

Recent Highlights

With such a busy schedule over the last few months, we have done so many things, but here is just a quick up-date on a few...

Summer trip

We had a fantastic weekend of singing in St Albans - the quality of singing was superb and the feedback from the Cathedral clergy was all excellent; the Dean was particularly thankful for us leading the music in their worship over the weekend. He said that we were welcome to come back in the future which is always nice to hear! Check out our website for photographs and audio clips.

Canterbury Cathedral

We are being asked more and more often to fill in at Canterbury Cathedral (see County Harvest Festival later...) and our Evensong back in July was a prime example of this. What was particularly nice about this service was the feedback that I received afterwards - including one regular member of the congregation who told the verger that she thought that it was the Cathedral Choir singing when she walked into the building - a true complement to your hard work.



Some of the Choir enjoying some time together after our weekend in St Albans

in this issue...

Summer highlights

Chant à Reims

Cathedral visits

Universal Music latest

Services at St Stephen's

Welcome back! I hope that you've all had a good summer break. We had a busy few months and some of the highlights I've picked out in this edition of **ChoirNotes**. The next few months leading up to Christmas are going to be just as busy - if not more so as more and more people hear of our high reputation. Can I take this opportunity to thank you all for your hard work as without you, we wouldn't have such a fantastic choir at St Stephen's.

Chant à Reims

Plans for our trip to Rheims are coming together now. We will be leaving Canterbury nice and early at 7:30am on Friday 19th November and travelling down to Rheims by coach, arriving at about 4pm local time. We'll be singing a concert on our own in Cormontreuil Church on the Friday night and then joining with choirs from other towns and cities twinned with Rheims for a concert on the Saturday night. Each concert will have a Christmas flavour (I know... it is rather early, but this weekend is the start of their Christmas celebrations!) and be of English Sacred Choral music. Most of you have replied to me now but if you want to take any extras then let me know as soon as possible, before I open the remaining seats on the coach to other members of the congregation. Details of the concert programmes and other information is all on our website.



Choir Festival

This year's RSCM Choir Festival is a little earlier than usual on Saturday 9th October. Arrangements are as previous years, meeting in the Chapter House at 1:30 so that the rehearsal can start promptly at 2pm. The service is at 5:30 if you have friends or family who'd like to attend, and should be finished around 6:45. The rehearsal this year is at St Stephen's on Tuesday 28th September between 7 and 9pm.

Cathedral Harvest Festival

We have been asked by the Cathedral to sing for the County Harvest Festival in Canterbury Cathedral on Sunday 10th October. The service is at 6:30 (so in place of our own Choral Evensong that week), with a rehearsal provisionally at 5pm. The service will be finished by 7:30.

Universal Music Choir Search

Despite our frantic arrangements to get the choir together at short notice and many of you travelling across the country at very short notice, as I type this, they still haven't chosen a winner out of the final three choirs. The winning choir is no longer going to be singing at September's Classic FM Live although they will perform at a similar concert at the beginning of next year.

Cathedral Visits

As well as our good relationship with Canterbury Cathedral, we have a growing reputation with Cathedrals across southern England. Consequently I sometimes receive enquiries asking whether we'd be able to sing for services - this is how our two 'extra' trips to Chichester and Salisbury have come about.

Chichester Evensong

Having had to turn down several requests from them in the past, we have accepted an invitation to sing in Chichester Cathedral on Saturday 23rd October. We'll be going down for the day, leaving at 9 in the morning and arriving in Chichester at about 11:30. Once there, we'll have a few hours to have lunch and explore the city before rehearsing in the Song School at 2:30 (not too many steps I hope!). We'll have a break for tea (provided by the Cathedral) before concluding our rehearsal in the Cathedral Quire. Evensong is at 5:30, after which we'll head back to Canterbury, arriving back around 9pm. If there are enough people who are willing to drive, we can share cars, or I could try and organise a coach - let me know what you think. As always, the sign up form is on the website.

Passiontide in Salisbury

Our little spring break to Salisbury is booked for Monday 11th and Tuesday 12th April, singing Evensong at the end of each afternoon. This will be a wonderful opportunity to be part of the Passiontide worship in a Cathedral. As well as singing, I'm hoping to

arrange a tour around the cathedral which will include climbing up to the spire, from where there are spectacular views. There are plenty of other things to do around the area such as Old Sarum and Stone Henge. I'll sort accommodation for those who would like it and will put details on the website in due course - keep an eye out!

Low Sunday in Canterbury Cathedral

Make sure that you've got Sunday 1st May in your diary as we're singing the Sung Eucharist and Choral Evensong in Canterbury Cathedral on Low Sunday. This festival music for this Sunday will be quite a contrast to the solemnity of Passiontide in Salisbury Cathedral a couple of weeks beforehand.

A Summers Weekend in Coventry

This is now booked for the weekend of 6th - 7th August next year so put the dates in your diary! Again, I'll sort out accommodation, but more about that nearer the time.

Keep up with what's going on

...by regularly visiting our website which has a large amount of information about events coming up, as well as photos and audio clips from recent trips. We also have a page on Facebook (www.facebook.com/churchchoir) and on Twitter (www.twitter.com/ststephenschoir); sign up to these and encourage others to do the same. I also try and keep my email list up to date so if you have changed your email address, please let me know.



The Choir in St Albans, disciplined as usual...

The Choir of St Stephen's

With all the news and events in this edition of **ChoirNotes** it would be easy to forget our main role - to enhance the worship at St Stephen's.

Regular Rehearsals

Trebles

Wednesdays 6.30 - 7.30 pm

Full Practice

Fridays 7.30 - 9.00 pm

Choral Services

Sundays

Sung Eucharist 10.30 am

Choral Evensong 6.00 pm

Weddings

The final wedding of the year is at 2.00 pm on 25th September. The couple have taken time to think carefully about their music and would love a full choir for their special day.

Weekday Festival Services

Wednesday 29th September is the Feast of St Michael and All Angels. There is a Festival Sung Eucharist at 7.30 pm, after Trebles choir practice.

Tuesday 2nd November is All Souls Day and there will be a Sung Eucharist to commemorate the departed at 7.30 pm.



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Canterbury

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