



2021

Click ['Once in Royal'](#), below, to listen to JB's arrangement

of [**'Once in Royal David's City'**](#) as

you've never heard it before!

Sung by JB's **PRINCETON SINGERS**

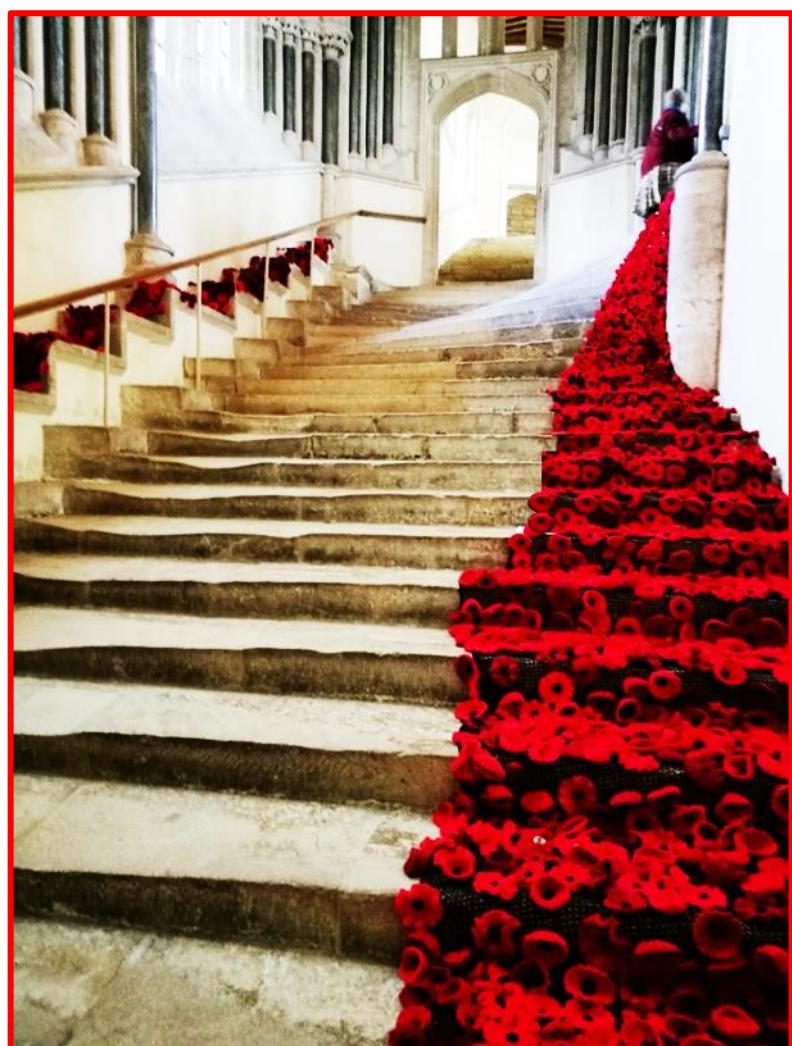
recorded in Trinity Cathedral, Trenton,
New Jersey, USA



Photo of the Singers in the Chapel of King's College, Cambridge, just before we gave a concert to a capacity audience in that hallowed place.

[**THE KNIFE ANGEL: BLACKBURN CATHEDRAL**](#)

[**A CASCADE OF POPPIES: WELLS CATHEDRAL**](#)



THE KNIFE ANGEL: The National Monument against Violence and Aggression...



... was installed in a commanding position outside our cathedral in early November.

The *Knife Angel* is a contemporary sculpture formed of 100,000 knives created by artist **Alfie Bradley** and the British Ironworks Centre in Oswestry.

Completed in 2018, the structure of the angel stands at **27 ft tall**. In order to create the sculpture, 200 knife banks were produced by the Ironworks and **amnesties** held for individuals to donate anonymously their knives. Knives seized by police were also included, with many arriving in evidence tubes.

The sculpture was created in order to highlight knife crime in the United Kingdom and educate young people of the harmful effect violent behaviour can have on their communities.

Once the knives were delivered to the Ironworks, each one was disinfected before being blunted. The knives were then welded onto an existing steel frame. Other knives were welded onto steel plates to form the wings of the angel, in order to give them a feather-like appearance.

Families who lost loved ones as a result of knife crime were invited to have a message engraved onto a blade used in the sculpture. Over 80 families contacted the artist in order to engrave a personal message on a blade used in the wings.



The Knife Angel is touring UK Cathedrals, and was with us for most of November.
It attracted MUCH attention.

TO SEE a video of THE KNIFE ANGEL IN CLOSE-UP **from the air, CLICK:**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=898bJ_8U-1Y&t=8s

**OUR HEARTIEST CONGRATULATIONS
and UNBOUNDED DELIGHT GO TO OUR FORMER ORGAN SCHOLAR
HARVEY STANSFIELD**

who has just been appointed Director of Music of St. Augustine's Church, Edgbaston, Birmingham



This is a major appointment for a young musician, for it has a fine choral tradition and some previous Directors of Music began their distinguished careers there:



Sir William Harris was there **1913-1919** and eventually became DoM of **St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle** where he taught the young Princess Elizabeth the piano!

Dr. Roy Massey **1960-67** became DoM of **Birmingham** and **Hereford Cathedrals**,

Harvey's first Service is on Advent Sunday.
We all wish him well in his exciting and demanding position at the same time as studying at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire.

Harvey popped into the cathedral in mid-November to support a fellow 3rd year organ student at Birmingham Conservatoire – **CHARLES FRANCIS**, who gave one of the most stunning lunch-time recitals we have ever heard here. (see page 9)

Afterwards Harvey drove your editor home in his new, very swish car! (*Everything seems to be going well for Harvey right now!*) The next thing we heard of Harvey was that, on the following day, he was exploring the delights of Winchester and its cathedral. With a car like that, only the English Channel could get in his way!





December Please visit the Cathedral website for more information
<https://blackburncathedral.com/>

Saturday 4th 7.30pm **Handel's Messiah Blackburn Chamber Choir**



Saturday 11th 7.30pm
'A Christmas Spectacular'
Blackburn Cathedral Choirs



Friday 17th 6pm **Carol Concert**
Cathedral Choristers



Saturday 18th 6pm **Carol Concert**
Cathedral Youth Choir

MORE

What do you know of the Emmanuel Theological College?

Emmanuel Theological College is a ``Christ-centred, hope-filled and mission-orientated community that exists to equip the whole people of God to serve the whole mission of God today".

It is being widely publicised in the Christian press – and it closely involves our cathedral.

See this photo taken after the launch service:



The Dean of Emmanuel Theological College, **Revd Canon Dr Michael Leyden** (front, centre left) with the Chair of Trustees, **Right Reverend Mark Tanner**, Bishop of Chester (front, centre right) next to Bishop Julian, along with other North West bishops, trustees and staff of Emmanuel Theological College.

For more, see <https://emmanueltheologicalcollege.org.uk/>

Eleven new Canons were collated and installed at a special service in Blackburn Cathedral recently.



See <https://www.blackburn.anglican.org/news/625/joyful-service-to-welcome-new-canons>

Bishop Julian has spoken several times in the House of Lords.

Here's his recent contribution to a debate on behaviour change related to carbon neutral targets during his week as 'Duty Bishop' in the House of Lords.

To see and hear Bishop Julian's speech, click:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qR67WNhWjKY>



“Memories of Blackburn Cathedral Choir” by former Chorister of TL Duerden (1939-64), **RODERICK HAMM**



I have just spent a fascinating hour reading the three most recent copies of **Music and More**, recognising a few names and events from those far off war-time days when I was a member of the decani team, playing my part in the week-day services, rehearsing on Fridays and singing in both services on a Sunday. Memories of running down to the Cathedral in the war-time blackout along King William Street or cycling in the lighter months.

My choir involvement resulted from satisfying **Mr Duerden** ‘that I could hold a note’ in music lessons at QEGS where he was also Director of Music. Parental encouragement and purchase of a **bum freezer Eton suit** (worn by all the cathedral choristers in those days!) and I took my place in the ranks back in 1940, lasting till I went off to Sedbergh School in 1943 at the same time as my voice broke; treble in the summer and bass in the House choir in December.



That was really the end of my experience as a member of a choir. Other pressures and priorities meant that I did not join school or college choir.

So, what memories? What lasting effects? What influences? What benefits? Let me see what comes to mind.



Memories are essentially those mentioned by many who have served their time : Choristers Annual Outings to Southport – the boating lake and a fish and chips supper to end the day. Singing in the cathedral: consonants **emphasised mid-service by TL D from the organ loft**, (!) the sonorous tones of **Provost Kay**, eyes closed, reciting “*In the Beginning was the Word.....*”, the cosiness of the east end (which was being extended - with the vast green curtain, the double decker pulpit over the cantoris side, the processional hymns, candles lighted and snuffed out, lights dimmed, But above all the extraordinary clarity and thrill of sound produced by a comparatively small number of



young lads. I can still hear it from all those years ago, still hear the astonishing pure high note by Alan Donelan ; “I know that my redeemer liveth.....”

I did sing as one of the chorus in the *Vagabond King* and *King's Rhapsody* when living in Sunderland in the 1950s. But then moved on to Derby and we started a family!

In 1974 I returned to “this part of the country, to serve with the brand new South Ribble Borough Council. We twinned with a German authority, Kreis Schleswig-Flensburg, on the Danish border. I was much involved in the twinning process as the only chief officer with some German and so was able to visit the Kreis on a couple of occasions.

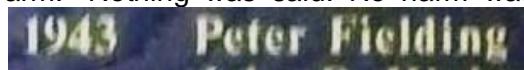
In all German states the primary administrative subdivision higher than a Gemeinde is the Landkreis or Kreis. [Wikipedia](#)

One of the lady councillors had become friendly with a local family and she and I accompanied them to a morning service in the splendid Cathedral. As there was a congregation of modest size we all moved into the choir stalls and I was once more comfortable on the decani side. The hymns were of course in German but most of the tunes were familiar, so I felt well able to participate and add my two pennorth.

On holiday some years ago Sheila and I were in Pembroke on a Sunday morning and popped in to a church in the Main Street where a service was about to commence. There were only half a dozen people there so once again we were confined to the choir stalls, decani of course! We had a good sing despite small numbers; after all I did have a Welsh grandfather.

I find myself listening carefully and critically to choral and formal singing (not pop!) on TV. Undoubtedly the intense and precise training provided by TLD gave me a structured appreciation of such singing, requiring not only hitting the pitch but also enunciating all the words; avoiding running one word into the next when one ends and the next begins with the same consonant. This approach helps when one is involved in a competitive event such as the Leyland Music Festival (now defunct), even as a mere steward (or organiser).

Just a couple of tail-Enders.. One of my pals was **Peter Fielding** with whom I spent a happy hour at his home, melting lead and making toy soldiers with a metal mould. By way of contrast, mid rehearsal in the song school he suddenly turned his head and bit my arm. Nothing was said. No harm was done. That's what friends are for, I suppose!



A mixed bag of thoughts, provoked by reading about the thoughts of other folk.

Roderick Hamm
Penwortham



Peter Fielding was the eldest brother of current alto, Paul Fielding (father of organist William Fielding.)

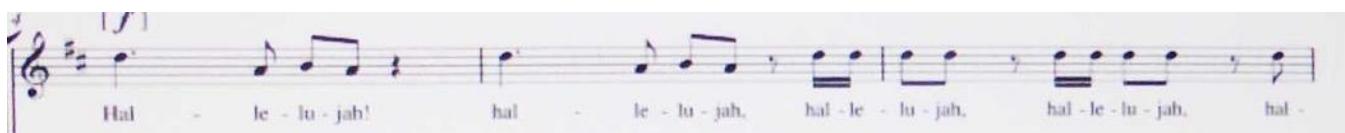
The Fieldings are an amazing family – so many are highly gifted musicians – Peter was an accomplished pianist, and often gave recitals in the cathedral; another Fielding teaches at the Guildhall School of Music, another is an accomplished organist in the South of England, whose son was Head Chorister in Salisbury Cathedral ... on and on. They have been connected with Blackburn Parish Church (now 'Cathedral') for something like 200 years!

From our Director of Music, JOHN ROBINSON

Handel's Messiah

Our glorious local chamber choir, 'Blackburn Chamber Choir' first known as the 'Blackburn Bach Choir' have once again changed their name! This isn't news here I know, but to relaunch, the choir have decided to sing one of the most iconic works in the English Language, Handel's **Messiah**. This will take place on **December 4th at 7.30pm**, at the Cathedral. It will be completely un-cut, but tempi will be exciting!

We are lucky enough to be welcoming a stellar cast of soloists in **Angela Hicks** (Internationally renowned Soprano) **Camilla Seale** (from our own Cathedral Choir) **Matthew Pochin** (who was a chorister with John Robinson



under Roy Massey) and **Damian O'Keefe**, one of George Guest's most versatile choral scholars.

We will have a **small orchestra** (all that's needed in our amazing acoustic) and this promises to be a brilliant and festive night. Although tickets will be available on the door, for COVID reasons it's great if you **book early** so that we can make our **seating plans** and provide refreshments accordingly. Please see the poster for a QR code and links to Eventbrite.



Christmas Spectacular

Sat. 11 Dec. 7.30pm The Christmas Spectacular returns this year with a flourish! Now including the full Cathedral Choir, the first half will feature Haydn's Missa Sancti Nicolai, with full orchestra, as it was intended to be heard. Traditional Christmas Carols will be sung by

all, and we will be joined by local school choirs. The Blackburn Chamber Choir will also feature, singing works by Dufay and Bertalot! This will certainly be a concert for the whole family, with sing-alongs, Jingle Bells, John Rutter, and rousing festive cheer!

Carols in the Market

On **December 18th** our Cathedral Choristers will sing carols around the lovely **Bechstein in the Coffee Exchange in Blackburn Market at 10.00am**

Shoppers will be serenaded as they make their way to Tom Woods award winning steaks! Our brilliant organ scholar Samantha Poh (who played the Liszt B-minor Sonata from memory before the Dean's Banquet) will accompany on the piano. This is a chance to come and support our choristers in a completely different context!



St. Paul's Voices

We have another new choir! St. Paul's Voices are a new group of experienced singers who sing **around six times each year** to a very high standard. They include a number of ex-choristers from many generations, and are looking for new members. They launched on October 24th singing Mozart's D-major Mass. Their next event will be on Boxing Day in the morning, when they will sing at the 10.30 Eucharist. They are a friendly group with lots of experience, who just enjoy singing great music in our Cathedral.



Dean's Banquet

On November 11th our Cathedral Choristers joined with Blackburn Chamber Choir to sing at the Dean's Banquet. It was a tour-de-force, with a palpable sense of appreciation coming from leading members of our business community.

Edwin Booth was present as **High Sheriff**, and was heard to compare our choristers very favourably with some other choirs! It was a late night for all, but seeing the Cathedral transformed

into a splendid banqueting hall was certainly a sight worth beholding for everyone.

Livre du S. S.

Tom Bell (Royal College of Organists) gave us an extraordinary performance of Messiaen's last, longest and greatest cycle, the **Livre du Saint-Sacrament**, on November 14th. A large group of musical pilgrims



came to hear this spell-binding music on the best organ for this in the UK. Tom had delivered a talk at **Stonyhurst College** on the music in the preceding week, and it was great to see a healthy representation of staff and students.

We made the experiment of putting the audience in the sanctuary so they could hear the full impact and clarity of the organ. Not one person complained it was too loud, even though Tom had the actual Tutti (including Chamade reed and couplers) on at times. (Of course, nothing is new, and several people have told me of JB's recitals

where he sat people in just this way, to be able to appreciate the clarity and timbre of this remarkable organ).

As usual with Messiaen's music, audience reaction was profound and extreme, and we are very thankful to Tom for his remarkable generosity in donating all proceeds to the organ maintenance. **See p.10**

The audiences for our regular **Wednesday lunchtime recitals** (12.15 - 1.10) are steadily building up – and quite rightly so, for we have enjoyed the creativity of some **outstanding** musicians. by JB

Two especially exceptional performances were heard on succeeding Wednesdays:

Nov. 17th JOHN ROBINSON played a programme of Bach with his usual shattering brilliance – even though it was at short notice, for our former choral scholar Daisy-Belle Dumsday (Soprano) was unwell.

He began with Bach's brilliant *Toccata, Adagio & Fugue in C* – which was not only scintillating, but also, of course, so very musical.

Alas, we don't have a video or recording of John playing this major work, but we do have a recording of the great **Simon Preston** playing it – from Birmingham. But John's slight varying of the stops (which Simon does not do) added to the satisfying musicality of John's whole glittering performance.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UOj4drS50NY>

(Ignore the adverts!!!)



The following Wednesday we were shattered yet again by an incomparably brilliant recital by **CHARLES FRANCIS**, a third year organ student from Birmingham Conservatoire – a contemporary of our own

Harvey Stansfield who turned pages for him for his first item, which was a Buxtehude Prelude and Fugue. We realised, very quickly, that this was no 'usual' performance of Buxtehude (which can so often lead the audience to think, 'Bach would have composed it better!'). No – every note was so musical and Charles' choice of stops made our (English) organ with 'French' leanings, sound thoroughly German. I didn't know how he did it!

But then, **Charles**, played the rest of his programme **FROM MEMORY** which ended with a shattering performance of Reubke's only major work, his Sonata on the 94th Psalm – which lasts for 25 minutes.



Here's **Richard Gowers** (who was given organ lessons at King's by our own **Gordon Stewart**) playing 'The Reubke' **also from memory** on the organ of King's College Chapel, Cambridge – so that you may realize just what a mind-blowing performance this was for those of us who were privileged to hear, and see, **Charles Francis'** performance in our Cathedral.

I confess that it took me the whole of the rest of the day to recover from such a shattering musical experience. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yLa-1ONtXC0>

**Here are the chosen words of Psalm 94 which Reubke expressed musically:
see if you can feel what Reubke intended you to feel.**

(Grave - Larghetto) God is hiding in mist – but then reveals Himself

1 O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself.

2 Arise, thou Judge of the world: and reward the proud after their deserving.

(Allegro con fuoco) Depicting the ungodly triumphing

3 Lord, how long shall the ungodly triumph?

6 They murder the widow and the stranger: and put the fatherless to death.

7 And yet they say the Lord shall not see: neither shall the God of Jacob regard it.

(Adagio) A quieter, peaceful section

17 If the Lord had not helped me: it had not failed but my soul had been put to silence.

19 In the multitude of sorrows that I had in my heart: thy comforts have refreshed my soul.

(Allegro) Fugue. But my God is strong, and He destroys the wicked!!

22 But the Lord is my refuge: and my God is the strength of confidence.

23 He shall recompense them their wickedness, and **destroy them in their own malice**

Julius Reubke: German Composer, 1834-1858. Pupil of Liszt



We welcome our new Verger, **Jon Addy** (right), who has come to us from being a Verger in Liverpool Anglican Cathedral.

Like all our resident cathedral staff, he has his own apartment in our (still) fairly new Cathedral Close.

WELCOME, Jon! So please introduce yourself to Jon to make him feel *thoroughly* welcome here.

Here he is alongside our Head Verger, **Mark Pickering**.



THE AUDIENCES for our Wednesday Lunchtime Recitals are beginning to increase!

And rightly so, for we have been thrilled by some most memorable recitals.(NB: **Wednesdays, 12.15 – 1.15**)



After each recital many of us enjoy a **delicious lunch** in the **Cathedral Café**. Take the lift down two floors!!

BOOK THESE JANUARY DATES!

Wednesday **5th** January: our own **HARVEY STANSFIELD** (organ) with **RUBY THORNE** (Soprano)



Wednesday **12th** January: The brilliant **TOM BELL** (who attracted a large audience when he played here in November)

Wednesday **19th** January: our own **GORDON STEWART** – one of this country's most exciting organists!



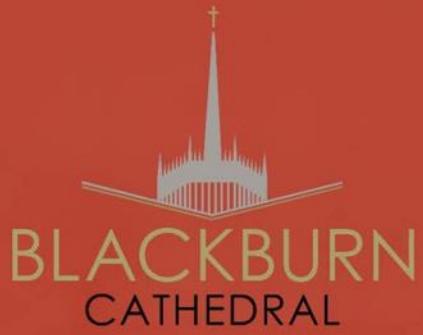
Wednesday **26th** January: Musicians from **St. Christopher's High School**, directed by our own **HELEN DAVIES**.



Our Madonna and Child

by Josefina de Vasconcellos

with our own cascade of Poppies.



Christmas Spectacular

Cathedral Choirs and local schools

11 December

Saturday 7.30pm 2021

Tickets £10

Music items to include

Haydn's St. Nicholas Mass,

John Rutter's Sans Day Carol

Bullard's A Feast for Christmas,

plus Jingle Bells and traditional carols.

Tickets to be booked via Eventbrite

www.spectacular.eventbrite.co.uk

Tickets available on the door if space permits

www.blackburncathedral.com





BLACKBURN CATHEDRAL

Christmas Services

Sunday 28 November

Advent Carol Service 4.00pm

Thursday 23 December

A Festival of Nine Lessons
and Carols 7.30pm

Friday 24 December

Christmas Eve

Carols around the Crib 4.00pm

First Eucharist of Christmas

(Midnight Mass) 11.30pm

Saturday 25 December

Christmas Day

Parish Eucharist 9.00am

Cathedral Eucharist 10.30am

Thursday 6 January

Epiphany Eucharist 7.30pm

followed by refreshments

www.blackburncathedral.com