



Wareham Choral Society Christmas Concert "O be Joyful!"

Celebrating the return of choral singing!
Saturday 4th December 7pm 2021
**Lady St Mary Church,
Wareham BH20 4ND**

Conductor
**Hazel
Ricketts**

Trumpet
**Philip
Singleton**

Soprano
Lucy Braga

Baritone
David Reece

Organ
John Challenger
**Assistant Director of Music,
Salisbury Cathedral**



"Challenger displays technical wizardry and infinite sonic variety throughout." - Fiona Maddocks, Guardian

"... the technical brilliance, artistry, musicality and seemingly effortless organ management of John Challenger." Andrew Fletcher, Organists' Review:

Traditional Christmas Music, including choruses from Messiah, and the first performance of DORSET JUBILATE by Philip Singleton, a new work commissioned by WCS which sets Hardy's poems "The Oxen" and "The Darkling Thrush".

Bach organ solos Wachet Auf and In Dulci Jubilo

WELCOME

O Come, All Ye Faithful

(please wear a face covering when singing with us)

Dorset Jubilate

Philip Singleton

Wachet Auf

BWV 645

J S Bach

O Little Town of Bethlehem

(please wear a face covering when singing with us)

Short **INTERVAL**. Please remain in your seats unless you require the toilet.

In Dulci Jubilo

BWV 729

J S Bach

“And the Glory” from Messiah

G F Handel

The Angel Gabriel

Traditional Basque carol

arr Pettman

“For Unto Us” from Messiah

G F Handel

Festive Reading

Still, Still, Still

German carol

arr Ledger

Organ Pastoral Symphony & Soprano Recitative followed by

“Glory to God” from Messiah

G F Handel

Shepherd’s Farewell

H Berlioz

The Three Kings

Cornelius

Festive Reading

In the Bleak Midwinter

H Darke

“Hallelujah Chorus” from Messiah

G F Handel

Joy to the World

(please wear a face covering when singing with us)

CLOSING WORDS

O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL

Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem,
Come and behold Him, born the king
of Angels.

*O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.*

God of God, Light of Light,
Lo, He abhors not the Virgin's womb
Very God,
Begotten not created.
O come...

Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing all ye citizens of heaven above.
Glory to God in the highest.
O come...

O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.

O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth!
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to men on earth.
For Christ is born of Mary
And gathered all above,
While mortals sleep the Angels keep
Their watch of wondering love.

How silently, how silently,
the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of the heav'ns.
No ear may hear his coming,
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray,
cast out our sin, and enter in,
be born in us today!
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell.
O come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel.

JOY TO THE WORLD, the
Lord is come
Let earth receive her King
Let every heart prepare Him
room
And Heaven and nature sing
And Heaven and nature sing
And Heaven, and Heaven,
and nature Sing

Joy to the World, the
Saviour reigns!
Let men their songs employ
While fields and floods,
rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat, repeat, the
sounding joy

He rules the world with
truth and grace
And makes the nations
prove
The glories of His
righteousness
The wonders of His love
The wonders of His love
The wonders, wonders, of
His love

Dorset Jubilate – Soprano & Baritone solo, Chorus, Trumpet and Organ

1. *Chorus*

O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands

1a *Soprano, Baritone solo*

Serve the Lord with gladness, and come before his presence with a song.

2. *Chorus*

Be ye sure that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves;
we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

3. *Soprano Solo & Chorus*

THE OXEN (words Thomas Hardy)

Christmas Eve, and twelve of the clock.

"Now they are all on their knees,"

An elder said as we sat in a flock

By the embers in hearthside ease.

We pictured the meek mild creatures

where they dwelt in their strawy pen,

Nor did it occur to one of us there

To doubt they were kneeling then.

So fair a fancy few would weave in these years! Yet, I feel,

If someone said on Christmas Eve,

"Come; see the oxen kneel,

"In the lonely barton by yonder coomb

Our childhood used to know,"

I should go with him in the gloom, Hoping it might be so.

4. *Chorus*

O go your way into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise:
and speak good of his Name.

5. *Baritone Solo & trumpet*

THE DARKLING THRUSH (words Thomas Hardy)

I leant upon a coppice gate

When Frost was spectre-grey,

And Winter's dregs made desolate

The weakening eye of day.

The tangled bine-stems scored the sky

Like strings of broken lyres,

And all mankind that haunted night

Had sought their household fires.

The land's sharp features seemed to be
The Century's corpse outleant,
His crypt the cloudy canopy,
The wind his death-lament.
The ancient pulse of germ and birth
Was shrunken hard and dry,
And every spirit upon earth
Seemed fervourless as I.

At once a voice arose among
The bleak twigs overhead
In a full-hearted evensong
Of joy illimited;
An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small,
In blast-beruffled plume,
Had chosen thus to fling his soul
Upon the growing gloom.

So little cause for carolings
Of such ecstatic sound
Was written on terrestrial things
Afar or nigh around,
That I could think there trembled through
His happy good-night air
Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew
And I was unaware.

6 *Chorus*

For the Lord is gracious, his mercy is everlasting: and his truth endureth from generation to generation.

7 *Soprano & Baritone solo, Chorus, trumpet*

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. World without end. Amen

Programme notes

How to compose an optimistic work whilst the world remains in thrall of such a terrible pandemic? Music often reflects the society from which it comes, but it can also offer consolation and hope. This was the belief of perhaps my greatest influence as a composer, Olivier Messiaen, and one to which I also hold.

When Wareham Choral Society and their director Hazel Ricketts approached me to compose what would become my Dorset Jubilate I quickly realised that I wanted this project to take the form of a close collaboration. We discussed the possibilities at some length, and agreed that the work should be as inclusive as possible for audiences.

The basis for the choral movements is therefore the Jubilate Deo (Psalm 100); an exhortation to 'Be Joyful in the Lord, All ye Lands'. In the third and fifth movements, however, we hear the haunting poetry of Thomas Hardy - appropriate for a work to be premiered in his home county of Dorset.

It is fascinating, when working on a new piece, how unforeseen connections can appear between elements. In the context of the Dorset Jubilate it became clear that Hardy's words were both extending and commenting on the Jubilate Deo. In the latter the choir sings that 'we are the sheep of his pasture' - before Hardy's Oxen kneel on Christmas Eve at midnight. Likewise, as the lone, despairing wanderer of The Darkling Thrush (Hardy himself?) receives a glimpse of hope from the song of the thrush, the choir follows this commentary with renewed optimism - 'For the Lord is gracious'.

It is my hope, therefore, that the Dorset Jubilate will resonate in some way with as many listeners as possible. For Christians, perhaps this new setting of the Jubilate Deo will help in some small way to affirm their faith. Meanwhile, the poetry of Hardy and the general atmosphere of hopeful optimism might be found evocative by those of other beliefs, and for those of no particular faith.

Music cannot solve the ills of the world; yet music can unite people and help us to bear the hardships of the present - and face the challenges of the future - with a greater sense of community. If the Dorset Jubilate achieves this in some small measure, then the work's intention will have succeeded.

Dorset Jubilate is dedicated to Wareham Choral Society and their Musical Director Hazel Ricketts.

Philip Singleton
November 2021

The rest of the programme is made up of familiar Advent and Christmas music. The two organ pieces by Bach are both well known choral preludes: **Wachet Auf (BWV 645)** based on an advent chorale, and **In Dulci Jubilo (BWV 729)** a joyful, almost fantasia like prelude on this well known Christmas Chorale melody. Thereafter our musical items follow the Christmas story. We start with **And the Glory** (the first of our well known choruses from Handel's Messiah which needs no further introduction!) foretelling the coming of the promised Messiah. Moving through the traditional French carol **The Angel Gabriel** who, of course, brings tidings to Mary, and onto the birth of Jesus in **For Unto Us a Child is Born**. We imagine that Mary and Joseph may have sung a lullaby to their baby and the beautiful gentle German carol **Still, Still, Still**, takes this role. Our organist and soprano take up the story with the **Pastoral Symphony** and recitatives telling **There were shepherds abiding in the field**, and the message of the angels, with the choir joining in the angel's song **Glory to God**. We leave the shepherd's visit to the infant to your imagination, but **The Shepherd's Farewell** (Berlioz) suggests their prayers as they leave and looks towards the flight of the Holy Family to Egypt. However, we know before this happened **The Three Kings** visited, led by a star and bringing their gifts. **In the bleak mid-winter** gives us the chance to reflect on this story and to ponder what we might have to offer being neither Shepherd or Wise Man. Our final two musical items are ones of joy. **Hallelujah Chorus** from Messiah, and we invite you to join us in **Joy to the World**.

Hazel Ricketts

studied music at the University of Surrey, with piano as her first instrument, and gained her MA in Musicology from the University of Southampton.

She has sung in choirs since the age of 6, started

accompanying them and leading occasional rehearsals at the age of 14.



During her MA she was appointed Director of Music at Holy Trinity Church in Fareham, and has been regularly conducting choirs ever since.

In recent years Hazel has rediscovered the organ, now studying with John Challenger, and she achieved her CRCO diploma in the midst of Covid lockdowns! Since moving to Salisbury she has led several singing groups including Castle Singers in Winchester, and smaller church groups. Hazel has been Musical Director of Wareham Choral Society since 2018 and was recently appointed co-Director of Music at St Mary's Church, Fordingbridge where she has the chance to both conduct the choir and play the organ.

Hazel is a well established piano and clarinet teacher working mainly in schools in the Salisbury Area. In addition to her regular church commitments in Fordingbridge, she is much in demand to play at services at many local churches and knows her way to many beautiful villages through this! She is an active member of the local RSCM Area Team who organise events to support music making at a local level.

In her 'spare' time Hazel enjoys walking, taking too many photos, arguing with her children about music practice schedules and others devouring her home baking!



John Challenger has been assistant director of music at Salisbury Cathedral since 2012. In this role he plays the cathedral's Father Willis organ, and assists in the running of the cathedral choirs. A Fellow of the Royal College of Organists, he is a former organ scholar of St John's College, Cambridge, and he was taught by Frédéric Blanc, David Briggs, Jeremy Filsell, Mark Williams, and the late David Sanger. In 2017, John acted as director of music at St John's College, Cambridge, during the sabbatical of the college's director of music, Andrew Nethsingha. At Salisbury, John

continues to work regularly as a conductor with Salisbury Musical Society and Salisbury Symphony Orchestra; alongside conducting and teaching work, he has also been responsible for many recent projects at Salisbury including Organ Vespers, the Organ Prom, the installation of the cathedral's 'virtual' Father Willis organ, and several solo albums including, most recently, Salisbury Meditation, released to raise funds for NHS Charities Together.



Philip Singleton studied at the University of Surrey, specialising initially in performance. After a number of years and many concerts in Britain and abroad as a professional trumpet player, he decided to devote his time principally to composition.

Philip was awarded his doctorate in composition and musicology from the University of Surrey in 2015, with a portfolio

of original compositions and thesis centred upon the so-called 'spectral' school of composition. His catalogue contains works for solo instruments, chamber and large ensembles including wind band, chamber and symphony orchestras. Philip's music has been performed in Britain, France and the USA, by performers including the Ligeti Quartet, flautist Robin Meiskins, the orchestra Symphonia of Pons, Cognac, France and a wide variety of amateur and professional musicians in the UK and abroad.

Future projects include a symphony for championship section brass band and a number of works for solo performers for the upcoming season.

For information on Philip's activities please visit :

<https://composerphil.wixsite.com/home>



Baritone **David Reece** is an experienced amateur singer with a choral background as a bass in the Winchester based choirs The Waynflete Singers (since 1990) and Southern Voices (since 2017), and is a committee member of both choirs.

Over the last decade David has performed regularly at Wessex Solo Singers courses led by Lynton Atkinson, and at Music Festivals. In January 2019 he was awarded a Licentiate Diploma in Singing (LTCL) from Trinity College London following singing lessons with James Ottaway of Salisbury.

That same year at the Bath and Mid-Somerset Festival he was the winner of the 'Muriel King Outstanding Singer award'. Also at Bournemouth Music Competition Festival in June he was awarded 1st prize in both 'Bournemouth Singer of the Year' and in 'Own Choice Two Songs'.

David is delighted to have been asked to sing solo baritone in the premiere of Dorset Jubilate by Philip Singleton.

In his spare time away from music David still holds down a full time job as a chartered surveyor.

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Soprano **Lucy Braga** studied singing at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama with Patricia MacMahon. She then spent several years in Vienna, where she was a member of both the Vienna State Opera Chorus and the prestigious Arnold Schönberg Choir. Lucy has performed with many of the world's leading conductors, among them Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Claudio Abbado, Sir Trevor Pinnock, Marc Minkowski and Sir Roger Norrington, and with orchestras including Vienna Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic and the Concertgebouw Orchestra. Operas include *Die Jakobsleiter*, *Carmen*, *Fidelio*, *die Meistersinger*, *Turandot* in Vienna, and *Die Fledermaus* at the Salzburg Festival.



Photo: Harnoncourt for Artist Digital, by Robert Piska photography

Since returning to the UK, Lucy has been in demand both as a singing teacher and as a soprano soloist. She has in the Carols by Candlelight concerts at the Royal Albert Hall as soprano soloist and in the Mozart Festival Chorus, as well as performing at the Barbican and Birmingham Symphony Hall. Lucy has performed as Soprano Soloist in Mozart Requiem, Rutter Requiem, Britten's "Ceremony of Carols", Haydn's Maria Theresa Mass, Verdi Requiem, Beethoven's 9th Symphony among other works, including Haydn's Creation, Fauré Requiem, Vivaldi Gloria and Vivaldi Magnificat.

She has also performed the role of Pamina in Mozart's opera *The Magic Flute*. She sang in the world premiere of Sir Karl Jenkins' "Symphonic Adiemus" (with *The Armed Man*) at the Royal Festival Hall.



Canzonetta

at

Christmas

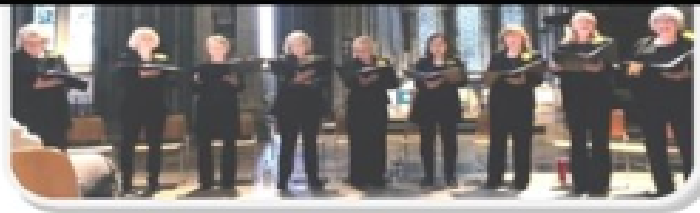
An hour of seasonal songs and carols

Emma Estridge *flute*

William Bishop *organ*



Sunday 12 December 2021



**Priory Church of Lady St. Mary
Wareham**

BH20 4NA

3pm

Free admission

Retiring collection for the Church



www.canzonettadorset.com

Wareham Choral Society

has been in existence since 1947.

We have vacancies in all parts.

Why not join us?

We rehearse in

Lady St Mary Church, Wareham, Monday evenings at 7.30pm.

Interested?

Call 01929 552272 or 01202 632678 or visit
www.warehamchoral.co.uk for more details!