in 2019.

For further information please contact:

Philip Lickley  
Communications, Marketing and Events Officer  
t: 01274 777720  
e: [commsandevents@bradfordcathedral.org](mailto:commsandevents@bradfordcathedral.org)