

Issue 4
Spring 2026

Cathedral Matters

News & Views from
Blackburn Cathedral



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GOVERNANCE

Moving Forward With Resolve and Purpose

Interim Dean, Canon Andrew Horsfall looks back at Holy Week and looks forward with purpose as the centenary year unfolds.



“ There are seasons in the Church’s year that ask something of us, not merely our attendance, but our attention, our willingness to be remade.

Holy Week is the holiest of such times.

This year, Blackburn Cathedral was blessed to journey through those days in the company of former Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, whose presence brought both theological depth and a rare quality of stillness to our worship together. It was a particular joy, too, that this significant moment in our liturgical life coincided

with the first use of our new centenary vestments, their beauty a fitting outward sign of the reverence and renewal we sought to bring to every act of worship throughout the week.

Our Annual Report for 2025 is now available, and we commend it to you as an honest account of a year that brought both real challenges and genuine opportunities.

It does not shy away from the difficulties we have faced, but nor does it linger there, because we move forward as a community with resolve and a purposeful hopefulness, trusting that the same Spirit who sustained us through the year past and continues to lead us into all that is yet to come as the centenary year unfolds. ”

With my prayers and warmest greetings.

The Revd. Canon Andrew Horsfall
Interim Dean of Blackburn

GET IN TOUCH

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Get in touch

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Connect

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@BlackburnCathedral @BlackburnCathedral
 @BlackburnCathedralTV @blackburncathedral.com

Sign up to our monthly email newsletter at:
blackburncathedral.com/newsletter

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VESTMENTS

Great Joy as Centenary Vestments Unveiled

The Cathedral was bathed in glorious colour as new vestments - commissioned for the centenary and designed by acclaimed British textile artist Margo Selby - were unveiled.



The arrival of the highly anticipated vestments was met with rapturous applause from those who had gathered to celebrate the completion of this special centenary project. The Revd. Canon Andrew Horsfall, Interim Dean of Blackburn, delivered a moving speech that perfectly encapsulated how the garments are woven into the Cathedral's fabric:

“Vestments are so much more than cloth and thread. Every stitch carries a prayer. Every colour tells a story of seasons observed, of sacraments celebrated, of faithful lives offered in service to God and to this community. Worn at baptisms and burials, at weddings and ordinations, at great festivals and quiet weekday Eucharists, they are present at the moments that have shaped lives, and witness to a century of this Cathedral community’s joys, its sorrows, and its steadfast worship.”

Designer Margo Selby then thanked the Cathedral for the opportunity to work on the project, adding: “These vestments mark our most prestigious commission to date and we are really grateful for the opportunity to make these cherished garments. We have spent significant time learning new heritage techniques and every element is handwoven and handmade - we are really proud of the outcome.”

The commission of the vestments was made possible through the generous support of the Friends of Blackburn Cathedral and speaking on their behalf, Paul Mason said: “This project is a wonderful way to celebrate the centenary. We are delighted to have been able to bring the project to fruition through the support of The Friends and Margo and her team’s creativity. We have created something special for now and future generations.”

Before the blessing of the new vestments, there was a memorable performance of ‘Oh Love’ by the Youth Choir, directed by Helen Davies and accompanied by Director of Music John Robinson.

Representatives of the Cathedral congregation, the Friends and the designers then offered the vestments to be blessed by the Right Revd. Philip North, Bishop of Blackburn, who led guests in a special prayer to end a memorable evening.

LEARN MORE

Regular centenary updates and ways to get involved can be found at:
blackburncathedral.com/centenary

UPDATE

News in Brief

Here's what has been happening in and around the Cathedral community.

Holy Week

We were delighted to welcome large numbers of worshippers throughout Holy Week. This special time was made even more memorable by the presence of former Archbishop of Canterbury **Dr Rowan Williams**.



During his time with us he commented on both the warmth of the welcome he received and the "great privilege of being able to join the Cathedral community at this time... and to see all the new developments in the buildings and the areas around which has been a very enriching experience."

Blackburn Diocese Centenary 'Big Day Out'

As part of the centenary celebrations the whole of the diocese are invited to have a joy-filled 'Big Day Out' together in the centre of Blackpool on **Saturday 16th May**. There will be activities for children with games and crafts, along with sessions for teenagers too. Adults can enjoy sport workshops, live



music, comedy and more. In the afternoon, there will be a giant picnic and a free hog roast before everyone joins together for a huge celebratory outdoor worship gathering in St John's Square outside the Winter Gardens. Everybody is welcome and more details can be found at: blackburncathedral.com/bdo

The Journey Anniversary Evensong

All are encouraged to join artist **Penny Warden** on Sunday 7th June to mark the 21st anniversary of 'The Journey' - her stunning artwork series.



At this celebratory Evensong we will give thanks for its impact and place in the life of the Cathedral. More details can be found at: blackburncathedral.com/journey21

Pilgrim Places, Holy Lives

This summer, the Church of England will offer a new reflection campaign centred around pilgrimage, which also encourages people to plan their own pilgrimage. The reflections, which begin at the end of May on the Everyday Faith app, are called 'Pilgrim Places, Holy Lives' and explore eight places which were important in the spread of Christianity in England and the stories of the different saints who lived there.



We are also pleased to announce that we have signed up to be a **Pilgrim Place** as part of the Faith in the North initiative and will support and promote this campaign with the aim of encouraging more guests to visit Blackburn Cathedral as part of their own planned pilgrimage.

Individuals can share social media content about pilgrimage using the hashtag [#PilgrimPlaces](https://twitter.com/PilgrimPlaces).

More details can be found at: cofe.io/Pilgrimage

Turin Shroud Exhibition Success

More than 4,000 guests were welcomed to the Cathedral during Lent and Easter as they visited to view the Turin Shroud Exhibition.



The latest in a series of high-profile installations taking place during our centenary year, the exhibition, which was featured on regional television, proved extremely popular with people visiting from across the UK.

Cycling Pilgrims Make Cathedral Pit Stop

Durham Redstarts, a female cycling group, visited the Cathedral recently during their ride of a 94 mile section of the Cathedrals Cycle Route, also calling at Manchester, Liverpool



and Chester cathedrals over 48 hours. Having already completed more than half of the challenge, they found Blackburn Cathedral to be "bright, inviting, calming and enchanting - with the light over the altar being particularly uplifting and spiritual." They received a warm and friendly welcome and were encouraged on their way with a blessing from the Interim Dean.

New Honorary Canons Welcomed

Recognised for their work in different fields across The Church of England in Lancashire and beyond, fourteen people from across Lancashire were recently appointed as Honorary Canons during a series of three services.



They were welcomed to the life of the Cathedral by the Revd. Canon Andrew Horsfall, Interim Dean of Blackburn who said "Lay Canons represent the unity and diversity of the body of the Church people throughout the diocese. It belongs to the office of Lay Canon to seek to contribute to the life of the Cathedral and to promote its mission and service and extend its influence throughout the Diocese."

New Altar Cloths

Ladies from the Blackburn Diocesan Fellowship of Church Needleworkers recently presented the Cathedral with new altar cloths.



These beautiful hand-hemmed, white heavy linen pieces enhance the dignity of the altar, the most sacred place in the celebration of the Eucharist.

Cathedral Matters Email Newsletter

Our monthly email newsletter continues to grow in popularity. We regularly share latest news and updates and subscribers are the first to hear about forthcoming events. Those that haven't yet joined, can do so at: blackburncathedral.com/newsletter

LEARN MORE

See our latest news at: blackburncathedral.com/blog

FUNDRAISING

In Conversation with fundraisers Nudrat Mughal and Kath Jump

With support from the Cathedral Sustainability Fund, the arrival of two fundraisers coincided with the start of our centenary year and heralds the start of a major period of fundraising for the Cathedral.



You're both fundraisers, but your roles differ, how does that work?

NM: My role is geared towards grants, applying to trusts and foundations and working with a variety of different funders both regionally and nationally. The roles are joined up though, because we're both telling the same story but to different audiences who each have their own motivations.

KJ: I work on a more outward-facing basis which includes building relationships with individual donors, local companies and the wider community. We're both working towards the same goal and collaborate on campaigns to source and secure funding.

You're using a range different strategies, can you explain why?

NM: No single source can or will fund everything, but in combining our strategies, we ensure our approaches are connected, relatable and clearly defined.

KJ: That's true - it spreads the risk by making sure that we aren't reliant on just a single source of funding. This is important as we aim to develop a sustainable, long-term, funding model.

Fundraising is widely seen as challenging at the moment, is that what you're experiencing?

KJ: I think donors are becoming more selective which means our approach needs to be really strong and clearly aligned with supporters' priorities. People are rightly being more careful with where and when they donate.

NM: And there is more demand than ever before so funders are stretched and their priorities are changing. They want to see strong projects, backed by good governance and clear impact, so we have to be more prepared than everyone else and present the strongest possible case.

Why is fundraising such a priority for the Cathedral now?

NM: The Cathedral has established itself as one of the leading cultural venue in the north west. We are hosting bigger, more ambitious events and a greater number of community activities too. This results in far more guests than ever before which means we need to match our offering to these increasing demands. It leads to a greater need for support to ensure that the building can cope whilst being safe and welcoming.

KJ: We see our centenary year as a major opportunity. As we look to the future, what we're doing from a fundraising perspective must lead to continued investment in our buildings and facilities. However, as our overheads have increased dramatically, it means that without any spare resources, in order for us to keep pace, we have to fundraise for everything - it's vital.

Can you tell us more about what we're fundraising for?

KJ: We've got clearly defined capital projects linked to the Cathedral's development aims. These projects are both much-needed and really important. They enable us to tell a compelling story to our funders and supporters.

NM: Having projects is one thing but experience has taught us that it's easier to secure backing when goals are clear. We are fundraising for specific projects rather than just day-to-day expenditure. Funders need defined projects that deliver distinct outcomes and long term benefits, which our plans demonstrate. We have a number of schemes that require support and a great example is our aged - and much-maligned - West Doors. These desperately need upgrading to make them energy-efficient, accessible to all and help improve our guest welcome.

KJ: But it's not just the doors! There's the Bell Tower, which needs urgent repair and we simply must replace the aging and obsolete lighting across the building with a digital LED lighting system which will make a considerable difference to every aspect of Cathedral life. It will also reduce energy consumption significantly as part of our commitment to Net Zero. These are just some of the many areas that we are working towards.

What makes a strong grant application?

NM: A key part of the process is making sure that we are a match for the fund itself. We must have a recognisable case for support backed by a strong application, clear project deliverables, solid costs, evidence of community impact and all this must be backed by good governance. I'm doing a lot of work behind the scenes to make sure everything is credible.

For individuals, what do you think motivates people to give?

KJ: I'm finding that people are motivated by their connection to the Cathedral whether that's personal, cultural, or spiritual. Building long-term relationships is really important. We must focus on engagement and show the positive and lasting impact of their support.

Strategic partnerships are often essential for funding. Why are they so important?

KJ: Strategic partnerships are crucial because many funders want to see a wider community benefit. We must demonstrate that we contribute to the social, cultural, and economic life of the region to support and strengthen our case for funding.

INTERVIEW CONTINUES ON p8 >

NM: That's true... partnerships are so important. Funders want to see collaboration and to understand how their support benefits the wider community not just the Cathedral in isolation. By working with councils, trusts and businesses we can really strengthen our proposition.

What are the benefits of signing up to the Fundraising Regulator?

NM: All fundraising is built on trust so it was vital that we registered with the Fundraising Regulator and that we follow best practice. We must deal with supporters and handle donations clearly and transparently and back this up with accurate record keeping. This allows funders and donors to be confident that we are managing their support responsibly. It governs what we do and that shows how we engage with the public is safe and is done so honestly and responsibly.

KJ: The code of conduct also shapes how we communicate

with donors and means we must be accountable. We are committed to ethical fundraising which is really important when it comes to maintaining confidence amongst our supporters.

What will success in fundraising look like and how can people play their part?

NM: I don't think there's one set way for people to get involved. Everyone has a part to play to help sustain the Cathedral and all the wonderful things that are happening here today. Success comes down to being clear about our objectives and getting there collaboratively. Fundraising isn't something that one person does, it relies on everyone playing their part. Fundraising isn't a nice addition to our day-to-day activities, it's a crucial part of our existence. Our target is £1.5m in the next 24 months which is ambitious but realistic.

KJ: I think the success of our fundraising efforts will see

us continue to diversify our income streams, while clearly demonstrating our positive impact. It's about securing support for key projects and sustaining the Cathedral for the future, and in a time when many charities are facing funding shortfalls and most cathedrals are really struggling financially, everyone can play their part. They can do this by donating, getting involved, attending events, supporting campaigns and by spreading the word of what we're trying to achieve. It's vital for us to ensure we're here and thriving for at least the next hundred years!

GET IN TOUCH

Contact Nudrat Mughal via email:
nudrat.mughal@blackburncathedral.co.uk

Contact Kath Jump via email:
kath.jump@blackburncathedral.co.uk

Turn your online shopping into donations to us.

Simply shop online as normal and then brands donate to us.

All without costing you a penny!

- 1 Visit easyfundraising.org.uk
- 2 Sign up and choose **Blackburn Cathedral** as your cause
- 3 Your favourite brands donate to us every time you shop with them



Make a difference every time you shop:
easyfundraising.org.uk/blackburncathedral



Shop with 8,000+ brands including:



OPPORTUNITY

From Cathedral to Screen... Join the 'StreamTeam'

Could you help bring our worship to a wider audience by joining our livestream team? This is a hands-on opportunity to learn new skills while playing a vital role in sharing Cathedral services online.

We're on the lookout for volunteers to join our livestreaming team, and to play an important and valued role in the life of the Cathedral by bringing our worship to those who cannot attend in person.

Working to a rota, the role will involve a couple of hours on a Sunday morning and occasionally other times too. It offers a practical way to contribute while developing valuable media skills. No prior experience is needed as full training will be given.



You'll learn how to operate our livestream system, manage camera angles, and help broadcast services live on YouTube.

This is an ideal opportunity for those interested in working in media, digital communications, or social platforms, whether you are a student or are simply keen to learn something new.

You'll be part of a supportive team and help to ensure our worship is accessible to all while gaining hands-on experience in a real-world and meaningful setting.

FIND OUT MORE

To learn more about this opportunity please speak to Alex Barnes, Head Virger, either in person or email: alex.barnes@blackburncathedral.co.uk

GET INVOLVED

From Needle to Nave

Founded by The Honourable Rachel Kay-Shuttleworth of Gawthorpe Hall in 1952, members of the Blackburn Diocesan Fellowship of Church Needleworkers have been involved in the design, making and repair of vestments and other items for over 70 years.

This work is carried out not only for the Cathedral but also for most of the Parish Churches in the diocese and for clergy in our sister diocese of Bloemfontein, South Africa.

They meet each month to carry out repairs, restorations and work together on new projects. New members are welcome to join them to preserve the traditions and skills for future generations.

To find out more please email: info@blackburncathedral.com

APPOINTMENTS

New Faces at the Cathedral

We welcome an interim succentor and a second fundraiser and detail the latest changes to the Cathedral team.

Revd Canon David Arnold to Support Liturgy and Music Department

The Revd. Canon David Arnold, a member of our College of Canons, has joined the Cathedral as Interim Succentor on a three-month secondment and will have particular focus on responsibilities within the Liturgy and Music department.



David will share in the general life and ministry of the Cathedral community and will continue in his roles as Area Dean of Accrington and some of his wider children's ministry associated with schools.

An experienced priest who has spent all his ministry in our diocese, he knows the Cathedral well, and is a former Bishop's Chaplain. We are immensely grateful to him and to the Bishop for their willingness to support the Cathedral's life and worship during this period, and to those in Accrington for enabling this arrangement.

Second Fundraiser Joins the Team

We are pleased to welcome **Kath Jump** to the team. Her role as Community Fundraiser will see her develop community fundraising initiatives and supporting individual giving during our centenary year and beyond. She joins us following the appointment of Grants Fundraiser, Nudrat Mughal at the end of 2025. Learn more on p6.



Departure

Cathedral Safeguarding Adviser **Lesley Hurst**, has left her part time role at the Cathedral to take up the offer of a full time position elsewhere. In addition to her expertise, she brought a sense of calm and reassurance during a demanding period of change at the Cathedral. She leaves with our heartfelt thanks for her contribution during her time with us and we wish her every success in her new role.

Vacancies

We rely on a team of enthusiastic people with the drive, attributes and skills to contribute to the daily life of Blackburn Cathedral. Our small yet dedicated team of clergy, staff and volunteers support the Cathedral's mission and strive to make a difference to the lives of our guests and our communities.

Details of current vacancies can be found at: blackburncathedral.com/vacancies

Vacancies at Checks & Greys

Due to continued growth, Checks & Greys are on the lookout for dedicated, enthusiastic individuals to join their team.

Whether you're an experienced kitchen professional or new to hospitality, if you're committed to working hard and delivering fantastic customer experiences, they'd love to hear from you.

See details of current vacancies at: blackburncathedral.com/vacancies

DIARY DATES

Highlights This Season

We host a wide range of events that bring people together and we strive to offer something for everyone. Here are some highlights between now and July:



The Drifters Live in Concert
Fri 15th May 2026 | 7.30pm
blackburncathedral.com/drifters



The Beatles by Candlelight
Fri 22nd May 2026 | 7.30pm
blackburncathedral.com/beatles



Westlife by Candlelight
Sat 23rd May 2026 | 7.30pm
blackburncathedral.com/westlife



Volunteer Celebration Service
Sat 6th June 2026 | 4pm
blackburncathedral.com/vcs



U2 by Candlelight
Fri 19th June 2026 | 7.30pm
blackburncathedral.com/u2



The Music of James Bond
Sat 20th June 2026 | 7.30pm
blackburncathedral.com/bond



The Choristers Entertain
Fri 3rd July 2026 | 7pm
blackburncathedral.com/entertain



National Festival of Making
Sat 4th & Sun 5th July 2026
festivalofmaking.co.uk



Four Choirs Evensong
Sun 5th July 2026 | 4pm
blackburncathedral.com/4choirs



Baroque Brilliance
Sat 11th July 2026 | 7.30pm
blackburncathedral.com/brilliance



Springsteen by Candlelight
Fri 24th July 2026 | 7.30pm
blackburncathedral.com/bruce



Fleetwood Mac by Candlelight
Sat 25th July 2026 | 7.30pm
blackburncathedral.com/fleetwood

The events calendar, which is updated daily and includes all worship, can be found at blackburncathedral.com/events

A TABLE FOR THE NATION

A Table For The Nation at Lincoln Cathedral

Created from a section of the nation's most significant tree - a 5,000 year old Fenland Black Oak - the spectacular 13m table is a masterpiece of craftsmanship.



Now on Display

Learn more at:

blackburncathedral.com/table



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CATHEDRAL**