

The Civic Service

at the beginning of the year of service of
Councillor Parwaiz Akhtar
as the worshipful
Mayor of Blackburn with Darwen



Sunday, 21 May 2023 at 11.15am



Mayor Cllr Parwaiz Akhtar

Mayoress Mrs Shagufta Akhtar

Consort Mr Umar Akhtar

Consort Mr Tauseef Akhtar

Mayoress Mrs Sabbah Akhtar

The Mayor's Charities 2023/2024

East Lancashire Hospice

East Lancashire Hospice seeks to ensure that all patients with palliative care needs have access to a range of services when they need them for as long as they are needed. The Hospice respects the intrinsic value of life of each person and the privacy and dignity of each person.

Nightsafe

Nightsafe is a Blackburn based homeless charity providing holistic services to homeless young people aged 16 to 24.

ELHT&Me

East Lancashire Hospitals' official charity supports every area of care from birth and throughout our lives. Enhancing environment and experience for patients, their families and staff above and beyond NHS funding.

Together, developing a better NHS for all.

Councillor Parwaiz Akhtar

Mayor of Blackburn with Darwen 2023/2024

Councillor Parwaiz Akhtar, who has been a Labour councillor representing the Bastwell & Daisyfield ward since 2004, was made the borough's first citizen at the annual Mayor Making ceremony in Blackburn Town Hall on Thursday 18 May 2023.

Councillor Akhtar was born in Jhelum, Pakistan in 1960. At the age of 10, his family moved to Great Harwood, and a couple of years later settled in Blackburn, where he has lived ever since.

He is a former pupil of Pleckgate High School. He left school in the summer of 1977 and went straight into the world of work – his first job was as an Apprentice Textile Weaver at Higham's Ltd, in Great Harwood. After four years, he took on a machine operator role at Precision Polymer Engineering in Blackburn.

Having always enjoyed working with people, Councillor Akhtar moved into community work around 1990. His first public sector role was working with young people as a Community Development Officer for the Ethnic Minority Development Association, and around the same time he volunteered at Bangor Street Youth & Community Centre.

Alongside work, Councillor Akhtar studied part-time at Blackburn College to boost his qualifications and became a Basic Skills Tutor at Training 2000 in 1995. As well as supporting people with English and Maths, he helped them get into training, further education and employment.

In 2012, Councillor Akhtar started work for the NHS at Royal Blackburn Hospital. Over the next decade he had various roles including ward clerk and support worker, and currently works as a Healthcare Assistant within Critical Care.

Over the last 19 years as a ward councillor, Councillor Akhtar has served on many committees within the Council: lead member for the Environment Services, Adult Social Care Services, Chair of the Licensing Committee, and Chair of the Standards Committee. He also serves as a governor at Cedars Primary School in Blackburn.

Councillor Akhtar will be supported in his Mayoral role by two Mayoresses, his wife of 29 years Shagufta and his daughter Sabbah, and also two Consorts, his sons Umar and Tauseef.

Together they have chosen three charities to support during their Mayoral year: East Lancashire Hospice, Nightsafe and East Lancashire Hospital charity ELHT&Me.

Mayoress Mrs Shagufta Akhtar

Shagufta Akhtar was born in Pakistan and moved to England at the age of just three. She attended St John's Primary School in Blackburn and then Pleckgate High School where she really enjoyed design technology and art.

On leaving school, Shagufta took up an apprenticeship at Blackburn College where she successfully completed a vocational qualification. This led to her securing a role at Blackburn's Cookson & Clegg manufacturing military gear, leather products and clothing for the British Army.

Shagufta married Parwaiz in 1984 and they have three children together. Shagufta is also a grandmother to four granddaughters and two grandsons.

Shagufta spent her early married life raising her children and taking care of her household. In 2009 she decided to return to work and began working at Lammack Primary School. She currently works here as a Welfare Supervisor and runs an after-school club. Shagufta occasionally assists in the classroom as support staff and is proactively engaged in helping the school deliver on their key objectives.

Shagufta enjoys spending time with her grandchildren and socialising with friends and family.



Mayor's Consort Mr Umar Akhtar

The eldest of the Mayor's three children, Umar was born and raised in Blackburn.

This millennial child grew up in the pre-internet era playing on the streets of Blackburn and keeping himself active with sports clubs such as East Lancashire cricket club, where he captained his team.

Umar studied at Pleckgate High School, like his parents before him and his siblings after him. He then moved on to studying A-levels at Nelson & Colne College, finally competing his studies in 2011 from the University of Wolverhampton.

Being the eldest child, responsibility and leadership were values instilled in Umar from a very young age, paving the way for him to become a successful manager. Initially Umar's career excelled at Etihad Airways in a role where he could combine his passion for travel and the airline industry. In this role, Umar travelled the world, exploring new and different cultures along the way.

In 2015 Umar married Miriam and they currently have three beautiful daughters together, whom he adores. In order to spend quality time with his family, Umar now works closer to home and is currently a manager at a local supermarket. Alongside work, he uses skills attained during his university study to design plans for buildings and extensions.

Over the years Umar has seen his role model father deliver for the community with dedication and a real passion to make a positive impact. Umar is honoured to be the Mayor's Consort for 2023/24 assisting his father.

Mayor's Consort Mr Tauseef Akhtar

Tauseef Akhtar was born in Blackburn and grew up in the Bastwell area of Blackburn. He attended St Michael with St John C of E Primary School, and then Pleckgate High School like his parents before him.

Tauseef studied Business Management at Blackburn College and went on to complete a Business Management qualification at Leeds University. Tauseef graduated from the University Centre at Blackburn College with a BA (Hons) degree in Business Management. Tauseef has also been accredited with qualifications such as APM and Prince2 whilst working as a Business Analyst.

Having spent his early career working in telemarketing, services and finance, Tauseef currently works as a civil servant within the Cabinet Office. He currently manages a large number of graduates, playing a pivotal role in helping them to secure senior leadership positions within government departments.

Tauseef has been married to Nosheen for eight years and they have three children together: Aydin (5), Mustafa (2) and Zara (7 months). Aydin currently attends St Gabriel's Primary School where Tauseef is an active member of the Governors' Board. Tauseef and Nosheen invest a huge amount of time in their children's development where the kids attend Islamic classes, swimming lessons and football practice.

Tauseef enjoys reading, travelling and watching sports. He spent a lot of his younger years participating in football and cricket matches.

Mayoress Mrs Sabbah Akhtar

Born and raised in Blackburn, Sabbah grew up in a loving family with two brothers. She attended St Michael with St John C of E Primary School, then Pleckgate High School – like her parents before her. Sabbah went on to study A-levels at Blackburn College and graduated from the University of Central Lancashire with a BA (Hons) in Fitness Management.

Since 2013 Sabbah works as a Client Onboarding Executive at a reputable law firm.

Outside of work, Sabbah enjoys baking and reading. Her love of baking stems from her childhood, where she spent many happy hours in the kitchen with her mother Shagufta, learning the secrets of traditional recipes passed down through generations.

Faith is a key part of Sabbah's life, and as a Muslim she values the teachings of Islam and strives to live by its principles every day. She believes that her faith gives her strength and guidance, and it has instilled in her a deep sense of compassion, empathy, and understanding towards others.

The Mayor, Mayoresses and Consorts would like to support other charities throughout the Mayoral Year and raise awareness for them.

Welcome
to this morning's
service

and to all who have come to
represent the life and work
of
The Borough of
Blackburn with Darwen.

The service is led by
The Very Reverend Peter Howell-Jones
The Dean

The Preacher is
Canon Gary O'Neill
Interim Precentor

The Cathedral Choir
Directed by
John Robinson
Organist and Director of Music

Blackburn and Darwen Band
Conducted by
Daniel Thomas
Musical Director

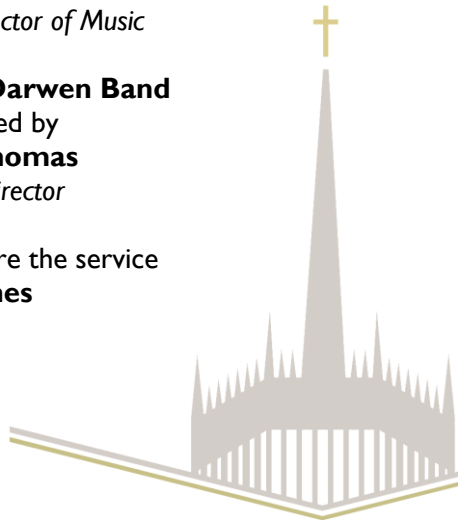
The prelude before the service
Ed Jones

Organ Sonata No. 3 in A major

i con Moto maestoso

ii Andante Tranquillo Op. 65/3

Felix Mendelssohn (1809–47)



Information

Toilets including accessible toilets are accessed by the stairs or lift situated in the Temple Gallery, off the South Transept. Please ask a steward for directions.

One accessible toilet is available at Cathedral level in the South Porch to the left of the main doors when looking towards them. Please ask the Stewards for assistance.

An induction loop is available in the Cathedral, for both speech and music, for those who are hard of hearing. Please turn your hearing aid to the appropriate setting. If you, or someone you are with would benefit from a large print Order of Service, please ask one of the Stewards.

The use of personal cameras, camcorders, videos and audio recording equipment is not permitted during the service without the written permission of the Dean.

Please switch off mobile phones and before the beginning of the service.

Advice about **posture** is given throughout the service. If you find it more comfortable to sit rather than stand or kneel, please do so.

We ask you to remain in your places both before and during the service.

The service is being live streamed and may be watched online at anytime.

The link is on the Cathedral website: www.blackburncathedral.com.

The Gathering

Please stand as the ministers enter to sing

Hymn

DIADEMATA 352



Crown him with many crowns,
the Lamb upon his throne;
hark, how the heavenly anthem drowns
all music but its own:
awake my soul and sing
of him who died for thee,
and hail him as thy matchless King
through all eternity.

Crown him the Virgin's Son,
the God incarnate born,
whose arm those crimson trophies won
which now his brow adorn:
fruit of the mystic Rose,
as of that Rose the Stem;
the Root, whence mercy ever flows,
the Babe of Bethlehem.

The Mace and Table

*During the hymn the mace is placed on the table,
acknowledging that all authority comes from God.*



Crown him the Lord of love;
behold his hands and side,
rich wounds yet visible above
in beauty glorified:
no angel in the sky
can fully bear that sight,
but downward bends his burning eye
at mysteries so bright.

Crown him the Lord of peace,
whose power a sceptre sways
from pole to pole that wars may cease,
absorbed in prayer and praise:
his reign shall know no end,
and round his pierced feet
fair flowers of Paradise extend
their fragrance ever sweet.

Crown him the Lord of years,
the Potentate of time,
Creator of the rolling spheres,
ineffably sublime.
Glossed in a sea of light,
where everlasting waves
reflect his throne – the Infinite!
Who lives – and loves – and saves.

Matthew Bridges (1800-94)

The Welcome

The Very Reverend Peter Howell-Jones, Dean of Blackburn, says

Peace to you from God our heavenly Father.
Peace from his Son Jesus Christ, who is our peace.
Peace from the Holy Spirit, the life-giver.

Grace, mercy and peace
from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ
be with you
and also with you.

Please sit down.

The Dean introduces the service.

The Dean continues

So we welcome today

Councillor Parwaiz Akhtar as our new Mayor, and
Mrs Shagufta Akhtar, Mrs Sabbah Akhtar, Mr Umar Akhtar and
Mr Tauseef Akhtar as our new Mayoresses and Consorts,
and wish God's blessing upon them,
and commend the citizens
of this Borough of Blackburn with Darwen
to God's care and keeping.

Let us pray.

[please remain seated.]

There is a short silence.

Lord of our life and God of our Salvation,
we ask your blessing
on all that is best about us,
and your forgiveness
for anything that has fallen short
of the greatness of the past
and the hopes of the present
and the higher calling of the things of the future.
Bless and guide those
who direct the affairs of this Borough,
sustain them in their work,
support them in their anxieties,
and strengthen them in their resolve
to seek and pursue the well-being of all the people.
Give them joy in their service,
due pride in their successes,
and the approval of a good conscience in all their endeavours.
And so work among us by your good and kindly Spirit
that our Borough may be renewed in beauty and order,
in happiness and peace;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Psalm

(68.1-10,32-35)

The choir sings

Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered :
let them also that hate him flee before him.

Like as the smoke vanisheth, so shalt thou drive them away :
and like as wax melteth at the fire,
so let the ungodly perish at the presence of God.

But let the righteous be glad and rejoice before God :
let them also be merry and joyful.

O sing unto God, and sing praises unto his Name :
magnify him that rideth upon the heavens, as it were upon an horse;
praise him in his Name JAH, and rejoice before him.

He is a father of the fatherless,
and defendeth the cause of the widows :
even God in his holy habitation.

He is the God that maketh men to be of one mind in an house,
and bringeth the prisoners out of captivity :
but letteth the runagates continue in scarceness.

O God, when thou wentest forth before the people :
when thou wentest through the wilderness;

The earth shook, and the heavens dropped at the presence of God :
even as Sinai also was moved at the presence of God,
who is the God of Israel.

Thou, O God, sentest a gracious rain upon thine inheritance :
and refreshedst it when it was weary.

Thy congregation shall dwell therein :
for thou, O God, hast of thy goodness prepared for the poor.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son :
and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be :
world without end. Amen.

The Old Testament Reading

(Ezekiel 36.24-28)

*Read by Councillor Parwaiz Akhtar
Mayor of Blackburn with Darwen.*

A reading from the book of the prophet Ezekiel.

I will take you from the nations, and gather you from all the countries, and bring you into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my spirit within you, and make you follow my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances. Then you shall live in the land that I gave to your ancestors; and you shall be my people, and I will be your God.

This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Please stand to sing

Hymn

CWM RHONDDA 368



Guide me, O thou great Redeemer,
pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty,
hold me with thy powerful hand:
bread of heaven,
feed me till I want no more.

Open now the crystal fountain,
whence the healing stream doth flow;
let the fire and cloudy pillar
lead me all my journey through:
strong deliverer,
be thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,
bid my anxious fears subside;
death of death, and hell's destruction,
land me safe on Canaan's side:
songs of praises
I will ever give to thee.

William Williams (1717-91) tr. Peter Williams (1727-96)

Please sit down.

The New Testament Reading

(Acts 1.6-14)

Read by Denise Park,

Chief Executive of Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council.

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

When the apostles Jesus had chosen came together, they asked him, 'Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.'

Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Canon Gary O'Neill.

There is a short silence for reflection after the sermon.

Anthem

Ave Maria gratia plena,
Dominus tecum:
benedicta tu in mulieribus,
et benedictus fructus ventris tui.
Amen.

*Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with you
blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the fruit of your womb.
Amen.*

Words: St Luke 1:28 and 42b

Music by Robert Parsons (ca. 1535–1571/2)

The Prayers

Led by Canon James Lawrence,

Canon Missioner and

Councillor Phil Riley,

Leader of Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council.

We pray for the Mayor, Consorts and Mayoresses and all those who serve the Borough as councillors, officers and staff of the Unitary Authority, that they may use their responsibilities and skills to enrich the life of all its citizens and so promote the common good.

For the unity of your kingdom,
hear us and help us.

We pray for all those who are working to improve the facilities of the Borough through the partnership and regeneration schemes; all who work in industry and commerce; all who create work and so realise our mutuality and interdependence.

For the unity of your kingdom,
hear us and help us.

We pray for those who act to protect our common life through the maintenance of law, order and justice.
We remember the work of all the emergency services who come to the aid of those in need.

For the unity of your kingdom,
hear us and help us.

We pray for those who are growing up within the life of this Borough, for those who seek to train, educate and nurture our children and young people; that they may go forward to lead happy and fulfilled lives.

For the unity of your kingdom,
hear us and help us.

We pray for the work of the Community and Voluntary Associations and all who work tirelessly in support of young people, those who are elderly, or infirm, those who are disabled and all who are vulnerable.

For the unity of your kingdom,
hear us and help us.

We pray for those in this Borough who are in need of love, care, shelter, comfort and friendship.
May those who counsel, help and befriend them give them a true sense of worth, and may sufficient resources be made available to the statutory and voluntary bodies to sustain them in their needs.

For the unity of your kingdom,
hear us and help us.

We pray for all places of worship in this Borough, that local religious leaders and their communities may pray and work together for the good of all people, and for positive interfaith initiatives which build trust and understanding.

For the unity of your kingdom,
hear us and help us.

We pray for Charles our King,
that you may pour upon him abundant gifts
to help him fulfil the promises made at his coronation:
that he will have the grace, wisdom, and strength
to live a life of service to you and to his people:

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.



We for Queen Camilla, William Prince of Wales,
the Princess of Wales, and all the Royal Family;
that they may love and support the King
as he bears the burden of his office:

Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

We for peace in our homes, towns and nation:

We continue praying in silence as the choir sings

Peace I leave with you,
my peace I give unto you:
not as the world giveth, give I unto you.
Let not your heart be troubled.

Text John 14.27

Music Amy Beach (1867–1944)

The Lord's Prayer

Being made one by the power of the Spirit, as we join our prayers with those of the Church Universal, let us pray in confidence, each in our own language, as our Saviour taught us,

Notre père, qui es aux cieux ... Missierna, li inti fis-smewwiet...

Vater unser im Himmel ... Padre nosso, que estais nos céus...

Padre nostro che sei nei cieli ... Ojczy nasz, któryś jest w niebie...

Otče náš, jenž jsi na nebesích ... الذِّي فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ،

Têve MÛsŷ, kuris esi danguje! ... Ein Tad, yr hwn wyt yn y nefoedd...

Tatal nostru care esti in ceruri Ár nAthair, atá ar neamh

**Our Father,
who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

*Please stand to sing the final hymn,
during which a collection is taken for the work and ministry of the Cathedral,
and the Mace Bearer collects the mace from the table.*

Hymn

LOBE DEN HERREN 440



Sing for God's glory that colours the dawn of creation,
racing across the sky, trailing bright clouds of elation;
sun of delight
succeeds the velvet of night,
warming the earth's exultation.

Sing for God's power that shatters the chains that would bind us,
searing the darkness of fear and despair that could blind us,
touching our shame
with love that will not lay blame,
reaching out gently to find us.

Sing for God's justice disturbing each easy illusion,
tearing down tyrants and putting our pride to confusion;
lifeblood of right,
resisting evil and slight,
offering freedom's transfusion.

Sing for God's saints who have travelled faith's journey before us,
who in our weariness give us their hope to restore us;
in them we see
the new creation to be,
spirit of love made flesh for us.

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Please remain standing.

The Blessing

The Dean says

God grant to the living grace,
to the departed rest,
to the Church, the King, the Commonwealth and all people,
unity, peace and concord,
and to us and all God's servants,
life everlasting;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.
Amen.

Please remain standing to sing

God save our gracious King,
long live our noble King,
God save the King!
Send him victorious,
happy and glorious,
long to reign over us;
God save the King!

Thy choicest gifts in store
on him be pleased to pour,
long may he reign;
may he defend our laws,
and ever give us cause
to sing with heart and voice
God save the King!

The Organ Voluntary

Sinfonia from Cantata N° 29.
Wir danken dir, Gott, wir danken dir
(We thank you, we thank you God) BWV 29i

J.S. Bach (1685–1750)

*Please remain standing as the procession leaves
and then please follow the directions of the wardens.*

Virger
Cathedral ministers
Residentiary Canons
Virger
The Dean
Mace Bearer
Mayor and Mayoress of Blackburn with Darwen,
Chief Executive of Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, Denise Park
Leader of Blackburn and Darwen Council, Councillor Phil Riley
The Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress
Member of Parliament

The Choir

The Mayoral Team
would like to offer a very big thank you
to all who helped and assisted in today's service.

If you are organising an event and would like to invite the Mayor to attend, or if your organisation requires further information about the charities, or if you can offer any assistance in fund raising, please contact the Mayor's Office who will be happy to help.

The Mayor's Office
Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Town Hall, Blackburn BB1 7DY

mayorsparlour@blackburn.gov.uk

Tel: 01254 585229

*Those walking in Procession
are asked to re-assemble in the Cathedral Grounds.*

The Order of Procession

Police Officers
Blackburn and Darwen Band
Mace Bearer
The Mayor and Mayoresses
The Chief Executive
Leader of the Council
Chief Superintendent Divisional Commander for East Division
The Deputy Mayor & Mayoress
Mayor's Chaplain
Member of Parliament
Borough Magistrates
Borough Councillors
Past Mayors of the Borough
The Mayor's Family & Guests
The Deputy Mayor's Family & Guests
Council Officers
Parish Councillors
Chamber of Trade
Chamber of Industry and Commerce
Royal British Legion (Blackburn Branch)
Royal British Legion (Darwen Branch)
Sea Cadets Corps
Scouts' Association
Guides' Association
UNISON
Blackburn College
Representatives of Secondary Schools in the Borough
Community Associations
Voluntary Organisations

Members of the Community

