

NOTES



GUILDFORD
CATHEDRAL

Michaelmas
Term 2023



Rehearsals for Christmas services

Hello New Faces...

Head Choristers and Probationers

One of the joys of having boy and girl choristers is watching them grow and improve. One of the sadnesses is having to say good bye when they move on. In July we said goodbye to our Head and Deputy Head Choristers. This meant we had to appoint new ones. In September we were pleased to install Ethan as our Head Boy Chorister,

and Anastasia, Heidi and Iris as our Head and Deputy Head Girl Choristers.

We also welcomed five new boy probationer Choristers into the boys choir ready to be taught and trained by Katherine, Asher and Jeremy, giving them a solid musical foundation for their futures and instilling in them a love of music.

Welcome all, and good luck in your new roles!



Rehearsals for Christmas services

Organ Scholar: Jeremy Wan

As a Cathedral, we take pride in helping to secure the future of the strong choral tradition we are known for. One of the ways we do this is by providing an Organ Scholarship to teach and train a talented organist in the ways of choral accompaniment and choral conducting. This year, we are pleased to welcome Jeremy Wan.

Jeremy is no stranger to accompanying musicians. He was the Director of Music at All Saints Bearsden and has worked with the Scottish Opera, Glasgow Cathedral Choral Society, and the University Choral Society as well as serving as organ scholar at the University of Glasgow, studying under Kevin Bowyer and accompanying the University Chapel Choir in their regular services, broadcasts and tours.

Jeremy is a versatile musician. He recently graduated from the University of Glasgow with a distinction in Musicology (MMus) under the supervision of John Butt. As well as the organ, Jeremy also plays the saxophone and is an active composer. He has worked with artists such as Lucia Ronchetti and cellist Rohan de Saram. He also appears regularly as a recitalist and has performed in many venues including Kelvingrove Art Gallery.



Advent Carol service

With one term already under his belt, Jeremy has met and overcome challenges including the acoustic of the Cathedral and misbehaving organs (more on that later) and is ready to overcome any others that will come his way during the rest of his time with us.





Lay Clerks

From 5 September, we were delighted to have a full complement of Lay Clerks. Joining existing Alto Lizzie Post (far right), our team has welcomed (left to right) Oliver Turner (bass), Peter Hicks (alto and Lead Chaperone), Fraser Ellson (tenor), Laurens Macklon (bass) and Hamish Garland (tenor). Their voices blend together beautifully. You get a chance to hear their exquisite sound at Monday Evensong at 5.30pm when they lead sung worship under Katherine's direction.



Bishop of Dorking

While not a new face, we were delighted to be able to hold an Installation service for Paul Davies as he took up his new role as Suffragan Bishop of Dorking. The music was all chosen by Paul himself and the choir rose magnificently to the occasion. Paul said of the service. "It was a beautiful and incredibly uplifting act of worship which has sent me into my new ministry with joy and gratitude."

...and Goodbye to Old Friends

It was with a hint of sadness we said goodbye to Dean Dianna Gwilliams as she retired after 10 years of serving here at Guildford Cathedral. The music from the choir and organists made it a poignant occasion as we reflected on Dianna's time here and wished her well in the next chapter.



Out and about

2022 and 2023

Monday 9 October 2023

Portsmouth Cathedral, Changed
Voices

Sunday 15 October 2023

St Mary's, Horsell,
Choral Evensong, boys and Lay Clerks

Wednesday 6 December 2023

The Cathedral choir sang its termly
diocesan service at St. Nicolas' Church,
Guildford in celebration of that parish
church's patronal festival.



Changed Voices at Portsmouth Cathedral

Out and About

On Monday 9th October, the Changed Voices from Guildford Cathedral were invited down to join Portsmouth Cathedral Choir changed voices for Evensong. The outing was hugely enjoyed and wasn't even dampened by the return train being cancelled. Instead, the boys decided to sing on the train station – and not just something simple. No, the boys with Mrs Dienes-Williams providing the soprano line, sang from a Mozart Mass! It was a good example of the lasting influence being a member of the boys' choir has as they grow up and become teenagers and even on into their adult life.

Our boys and Lay Clerks visited St Mary's, Horsell on Sunday 15 October. They led Evensong to a packed church and judging from the happy faces, this was enjoyed by the congregation and the choristers. It was also a chance for our organ Scholar, Jeremy, to show off his adaptability.

A malfunctioning organ during the Magnificat meant that he had to adjust everything in the space of one bible reading so that the Nunc Dimitus could go ahead without a hitch, and he did an amazing job.

It is one of our joys that we get invited to celebrate with other churches and parishes in the area, and this term, we were also invited to sing at St Nicholas', Guildford as they celebrated their Patronal Festival on Wednesday 6th December.



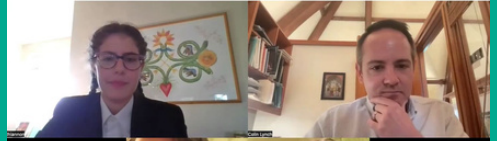
Evensong at St Mary's, Horsell

Beyond these four walls...

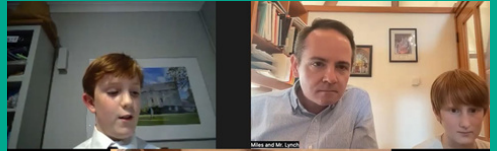
We appreciate that not everyone can come to our wonderful building and hear us in person, so here are some examples of what we have done to ensure more people get the opportunity to hear us.

International Chorister Day

October was time for the Royal School of Church Music's International Chorister Day. This year we set up two Zoom conversations with choristers in Trinity Church, Boston. Choristers had the opportunity to ask questions and find out about the similarities and differences between being a chorister on either side of the pond. With different colours of cassocks and slightly different service structures, the actual experience of being a chorister seemed to be very similar with all talking about how being a chorister is like being part of a family and a community and how much they all enjoyed feeling part of it.



International Chorister Day, Bella and Rhiannon



International Chorister Day, Miles and Marcus

Advent Calendar

For the third year running, Guildford Cathedral posted an online advent calendar on social media, giving our followers the joy of hearing our musicians give a snapshot every day in December. As each day's offering was released, our followers were able to pause for a moment and enter into the anticipation of Christmas. If you missed it, you can still listen to them all on our Youtube channel.



Advent Calendar 2023

Talent recognised

Every year, Songs of Praise and BBC Radio 2 host a competition to find the best choristers from across the country and have them sing in front of a panel to find out who is that year's Chorister of the Year.

This year, our own Annie auditioned and made it all the way to the senior final. Annie said, "I am so thankful that I was able to have this opportunity. I have learnt so much and met so many incredible people and I have enjoyed the whole experience thoroughly."



BBC Chorister of the Year final credit: Tricia Yourkevich

Guildford Cathedral Choristers have a good track record of choral excellence, proven by the BBC Young Chorister of the Year award. In the last 11 years, there has been a Guildford Cathedral Chorister in the final six times.

2014 - Tom King, winner

2016 - Hannah Dienes-Williams, finalist

2017 - Hannah Dienes-Williams, finalist

2020 - Ruby Skilbeck, finalist

2021 - Ruby Skilbeck, winner

2023 - Annie, finalist

Better Together

We love joining with others to sing a joyful song! In October, we welcomed members of the Guildford Cathedral Choir Association for a special evensong. It was a fantastic mix of musicians past and present who have served and continue to serve here.

And then on 12 October, we welcomed parents and staff from our choir school RGS Prep School and RGS senior school to sing with their children/students in a choral evensong, allowing them to experience what our choristers do here on a weekly basis. With their eyes fixed on conductor Katherine, all worked together to do justice to the chosen repertoire and lead a prayerful and sensitive service.



Other voices

There are a lot of services across the year which require music. You will often hear our Boy and Girl Choristers and Lay Clerks singing, but in choir holiday we also have another ensemble which supports by providing the music. The Guildford Cathedral Singers provide music during weeks when the school term has ended and the choristers are on holiday, and once a term join forces to create a bumper choir under the joint direction of the Organist and Master of the Choristers and the GCS Musical Director.

For those who are in this choir, they get the opportunity to sing some of the best sacred music within the setting it was meant for and in our glorious building. For those who come to the services, it means we get high-quality music to support our worship all year round.

GCS also serves as a learning point for the Organ Scholar who acts as their official accompanist in the year that they are with us.

We are fortunate to have so many excellent musicians who are willing to enrich the worshipping life of the Cathedral.

In October, we were excited to witness the debut of a brand new ensemble directed by Peter Hicks, one of our Lay Clerks. The ensemble, the Stag Consort, is made up of young singers based in and around London. Many of them are starting out on careers as professional musicians. They provided the music for Evensong on 29 October and if you had heard them you wouldn't have known they that were a newly combined choir – they sounded like they had been singing together for years. We hope to see them back to sing for us again in the not-too-distant future!



Advent Carol Service credit Marie Davey

Something Special

As we go through the year, our musicians provide excellent music for the weekly pattern of Evensong and Sunday services. But at certain points, they provide something extra special. This term, the choirs prepared something extra special for All Saints, All Souls, Remembrance, Advent Sunday, and, Christmas services of Lessons and Carols and the First Eucharist of Christmas. Preparing this music comes in addition to the repertoire they sing at the weekly services and serves as a showcase of the musicians talent and sensitivity that the music is sung so well and enhances the experience of those attending the services. This year, they sang Duruflé's Requiem, Faure's Requiem and a sublime selection of advent carols, plainsong and the responsories as they moved around the Cathedral for the Advent Carol Service.

Over Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, our musicians sang in five services, and some also participated in Journey to Bethlehem, our Nativity service aimed at families – Christmas is a lot of work for them, and they deliver the music so well that it raises our worship to another level, and it is a favourite time of year for many. It also saw some former choristers come 'home' for Christmas to sing with our choristers and Lay Clerks.



Stag Hill Phil

This term, we had a couple of extra special events too.

On Saturday 9 December the Cathedral choir was privileged to sing under the direction of John Rutter, accompanied by Asher Oliver as organist, Septura brass ensemble and percussionists Matt Perry and Ben Fullbrook. To sing to a packed Cathedral was an incredible experience, and our choir excelled itself, delivering a programme of beautiful festive music to perfection, and allowing the audience to sing along with many carols as well as bask in the beauty of the music on offer. John's philanthropy is well known, and his generosity of musicianship, personality, time and talent was enormously appreciated. He was hugely impressed with the choir, using words such as 'superb' and 'magnificent' which left a huge smile on all our faces.



John Rutter Rehearsal



John Rutter Concert



Alex, Marcus and Theo

On Saturday 16 December, Carrot Productions ran a series of showings of *The Snowman* with live orchestra. Three of our boy choristers were chosen to sing the iconic solo 'Walking in the air'. In addition to all the other services they sang in December, our boy choristers mastered this song and helped to make it a magical event. Well done Theo, Marcus and Alex - a job well done!

Music Patron Scheme

I think we can all agree that our musicians work hard so that we can listen to excellent music in worship and in concert, and so that the next generation of musicians get a good grounding in music theory and vocal technique. Would you like to support our musicians to keep this going for years to come?

Are you able to give financially? We have a Music Patrons' Scheme with four levels of giving, Star, Dove, Stag and Angel. If you would like to know more and explore whether you can help, visit the Guildford Cathedral website or email headofdevelopment@guildford-cathedral.org, or have a look at the West End of the Cathedral for a leaflet.

This termly update is an example of what you will receive three times a year if you sign up to be a Music Patron.



GUILDFORD
CATHEDRAL

Guildford
Cathedral
Choir

CONCERT

*A celebration of Barry Rose
for his 90th Birthday.*

Saturday | 11 May 2024
7.30pm

SAVE THE DATE



Dates for your diaries

Friday 26 January 2024

Choral Evensong 5.30pm

Students from The Sixth Form College Farnborough join with the Cathedral Choir as part of its schools Evensong project.

Friday 2 February 2024

Candlemas - Choral Eucharist 7pm

Marking the end of Epiphany season, sung by the Cathedral Choir and ending with the singing of the Nunc Dimittis

Monday 5 February 5.30pm

Choral Evensong sung by the Cathedral Lay Clerks and Changed Voices, with the Changed Voices of Portsmouth Cathedral Choir

14 February

Ash Wednesday

4pm Choral Evensong broadcast live on BBC Radio 3

7pm Choral Eucharist with the Imposition of Ashes

Sunday 25 February

Girl Chorister Instrumental Concert 11am

A free concert performed for you by our girl choristers

Saturday 2 March

Girl Choristers' Concert 7.30pm

At St. Catherine's School, Bramley

Thursday 14th March, 11.15am

Coffee Concert performed by Jeremy Wan, Organ Scholar

With refreshments served from 10.30

Sunday 17 March 6pm

Choral Evensong with the Installation of the new Archdeacon of Surrey, Reverend Canon Catharine Mabuza

Thursday 21 March 5.30pm

Choral Evensong sung by the Cathedral Choir and RGS Chamber Choir

Holy Week and Easter

Palm Sunday 24 March

10.30 The Liturgy of Palm Sunday

6pm Music and Readings for Passiontide

Holy Monday and Tuesday

25 and 26 March

5.30pm Choral Evensong

Maunder Thursday 28 March

7pm Eucharist of the Last Supper with Foot-Washing

Good Friday 29 March

12noon-3pm The Three Hours and Liturgy of Good Friday

5.30pm Choral Evensong

Easter Eve Saturday 30 March

7pm Easter Eve Service with Baptism and Confirmation

Easter Day 31 March

9.45 Festival Eucharist of Easter Day

6pm Festival Evensong

Commissioning New Music

Supporting Young Musicians

As we have said before, Guildford Cathedral passionately supports young musicians. This is evident in the investment we make into our young choristers, but we do more than that. Another way we do this is to perform works by young composers.

The Ash Wednesday BBC Radio 3 Broadcast will feature the première performance of a specially commissioned work by Gregory May. This work is a setting of the text 'But Men loved darkness' by Richard Crashaw and was written specifically for Guildford Cathedral to perform on the BBC 3 Broadcast on 14 February. Be sure to tune in to hear it!

Greg is a 21 year old composer, currently studying composition with Matthew Kaner at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. He previously studied with Christian Mason at Cambridge University, and with David Knotts and Edmund Jolliffe at the Junior department of the Royal Academy of Music, on a scholarship. His pieces have been played in the UK, Germany, and Croatia, in venues including St. John's Smith Square, King's Place, Kettle's Yard, and Guildford and Ely cathedrals, and by performers including Rolf Hind, Susanne Kessel, the BBC Concert Orchestra, Britten Sinfonia, the choirs of Guildford Cathedral and Clare College Cambridge, and the Rothko Collective. He's attended masterclasses and received tutoring from composers including Helen Grime, Stephen Goss, Diana Burrell, Dobrinka Tabakova, Hannah Kendall, Nico Muhly, and Richard Causton. He was a winner in the 2020 BBC Young Composer Competition.



This newly commissioned composition has been made possible due to the generosity of two donors.