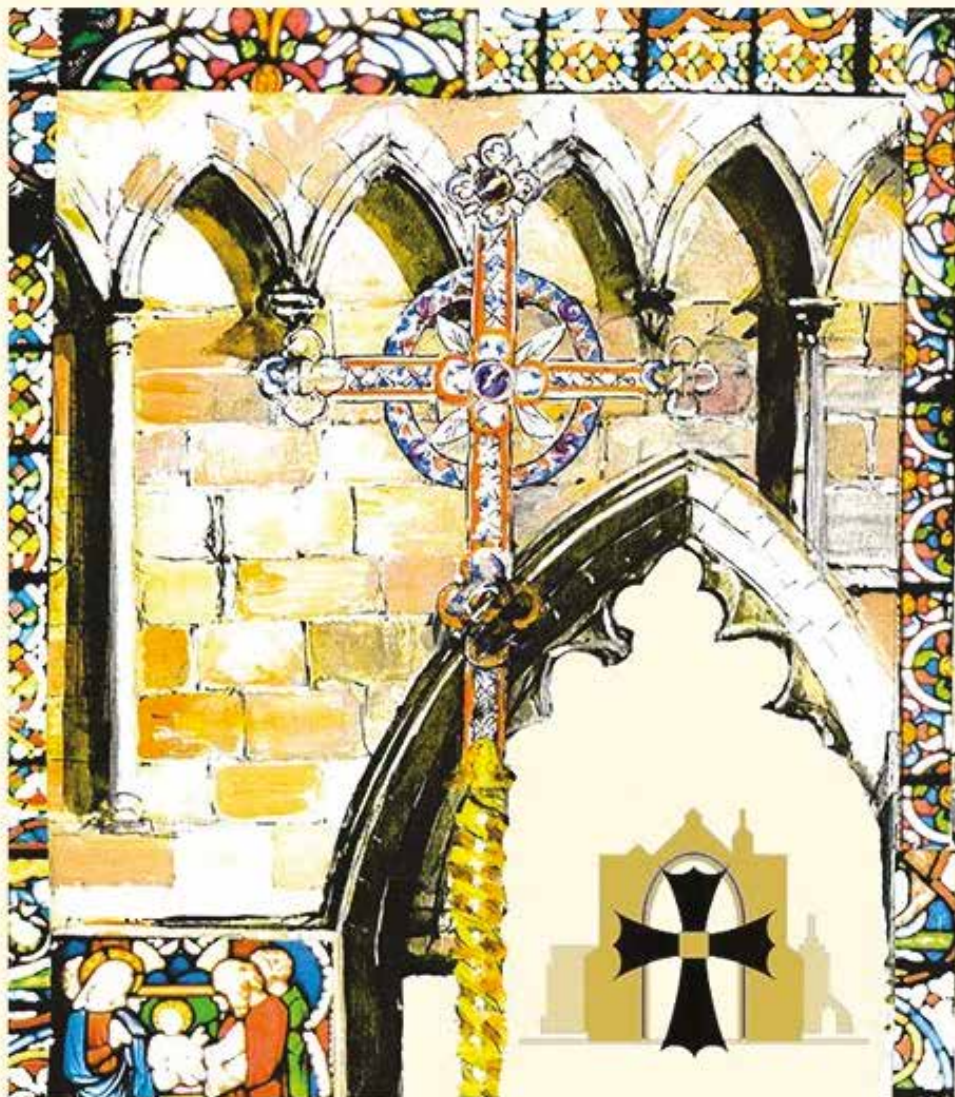


# BOLTON ABBEY PARISH MAGAZINE



**MARCH · APRIL  
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The Rectory, Bolton Abbey, Skipton BD23 6AL  
*rector@boltonpriory.org.uk*

**Website**

*www.boltonpriory.org.uk*

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**SUNDAY**

08.00 Holy Communion  
09.15 Liquid Family Service First Sunday  
of the month  
10.30 Sung Eucharist  
16.30 Evensong as announced

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**WEDNESDAY**

10.00 Holy Communion

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**BAPTISMS, WEDDINGS and FUNERALS**

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### **From Revd Nicholas Mercer**

When I was at Theological College, the Principal, the Very Reverend Martyn Percy, tried to temper the expectations of those studying for ministry in the Church of England. Whilst some ordinands may have harbored ideas of being at the heart of an enormous church, the reality might well be that our ministry was more about ‘huddling round a candle’. As he pointed out, the Church goes through times of revival and decline, and we might well find ourselves in the latter.

What he could never have anticipated, however, was the pandemic which struck the world in 2020. We all thought that pandemics were a thing of the past and could never happen to us in an age of science. Except that it did. And for two years at least we were, in a sense, ‘huddled round a candle’, celebrating Holy Communion in church with no congregation or even in our kitchens. The doors were locked, and we simply had to sit it out and wait until the pandemic was over.

The pandemic struck just one year into my ministry at Bolton Priory, and I realised I had, inadvertently, been well prepared for such an event. However, the end of March brings another anniversary as it will mark five years since I became the Rector of Bolton Abbey. I am pleased to say that, post pandemic, life has returned to normal at Bolton Abbey and that our congregation and giving have held up very well. However, the tempering of expectations is as important as ever.

The next five years are anticipated to bring about a marked decline in Church numbers as the Church of England reaches its predicted demographic cliff edge in 2030. It is incumbent on us to prepare ourselves for what is to come, not waiting until events overtake us, but anticipating, modernising, and replacing, as required, in good time. It may be a time of Church revival or indeed decline – we cannot tell. But the remainder of this decade is a time for us to prepare for what is to come next.

*Nicholas*

## OUR RECTOR'S FIRST QUINQUENNium



At the beginning of April, the Reverend Nicholas Mercer will have completed his first five years as Rector of Bolton Abbey. Nicholas remarked that during this time he has grown in maturity of love for his parish and parishioners. I recognise the truth of this self-reflection and cherish it; no truth about a rector's ministry could be more important than growth in mature love.

Newcomers are struck by the clear focus of the Rector's engagement with them, by his ability to coin a phrase that really connects. Many appreciate that at the church door the Rector is direct and forthright and does not deal in the small change of clerical blandishments. In other contexts, I have met those who tell me of in-depth conversations they have enjoyed with the Rector, perhaps at a funeral reception, folk who take away a lasting impression of a man who is living out a deep calling to be, in the words of the Ordination Service, both a servant and a shepherd amongst his people.

At Bolton Priory each week we seek to 'worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness'. How could we do less, given the splendour of our ancient church, and the inspiration of fine music from both organ and choir? But the tone is set by the Rector, both by the easy warmth of his welcome, and by his leading of the liturgy in ways that compel you to be fully present and attentive. He is indeed responsive to the resonance of the Book of Common Prayer, but at the same time utterly committed to reading the issues of our contemporary troubled world in the light of the Scriptures. In his previous roles as both lawyer and army officer, the Rector has wrestled with issues 'on the dangerous edge of things'. A passion for justice nourished by disciplined and scholarly study of the Scriptures informs the Rector's thinking and gives us intercessions that are always balanced and compassionate.

Many see the Rector's preaching as a key strength. A parishioner recently commented, 'I've never heard him preach a bad one'. Parishioners rely on our Rector for preaching that is sensitive to the plight of those who are oppressed and powerless and which reaches into the forgotten corners of the world. Week by week we are equipped to live out the Gospel in the world through listening to and reflecting on our Rector's analysis of contemporary fault-lines in our society,



his concern for the tragic conflicts assailing the wider world, and his grasp of our failure to live in a balanced relationship with the planet's resources.

The stewardship of God's Creation has been a priority for Nicholas and is articulated in his introduction to Bolton Priory ("Who we are") in the weekly sheet. His wish to see careful stewardship of our use of expensive energy led to the installation of an under-pew heating system derived from renewable sources. The current project involving the replacement of the west glass doors and new glass doors on the south side will further conserve heat and save energy. During the Rector's tenure and with his support, the Environmental Officer has led initiatives for Bolton Priory to become an Eco Church. Following a detailed audit of all parish activities, we now hold the Silver Award from the environmental charity A Rocha UK. Our current ambition is to make further improvements to achieve the Gold Award.

The Wharfedale setting and beauty of the Priory attract many wedding couples. What they find with us is a community in which they are offered a warm welcome, opportunities to serve and grow, a sense of belonging, together with in-depth care from a Rector, who responds to their concerns, and affirms very clearly that 'This is your Church now'. The growth of an active network of couples who have become part of the congregation, combining with those who visit whenever they are in the area, is a very pleasing development in our outreach as a Church which the Rector has carefully nurtured during his tenure.

Ministry to families and children, and to those who enjoy a less formal service, is sustained through the Rector's monthly commitment to Liquid Worship, and through the sequence of special services at high points in the Christian calendar: Christingle, the school Carol Service, Palm Sunday, Good Friday, and Harvest. These services are very well attended and include some who would see themselves as occasional worshippers. Nicholas has engaged regularly with our local primary schools, Montessori, and the Boyle and Petyt School, where he is a governor, welcoming the children's artistic makings into the Priory, and offering the hospitality of the Priory for such joyously charitable events as the concert given by The Singing Children of Africa.

Above all, our Rector is a leader, and a key aspect of his leadership is his determination to ensure that the Priory community does not lapse into self-absorption but is adventurously focussed on Mission. As Martyr Percy wrote in his *Advent Manifesto*, the challenge is not to run an orderly house of God, but to make 'the house of God a home for others, because God invites us home'. Even when the pandemic locked the church door, the Rector, supported by a small but highly competent team, was quick to respond to the challenge. Few churches moved as quickly to online streaming as the Priory, and live-streamed services

reaching out to a wider world are now a staple feature of the Priory's mission.

Recent great events in our national life, including the 2022 celebration of the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee, her death in September of the same year and then the Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla in 2023, have all been fittingly and promptly marked by special liturgies and appropriate community gatherings, to share both sadness and joy. Not many congregations were so immediately supported, but at the Priory between the announcement of the Queen's death, late in the afternoon of Thursday September 8th and the Sunday service, everything was changed, so that we could be led prayerfully towards the commendation of our beloved Queen into the care of Almighty God: 'Enlighten her with your holy grace and suffer her never to be separated from you, O Lord in Trinity, God everlasting.'

That autumn the Rector's initiative brought The Festival of the Moon, in collaboration with the Bolton Abbey Estate, to Bolton Priory. As the Rector wrote: 'First and foremost it was an act of Mission. It was designed to reach out to people in the community and beyond, inviting them to visit the Priory'. Thousands of people came, many of whom had never been inside a church in their lives, and many were overwhelmed by that sense of wonder which sometimes is the beginning of a spiritual quest. Many too were drawn towards fresh debate between science and religion, as offered by three eminent speakers, who gave both an evening lecture and a Sunday address about their faith. That expert teaching should open towards questions and dialogue has been the hallmark of the Rector's approach throughout his tenure. His flexible mind relishes controversy and the aim is to make you think out your own response.

Perhaps one day a little girl called Betsy will find herself thinking about her visit with her Mum to see the Moon at Bolton Priory. Jill Riley captured the moment perfectly: 'Betsy just couldn't take it in, but at that moment Nicholas came along. He knelt beside her, asked her name, and said, "Do you know how the moon got in here, Betsy?" "No", she whispered, "Well", he said, "last Monday I came to close up the church for the evening and I saw the moon shining up in the night sky; the next thing I saw was that the moon had followed me into the Tower creeping in under the glass door and because I hadn't quite shut the big oak door properly, it snuck through the gap, floated up to the roof and then said to me very quietly, "I like it here, Rector, I think I'm going to stay for a while"'

Reflect on that moment of encounter, in and out of time, and you will see why we all may hope that our Rector who has now completed one Quinquennium will choose to stay and lead us for some years to come.

*Joyce Simpson*



## CLARE GRANGER: HIGH SHERIFF OF NORTH YORKSHIRE



Being High Sheriff of North Yorkshire for a year has opened windows into so many worlds for me, it has been astonishing!

The High Sheriff is the oldest Royal Appointment in the land dating back over 1000 years. On only my second day in office, I found myself meeting the King and Queen because, coincidentally, this was the day that they came to Malton! The High Sheriff's remit is to represent the King's interest in Law and Order. This involves supporting the judiciary and in October we held the Legal Service at York Minster. I was

thrilled that we had a record-breaking procession of 150 members of the legal profession from Court of Appeal judges through to barristers, all splendidly led by mounted police and the York Guard. I had a lovely police cadet to carry my Great Uncle's sword in front of me! It was an awe-inspiring experience.



I have also spent time with the emergency services, which includes the RNLI and the Mountain Rescues. I have been getting to know both North Yorkshire and Cleveland Police. It is clear to me how many brave and dedicated officers we have. I witnessed this in action on a night shift with the police in Harrogate just before Christmas. Blue light driving is absolutely terrifying, I have to say!


One of the main aspects of the role these days is to thank the voluntary sector and to make connections where possible. Amongst other things, I have an interest in organisations helping those affected by domestic abuse and it has been rewarding, for example, to enable conversations between these charities, the police, and the judiciary.

There really are so many people working incredibly hard to help people in our communities, it is heartwarming. Whether it is the hot lunch twice a week in Bedale for the elderly, or the art sessions for people with mental health challenges in Bentham, there is a warm welcome and a lift to the spirits to be found. I have been to many groups and charities all over North Yorkshire and I am humbled by all that they do. It is wonderful to have the opportunity that the Thanksgiving Service at Bolton Priory brings, to give thanks for all the people who do so much.



One of the key observations that I will take from this year as High Sheriff is how good people feel when they gather together, particularly for a creative activity or perhaps just to eat lunch! Getting together, being part of a community, is where joy is to be found.

*Clare Granger*



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## BESPOKE FLOWER DEMONSTRATION



Local florist, NAFAS demonstrator, Chelsea Silver Medal winner and more, Vanessa Wellock is well known for her breathtaking floral decorations (*available to see all year round at The Devonshire Arms*), so our volunteer flower teams were privileged to enjoy her bespoke tutorial at the Priory. Whilst some members of our group are experienced flower arrangers all, without exception, came away informed and enthused for our turn on the rota when we can put into practice Vanessa's instructions. As well as creating a magnificent arrangement, she gave us so much good advice on caring for the flowers: how to take out bruised petals; how many and which leaves to strip off; the best flower food to use, and much more. A great deal of thought goes into the choosing, ordering and then, for 24 hours, the conditioning of our flowers, all ready for whichever team is on duty to get to work arranging them to complement the most glorious of settings. It's a joy.

For Vanessa's contact details please see her advert (Wildflowers) in this magazine.

*Liz Clayton*

## THE PRE-REFORMATION PRIORY.

Most visitors to the Priory do a quick tour of the nave and admire the improvements made in or after the latter part of the 19th century. Few seem to understand that this is a very ancient building whose size and splendour were once truly remarkable, or appreciate the ingenious design which allowed its occupants to work in and with, but apart from, the community.



Building started within a century of the Norman Conquest and the Harrying of the North, which was designed to 'deprive the area north of the Humber of all sustenance'. Twenty years later the population had fallen by 73% and the area was described as 'largely waste'. Yet over the next 400 years the Priory was gradually built, remodelled and extended. The huge pinnacle on the south east corner – the only one of about 20 to survive – illustrates the splendour of the vast building which, to peasants who lived with their animals in wooden huts – must have seemed magical.

Only the nave (a little more than a third of the church) and the gatehouse survived the Reformation intact, perhaps because the new Patron, the 11th Lord Clifford and 1st Earl of Cumberland, was brought up with Henry VIII. But within the ruins, the oldest part of the building, it is still possible to see how the two main components of the Priory were organised. The first, the outer courtyard, was entered through the arch – now covered by a window – in the hall/ gatehouse. Everything coming to or leaving the grounds came through this courtyard, which was alive with stables, bake-houses, a brewery, forges and workshops for carpenters and stonemasons. But the Priory itself was 'a world apart'.

Augustinian Canons were less severely segregated than members of other orders, and the Priory church was in effect the parish church. Villagers entered the nave through one of the small doorways on the northwest corner (A) but saw little of the clergy who conducted the service beyond the rood screen which was supported by a beam lodged in two large grooves (still visible) in the arch behind the present altar (D). Like today's visitors, they could only hear the sound of (now recorded) music coming from the far end of the church.

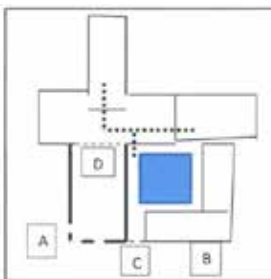


An old etching of the Priory as it appeared before the west tower was built also shows a large building to the right of the church (B) - the west range or storehouse. Long since destroyed, the remains of the massive walls and the outline of the roof on the side of the church show that it was

as tall and as spacious as the nave itself. But the important thing to notice is the small doorway alongside the church (C) which led to a narrow vaulted room and a second doorway into the cloister.



This was the outer parlour – the boundary between the canons and the outside world. It stood above the grassy bank on the south side of the church (produced by a new boiler installed in 1893) and all that remains are two of the corbels that once supported the vaulted roof and the jamb of the inner door. The outer door had to be ‘carefully and faithfully preserved from the intrusion of strangers and also as a means of egress by the canons, unless such entry or egress is unavoidable and without harm’. It was therefore a place where suitable visitors could be received and business transacted – although it did not prevent a popular annual visit to the great fair at Boston. An almost identical room has survived at Norton Priory at Runcorn, Cheshire.



Aside door for public. B=west range. C=door to outer parlour. D=rood screen. Dotted line= canon's path from cloister/dormitory. Nave= dark outline.

Amidst the ruins one can therefore see how domestic and commercial activities were confined to the outer courtyard and visitors to the church were separated from the clergy by the rood screen. The canons moved around an entirely different area, entering the south transept through the doorway from the cloister in which they lived and worked or via the night stair from their dormitory. They then turned right and went through a second screen – the pulpitum – to their seats in the chancel.

*Michael Parsons*





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## BOLTON PRIORY SALUTES TWO DEAR FRIENDS



### **Trevor Dunn (1926 – 2023)**

Trevor Dunn, the youngest of three children, grew up in Sheffield, and joined the Army becoming a fitness instructor, and attaining the rank of Regimental Sergeant Major in the Yorkshire and Lancashire Regiment. Though modest about his achievements, Trevor loved his time with the military, enjoyed the regimental approach and especially the camaraderie. Trevor met his wife of 54 years, Jacqueline, when he visited an up-market stationer's shop in Ilford, Essex, to buy some cards.

In 1960 the couple moved to Burley in Wharfedale, when Trevor became Personnel Manager at Martin's the Cleaner's in Greengates, and after that he became a Personal Director for the Burton Group in Leeds. Trevor and Jacqueline had two boys, Dave and Paul, who dearly loved their Dad, and have fond memories of him, including the special times of family holidays in Cornwall. Trevor would drive down overnight, the two boys tucked up on the back seat of the Ford Cortina.

Trevor was a regular worshipper at the Priory, and this fed into his passion for classical music; he loved to play Handel's Messiah on the record-player. He was also an enthusiastic supporter of The Wednesday Nighters, and even in his later years enjoyed going with his son, Dave, both for good company and for the reliable fare of an entertaining lecture. Trevor had a love of history and was fascinated by the Second World War. His sharp mind could recall what he did on a certain day in a particular year; he really had an amazing memory. But above all he loved to laugh, and especially he enjoyed watching re-runs of Monty Python, featuring his all-time favourite comic, Spike Milligan, with his abstract, alternative sense of humour.

Memories of Trevor are treasured by his family who are honoured to have been part of his fabulous, colourful life, and who will remember him, as does the Priory community, as a kind, caring, humble, loveable gentleman. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.





## **John Tinker (1936 – 2023)**

John had a happy childhood in Huddersfield and would fondly recall his rides on the back of a large sow on the family farm. The sow would career down the croft, stop suddenly, and send John flying over her head. She would then run back up to the top of the hill, eager to repeat the caper. Through helping in his Dad's greengrocer's shop, taking great care over how best to display the produce, John discovered his love of retail.

After leaving school, he studied Pharmacy at Bradford College of Advanced Technology. John married Myra, also a qualified pharmacist, in 1963, and they had three children: Andrew, Helen and Ed. John developed his whole career at Boots, working in Keighley, Harrogate, Stoke on Trent, and then from 1971-78 he served in Glasgow at the largest Boots store that spread over five floors. Andrew recalls that John was fond of a homeless man, named Muscles, who slept in the entrance to the shop. After Glasgow, John worked for a time in the Nottingham head office, before moving again to manage a group of Boots' stores from the East End of London, including the Essex stores in Ilford and Romford.

When John retired in 1986, John and Myra moved back to Yorkshire, and settled in Ben Rhydding. They enjoyed walking the dogs on the moors, playing bridge at the Olicana Bridge Club in Ilkley, and they undertook adventurous holidays in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and especially Norway. John had a relish for fine dining and wine and enjoyed walking holidays in the vineyards of France and Italy.

John loved Bolton Priory, and was a member of the congregation for over 30 years, and he contributed faithfully in the role of sidesman. He particularly enjoyed the music at the Priory, as well as classical music more generally. He was an avid reader, curious about the world, and particularly interested in politics and history.

On the 22nd October 2023, John and Myra celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary, and were delighted to receive a congratulations card from King Charles and Queen Camilla. John adored Myra and was happiest when they were together. He was a kind and gentle man, who always treated others well.

John died peacefully at home on December 5th, after a brief illness, with all his family around him. He will be much missed by the Priory community. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

*Editor, drawing from eulogies delivered at the funerals of Trevor and John in Bolton Priory.*

## FIVE MONARCHS: GEORGE V (continued)

With the outbreak of World War I in 1914, George V undertook the responsibility of leading the nation through the most serious challenge it had faced in a century. The King, with his sincere but earnest manner did not have the popular appeal of his flamboyant father. But this changed in 1915 when George was in France reviewing the troops. The horse, excited by cheering crowds, reared twice and threw the King, causing serious injury; but the incident aroused strong public sympathy and support.

Public approval strengthened further in 1917 when George V responded to the anti-German feeling aroused by the War, by proclaiming that the royal family name would change from Saxe-Coburg-Gotha to Windsor, thus severing the royal family's political connections with Europe. It was with lasting regret and a heavy heart that George V avoided taking in the Russian Tsar and his family, overthrown by the Russian Revolution in 1917; even his first cousin was abandoned for the sake of his own country.

During the General Strike of 1926, the King played his part in reconciliation. Winston Churchill announced that the military would receive support for maintaining essential services. The King asked his Private Secretary to say that he thought this was an unfortunate announcement. The King had good insight into labour problems through his close friendship with J H Thomas MP, the railwaymen's leader, who warned the Government against stopping the banks from paying out money to striking unions.

George V also helped in connection with the political trouble in Ireland. In 1921 Eire was separated from Ulster, and despite a context of violence across the country, both houses of the new Northern Ireland Parliament at Stormont were opened by the King. In a significant speech, the King urged Irish men and women 'to pause, to stretch out the hand of forbearance and conciliation, to forgive and to forget'.

In 1929 the King's health, weakened by his accident in France, and by wartime stress, caused concern: his hand had to be guided when he put his signature to a document appointing a Council of State. Following an operation on his lung, churches were kept open for prayers to be said for his recovery. In June that year the King and Queen went to Westminster Abbey to join in prayers of thanksgiving for his recovery. His young grandchildren called him 'Grandpa England', a term indicating the respect he had won within the family, but also the wisdom he had displayed

towards relations with the rest of Europe when other crowns were toppling – and heads too, this at a time when most of European royalty was related, all descending from Queen Victoria.

King George and Queen Mary's Silver Jubilee was celebrated in 1935 when they toured overseas and around the country. They visited several towns and cities I knew. I was by then old enough to recognize the significance. I was moved by the report that, seeing the vast crowds of welcome, the King realized that he was accepted, even loved and respected. The reception was so warm that the King expressed his surprise and joy by saying that he had no idea he was so admired. He sought a means of expressing his feelings when he said: 'How can I express to you the feelings I have in my heart? I dedicate myself to your service for the years that I may be given time.'

There was in fact very little time. His health deteriorated and in January 1936 a Council of State re-formed. He was now unable to write the diary he had kept for 50 years. The last entry was by Queen Mary who wrote: 'My dearest husband, King George V, was much distressed at the bad writing above and begged me to write his diary for him. He died on January 20th 5 minutes before midnight.'

*... to be continued*

*James Turnbull*



*Wikipedia: George V and Queen Mary at a base hospital in World War I*





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## THE FRIENDS OF BOLTON PRIORY

You are invited to

### **The Friends' Lecture**

on Friday, 8th March, 7.00pm for 7.30pm  
in the Bolton Abbey Village Hall.

Clare Granger, currently High Sheriff of North Yorkshire,  
will speak on the topic:

**“A Brief History of the Shrievalty and my Year as High Sheriff”**

Tickets are £10 per person and include a glass of wine or soft drink.  
Booking forms are available from Margaret Cody at the Church Office,  
or from The Friends' Noticeboard in the Priory Tower,  
or from a member of The Friends' Committee.

### **Advance Notice: The Friends' AGM**

will take place on Sunday, May 12th 2024, at 12.30pm,  
and is followed by a Lunch.

Tickets cost £22 per person,  
including lunch, wine, and soft drinks.

### **Breaking News from The Friends of Bolton Priory:**

The Committee has agreed to pay the full amount of £17,760  
for the Priory's new glass West Doors, which will feature the  
Coronation logo of HM King Charles III.

These will be fitted later this year.

Please join **The Friends**, which is a registered Charity,  
as they endeavour to continue in their mission  
to give financial assistance where they can to  
Bolton Priory, and so help maintain  
this beautiful church for future generations.

Website: <http://prioryfriends.org.uk>



## MARCH

**03 SUNDAY**

**LENT 3**

10.30 Thanksgiving Service for the High Sheriff

08 Friday

19.00 The Friends' Spring Lecture

09 Saturday

16.30 St. Cuthbert's Lecture

**10 SUNDAY**

**MOTHERING SUNDAY**

**17 SUNDAY**

**LENT 5**

16.00 Cantores Salicium Concert

20 Wednesday

10.45 The Pheonix Singers to sing in Church

**24 SUNDAY**

**PALM SUNDAY**

**28 Thursday**

**Maundy Thursday**

19.00 Eucharist of the Last Supper with  
Foot Washing and Vigil

29 Friday

**Good Friday**

10.00 Children's Service

12.00 Three Hours' Devotion

**31 SUNDAY**

**EASTER DAY**

10.30 Festal Eucharist

## APRIL

06 Saturday

13.00 Marriage of Gbolahan Ladipo and  
Charlotte Dooley

**07 SUNDAY**

**FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER**

09.15 Liquid Family Service

08 Monday

**The Annunciation of Our Lord to  
The Blessed Virgin Mary**

13 Saturday

09.00 Meeting for those wishing to be married  
at the Priory

**14 SUNDAY**

**THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER**

20 Saturday

12.30 Marriage of Edward Barnes and  
Louise Ellison

**21 SUNDAY**

**THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER**

23 Tuesday

**St George**

25 Thursday

**St Mark**

**28 SUNDAY**

**THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER**

14.00 Cantores Concert

16.30 Choral Evensong sung by Giggleswick Choir

## MAY

01 Wednesday		St Philip and St James
04 Saturday	19.00	Priory Concert Series: York Railway Institute Brass Band
<b>05 SUNDAY</b>		<b>THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER</b>
09 Thursday	09.15	Liquid Family Service
		Ascension Day
	19.00	Service for Ascension Day
11 Saturday	13.30	Bolton Abbey Show
	19.30	Priory Concert Series: Skipton Choral Society
<b>12 SUNDAY</b>		<b>THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER</b>

### Lent Lunches

These started on Wednesday 21st February and are each Wednesday until the 20th March. This year they will be in Bolton Abbey Village Hall supper room. Just come along and join this very convivial lunch. Offers of help with making the soup would be gratefully accepted by Elaine Lambert, 01756 794542. Thank you to Elaine for organising these lunches yet again.

### St Cuthbert's Lecture

An Architectural Mystery at Bolton Priory.

This will be given by Prof. Sir Ian Kershaw and Prof. David Stocker, on Saturday 09 March at 4.30 pm in the Priory Church.

### Easter Lilies

Someone will be in the Tower on Sundays March 10, 17, 24 before and after the 10.30 am service to take names and donations for the Easter Lilies in memory of those departed.

### Giving Envelopes

The giving envelopes, starting in April, will be available in the Tower in March. Please pick yours up. If you no longer contribute by this method, please just cross your name out and give the box to the sidesman.

## FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

### HOLY BAPTISM

14 January Louis Gribben

21 January Avril Warters

### FUNERAL SERVICE

14 December Ruth Holmes

03 January John Tinker

11 January Trevor Dunn

### INTERMENT OF ASHES

07 January Pam Marshall

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## BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE PRIORY: FOCUS ON SPARKLE



*Jack and Katie Muldoon*

Over many decades the Priory has been cleaned each week by teams of parishioners, who have generously given their time and made great efforts to ensure that the Priory is cleaned to a high standard. The volunteers have lavished the love they would bring to cleaning their own homes. We had recently a sharp reminder that this has not always been so.

A young ordinand who visited in 1970 was moved to write to the Bishop of Bradford to say that this beautiful church appeared abandoned and not cared for, and yet people were still visiting and seeing the decay and neglect. Fifty-four years later this same person has watched on live-stream worship from Bolton Priory, and the joy he experienced, seeing the Church so beautiful, brought tears to his eyes. He wrote: 'How good it is to see the change.' This is a tribute to the care of volunteers over the years, but also to the continuing care and high standards of those now responsible for the weekly clean.

In 2023 a significant change was made, and the PCC agreed to seek the professional support of JK Cleaning Services, a company founded in 2018 by Jack and Katie Muldoon. In the last couple of years, the team has expanded to cover all aspects of domestic and commercial cleaning in Skipton and surrounding areas. They have worked closely with the Bolton Abbey Estate for several years and are now building excellent relationships with multiple businesses.

The Team especially finds joy and fulfilment in cleaning the Priory Church. Everyone feels a sense of pride and accomplishment in knowing that this work actively contributes to the maintenance of a space dedicated to worship and communal gathering. Here are some comments from members of the Team:

- It promotes a sense of achievement and feels great once it's accomplished. It helps foster a healthier environment, encourages others to respect the property, and allows Bolton Priory to be an inviting and beautiful place for visitors.



- I enjoy cleaning the Priory Church. As they say, ‘cleanliness is next to godliness’, and it makes me feel enriched with the spirit of Christ.

I can vouch for the willingness, hard work, and deep respect the Team brings each week to their task. They are responsive to any suggestions, and so, for example, the glass that protects the model of the Pre-Reformation Priory was carefully cleaned on the inside, as well as the outside, in time for the Christmas services, and that made such a sparkling difference.

The voluntary tradition continues through, for example, the monthly contribution made by Liz Hornby and Jen Lewis, who polish the Victorian pews, and have restored a warm appearance that had been inevitably lost through the chemical cleaning required in covid times.

To all who have contributed and to those who now undertake this work, our most grateful thanks. As George Herbert wrote: ‘Who sweeps a room, as for thy laws, Makes that and th’action fine’.

*Joyce Simpson, with Jack and Katie Muldoon.*





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## POEM IN PASSIONTIDE

In 2015 Rowan Williams published with SPCK a small book, *What is Christianity?* The text includes this comment:

‘... one of the tests of actual faith, as opposed to bad religion, is whether it stops you ignoring things. Faith is most fully itself and most fully life-giving when it opens your eyes and uncovers for you a world larger than you thought – and, of course, therefore, a world that’s a bit more alarming than you ever thought. The test of true faith is how much more it lets you see, and how much it stops you denying, resisting, ignoring aspects of what is real.’

This means that faith will open our eyes to see without shrinking the ache and distress of the darkest aspects of life. In the 1880s, towards the end of his short life, Gerard Manley Hopkins, a gentle Roman Catholic priest, wrote a small cluster of sonnets that looked hard at the darkness in his heart and mind, at the desolate sense of separation from God that afflicted his days.

No worst, there is none. Pitched past pitch of grief,  
More pangs will, schooled at forepangs, wilder wring.  
Comforter, where, where is your comforting?  
Mary, mother of us, where is your relief?  
My cries heave, herds-long; huddle in a main, a chief  
Woe, wórd-sorrow; on an áge-old anvil wince and sing —  
Then lull, then leave off. Fury had shrieked ‘No lingering!  
Let me be fell: force I must be brief’.

O the mind, mind has mountains; cliffs of fall  
Frightful, sheer, no-man-fathomed. Hold them cheap  
May who ne’er hung there. Nor does long our small  
Durance deal with that steep or deep. Here! creep,  
Wretch, under a comfort serves in a whirlwind: all  
Life death does end and each day dies with sleep.

All Hopkins can bring to God is his questioning despair; there is no sense of an answer to prayer. His distress feeds on itself and grows ever sharper. The pain of a sufferer about to explode is dramatized in dense lines of concentrated imagery: the collective force of an anxious herd moving with one mind, on the edge of panic; the harsh wincing scrape of metal striking metal; emotions as turbulent as the Furies of Roman mythology who lived in the underworld and tortured sinners. Mental suffering can be as horrific as this. In the last six lines (the sestet), agony is imagined as a

terrified wretch clutching at a cliff face, suspended over vast, unmeasured space. The only relief is that which the Fool in *King Lear* offers the tormented king: this agony is not for ever; death will put an end to it, and each day sleep brings a brief release from pain.

Hopkins's faith demanded honesty as searing as this; he prayed to God who seemed silent and indifferent to his distress. It was not easy for him to voice the aloneness and anxiety he felt. This sonnet and five others, known as 'The Terrible Sonnets', were found amongst his papers after his death. Too often, even today, depression is not taken as seriously as it should be by friends, families, by churches.

To fully embrace such despair is to draw closer to our Lord's cry of dereliction from the Cross:

'My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?' (Psalm 22)

*Joyce Simpson*

## WELCOMERS' REPORT

The welcomers/guides play an important role in the life of the Priory. They welcome our 100,00 visitors into the building and answer any questions they may have. We are fortunate enough to have visitors from all over the world, and they are delighted to have a welcoming smile and a word or often a conversation with our guides. Some visitors are very knowledgeable about the Priory, others are less curious. Either way we hope to enhance their visit. They may marvel at the beauty of the Pugin windows or the fresco – the painted wall. The guides understand that some visitors seek the serenity and peace of this beautiful building and greet them accordingly.

The welcomers are a lovely team of people. They enjoy communicating with others and gain much from their voluntary work. In the autumn we visited Chatsworth and had a most informative guided tour. Many of our visitors are interested in the Cavendish connection, and this was an opportunity to learn more. Our thanks to the staff at Chatsworth.

If you would like to become a welcomer, please do get in touch. We would love you to join us. We usually work in a team of 2 or 3, for a morning or afternoon. Some very dedicated welcomers do complete full days. We restart after Easter and finish at the October half term holiday.

Please do join us - volunteering is such a worthwhile activity. Join a team, meet new people, and learn new facts and figures about the long history of the Priory at Bolton Abbey.

*Kate Templeton*

07786064699 [katetempleton@btinternet.com](mailto:katetempleton@btinternet.com)



## EASTER DAY 2024

On Easter Day, early in the morning Church Warden, Matt Hey, with great care will remove from its velvet wrappings one of the Priory's great treasures, the tall silver chalice, made by Matthew Butler in York and hallmarked 1656. As is well known, Matt brings a very wide range of practical expertise to his care for the fabric of the Priory, but the focus of his affection is this beautiful silver chalice. On Easter Day the chalice will adorn the High Altar for the first time since English churches were closed by the Covid pandemic in 2020. The chalice is engraved with the arms of the Earl of Cumberland, and it was donated, originally to the chapel at Barden Tower, by Lady Anne Clifford.



### **Lady Anne Clifford: Woman of Resolute Courage and Vision in a Man's World**

Lady Anne, born in 1590 in Skipton Castle, was daughter to the Third Earl, George Clifford, Royal Champion to Queen Elizabeth I, and his wife, Margaret. The story of Lady Anne's life is remarkable both for her single-minded pursuit of her inherited rights, and in her later years for what she accomplished for the people of her estates

which stretched from Craven across the Westmoreland fells to a northern boundary marked by Brougham Castle, near Penrith. At strategic points across this vast terrain were the castles of Appleby, Brough, Pendragon, and Skipton, all of which had seen action against Scottish raiders, and all, especially Skipton Castle, were to see more during the Civil War. Barden Tower and Bolton Abbey were also part of the Clifford estates, and several of Anne's ancestors lie buried at Bolton Abbey.

Anne's father was a prominent Elizabethan, a Member of the Order of the Garter, a witness at the execution of Mary Queen of Scots, and in 1588 had commanded the *Elizabeth Bonaventure*, one of the biggest English ships during the action in the Channel against the Armada. But this hero of public life was at odds with his wife and daughter. His two sons had died in infancy, and when the Earl died in 1605, he bequeathed the Clifford estates to his younger brother and heirs of that line. After the funeral his widow, Margaret, began legal action to claim the estates on behalf of her daughter, Lady Anne. Margaret argued that by the royal grant of Edward II, the

estates were to descend to the heirs, whether male or female, in the direct line, and that therefore the inheritance should go to Lady Anne. Margaret ensured that research to back this claim was thoroughly undertaken, and both mother and daughter held passionately to the belief that the Clifford estates were Lady Anne's rightful inheritance.

In 1609 Anne married Richard Sackville, the Second Earl of Dorset; he loved the life of the Court and spent a fortune on women and gambling. As Countess of Dorset, Anne was mistress of Knole, the great Jacobean house in Kent, but Anne's life was a misery as she came under pressure to yield her claim on the Westmoreland estates to pay her husband's debts. She wrote in her diary: 'My Lord went up to my closet and said how little money I had left - - Sometimes I had fair words from him and sometimes foul, but I took all patiently, and did strive to give him as much content and assurance of my love as I possibly could, yet I told him that I would never part with Westmoreland upon any condition whatever.'

Lady Anne maintained her resistance when King James himself summoned her to an audience, and tried cajoling, arguing, bullying, and threatening. She was convinced of the justice of her contention, and she clung to her resolution: 'I beseech'd His Majesty to pardon me for that I would never part from Westmorland while I lived upon any condition whatsoever.'

Widowed in 1624, Lady Anne in 1630 embarked on another disastrous marriage, this time to Philip Herbert, Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, a man of good looks and charm, but described as 'a flippant fop, caring little for anything or anybody other than dogs and horses', whereas Lady Anne was studious and fond of reading, and an intensely devout woman. Philip Herbert took his new wife down to the Pembroke seat at Wilton, where Lady Anne became immersed in the renovations being undertaken there by Inigo Jones. At Wilton she befriended a distant kinsman, the poet and vicar of Bemerton, George Herbert, a friendship cut tragically short by his death from consumption in 1633, at the early age of 39. Soon the Earl of Pembroke began his predatory claim 'to all the Landes of mine Inheritance', and Anne found herself again rejected and isolated: 'the marble pillars of Knole and Wilton were to me oftentimes but the gay Arbours of Anguish.'

But then, in 1643, with the death of her cousin, Henry Clifford in York, without a male heir, Lady Anne become undisputed mistress of her Westmoreland and Craven inheritance. Through the Civil War she lived in London, and only in 1649, six months after Charles I's execution,

was it deemed safe enough for Lady Anne to move north and claim her estates. She found her castles in varying states of disrepair, and that nearby churches had been damaged and desecrated. Skipton Castle had withstood a siege for four years and was in fact the last royalist stronghold in the north to surrender. She wrote in her diary: ‘By easy journeys on the road I came to Skipton - - into my Castle there, it being the first time of my coming into it after the pulling down of most of the old castle, which was done some six months before, by Order of Parliament, because it had been a garrison in the late Civil Warre.’

Very soon after her arrival in the north Anne set about restoring her inheritance. She was not put off by the risk of incurring Cromwell’s wrath: ‘Let him destroy my Castles if he will; as often as he levels them, I will rebuild them, so long as he leaves me a shilling in my pocket.’ Now a woman of sixty, Lady Anne set about a programme of restoration, spending thousands of pounds on her castles and the hunting lodge at Barden Tower. She rebuilt or repaired churches, bridges, alms-houses, and schools. In her role as hereditary Sheriff of Westmorland and of Craven she convened courts to hear complaints and punish offenders, to set right what had been neglected for over thirty years.

Through her later years until her death in 1676, Lady Anne worked hard at many projects and undertook difficult journeys across rough country tracks, but through her endeavours local communities became more prosperous; workers with skills had scope and were justly paid. She wrote: ‘I doe more and more fall in love with the contentments and innocent pleasures of a Country Life.’ She quoted from Psalm 16: ‘The Lott is fallen unto mee in a pleasant place. I have a fair Heritage.’

How fitting that her gift to us should be a chalice, the gift of new life through the Resurrection of our Lord.

*Joyce Simpson*



*Photos courtesy of Matt Hey*

# HARTLEYS

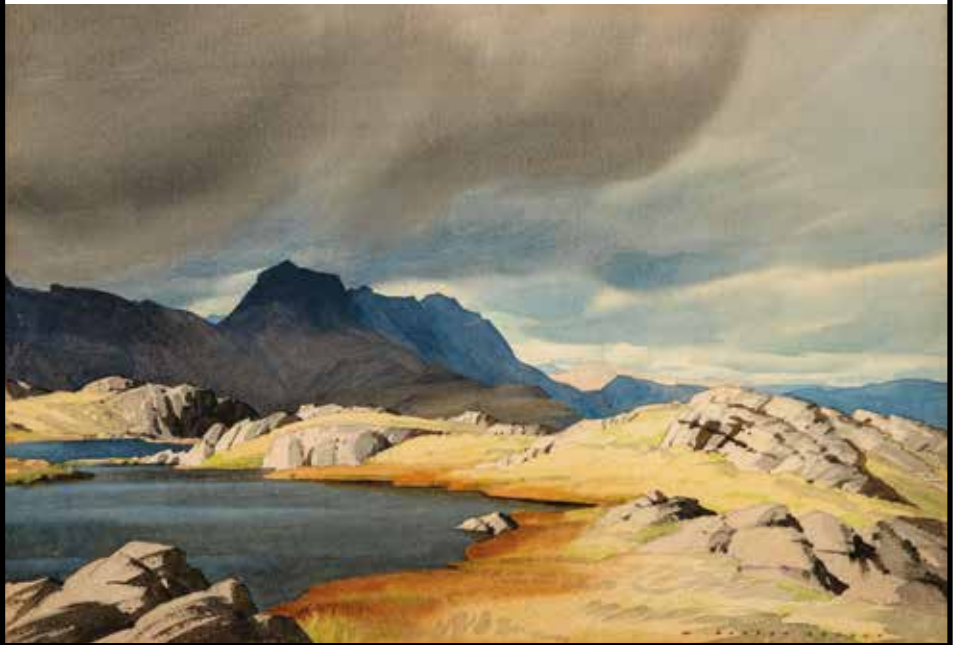
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We start the 2024 season with two exciting concerts. On May 4th the prize winning York Railway Institute Brass Band comes to the Priory. Please note the earlier starting time of 7pm.

On May 11th, at 7.30pm, Skipton Choral Society performs choral classics from Brahms, Purcell and Parry, as well as the lesser known but equally as magnificent Winchester Te Deum by John Rutter and the exhilarating Gloria by Bob Chilcott. They are accompanied by a brass quintet and organist Anthony Gray, Deputy Director of Music, Bradford Cathedral and Director of Music, St Wilfrid's, Harrogate.

Tickets for both concerts are £15, refreshments included, available at [www.boltonpriory.org.uk](http://www.boltonpriory.org.uk) from 4th March or on the door.

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Rutter

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Parry

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## TEARS

My neighbour's aged cousin, in fireside chair,  
Cradled the lamb upon his swollen knees,  
One gnarled and mottled hand, with broken nails,  
Tracing the crisp, warm curls of new-made wool,  
The other cupping the small dome of the head.

The shepherd lad, shedding his boots at the door,  
Had burst in, like a gust of moorland breeze,  
And a voice to match, ringing with youthful pride.  
'Grandad! What's tha think o' this un, then?'  
And placed the little creature on his lap.

'Aye, lad, tha's reet enough – a bonny lamb.'  
The pale eyes gazed, unfocussed, dreamily –  
Then strove to hide the tears that sprang, unbidden,  
Under the lids and down the furrowed cheeks,  
While sobs, suppressed, convulsed, and choked his voice.

I pitied then, but did not understand.  
But now, when age enfeebles and rewards,  
My eyes can moisten when I recollect  
The morning round, before the break of day,  
The tumbling peewits and the curlew's plea,

The ewe's soft chuckling to her new-born lamb;  
The first breath and the tiny sneeze that followed.  
There is a passion in the shepherd's heart  
That never fades – and only God can know  
How my hands ache to hold a lamb again.

*Kate Rhodes, September 2023*  
(RIP September 2023)



## PCC REPORT

The PCC represents the views of the congregation, in the running of the Church. Please feel free to contact any PCC Member, if you have matters which need to be raised at meetings. Currently, PCC members are:

The Rector: Rev Nicholas Mercer;  
Honorary member: the Duke of Devonshire;  
2 Church Wardens: Mr Matt Hey and Mrs Joyce Simpson;  
Secretary: Mrs Kate Templeton;  
Treasurer: Mr Michael Heatley;  
Mrs Elaine Adams-Lambert ( Environmental Officer);  
Mrs Susan Barker; Mrs Jean Crawford;  
Mrs Rosemarie Fisher (Electoral Role Officer);  
Mr Barry Cody; Mr Gerry Yates;  
Mr Peter Lambert (Verger and so non-voting);

These church members work hard giving up their time willingly to contribute to the smooth running of the Priory. We meet on a regular basis, once every 2-3 months, as does the Standing Committee (Rector, Church Wardens, Secretary and Treasurer). Current church matters are discussed, and solutions found. Communications are discussed.

Current projects include replacing the glass west doors. The new doors will carry a logo to commemorate the Coronation of King Charles III. New glass doors will be fitted into the existing recesses in the South doors, to reduce draughts, and thereby improve heat retention in this ancient stone building. This is an extensive project, requiring liaison with professional experts and consultation to gain diocesan approval.

Matters reported on each meeting include safeguarding, finance, fabric of the building, health and safety, environmental. We are fortunate that The Friends of Bolton Abbey continue to support the Priory in many ways, including financially. The Minutes of each meeting are to be found on the noticeboard at the rear of the church.

If you have an issue for consideration, please do contact any member, or send me an email: [katetempleton@btinternet.com](mailto:katetempleton@btinternet.com).

*Kate Templeton*

## WHAT OUR VISITORS SAY

Years ago, George Moffat asked me to attend a Church Tourism conference, the object of which was to get people to look at their church and highlight parts of it which could be used to attract people into it: beautiful stained-glass windows, for instance, or carvings. When the other delegates saw where I was from their attitude was, 'It's easy for you. You're a honeypot church'. Yes, we have a lovely building in a picturesque setting, but it takes a lot of busy bees to make honey. Our visitors' comments show that they appreciate the work that goes into making this a 'honeypot'. Thank you to all our busy bees.

- *Reader – Diocese of Chester with prayer for your continuing ministry here.*
  - This is our history and heritage for our grandchildren.
  - *Loved the quiz sheet!*
  - I liked the candles.
  - *I liked the see-through balls (on the sales table).*
  - Visited graves to see Grandpa Sam and his wife and mother-in-law.
  - *I lost my grandmother Nanna this morning. I dedicated my run through your grounds to her and lit a candle in her honour. Please pray for her for I know she is with Jesus now. I will miss her greatly. Her name was Laurie Marsh. Thank you for giving me peace to pray for her. (Sarah Beresford).*
  - Condolences to Sarah (a stranger, I know) but with support she will be comforted. The peace of this Priory will be forever with her.
  - *Beautiful! Lovely organ playing too.*
  - What an amazing piece of history! Thank you.
  - *Feeling of coming home!*
  - Lovely post cards, great service, lovely church.
  - *What a blessing to see this place.*
  - Nice people and lovely choir!
  - *Great place to get married!*
  - Very special. Beautiful flowers.
  - *My birthday. Couldn't wish to be in a better place.*
  - Wonderful Christingle.
  - *Thank you for beautiful Xmas evening here.*
  - I absolutely loved my visit today. Blown away by the beauty of the Priory.
  - *Came with my love and his lovely family.*
  - The nativity scene was lovely, especially the Wise Men.
  - *My husband last brought me here 9 years ago for our first Christmas together. Love it.*
  - Thank you so much. Applause all round.
  - *An oasis of calm in a chaotic world.*
  - Lovely place to be ourselves.
  - *Still amazing after 850 years.*
  - Best church I ever visited. Love to see how history is preserved.
  - *Can't wait to make pilgrimage here in May.*
  - Very informative guides and a great quiz for the children.
  - *Very interesting. Love to come back! (From Ella age 9)*
  - Worship as inspiring as ever at the Priory.
  - *Louis Theroux would approve.*
  - Will not NUKE! (Visitor purporting to be from North Korea. Really?)
- These months we have had visitors from Australia, Canada, China, Columbia, Hong Kong, Greece, Kurdistan, Mexico, Moldova, Nassau, North Korea, Poland, Spain, Ukraine, USA, Venezuela.
- Footfall in December was 5,508 and in January it was 3,616, a surprising number for such a stormy month.

*Liz Higgins*



**The Priory Church, Bolton Abbey**  
**Easter Services**  
**2024**



**Palm Sunday**

**24th March**

8.00 am Holy Communion

10.30 am Family Service with Donkey

**Maundy Thursday**

**28th March**

7.00 pm Eucharist of the Last Supper with  
Foot washing, and the Watch after the  
Blessed Sacrament until 9 pm

**Good Friday**

**29th March**

10.00 am Children's Service and  
Hot Cross Buns

12 noon Three Hours' Devotion, including  
the Liturgy of Good Friday

**Easter Day**

**31st March**

8.00 am Holy Communion

10.30 am Festal Eucharist

## HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY AT BOLTON PRIORY



Holocaust memorial-day is an annual observance to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust. It is generally marked on the 27th January as this was the day in 1945 when Soviet troops liberated Auschwitz Birkenau. It is the day for everyone to remember the millions of people murdered in the Holocaust, under Nazi Persecution, and in the genocides which followed in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, and Darfur.

Between 1941 and 1945, six million Jewish men, women and children were murdered by the Nazis and their collaborators. Their attempt to murder all the Jews in Europe, shook the foundations of civilisation. The Nazis targeted anyone they believed threatened their ideal of a 'pure Aryan race', including Jews, Roma and Sinti people, disabled people, gay people, political opponents and others. They were first stripped of their legal rights and deprived of the normal protections under the law. What followed was one of the worst atrocities the world has ever known.

The day also commemorates the genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur and reminds us all of the depth to which humanity can fall.

This year, those commemorating Holocaust memorial-day were asked to light a candle and place it in their window at 8pm in the evening. A candle was lit on the votive candle stand in the Tower of Bolton Priory meaning that the candle could be seen burning during the night through the glass doors. It was a light to lighten the darkness.

*The Rector*

## PROVERBS 6:6

Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise!

If tha's nattered wi' frets, if tha's moidered wi' debts,  
An' tha's bogged in a slack o' dree days;  
If thi pickle hez palled, if tha's feelin' reight stalled,  
An' tha glaurs at t' fire grate in a daze;

If tha's nithered wi' t' cowl, if tha's jiggered an' owd,  
An' tha's cahrin', cronkin', an' crammly;  
If tha's fast in a dowl, if for two pins tha'd yowl,  
An' tha weean't tell thi friends or fam'ly.

Tha mun shak' up thisel, nivver dee i' thi shell,  
Reach down deep to wheer t' Tyke spirit dwells;  
Shift thisel', stand up straight, don thi beeats, mak some bait,  
Get agate for a day out on t' fells.

Aye, it beats onny pill does a hard slog uphill:  
Plod on till tha's puffin' an' sweatin'.  
Rain or shine, it's all t' same, 'cos choose-what tha'll soon frame;  
Thi fahl mood 'll lift, Ah'll be bettin'.

Up on t' crest of a fell, grand fresh air waarks its spell:  
Blaws yon dusty owd cobwebs clean out.  
Seen fro' weel up aboon, ivvry problem 'll soon  
Show as nobbut a lile lump o' nowt.

So remember this tale: to keep hearty an' hale  
Tha mun allus tak' hard exercise.  
As it says i' t' good bewk, slug should go have a lewk  
At t' ant - think on her ways an' be wise.

*By Roger Nelson, who has lived in the hills above Bolton Abbey since 1947.*

## PRIORY DIRECTORY

Rector	The Revd Nicholas Mercer	01756 710326
Parish Administrator	Margaret Cody	01756 710238
Churchwarden	Matthew Hey	07702 555339
Churchwarden	Joyce Simpson	01943 872882
PCC Secretary	Kate Templeton	01943 463150
PCC Treasurer	Michael Heatley	01423 509629
Gift Aid	Bill Marshall Smith	01943 462719
Director of Music	Tim Raymond <i>stanghan@aol.com</i>	
Concert Coordinator	Volunteer needed, please	
Deanery Synod	Susan Barker	01756 711260
Deanery Synod	Peter Lambert	07985 136819
Verger	Peter Lambert	07985 136819
Sacristan	Jennifer Hardaker	
Chalicians' Rota	Mike Vineall	01756 753013
Liquid Worship	Joan Mason	01943 608049
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Environmental Officer	Elaine Adams-Lambert	01756 794542
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*Spring view from the Priory*

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