

BEFORE YOU LEAVE

You have visited not merely a fine historic church and awe-inspiring ruins, but a place where the Christian faith has survived with great power. Many of our visitors find it possible to draw near to God with their joys, problems and fears in the tranquillity of this church, and never more so than in our present disordered and threatening world. The simple prayer below is for you or for anyone for whom you wish to use it.

God be with you in your going out and your coming in.

God be with you in your work and in your leisure.

God be with you in company and solitude.

God be with you in all your pilgrimage and at its end.

*And the blessing of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit abide with you
always.*

Amen

The Gregorian plain-chant which you hear in the church was recorded by Benedictine monks and was used here for centuries.

Volunteer guides are on duty to help you.

Photography (without tripod) is freely permitted.

If you are interested in joining the Friends of Bolton Priory, a leaflet is obtainable in church from the guides.

The Priory Church of St Mary and St Cuthbert
Church Office, Bolton Abbey, Skipton, North Yorkshire BD23 6AL
Telephone: 01756 710 238

WELCOME

to the peace and sanctity of this ancient Priory Church

A brief guided tour is provided overleaf, but you may derive the greatest value from your visit if you sit for a few moments, simply to absorb the beauty and sense of worship around you.

Ordinary men and women have prayed here for over 800 years, despite the catastrophes of history and the instability of human life.

Prayer continues here today as a large and devoted congregation bring their daily lives before God each week in the regular services.

BOLTON PRIORY

TIMES OF SERVICES

Sunday

8:00 am Holy Communion

9:15 am Family Service

first Sunday of the month

10:30 am Sung Eucharist

Wednesday

10:00 am Holy Communion

No admission charge is made but the Priory Church depends heavily on the generosity of visitors to maintain its work and fabric. A donation box is near the sales table

SOME IMPORTANT DATES

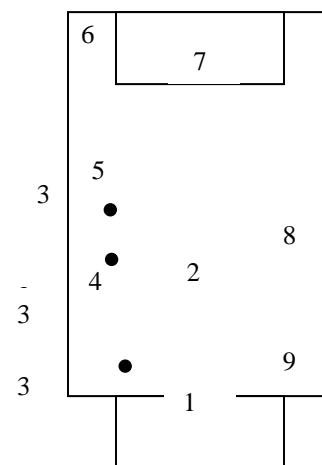
- 1120 A community of Augustinian Canons was founded at Embsey near Skipton
- 1154 Lady Alice de Romille of Skipton Castle gave land the Canons land and resources to establish themselves at Bolton.
- 1539 King Henry VIII in his quarrel with the Pope, closed down Bolton Priory, along with all the other monastic houses in his realm. Furnishings were stripped out and the protective lead removed from the roofs, except for the Nave which was retained as a Parish Church serving the newly formed Church of England.
- 1853-80 Victorian restoration of the Church, mainly under the distinguished architect, George Street.
- 1982-85 Major refurbishing of the Church as a result of the renewal of its spiritual vitality under Canon Maurice B Slaughter.

A NOTE ON THE AUGUSTINIAN CANONS

Their ideals over the centuries, inspired, sustained and invigorated the life of the Priory Church. They were ordained priests, often local men in origin, who lived a monastic, but not reclusive life. Their first commitment was to the worship of God, seven times a day, commencing at 2:00 am; their second was to people – to preach the Gospel, welcome guests and travellers, tend the sick and share their church with the local laity who were admitted to the Nave, baptised and given funeral rites and the Sacrament there.

On average, perhaps sixteen Canons were resident here, (their living quarters for part of the ruins) deriving their income from sales of wool and from tithes and rents of farm land, mines and mills given to or purchased by them. Today we try to continue their twofold mission of offering realistic worship to God and a warm welcome to the thousands who visit us each year.

GUIDED TOUR OF THE CHURCH



- 1 WEST TOWER** begun in 1520 under Prior Richard Moone, but left unfinished in 1539. Modern roof of 1983. Beautifully sculpted 13th century facade partly obscured by the tower.
- 2 NAVE** retains glorious roof, probably early Tudor but much restored with carved angels and bosses. Far wall separating Church from ruined choir is a Victorian replacement of Prior Moone's wall set up to rescue the Nave in 1539.
- 3 NORTH AISLE WINDOWS** Lost most of the 14th century glass in the Reformation, but some remains in the upper tracery of each window.
- 4 THE MODEL** and aerial photograph give an excellent idea of the extent and beauty of the Priory before 1539 and help you to understand the picturesque ruins which are well worth visiting.
- 5 THE STONE ALTAR** A rare survival of a pre-Reformation altar, possibly used by the Canons. The central, rough recess may have contained a sacred relic; the larger square recess later housed the brass plate now mounted on the adjacent wall.
- 6 THE ORGAN** is a fine Victorian pipe-organ, recently rebuilt with modern detached console.
- 7 THE WALL PAINTING** was executed in 1880 by Thomas Bottomley and his assistant R H Greenwood. The five Madonna lilies represent the Virgin Mary; the other plants symbolise various events and sayings in the life of Our Lord, shortly before his death on the Cross. For the full interpretation please see the special leaflet.
- 8 THE SIX SOUTH WINDOWS** are magnificent 19th century glass by Pugin, the foremost stained glass artist of the period. Each contains six medallions, representing scenes from the life of Christ, from the Annunciations to Pentecost.
- 9 THE 'WATCH' PLACE** A curious high alcove reached by a stair in the thickness of the wall. Here, it is thought a Canon may have kept vigil while the others slept.