

Lancaster Royal Grammar School

Founded 13th century John Gardyner's Endowment 1472



Founders' Service of Thanksgiving

Lancaster Priory and Parish Church

Saturday 4th July 2026

10.30am

Praesis ut Prosis

It is known that a school existed in Lancaster in the thirteenth century, but the first definite mention of the old Grammar School is found in a deed dated the 4th August 1469, when the Abbess of Syon granted to John Gardyner of Bailrigg, near Lancaster, a lease of a water-mill on the River Lune and some land nearby for two hundred years to maintain a chaplain to celebrate worship in the Church of S. Mary, Lancaster and to instruct boys in grammar freely, “unless perchance something shall be voluntarily offered by their friends”.

In 1472, John Gardyner’s will made further provision for the endowment of the school, and also for William Baxstonden to “keep the said school” so long as he should be able to teach the boys. In 1682 the school was rebuilt and in 1851 was removed from the old site on the slopes by the Priory to the outskirts of the city, where it now stands. The title “Royal” was granted by Queen Victoria in the same year.

Address given by: Reverend Carol Backhouse, Vicar of Christ Church,
Lancaster

Organist: Andrew Plowman
Director of Music: Rose Martin

Introductory music

Andrew Plowman

Introit - choir

Cantique de Jean Racine – Gabriel Fauré

Congregation stand

Processional hymn

All creatures of our God and King,
Lift up your voice and with us sing

Alleluia, alleluia!

Thou burning sun with golden beam,
Thou silver moon with softer gleam:

O praise him, O praise him,
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Thou rushing wind that art so strong,
Ye clouds that sail in heav'n along,

O praise him, alleluia!

Thou rising morn, in praise rejoice,
Ye lights of evening, find a voice:

O praise him, O praise him,
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Thou flowing water, pure and clear,
Make music for thy Lord to hear

Alleluia, alleluia!

Thou fire so masterful and bright,
That givest man both warmth and light:

O praise him, O praise him,
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Let all things their Creator bless,
And worship him in humbleness,

O praise him, alleluia!

Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,
And praise the Spirit, Three in One.

O praise him, O praise him,

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Words by St. Francis of Assisi, Melody from Geistliche Kirchengesang (Köln, 1623)

We meet together in the presence of Almighty God to remember the foundation of our school, its endowment by John Gardyner and the generous support of its many benefactors through the long years of its history, and to make our prayers that the work so ably begun by others may be continued in this generation and in those to come, that the seeds of virtue and learning here sown may bring forth fruit to the benefit of all people.

Let us pray:

Congregation kneel

I have considered the days of old.

And the years that are past.

I will give thanks to God

For the founder of this school, for John Gardyner and all our benefactors and friends.

We thank you O Lord.

For the gracious favour of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, by whose command the school received its royal title and by whose generosity it was enriched.

We thank you O Lord.

For the lives and good example of all those who have worked for the welfare of our school since its foundation.

We thank you O Lord.

For the heritage into which we have entered and for the commission and charge that have been entrusted to us for our time.

We thank you O Lord.

For the lives of those who have gone before and for the example of their lives.

We thank you O Lord.

Let us offer our own silent thanksgiving to God.

The Lord's Prayer

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.

Congregation stand

Hymn

Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;
Be all else but naught to me, save that Thou art;
Be Thou my best thought in the day and the night,
Both waking and sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be Thou my wisdom, be Thou my true Word,
Be Thou ever with me, and I with Thee Lord;
Be Thou my great Father, and I Thy true son;
Be Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee one.

Be Thou my Breastplate, my Sword for the fight; Be
Thou my whole Armor, be Thou my true Might; Be Thou
my soul's Shelter, Be Thou my strong Tow'r,
O raise Thou me heav'nward, great Pow'r of
my power.

Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise:
Be Thou mine inheritance, now and always;
Be Thou and Thou only the first in my heart,
O High King of heaven, my Treasure Thou art.

High King of Heaven, Thou heaven's bright Sun,
O grant me its joys, after vict'ry is won:
Great Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be Thou my vision, O Ruler of all.

Congregation sit

Lower voices

The Salley Gardens

Irish Tune arr. Benjamin Britten

The Lesson

Genesis 17: 3-9

Read by the Head of School

The Sermon

Reverend Carol Backhouse, Vicar of Christ Church, Lancaster

Congregation stand

Hymn

I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard My people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin,
My hand will save.
I who made the stars of night,
I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear My light to them?
Whom shall I send?
Here I am Lord, Is it I, Lord?
I have heard You calling in the night.
I will go Lord, if You lead me.
I will hold Your people in my heart

I, the Lord of snow and rain,
I have borne my people's pain
I have wept for love of them
They turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone,
Give them hearts for love alone,
I will speak my word to them,
Whom shall I send?
Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart

Congregation sit

Choir

A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square
Manning Sherwin arr. Michael Neaum

Poetry Reading

The Way Through the Woods by Rudyard Kipling
Performed by LRGS Poetry by Heart Finalist
Benjamin Coulton

String Group

Spring: I from The Four Seasons
Vivaldi

Congregation kneel

The Prayers led by Reverend Graham Young, Vicar of Lancaster

O God our Father, hear us as we pray:

That your blessing may rest upon our school.

Hear us as we pray

That the hearts and minds of our governors, headmaster and staff may be filled with your grace, so that in all things they may seek the well-being of those in their care.

Hear us as we pray

That your blessing may rest upon Old Lancastrians, former staff and those no longer with us.

Hear us as we pray

Prayer for The King - The Duke of Lancaster

God of time and eternity, whose son reigns as servant, not master; we give you thanks and praise that you have blessed this nation, the realms and territories with Charles, our beloved and glorious King, Duke of Lancaster.

Grant him your gifts of love and joy and peace as he continues in faithful obedience to you, his Lord and God and in devoted service to his lands and peoples, and those of the Commonwealth, now and all the days of his life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Prayer of dedication

Almighty God, we dedicate to you our school and all its members within these walls; watch over us continually and protect us from evil. Guide us through the darkness of this world, guard us from its perils, uphold us and strengthen us when we grow weary; and lead us upon your road to our eternal home.

Amen

Congregation stand

Hymn

And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green?
And was the holy Lamb of God
On England's pleasant pastures seen?
And did the countenance divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here
Among those dark satanic mills?

Bring me my bow of burning gold!
Bring me my arrow of desire!
Bring me my spear! O clouds, unfold!
Bring me my chariot of fire!
I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.

Text: William Blake (1757-1827)

Music: Charles Hubert Hastings Parry (1848-1918)

Act of Dismissal and Benediction

Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good; forgive those who do you wrong; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honour all people; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

And the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit rest upon you and remain with you this day and always.

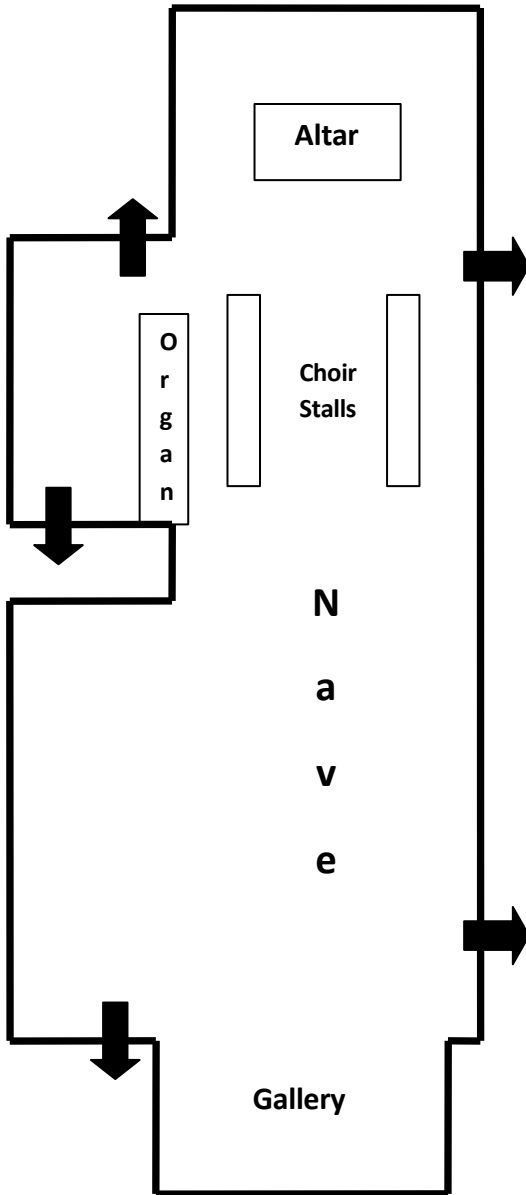
Amen

Congregation stand

National Anthem

God save our gracious King,
Long live our noble Duke,
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.



Exits are marked 

