



The Friends of Launde

Charity No: 519042

September 2026



As we sit here early in this Season of Creation, how appropriate it is that the theme for this year is Living Water. For those of you who came to our Friends Retreat in 2024 you will remember that our theme was Wells of Salvation and was based upon the Launde Abbey 900 Prayer.

Also, of course, last year we granted a sum of money to the Abbey for the purchase and installation of a new pump and ancillary works to the existing underground brick-built rainwater storage chamber. This has worked especially well in watering the border behind the main house over the last few months.

It has not been easy for Karen and her team of garden volunteers over these very hot and dry summer months. How well they have done supplying produce for the Abbey's use under very difficult circumstances.



The Launde Abbey 900 Prayer

Eternal God,
who calls us to draw water
from the ancient wells of salvation,
and whose Son is the living water
from whom we can drink
and never be thirsty:
resource, renew and refresh us,
as with gratitude for the past,
we step out with confidence
into your future,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

Notice of the Annual General Meeting of The Friends of Launde The 41st Annual General Meeting

will take place on Tuesday, 6th October 2026 at 7 pm by Zoom

The Zoom link and copies of the minutes of last year's meeting
will be made available by email before the meeting



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Our Friends' Retreat 2026

What an enjoyable time we had at Launde Abbey in July. Led by Jo de Graath and supported by Revd Catherine Wright I am sure that I was not the only one who felt that we really were "Living life in the joy and promise of Psalm 23"



The Friends of Launde are hosting a Bridge Day at Tilton Village Hall, LE7 9DB

Friday 9 October: 10 for 10.30am to approx. 3.30pm

Interested in having a relaxed day playing Bridge with 3 friends and a good lunch at Tilton Village Hall? If so, please do join us.

Tables of 4 players – if there are 3, 2 or 1 players interested we may be able to make up a table so please contact Mary whose details are below.

£25 per head

- * Coffee with Home Made Biscuits * Tables of 4, NON PROGRESSIVE
- * Lunch with Wine : there will be a vegetarian and a soft drink option
- * Home Made Puddings * Raffle with excellent Prizes
- * Prizes for highest Bridge Score

Tickets from Mary Weston

<https://form.jotform.com/261174687698072>

email : mary@bankart.co.uk



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**With thanks to Launde Abbey for hosting
our 2027 Friends' Retreat with the theme
'Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread'
26 - 28 July 2027**



Led by Revd. Debbie Smith, Resident Chaplain.

As a new member of the team at Launde Abbey, Debbie brings experience as a psychotherapist, of teaching in pastoral care and counselling and of leading retreats in various context. She has worked in parish ministry and as a healthcare chaplain, both in the UK and in New Zealand.

Our Friends annual retreat will provide an opportunity to meditate afresh on the phrases of the Lord's Prayer. Through short talks and quiet reflection, there will be an opportunity to engage with prayer stations to express our response creatively as we pray through and explore in more depth the core themes of this well-known prayer.

There will also of course be times of fellowship with a Quiz evening, perhaps time to work together on a communal jigsaw and also conversations and walks with Friends.

Retreat Cost: Arrival 26 July at 3pm and leaving 12 noon 28 July.

Single Occupancy; full board £245 per person

Double Occupancy full board £195 per person

Premium Room + £30 per room for the 2 night stay

Retreatant Day Rate: Tuesday (9.30 - 4.30 morning coffee, lunch & tea) £60,

plus an additional charge of £22 should you wish to stay for the Evening Meal

Launde Abbey are also offering special offers for any additional nights to these residential stays after our retreat.

Due to us having to shortly contract for a certain number of rooms we are asking for a deposit of £100 to confirm your intention to join us as a resident.

Please email: friendsoflaunde1@gmail.com with any queries.



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The Sound Project



Earlier this year we agreed to fund the cost of £5750 for the Jacqui Parkinson banner Light of the World plus 9 acoustic panels.

The banner is now in position on the landing of the dining room and the acoustic panels will hopefully be in situ within the next few months.

Due to the generosity of some of our members we have received more than the sum requested and so we have asked Launde Abbey to obtain quotes for new thermally lined curtains, poles and rails.

To donate by card visit:

tinyurl.com/thesoundproject

Or use this QR code



To donate by bank transfer

The Friends of Launde

Sort code: 40 28 06 Account: 21302132

Please use the reference Sound

To donate by cheque

please make payable to

The Friends of Launde

and send to our treasurer:

Alison Collis, 37 Coppice Mead,
Stotfold, Hitchin, SG5 4JY

Introducing Stephanie Preston-Hall

Hello, my name is Stephanie and am a retired dance teacher from Skegness who now runs a property rentals business, owns a laundry business and also am a PA to an autistic young man.



I first came to Launde in 2013 on a retreat to do with working with autistic children. One day in a break I wandered across from the stables and found the chapel purely by accident. My husband and I had been looking for a special place to get married for a couple of years.

Hence I phoned my then fiancé and said 'you've just got to come and see this!' We came back the next weekend and as soon as we pulled over the cattle grid he said 'yes, this is it!' The following year we got married at Launde Abbey.

I've been in love with Launde ever since that first visit. I feel it is my spiritual home and is therefore a very special place to me. This is why I am a Trustee of The Friends of Launde and believe they play a vital role in ensuring the future of the Abbey.

Stephanie



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Digital Horizon: New Website to Strengthen our Support for Launde Abbey

Exciting changes are on the horizon for our community network. The Friends of Launde have officially agreed on a framework for its own website, which is currently under construction. This represents a major step forward in how we share our story, and our support for the ministry and wellbeing of Launde Abbey with the wider world.

Bridging the Gap: Better Communication

At its heart, the new website is designed to bring our community closer together, where we will be able to share regular updates, newsletter archives, and event details instantly. Whether you are a long-standing supporter or a first-time visitor, staying in touch will be simpler than ever before.

Growing Our Family and Funding

To ensure the Abbey remains a thriving place of sanctuary and retreat for generations to come, the website will focus heavily on two vital goals:

Increasing membership: Simplifying the sign-up process to welcome new members into The Friends of Launde, and Boosting Donations: Introducing secure, streamlined online giving tools to make one-off or regular financial support effortless.

Looking Ahead

While our developers work hard behind the scenes to bring this framework to life, we want to thank everyone whose continued generosity makes projects like this possible. We look forward to sharing the official launch date and web address with you this October!

Madeleine Wang

Our August Cream Tea: It was a pleasure to meet old and new Friends and what an enjoyable day it was. The weather was ideal, the dining room and dairy were full of both people and conversations, and the cream tea perfect as ever.

Afterwards we gathered in the Chapel for a talk by Michael Miller on a project to uncover Launde's historic secrets of the Priory & Abbey, a 2-year programme looking at the main area at the front of the house. The last Resistivity Survey was carried out between 1989 and '92 but of course much has changed since then with satellite imagery, LiDAR which stands for Light Detection and Ranging, a remote sensing technology that uses laser pulses to measure exact distances and build detailed 3D maps, and other new technology.