

LAUNDE LEAVES



THE FRIENDS OF LAUNDE

NOVEMBER 2021

LIVING STONES

Supporting Launde Abbey
The Retreat House of the Dioceses of
Leicester and Peterborough

You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 2:5

Thank you to Simon Barrington for giving permission to feature his recent painting on the front cover of this edition. Simon writes: *Launde is a place of lasting strong impressions and I'm sure many are attached to it. There were a number of special angles and views but the best at the time was the great view of the front of the house in its setting of trees with the drive and iron gates which lend a delightful contrast of colours and textures.*

A HYMN FOR LAUNDE : CELEBRATING 900 YEARS

For Launde we give you thanks, O Lord, this green and healing space; The trees and parkland spreading wide, The gardens and the house provide a peaceful, holy place, a peaceful, holy place.	The anxious soul find rest; The tempted struggling with their fears, Those full of sorrow, grief and tears: May everyone be blessed, May everyone be blessed.
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And so, O Lord, we pray for those who come to Launde each day; That all who seek in faith may find Your saving grace, with open mind May walk the Christlike way, May walk the Christlike way. Here may the doubting grow in faith,	Here may the weary find new life, The weak their strength restored; And may we all, now Spirit fired, With love and joy and peace inspired, Rejoice to serve our Lord Rejoice to serve our Lord.
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The Reverend Canon Brian Davis

Partly based on the Launde Prayer (see back page), written to celebrate 900 years of Launde Abbey. Tune: Repton, by Hubert Parry - 'Dear Lord and Father of mankind'

FROM THE CHAIR



WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE FRIENDS?

The Friends exist to support Launde Abbey in a variety of ways. An important part is raising much needed funds to support various projects at Launde.

Most of the funds over the years have come from the membership fees. We are grateful to all the Friends who help us in this way, and especially to those who include a donation as well.

It was good to have a social afternoon for Friends (and those they brought with them) in August when 75 of us were able to walk round the grounds and enjoy a cream tea. It was a chance to meet one another socially. It was also a fund-raiser. After paying for the teas we were able to add £409 to our funds.

I want to thank the three members who are standing down from the committee this year: Mike Playdon, Bart Hellyer and Mary Rose de Lisle. They have each made a valuable contribution to the Friends' Committee, and we will miss them. We need to recruit new members who can contribute something to our aims. So if you know someone who might be suitable and willing, please contact me. I am pleased that Hazel Aucken has joined the Committee. She was an 'intern' living in at Launde for several years. She is now ordained, and is Curate at Newbold de Verdun, Barlestone & Kirkby Mallory, Peckleton & Tooley!

A few years ago we had a member of the Committee who was a keen Bridge player. She organised a Bridge tournament at Launde which I seem to remember raised over £1000. We need more people like that!

The Friends' 24 hour Retreat has been going for some years, organised by Mike Playdon. We hope it will continue. For a number of people it has introduced them to the idea of a Retreat, which was partly its purpose.

Planting trees at Launde has been one of our aims. We have managed to plant about 15 small saplings in the grounds of the Abbey (donated by Mike Hind-Woodward), and also four well established oak saplings in the park (also donated), to replace the four of the twelve that we had planted four years ago, which had died. But our aim is still to plant 900 trees to celebrate the 900 years since the monastery was first established at Launde. We can only do this by going out to local farmers, especially those that rent the Glebe land around Launde, and persuading them to plant more trees. The UK is the least wooded country in Europe, and Leicestershire is the least wooded county! Yet planting trees is a very good way to absorb the carbon in the atmosphere which is the main contributor to the climate crisis.



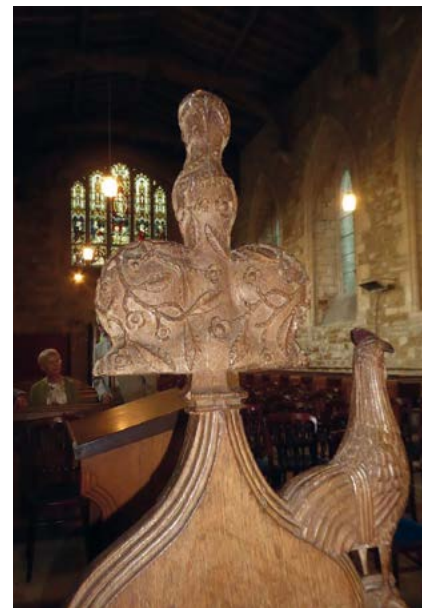
A major fund-raising event took place on 25th September: a Gala evening at Noseley, which included a champagne reception with a Jazz Band, a Concert in the large chapel and supper in the marquee.

We are very grateful to Robert and Sue Wilkinson, of Rolleston Hall, who have met most of the costs of the evening. The many people who attended will doubtless long remember this evening of perfect weather, wonderful music, a fine supper and the opportunity to meet up with old friends and make new acquaintances, all in aid of Launde Abbey.



The quartet in rehearsal in Noseley Chapel

Cellist Caroline Dearnley, oboist Catriona Lockhart, violinist Rebecca Hirsch and viola-player Clare Finnimore entertained us with pieces from around the world in the remarkable Noseley Chapel. What a joy it was to hear such accomplished musicians play live music to a substantial and appreciative audience.



Bishop Martyn of Leicester reminded us in his closing words that the chapel at Noseley is one of the few churches in Leicestershire for which he is not responsible. Before and after the concert we were able to look closely at the family tombs, dedications and inscriptions, the wooden carvings, stained glass and fine stonework of this centuries-old building. Living stones indeed.



The total raised has yet to be confirmed but those who attended the evening will surely agree that it was a wonderful way to show our support for Launde Abbey in such a convivial and enjoyable way and to be able to celebrate being able to share a memorable

evening after so many months of restrictions and separations. Mary Weston's team did a superb job organising the sale of tickets, the Prize Draw and making us all feel welcome. Huge thanks go to them.

The Reverend Canon Brian Davis, Chair of the Friends of Launde Abbey

Thank you to our Membership Secretary Jan Zientek for the photos

JOIN THE FRIENDS OF LAUNDE

The Friends of Launde exist to provide practical, spiritual and financial support to Launde Abbey.

The annual subscription is £20 for individual members, £30 for couples.

Did you know that corporate membership is available for churches? For all information follow <https://www.laundeabbey.org.uk/friends/become-a-friend/>

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STONES OF WITNESS

We can discover so much from our church buildings but what do most of us really notice or 'learn' when we visit them? 'Church Going', as the poet Philip Larkin puts it, can teach us about the history of the Christian faith in this country, about the use of the decorative arts in buildings of faith, about the place of churches in their local landscape and community and in national history, and not least about the changing use of sacred space through the centuries as reflected in architecture and furnishings, for actually "the tradition of the church is change". I realised, when we were having a complete re-ordering of Emmanuel Church Loughborough in the 1990s, that there were many in the congregation like me who almost took it for granted that the church had always looked the same internally: this was the sort of Anglicanism with which we were brought up. Hence the proposals ran into considerable opposition.

It set me thinking. As a devotee myself of robed choirs, organ accompaniment and a sacramental east-end chancel, I had to admit that things were not always so. Have you read Thomas Hardy's 'Under the Greenwood Tree' when the village band, which has 'traditionally' led the singing from a gallery at the back, has its nose put out of joint by the arrival of a lady on a new organ at the whim of a new vicar for 'new-fangled' Victorian things?

Medieval churches must often have been spectacular to enter: a compartmentalized interior, a glorious chancel for the liturgy of the mass, images of saints, an elaborate reredos to a high altar, a rood screen



Photo: Medieval interior, Stoke Dry

running across the width of the building to separate the laity from the priest.

By Elizabeth I's reign, the Protestant Reformation had brought a complete liturgical change: a communion table in the centre of the 'chancel' or even in the nave, whitewashed walls. Morning and Evening Prayer, now in English, were read in the nave among the people, who sat in pews. The government insisted that each parish should provide a 'comely and honest pulpit'!



Above: Elizabethan interior, Brooke

In the 1630s, Archbishop Laud, supported by Charles I, introduced a sort of 'Anglo Catholic' emphasis with the altar back at the east end, decently railed off, and with vestments to be worn. I have even come across a church where there was virtually a tug-of-war between the rector, who

wanted to follow Laud's altar decree, and a congregation who wanted to hold on to their table! The Puritan zeal of the Civil War and Interregnum led to communion rails being destroyed, stained glass smashed and Prayer Book worship banned.

Then came the Georgian Church: Holy Communion usually only three times a year; box pews with doors for those who could afford the rent; the squire's pew in a prominent position; galleries added to provide extra accommodation, especially in town churches; a plain table at the east end with the Tablets of the Law, Lord's Prayer and Creed above it, but the pulpit, often a 'three-decker', being by far the most imposing feature, long sermons requiring hour glasses. Organs were now rare, the singing of metrical psalms and anthems being led by an enthusiastic choir accompanied by a small band who were often accommodated in a gallery at the west end of the church. As Christopher Wren had written: 'It is enough for the Romanists if they hear the murmur of the mass and see the elevation of the Host, but our churches are to be fitted as auditories.'



*18th century interior,
Kings Norton*

Only in Victorian times did the lay-out we may have thought of as 'traditional' really become universal: a raised altar at the east end, choir pews, organs, sung services and, as the Anglo Catholic wing of Anglicanism developed, we find one of their pioneers, John Mason Neale writing that, 'A church is not as it should be till every window is filled with stained glass, till every inch of floor is covered with encaustic tiles,

till there is a rood screen glowing with the brightest tints.’

Below: Victorian interior, Ashley



So, most church interiors probably assumed their present form 150 years ago at most, and a medieval church might well have had five or more substantial re-orderings over its lifetime. And that’s even before the second half of last century and the first

decades of this with the impact of modern liturgical and community requirements.

Within 25 miles or so of Launde Abbey ‘survivals’ or ‘partial survivors’ can be found of most of these changing liturgical fashions and they make fascinating visits: Stoke Dry, Brooke, Lyddington, King’s Norton, Ashley, Gaddesby, Stapleford, East Carlton, Hallaton, Teigh....the list goes on.

How about days out for Friends who are interested? I would be happy to lead small groups in cars visiting perhaps two churches in the morning and two in the afternoon, booking in for lunch at Launde and leaving a donation for the ‘day out’ to Launde’s funds? Please let the Editor know if you would like to take part sometime.

Roger Willson

*If you would like to take part in the kind of small group visit outlined by Roger above, please email the Editor b.lott1509@gmail.com
Thank you, Roger, for taking us on this tour of churches within 25 miles of Launde.*

The United Nations Climate Summit (COP 26) is taking place in Glasgow in November. Roots & Wings members Tim, Esther, Mary, Eve and James share their thoughts, based on their research

HOW DOES OUR ECONOMY WORK RIGHT NOW?

Currently our economic model is linear. We take raw materials from the ground and the world around us (metals, wood, fossil fuels etc.) We make products from these raw materials through an often very wasteful manufacturing process. When the product reaches the end of its usage it is ‘destroyed’, usually ending up in landfill, with very little being recycled.

A huge issue with our linear economy is the massive amount of waste it produces. This waste can lead to fly-tipping and other forms of environmental damage. Food waste contributes 6-8% of global greenhouse gas emissions. The ideal solution would be to get rid of the destroy sector all together, or at least reduce it.

What are the problems with our linear economy?

We are extracting resources far faster than they are being replenished. Another problem with the **take** stage of the process is the negative effects it can have on the environment and people, such as the destruction of local ecosystems.

The **make** section of the linear economy model is incredibly resource-hungry and wasteful, usually relying on fossil fuels to power the production and distribution of products. Another issue is the environmental effects of the production itself with harmful chemicals being released. This is due to most manufacturing being undertaken in Low Income Developing Countries with cheaper labour and less strict environmental laws. This can be made worse by the waste from this economic model being shipped to the LIDC in the **destroy** stage.

Our Linear Economy



Would a circular economy be any better? When something reaches the end of its life it isn't thrown away, it is used as a resource to make something else. The best example is nature: Plants absorb nutrients and CO2 and make oxygen. Animals then eat the plants (and each other) and breathe in the oxygen, exhaling CO2 and releasing nutrients when they die. A key part of the circular economy is designing things so they are easily repairable and so they can easily be broken down into the components, then materials that were used to make them. This ensures a long lifetime with maximum use and when something does break, it can be made into something else or fixed relatively easily.

In the **take** sector there is less strain on natural resources because of the emphasis on making products last and recycling. For example, food waste should be used as a fertiliser or to create biofuels (like ethanol) then it would not only reduce emissions, it could also be a great financial opportunity. It could also reduce the need for chemical based fertilisers that can be very harmful to wildlife. Unsold food can be collected and then given to people struggling with food insecurity - this already happens to a small extent in Oakham.

Make - some of the make jobs would be replaced by industries that repair and upgrade old, used products. This could sometimes be done by the owner of the product. For example - my Smartphone is a 'Fair Phone'

which is fairtrade and has been designed to last a long time. I can buy new parts separately and upgrade or repair it myself. Other smartphones are designed so that you have to buy a new phone regularly if you want upgrades. The average person in the UK buys a new phone every 2 years. Recycling has major benefits. For example, recycled copper uses only 20-30% of the energy used in primary copper extraction, so it can be much cheaper.

The group have asked the MP for Rutland and Melton to send to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs the following two questions:

1. Will he bring forward to 2025 the ban on biodegradable waste being sent to landfill, in line with the Climate Change Committee's recommendations?
2. What steps is he taking to phase out exports of waste by 2030 at the latest, in line with the Climate Change Committee's recommendations?

A further two questions are requested in parliament:

1. Will he set a target for a 68% recycling rate by 2030 covering all wastes in England, in line with the Climate Change Committee's recommendations?
2. Will he introduce mandatory business food waste reporting by 2022, in line with the Climate Change Committee's recommendations?





If you are interested in being part of the editorial team that produces Launde Leaves twice a year, please email the editor b.lott1509@gmail.com

DAVID AND HELEN AT LAUNDE ABBEY



“A voice of one calling in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord!” In the summer of 2019 David Newman proclaimed these words to a crowd of hundreds at the Launde 900 celebrations as he began his spellbinding hour-long performance of Mark’s gospel. Perhaps the same words were echoing somewhere in the back of his mind as he and Helen unpacked removal boxes in the Warden’s House two years earlier at the start of their four year ministry here at Launde.

If not exactly a wilderness, Launde was certainly a surprisingly remote and rural outpost for a clergy couple who had been based more recently in Loughborough and the vibrant heart of Leicester. But David and Helen were already very familiar with both the Abbey and many of our staff (who had been delighted by the appointment when it had been announced in late 2016) and they adapted to life here very quickly — not just coping or managing, but flourishing and thriving. For all of us, these last few years of working alongside them have been both a privilege and a pleasure.

David’s quiet, gentle yet surprisingly effective approach quickly became evident. He never seemed to need the blustering, driven style affected by some in leadership. He would have a conversation here, offer a suggestion there, gather people’s thoughts, draw his team to a common mind; it felt as natural as the soft flowing of a tiny brook, and yet when you turned around to look you suddenly realised how far you’d travelled, how significant were the changes, how much had been done.

Helen, meanwhile, worked as David's strongest supporter and most constructive critic, using her own creativity and vision to give depth and shape to their shared ministry. And she threw herself into her new role as Chaplain, building strong relationships with so many of our guests and visitors and, notably, with the staff. Helen's loving care of many of our staff during some incredibly difficult personal situations will be remembered for a long time to come.

David and Helen inherited strong foundations laid by the previous Warden, Alison Christian, and they built on them confidently, courageously and imaginatively. We expanded the range and number of retreats on offer throughout the year. We developed a programme of Deepening Discipleship days to help people explore their faith. David introduced retreats which knit together the contemplative and charismatic traditions, while Helen drew on her experience in hospice chaplaincy to offer retreats giving space for reflection on dying and death. Helen also pioneered a much greater engagement with the arts in the Abbey, and most of the public space in Launde now bears touches of her passion for visual beauty.

In 2019 David led the Abbey through the magnificent Launde 900 celebrations, bringing together thousands of people to celebrate, reflect, pray and worship in the company of such luminaries as Hilary Mantel, Professor Diarmaid MacCulloch and Adrian Plass. The whole year was filled with hope, as we marked nine centuries of prayer at the Abbey, rejoiced in the best financial stability we'd seen since Launde opened as a retreat house, and were seeing steady growth in both our own retreat programme and our work with external church and Christian groups.

Then came 2020: COVID and lockdown. David and Helen responded with characteristic steadiness and determination, and Launde had a Holy Week retreat going out online (to over 1000 people!) within two weeks of lockdown starting. Throughout the last year they worked tirelessly to maintain staff morale, protect the finances, engage creatively with online retreatants and the wider church, and to ensure Launde would have a

future on the other side of the crisis. Even in these last few months, despite the shock of Helen's diagnosis and while both on extended leave, they've continued to maintain a lively interest in the reopening of Launde, encouraging and supporting right up until their recent move into retirement.

We're going to miss David and Helen greatly. I'm going to miss them both. Working with them, I've learned so much, enjoyed good companionship on the journey, and valued their wisdom, energy, deep prayerfulness and imaginative verve. I hope all Launde's friends, all who read this, will join us in praying for them both as their next steps unfold. Launde is so much the richer for their time and ministry here.

The Reverend Chris Webb - Deputy Warden

David and Helen Newman

I will never forget Rev David Newman's thought-provoking and inspiring telling of St Mark's Gospel from memory as part of the 900th anniversary of Launde Abbey. Hearing the whole Gospel spoken in its entirety from memory brought it much closer to the oral story telling traditions of Jesus and by doing so the Word come alive in a fresh and powerful way. To achieve this on what must have been his busiest week at Launde Abbey in such a calm and creative manner speaks much of a man with a quiet dedication to what is most important in life.

Helen's honesty, humour and humility made her such a great part of the team at Launde Abbey. Her Quiet Days on suffering, darkness and end of life experiences were clearly profoundly informed by her time as lead Chaplain at LOROS, and were incredibly moving and inspiring. Her powerful use of images of Kintsugi - the Japanese art of repairing broken pottery pieces with gold, really spoke to me as a very helpful way to value and grow through flaws and imperfections by focusing on them as something to embrace, not disguise.

Miriam Stoaite

HAZEL AUCKEN REFLECTS

The Revd Hazel Aucken was resident at Launde when Helen & David Newman arrived. She recalls that David instigated an Induction Week during which he and Helen worked alongside housekeeping and dining room staff, counted money in the Accounts Office and worked with the gardeners. Helen planted onions. She later became volunteer coordinator. At staff meetings David asked different departments to give presentations of their roles. This was a move much valued by those who worked at Launde, though the award for most entertaining presentation has to go to the Housekeeping Team who performed their version of “The Ten Days of Christmas.”

Chris Webb and Cathy Davies welcomed them to the Clergy Team. David & Helen were keen to learn the “house style” and were generously supported in this by Chris Webb. David changed the time of Morning Eucharist to 8 am, giving time for guests to enjoy breakfast at 8:30 and he removed the 15 minutes’ silence after the service as he wanted to be available to those who attended.

Helen brought her interest in the creative arts. An artist in residence was commissioned and, thanks to Helen, Launde acquired the Deo Gloria-sponsored wall hangings by Jacqui Parkinson that now hang along the main corridor. The textile works in the Dining Room light up those walls and have been much admired and appreciated.

The position of Warden at Launde includes being Priest-in-Charge at Loddington Parish Church. Hazel, then an ordinand, would sometimes walk, sometimes drive with David to services there and David introduced child-friendly worship. On light evenings Hazel would often meet David and Helen walking round the park after evening service. A pause to sit on the bench dedicated to the memory of former Warden Henry Evans was usually included.

David and Helen’s respective personalities complemented one another in ways that many who attended their jointly-led retreats, both at Launde and on-line, found spiritually inspiring and memorable.

FROM THE WARDEN

The joy of shaping a new chapter together

First of all, thank you for all that you, the Friends, have given in time and resources over many years to Launde Abbey and its work. Your support is important and many are grateful for it. Indeed, I am one of the many who have benefited from your contributions, as I have visited Launde privately and led various groups here, over the last 15 years.

However, during the summer a page was turned at the end of a chapter in the story of Launde and this autumn a new chapter is starting. Some of the characters have changed but some will stay the same. As the new Warden, I am hugely grateful to those before me who have passed the baton on, not least David and Helen. I am also aware of those staff and volunteers, including the Friends, who have figured in previous chapters and will be in the next one. Together we will see how the narrative must change, shaped by today’s context and today’s people, and to meet today’s challenges - particularly those that face us as we emerge from the pandemic.

In this endeavour we will need both faithfulness and creativity, both continuity and innovation. But it seems to me that this is the way that God’s Spirit most often works: inspiring us to tell ‘things from of old, things our ancestors told us’ (Psalm 78: 2 & 3) and to ‘sing a new song’ (Psalm 144: 9), often both at the same time! And that sounds joyful to me.

The Reverend Canon Alison Myers



LAUNDE LEAVES

is published by the Friends of Launde Abbey

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THE LAUNDE ABBEY PRAYER

Father,

here may the faithful find salvation

and the careless be awakened;

here may the doubting find faith

and the anxious be encouraged;

here may the tempted find help

and the sorrowful comfort;

here may the weary find rest

and the strong be renewed;

here may we all find inspiration,

and that peace which the world cannot give:

your precious gift to us in Jesus Christ our Lord,

Amen.

For more information about Launde Abbey and its programme of events
visit www.laundeabbey.org.uk or email info@launde.org.uk
or ring (01572) 717254 (between 10.00am and 4.00pm),

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