



Editor: [john.beralot@gmail.com](mailto:john.beralot@gmail.com)



2022



[www.blackburncathedral.com](http://www.blackburncathedral.com)



### Have you seen Blackburn Cathedral 'live' on TV for some Sunday morning services?

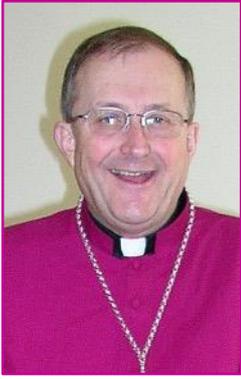
A number of Cathedrals are now live-streaming their services regularly – this is one of the positive outcomes of the Covid outbreak which has affected the lives of countless people all over the world.

But now, through this modern technology, we may participate in so many superb Cathedral services – including Canterbury, York, Winchester and **Blackburn!**

The quality of our pictures is amazing, and so is the presentation by **Canon Gary O'Neil** who is responsible for the smooth running of services in our cathedral and online. **Canon Rowena Pailing's** sermons are always outstanding and the **Dean** leads services with calm authority. And, of course, the music is always a joy, as **John Robinson** builds up the numbers and confidence of his choristers: **Samantha Poh**, our organ scholar who, along with **John Robinson**, works hard to offer hymns & anthems, preludes & postludes, for our cathedral's worship.



# Bishops' Page



By now everyone will have heard that Bishop Julian is retiring – tributes have appeared in national newspapers and so it is appropriate that we remember some of our immediate past bishops for whom we have such affection and respect.

**Bishop Nicholas Reade** wrote to your editor recently to say that his predecessor, **Bishop Alan Chesters**, had been unwell:

“Had a good chat on the ‘phone with + Alan last week. It’s pleasing he’s made a pretty good recovery from the operation. Given that he left Blackburn approaching nineteen years ago his memory of his times there is very good – and he can pull me up on the odd fact!”

So JB wrote to **Bishop Alan Chesters** who responded almost immediately:

Dear John,

I am so pleased to hear from you and to have that photograph of you looking so well. My son, **David** and I look forward each month to reading **M & M**. It brings back a host of happy memories, not least of the splendid choral services in Blackburn Cathedral. It is heartening to know that in spite of the challenges of recent years such high standards have not only been maintained but enhanced by successive Directors of Music.

Thank you for asking after my health. You may certainly share this with the readers of **M & M**. I think you know that for a number of years I have suffered from arthritis. I had my right hip replaced in 2009 whilst we were in Cheshire. As things had deteriorated in early December 2021 I had my left hip replaced in the local Nuffield Hospital. After which I spent three weeks in a very pleasant care home to recuperate. Sadly the Omicron strain of Covid limited me to meeting my family through a glass screen. Fortunately I had a very skilled surgeon and the operation went well. I am now able to walk further than I have done for the last 2 years and am also able to drive locally.



We are very privileged to have a wonderful choir in **Chichester Cathedral** with **Charles Harrison** as a brilliant Director of Music. I expect you saw the announcement that from the next round of auditions for choristers we shall have girls in the choir. I gather Chichester is one of the last cathedrals to admit girls. As you may imagine there have been mixed reactions.

*To see & hear Chichester Cathedral choir, click the photo (L.)*

Your mention of choir festivals reminded me of how **as a choir boy** we had marvellous Choral Evensongs in **Wakefield Cathedral**. I still remember the instruction of the pointing for the verse in Ps 104 'Man goeth forth to his work and to his labour' !

Keep up your good work John

with every blessing, +Alan

**Bishop Alan**, with his family at Buckingham Palace, after he had received his **CBE** from **HM The Queen**.



Portraits of **Bishop Alan Chesters** (far R) with **Bishop Stewart Cross**, his predecessor, on display in the Crypt assembly area.



# Blackburn Cathedral's Historical Music Pages

We are most grateful to long-time choirman **PAUL FIELDING** (*William's Dad*) who has extensive archives of our cathedral and its music. He recently showed your editor a leaflet (which JB had created in 1969, so it's now *historic!*) which gave full details of concerts, organ recitals and choral services for 1969-70, following immediately upon the dedication of our brand new organ in December 1969.

## MUSIC IN BLACKBURN CATHEDRAL 1969-70

All seats for Cathedral sponsored concerts may be obtained from S.P.C.K. Bookshop. Cathedral Close. (Tel. 60973). Special rates for parties, students and O.A.P.s.

Sat.,  
20 Dec.,  
1969  
7-30  
**MAGNIFICENT  
NEW CATHEDRAL ORGAN**  
Cathedral Choir, John Bertalot,  
Ronald Frost, Fred Dewhurst.

**INAUGURATION AND BLESSING**  
of the new Cathedral Organ,  
followed by demonstration recital.  
Congregation please be seated by 7-15  
Free tickets from S.P.C.K. Bookshop.

Tues.  
23 Dec.,  
7-30  
**BLACKBURN BACH CHOIR**  
Bryan Cryer, John Bertalot.

King George's Hall, Blackburn.  
**CAROLS FOR AUDIENCE AND  
CHOIR.** For all the family. 2/6, 5/-

Sun.,  
28 Dec.,  
3-00  
**CATHEDRAL CHOIR**

**NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS**

Sat.,  
10 Jan.,  
1970  
7-30  
**DR. FRANCIS JACKSON**  
(York Minster)

**OPENING RECITAL** on the **NEW  
CATHEDRAL ORGAN**, including a  
specially commissioned new work by  
Dr. Jackson.  
2/6 5/- 7/6 and 21/- (Privilege)

Every  
Sat. from  
17 Jan.  
12-0 - 1-0  
**JOHN BERTALOT  
RONALD FROST**  
and visiting recitalists

**MID-DAY  
POPULAR ORGAN CONCERTS**  
for the delight of shoppers & visitors  
Free. Plate at door.

Sat.,  
24 Jan.,  
7-30  
**DR. HAROLD DARKE**  
C.B.E.

**CELEBRITY ORGAN RECITAL**  
2/6 5/- 7/6 and 21/- (Privilege)

Thurs.,  
29 Jan.,  
7-30  
**BLACKBURN BACH CHOIR**  
Ronald Frost, John Bertalot.

Bach ..... Jesu priceless treasure  
Parry ..... Songs of farewell  
Britten ..... Rejoice in the Lamb  
Organ music by Bach and Peeters.  
2/6 5/-

Tue.-Fri.,  
3, 4, 5, 6  
Feb.  
7-30  
**BLACKBURN  
SCHOOLCHILDREN**  
Christina Simpson.

**NOYE'S FLUDE** (Britten)  
Musical "spectacular" for acting chorus  
and soloists, orchestra, organ and  
audience. Particulars from  
Blackburn Education Dept. : 55201.

Tuesdays,  
Feb.  
17, 24  
March  
3, 10, 17  
7-30  
**JOHN BERTALOT**

**BACH'S ORGAN MUSIC EXPLAINED**  
Five weekly recitals during Lent.  
2/6

Thurs.,  
19 Mar.  
7-30  
**CATHEDRAL CHOIR**

Fourth annual performance  
**ST. MATTHEW PASSION**  
(J. S. Bach) Shortened version.  
2/6 5/-

Sat.,  
4 Apr.  
7-30  
**NORTHAMPTON  
LAURENCE LLOYD SINGERS**  
(Fourth Visit).

**VOICES, ORGAN and BRASS**  
2/6 5/-

Sat.,  
25 Apr.  
6-00  
**CHRISTOPHER DEARNLEY**  
(St. Paul's Cathedral)

North Western Association of  
Organists. **ANNUAL CONFERENCE**  
Details from R. Freeman, 83 Upton  
Road, Moreton, Wirral, Cheshire.

Thurs.,  
14 May  
7-30  
**BLACKBURN MUSIC SOC.**  
John Bertalot, Horace Tattersall.

**CREATION** (Haydn)  
2/6 5/-

Sat.,  
23 May  
7-30  
**FLOR PEETERS**  
(Malines Cathedral, Belgium)

**CELEBRITY ORGAN RECITAL**  
2/6 5/- 7/6 and 21/- (Privilege)

Sat.,  
6 June  
7-30  
**BLACKBURN SINFONIA**  
John Bertalot, Nicholas Smith.

Mendelssohn . Nocturne (Midsummer  
N.D.)  
Handel ..... Organ Concerto  
Poulenc ..... Organ Concerto  
Beethoven ..... Symphony No. 2  
Prokofieff Overture on Jewish themes

Sunday  
Evenings  
in June  
7-45  
**MUSIC IN THE  
SOUTH TRANSEPT**  
after Evensong.

Gentle music for strings, woodwind  
and organ.  
Free.

Tues.,  
23 June  
7-30  
**RONALD FROST**

**MODERN ORGAN MUSIC**  
2/6 5/-

Sat.,  
4 July  
6-00  
**CHESTER, MANCHESTER and  
BLACKBURN CATHEDRAL  
CHOIRS.** Bertalot, Frost, Fisher,  
Cantrell.

**THREE CATHEDRAL CHOIRS  
ANNUAL FESTIVAL RECITAL**  
2/6 5/-

**The back page** of this leaflet (below) is even more astonishing, not only because there were so many diocesan church choirs at that time who could come to their cathedral to share and enjoy the glorious new organ, but who could sing a full Choral Evensong on their own. How many diocesan choirs are there now who could do this?

**Please let us know if your choir is still functioning strongly...** [john.bertalot@gmail.com](mailto:john.bertalot@gmail.com)

But also, look at the astonishing advert in the right hand column: **for there were no immediate vacancies in the Cathedral Choir all those years ago!!!**

**SATURDAY CHORAL  
EVENSONGS**

at 5-0 p.m.

sung by visiting diocesan choirs

**January**

- 3—Brounedge, St. Mary (R.C.)  
Vespers.
- 10—Cathedral Choirboys.
- 17—Massed Diocesan Choirs  
Festival, 4-0 p.m.
- 31—Bishop of Lancaster's Choir-  
girls.

**February**

- 7—Chorley, All Saints.
- 14—Blackpool, Holy Trinity.
- 21—Blackpool, St. Stephen.
- 28—Padiham, St. Leonard.

**March**

- 7—Liverpool, Stanley, St. Anne.
- 14—Bishop's Young Choirmen.
- 21—Standish P.C.
- 28—Balderstone, St. Leonard.

**April**

- 18—Woodplumpton, St. Anne.

**May**

- 2—Burnley, St. Peter.
- 9—Bishop's Choristers.
- 16—Blackpool, St. Mark.
- 30—Provost's Choristers.

**June**

- 13—Broughton, St. John.
- 20—Ashton, St. Andrew.
- 27—Skelmersdale P.C.

**July**

- 11—Blackpool, St. Thomas.

**"PRIVILEGE" SEATS**

A strictly limited number of privilege seats (very near the organ console) may be available for a few concerts at one guinea each. The price includes a glass of sherry to be taken with the distinguished soloist after the concert in St. Mary's House, Cathedral Close. Please apply to S.P.C.K. Bookshop.

**CATHEDRAL CHOIR  
VACANCIES**

There are no vacancies in the Cathedral Choir at present for boys or men. However, boys between 8 and 11 may apply for a place on the waiting list **provided they are not members of another church choir.**

**To the Cathedral Organist,**  
Cathedral Close, Blackburn.  
BB1 5AA.

I would like to make an appointment for my son (name)

.....

to be auditioned, without obligation, for the Cathedral Choir, after the 10-30/6-30 service on

Sunday (date) .....

Name and address .....

.....

.....



From our former Head Chorister **WILLIAM FIELDING** who is in Toulouse pursuing tuition in advanced organ playing, and who has just won a demanding audition to be taught in Paris by France's very finest organists!

Dear John,

I'm currently on the train back to Toulouse from Paris after a rather intense week of auditioning - **14 really good organists for 2 places**. I'm happy to say that I've been accepted, along with one other student - It was quite a stressful few days but I'm most relieved to be starting there in September - it's been a dream for quite a few years now. I'm very grateful to both Michel Bouvard, and to my new teacher this year, Yoann Tardivel, for preparing me so well for the exam.' **To see & hear William play at Toulouse, click his photo (left)**



My teachers from next year will be **Olivier Latry** and **Thomas Ospital**; I'm very excited about the coming three years! (See below)

I was also most fortunate to visit the tribune at **St Sulpice**, and to have dinner with **Daniel Roth** who is fascinating, (and knows all the best restaurants!) I also spent a day playing on **Cesar Franck's organ at Ste Clotilde**, so it is possible to play Franck as he would have heard it himself, which was an incredible experience!

So now back to Toulouse, to enjoy my last months as choir organist at St Sernin and to profit from this beautiful city.

I do hope you are well, and that I can return to Blackburn very soon - send me some news.

All the very best,  
**Will**

**Were your socks blown off by Will (above)? Here's more by his new teachers: Olivier & Tom!**

**OLIVIER LATRY**

At age 23 he won a competition to become one of the three titular organists on the huge Cavallé-Coll organ of the **Cathedral of Notre-Dame in Paris**.

Olivier Latry is one of the world's most distinguished organists, not only in France, but in the international community as well. He has performed in more than 40 countries (throughout Europe, Canada, Russia, Japan and Australia.) on 5 continents, appearing most often in the USA.

Olivier Latry and his wife Marie-Therese have three children and live in a little village outside Paris. **To see and hear Latry play click his photo:**



**THOMAS OSPITAL**

(b. 1990) was the First Prize winner at the International Competition of Organ in Saragossa (Spain) in 2009, Duruflé-Prize and Public Prize at the International Chartres Competition in 2012, Second Prize at the International Xavier Darasse competition in Toulouse. In May 2014, he obtained the Grand Prix Jean Louis Florentz and the Public Prize at the International organ competition of Angers under the direction of the Académie des Beaux-Arts. In November of the same year, he was awarded Second Prize, the Public Prize and the Florentz Prize at the International Chartres competition.

In March 2015, **Ospital** was appointed as titular-organist of Saint-Eustache church in Paris.

**To see & hear Thomas Ospital play,**



**click his photo: Then choose Vienne Toccata! lower right.**

## From our former Dean, David Frayne, in North Somerset.

Dear John, It is good to keep in touch with Blackburn through **M & M** and with you, through Phone chats from time to time!

Blackburn Cathedral has offered a splendid and very helpful website ministry during Covid times for which I congratulate **Dean Peter** and all his colleagues. I am not all sure how I would have coped in such circumstances. Thankfully, much is getting back to normal save for the terrible European situation which casts, I fear, a very long shadow over us all in one way or another.

This season of Lent (I write during the first full week) will encourage us all to "watch and pray" very attentively and reflectively, perhaps as never before.

Meanwhile here, "down South", our retirement lives (now 20 years old!) continue at a slower pace with "pills and prayers" to keep us going! But while I am not so active in public ministry. **Liz and I** are still enjoying our modest music-making through a local "**We play for Fun**" term-time orchestra and our parish church music group - both of which we find ourselves leading! The attached photo will give you a bit of flavour as we also duet from time to time at home! When our second daughter, **Hilary**, re-learns the flute in her retirement from full-time nursing in South London, we can offer a family trio! She has come to live here in Clevedon not far from us and her sister **Clare** and family. So we are being well monitored and looked after!



We send our greetings to you and any at Blackburn who remember us during the nine years we were with you all. We still miss Blackburn Cathedral worship, but try and make up for it either at Bristol or Wells.

Yours ever

David



Dear David & Liz,

Thank you so very much for your wholly delightful letter and highly attractive photo of you both making music so joyfully.

This will appear in the April **M&M** - to the joy of your many friends here.

May life continue to bless you both, and family despite, as you mention, the so terrible international situation. A candle is burning in Blackburn Cathedral for Ukraine, with a prayer attached. Here they are.

Ever,  
John B

**Ukraine**

We stand with and pray for the people of Ukraine

Almighty God,  
seated above all the affairs of humankind  
and sovereign over nations and leaders,  
hear our prayer for Ukraine at this time of war,  
that lives may be spared,  
that national boundaries be respected  
and that forces of aggression be restrained.  
Grant, Lord God, peace in your world in our time.  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen

BLACKBURN  
CATHEDRAL



From **JEREMY DUERDEN**, our Area Representative for the **CATHEDRAL MUSIC TRUST**



Over the weekend of the 4th to 6th March, Jean and I attended the National Gathering of the **Friends of Cathedral Music at Peterborough Cathedral**, with more than a hundred other members. You might know that organisation better than the Cathedral Music Trust which includes the Friends of Cathedral Music, but the overriding organisation was created recently to reflect its status as a larger charity, which success came about by the energetic work of the Friends. I recommend that you have a look at the website <https://cathedralmusictrust.org.uk/> for more information.

Gatherings provide members with the opportunity to visit cathedrals with which they might not be familiar, and to share that experience with other members of a like mind. It also gives different **Directors of Music** the opportunity to show off the quality of their choirs, instruments and musicianship. **Tansy Castledine**, **Director of Music of Peterborough Cathedral**, certainly took advantage of the opportunity to present a superbly varied programme involving all the resources there.



After Tansy's introduction we received a presentation from **Andy Scott**, the **Head Voicer at Harrison & Harrison**, organ builders, about the



revoicing of the historic organ at Peterborough (*a significant 1894 Hill, Norman & Beard*) which used to be slightly sharp, but now is no longer. The reason for the revoicing was the increasing use of the Cathedral for orchestral concerts, and to bring the pitch nearer to Concert Pitch.

See: <https://www.peterborough-cathedral.org.uk/home/musichome/worship-and-music/organ.aspx> for fascinating videos of this specialised work.

I had no idea of some of the techniques employed in the process, especially taking account of the effect of temperature on the level of pitch, but learnt a lot from the talk. It was of significant importance in the case of Peterborough as it is the coldest place of worship I have ever attended. After two and a half hours listening to the addresses, I was in second degree hypothermia and shivering uncontrollably.



Fortunately there is a very warm Starbucks outlet round the corner, serving warm coffee which restored the temperature to something like normal. Even the tea and cakes provided after the talks did not do the necessary. We were able to return to hear choir practice before Evensong and to listen to **the Rose responses, Purcell G minor canticles and Gibbons 'O Sing unto the Lord'**, all beautifully delivered and then as the voluntary, Bach's fugue BWV689, which showed us the power of the restored organ. As if that feast were not enough, there was another treat to

come with Compline at 9 pm.

I have been used, on other occasions, to sitting listening to the voices of the Back Row delivering thoughtful, restful music, but this time, the congregation was invited to join in with the responses, confession and Lord's Prayer, all in the atmosphere of a candlelit ancient place of worship. A wonderful end to a day packed with activity.



(Left) This was the view that greeted us as we entered **Peterborough Cathedral** on the Friday evening. **The Quire was lit by candles only!** Saturday brought a packed day of activity starting with a coach trip to **Oundle School**, some 20 minutes away.

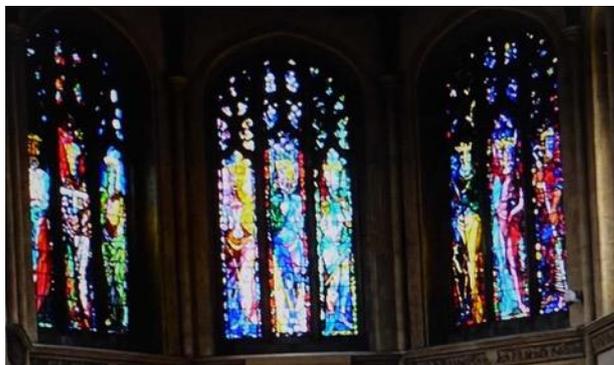
**Oundle School** itself is set in a quaint village whose market charter was granted before William I (1066-1087) came and changed things for ever. It became apparent on walking round the village during a break in the schedule, that the school in effect was the village as so many of

the **honey-coloured stone buildings** were part of the school accommodation and offices. Our first sight of the school itself was the



Chapel of St Anthony, built in the same local stone, where we were addressed by the former Chaplain, whose informative talk about the remarkable **stained glass** throughout the Chapel persuaded me that a tour of the place before the next item in the programme was definitely not to be missed.

The Chapel is furnished with some amazing stained-glass windows. **At the East end are three windows of three panels each by John Piper**, installed in 1956 and dedicated by the Queen Mother, his patron. I fear that the photograph does not do them justice. Had there been more sun in the sky, at any time that day, they might have been more easily seen on it, but it gives the impression at least of a magnificent piece of art. The John Piper East windows. . . . and God said **'Let there be light'**.



Around the aisles is a series of windows designed by Mark Angus that depict many different aspects of the Bible, and literature. The Creation is especially vivid and Shakespeare's Seven Ages of Man contain additional quips to augment the original description of one's progress through life. For all that the artistry impressed, its effect paled when contrasted with the **memorial to old boys lost in the two World Wars**. In the Ambulatory is a large stone bearing many names, but particularly poignant is the tally of the WWII entries, about twice the number of those for WWI.

The mood then changed substantially, when we were treated to a brilliant display of the talents of the students. No names, of course, but it is difficult not to mention one of the performers who gave an outstanding performance of the **Bach Gm Fantasia & Fugue**, as he has a glittering future ahead, after he completes his time as an organ scholar at Oxford, which starts in 2023.



After queuing outside to get into the Great Hall for lunch (*did I mention how cold it was?*) ...

... we were back on the bus and off to join the Nene Valley Railway for a **trip back to Peterborough**, which we had left that morning.

The evening was spent enjoying the dinner, well prepared and served by the staff at **The Bull Hotel, Peterborough**,



where many of the members were staying. The guest speaker was **Christopher Gower**, formerly Director of Music at Peterborough, who gave an entertaining talk, with slides, about his involvement with the music for **the BBC production of the Barchester Chronicles** some 40 years ago which featured **Peterborough Cathedral**; a very pleasant evening getting to know other members, and with excellent food and wine.

**Sunday brought a full programme of services**, Matins at 09.15 and Choral Eucharist at 10.30. The setting, Rheinberger in E-flat was beautifully sung, and from talking to some of the choir when waiting for a **group photo** to be taken, it was clear that they had appreciated the beauty of the music. Lunch was served in the Cathedral New Building, so called

because of being built as recently as the 16th Century, which shows that the original parts are so much older.

I have to confess that we were not able to stay for Evensong as we had a three-hour journey home, but it comprised the Rose Responses, Dyson in D Canticles and *Deus est Caritas* by Panufnik as the Anthem. Having heard the choir at other services, I have no doubt that it was another joyful occasion.

I hope that you have gathered something of the event from the above. There are two or three gatherings a year, the next

being in Chichester in May, which I shall miss by being in Scotland or even Orkney by then, and in October, Dublin with a visit to Cork Cathedral to boot. I shall definitely not miss that trip. **I am the Area Representative of Friends of Cathedral**



**Music** and shall be happy to give any reader more information about its work, and the benefits it gives to cathedral music as a whole. We at Blackburn Cathedral were recipients of the charity's bounty in 2008 when a grant paid for the stalls in the Choir School. Do have a look on the website as well, as there is a great deal of information there. This was intended to be a personal reflection on a great weekend away with friends, and I hope that you enjoyed the experience vicariously. **Jeremy Duerden**



<https://cathedralmusictrust.org.uk/>

## YOUNG BLACKBURN MUSICIANS

Our former organ scholar **Karen Au** enjoying lunch in our Cathedral Café after her lunchtime recital in Blackburn Cathedral which began with the monumental *Passacaglia and Fugue* by JSB and ended with the *Introduction and Passacaglia* by Max Reger which was even louder!



*Email from former choir mum, **Kate Fulwell:***

'**Ollie**'s been in Hereford Cathedral for a couple of days [where his younger brother, **Leo**, succeeded Ollie as choral scholar]. Ollie was guest tenor soloist there for a *Come and Sing Nelson Mass* - and is calling in on his way back to York University, when we're off to the **Inn at Whitewell** for my birthday dinner. Perfect!'

## OUR WEDNESDAY LUNCHTIME CONCERTS ARE TRULY MARVELLOUS

On Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> March we enjoyed an especially uplifting recital for flute and piano.

The flute was played truly mellifluously by **Kevin Gowland** who is a member of the senior teaching staff of the Royal Northern College of Music.

And the piano was played exquisitely by the Revd. **Neil Kelley** who is *Rector of Chorley!*



What first transfixed the attentive audience was the wonderful sound of the flute in our cathedral, for it seemed that our sensitive cathedral acoustic embraced every note in such a way that it almost sounded as though another flute was being played in our South Transept. It was truly magical!

Neil's playing of our piano was 100% accurate and also 100% musical – and he even turned his own pages!

**John Robinson**, who was in the audience enjoying this very special concert, told your editor that he had just had the **piano 'revoiced'**. i.e. the hammers which strike the strings were softened, so that the piano now sounds mellifluous – noticeably so.

And afterwards our **Cathedral Café** began filling up with hungry customers – it's really coming into its own, now – and it's also open for a light lunch immediately after the Sunday 10.30 service. Take the lift down 2 floors!

**Friends may recognise at least three customers here: L-R **Jeremy, Jean and Raymond.****



# Chorister Recruitment

Hi John,

March 1st: Open Evensong for local schools, pupils from [Redeemer, St. Philip & St. Luke's](#), [Westholme](#) and [St. Leonard's Langho](#) (schools I've visited to do workshops) took part. They sang music by Richard Shephard, Wesley, and 'Lord of the Dance.' A great time was had by all, and some are signing up to be choristers already. JR

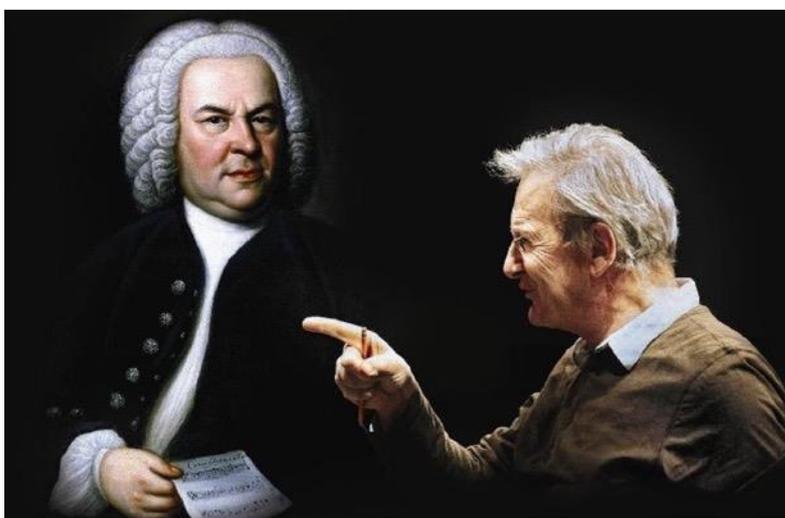


Quotation from [Sir John Eliot Gardiner's](#) book about the life and music of J. S. Bach, [MUSIC in the CASTLE of HEAVEN](#), published by Allen Lane, page 17:

'Bach is of the very front rank of composers since 1700 whose entire work was geared, one way or another, towards the spiritual and metaphysical - celebrating life, but also befriending and exorcising death.

He saw both the essence and practice of music as **religious**, and understood that the more perfectly a composition is realised, both conceptually and through performance, the more God is immanent in the music.'

**Bach** wrote: 'Where there is devotional music, God with his grace is always present.'



To listen to, and watch and exult in the finest performance of a Bach Motet you'll ever hear : 'Christ lay in the fetters of death...' [CLICK the photo](#) (above, right). Notice how Bach expresses every word of the Lutheran hymn so musically. Exult in the total commitment of every singer and instrumentalist.



Blackburn Cathedral  
Cathedral Office,  
Blackburn BB1 5AA.  
Telephone: 01254 277 430

Lancashire  
Tourism Awards  
2018  
WINNER  
Cultural Venue/Organisation Award

**Information from our Interim Canon Precentor  
about ambitious plans for live-streaming more of our Cathedral services:**



Our services to be live-streamed are in the Services and Music details booklet also on the front of our web site:

Web: [www.blackburncathedral.com](http://www.blackburncathedral.com)

For April, the live stream is yet to be confirmed, but probably:

15 April  
16 April  
17 April

10 April Palm Sunday 10.30am  
14 April Maundy Thursday 8.00pm  
Good Friday from 2.00pm (the last hour)  
Saturday Easter Vigil 8.00pm  
Easter Day 10.30am



There are plans to make our live-streamed services even more informative and 'watch-worthy'. Do let **Canon Gary O'Neil** know how much you appreciate his work in this modern outreach field:

[Precentor@blackburncathedral.co.uk](mailto:Precentor@blackburncathedral.co.uk)

From our former organ scholar, **JOSEPH O'BERRY**, who is **Associate Director of Music & Organist of St. John's Cathedral, Denver, Colorado.** (Denver is known as the 'Mile High' City... because it is!)



Hey there, JB!

How wonderful to hear from you. Please forgive my delayed response to your multiple messages; I've been traveling quite a bit and work here at Saint John's Cathedral is pretty full and back to 'normal' these days.



We are singing your lush setting of "**Amazing Grace**" on Sunday 27th March and can't wait! If you tune in to the live-stream, or post-stream, please forgive, in advance, the audio - we need quite a bit of assistance on how to capture the choir and organ in our glorious acoustic.

I'll try to ping you back later with some more news. In the meantime, be well. With best wishes, Joseph

**Blackburn Cathedral Music Department**

**John Robinson** *Director of Music*  
**Samantha Poh** *Organ Scholar*

**Helen Davies** *Youth Choir Director*  
**Dr John Bertalot** *Organist Emeritus*

If you do not wish to receive M&M, please let us know: [John.Robinson@blackburncathedral.co.uk](mailto:John.Robinson@blackburncathedral.co.uk)



## Holy Week and Easter Services

### **Palm Sunday 10 April**

Parish Eucharist 9.00am  
Cathedral Eucharist 10.30am  
Choral Evensong 4.00pm

### **Tuesday 12 April**

Bach's St John Passion 7.30pm  
*English Touring Opera & Blackburn Choirs £15*

### **Thursday 14 April**

Chris Eucharist 10.30am  
Cathedral Eucharist 8.00pm  
*Preacher The Very Rev Gordon McPhate*

### **Friday 15 April from 12 Noon**

The Three Hours  
including Liturgy of Good Friday  
*Preacher The Very Rev Gordon McPhate*

### **Saturday 16 April**

Easter Vigil with confirmation 8.00pm  
*followed by refreshments by Checks & Greys*

### **Easter Day 17 April**

Parish Eucharist 9.00am  
Cathedral Eucharist 10.30am  
*President and Preacher the Bishop of Blackburn*  
Choral Evensong 4.00pm

see [www.blackburncathedral.com](http://www.blackburncathedral.com)  
or [info@blackburncathedral.co.uk](mailto:info@blackburncathedral.co.uk)



**HOW TO SEE FULL DETAILS OF OUR SERVICES, including words & tunes of hymns and LIVE STREAMED services....  
*ON YOUR COMPUTER!***

**1: CLICK the Cathedral's website address:**

[www.blackburncathedral.com](http://www.blackburncathedral.com)

you'll see **'Welcome to Blackburn Cathedral'**

**2: CLICK one of the options immediately below** and you'll see top right of your screen a **PDF** with your request appearing.

**NB: Printed orders of Sunday services** are especially useful when watching our **LIVE STREAMED SERVICES.**

**Download the order of service  
AND PRINT A COPY FOR YOURSELF  
before you  
download the streamed service.**



**"Success is not final,  
failure is not fatal:  
it is the COURAGE  
TO CONTINUE  
that counts."**

**WINSTON CHURCHILL**

**"You are never  
too old to set another  
goal or to dream  
a new dream."**

**C.S. LEWIS**

**"Believe you  
can and you're  
halfway there."**

**THEODORE ROOSEVELT**

## FAIR ORIANA CONCERT by Jeremy Duerden

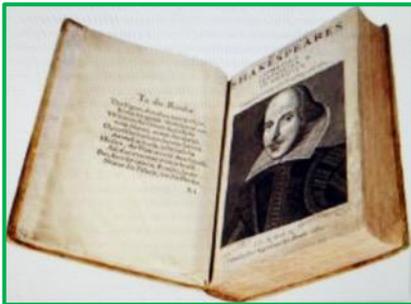
On Saturday evening, the 12th March, the audience at Blackburn Cathedral was entertained by a delightful concert entitled 'Silver Baroque', presented by the soprano duet Fair Oriana, comprising **Penelope Appleyard** and **Angela Hicks**, who perform together as 'Fair Oriana'. Angela is, of course, well known to many Blackburn Cathedral parishioners as a home-grown singer whose promise was shown from an early age when she started singing in our choirs. The concert was in aid of the Blackburn Cathedral Trust.

The two ladies' voices complement each other beautifully, having similar range and delivery while remaining distinguishable.

They were accompanied by an outstanding trio of musicians on early music instruments; **Jonatan Bougt** on theorbo and guitar; **Harry Buckoke** on viola da gamba; and **David Wright** on harpsichord. It was the harpsichord that we heard first as David spent the best part of an hour tuning his instrument before the start of the recital. Upon hearing him play some very rapid and loud passages, it became obvious why the tuning was necessary; the strings were well and truly plucked by fingers that were a blur on the keys at times.

The wonderful acoustic of Blackburn Cathedral added so much to the beauty of the music presented to us, allowing a solo soprano voice to be heard with total clarity.

Although the programme was undeniably Baroque, the variety within it was outstanding. We were delighted with some solo voice and limited accompaniment and some riotous items together with poetry read delicately to a hushed audience. Shakespeare's Sonnet 147 was particularly moving, as might be expected.



My love is as a fever longing still,  
For that which longer nurseth the disease;  
Feeding on that which doth preserve the ill,  
The uncertain sickly appetite to please.  
My reason, the physician to my love,  
Angry that his prescriptions are not kept,  
Hath left me, and I desperate now approve  
Desire is death, which physic did except.  
Past cure I am, now Reason is past care,  
And frantic-mad with evermore unrest;

My thoughts and my discourse as madmen's are,  
At random from the truth vainly expressed;  
For I have sworn thee fair, and thought thee bright,  
Who art as black as hell, as dark as night.

No more was it the 'usual suspects' of Baroque vocal music; GF Handel; Henry Purcell *et al*, that we heard. We had a most unusual piece '**Vertigo**' by **Joseph-Nicolas-Pancrace Royer**. No; I hadn't heard of him either, but I won't forget that piece, and he was definitely Baroque, having lived in the first half of the Eighteenth Century. [CLICK to hear it!](#)

Purcell made a return visit in the second half when the ladies returned as the witches from *Dido and Aeneas*, having changed from their first half concert gowns into close-fitting black leather trousers and jacket. I don't think that Purcell imagined that setting when the opera was first performed, but it added much piquancy to the evening's entertainment. There was another costume change while the instrumentalists continued to perform, and then Fair Oriana returned for more reading, and music including a modern piece by Owain Park, still in his twenties, calling on the array of musicians to show that instruments from an earlier time do not have



to remain there.

The programme finished with the closing scene from *Dido and Aeneas*: '*With Drooping Wings*': perfection!

The ensemble were more than happy to stay a while for a chat and a photograph. The audience of more than a hundred people were truly delighted by the evening's entertainment – I am sure that they will return – as shall I.

To give yourself a taste of that blessed evening, [CLICK the photo!](#)



## BLACKBURN CATHEDRAL RAMBLERS by Jeremy Duerden

The latest ramble of the **Blackburn Cathedral Ramblers** took place on the 12th March, when we were blessed once more with good weather.

My invitation to join the group in earlier reports bore fruit in that we had two new members join the walk together with a visitor who brought her boisterous **black Labrador puppy**. The walk was generally undemanding although there was one steep climb to a trig point, which two of the group, with puppy, avoided, but they missed the views from the top.



The views gave us a 360 degree view of the countryside even as far as the North Wales hills to the south and the southern Lake District to the north. Pendle Hill and Winter Hill also put in an appearance. We rarely go on one of these walks locally without saying how lucky we are to have this scenery on our doorstep.

The **trig point** is above an old quarry (see below) and the path skirted its edge with quite a drop to the water in the bottom, which is why the visiting dog, 'Otto' was taken on the low route: safety first!



We had a short stop for a picnic lunch and then continued to the destination which was new to most of us on the walk: **Brindle Distillery**. It might be known to readers that this is where Blackburn Cathedral's own brand gin, **Cathedra**, is distilled. Its flavour is created by botanicals from the

countryside around about the farm. We did not have time because of other commitments later that day, to delay to make our own gin. There is a great café/bar there with a section given over to benches where instruction can be given on the process of distillation and flavouring the gin. It occurred to me that it might be a place to go to without first walking five miles to get to it.



*The base of the disused quarry (see above)*

The next walk in the programme will be out of the immediate area, visiting the **waterfalls of Stainforth**, on the 9th April. **See their video:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6q7zxi12yd8>

I shall probably file a report on it after the event, but if you wish to see it 'in the flesh', let me know on [jeremy.duerden@virginmedia.com](mailto:jeremy.duerden@virginmedia.com) and I can give full information on the walk and starting point.



Even further afield will be the walk on the 23rd April which will be a **ten-miler** from the Goyt Valley to the highest point in Cheshire at Shining Tor. That might not appeal to strollers, but, as usual, allcomers are most welcome.

**Jeremy Duerden**

A large audience enjoyed a fabulous Wednesday lunchtime organ recital given by **NIGEL SPOONER** on March 23rd. We all sat open-mouthed at Nigel's brilliance! He is organist of Bolton School, where he teaches a dozen young organists and also teaches chemistry.  
(Nigel is multi-talented!)

He included works by Jean Langlais, Jeanne Demessieux, Maurice Duruflé and even by cinema organist Nigel Ogden.

But he ended with Marcel Dupré's fiendishly difficult *Prelude & Fugue in B major* which is one of the most challenging organ pieces ever composed, and he played it *faster* than we've ever heard it before!

Our **JOHN ROBINSON** turned pages for Nigel – but even he was overcome with joy at Nigel's playing, for he was often wreathed in smiles!



To hear, watch and exult in Nigel's playing of the Dupré, put on your headphones and click his photo.  
*(Photo and video by Terry Givens)*

**And to celebrate Easter,**

click the picture below for a video of *This Joyful Eastertide* arranged and conducted by JB at Trinity Church, Princeton, NJ, several years ago

