



Wareham Choral Society

"Crucifixion"

Sat 23 March 2024 7pm
Lady St Mary Church
Wareham BH20 4ND

Conductor
Hazel Ricketts

Organist
Paul Ellis

Soloists
**Jonathan
Prentice
Padre Matt Dietz**

Patron: Rt Hon David Mellor KC

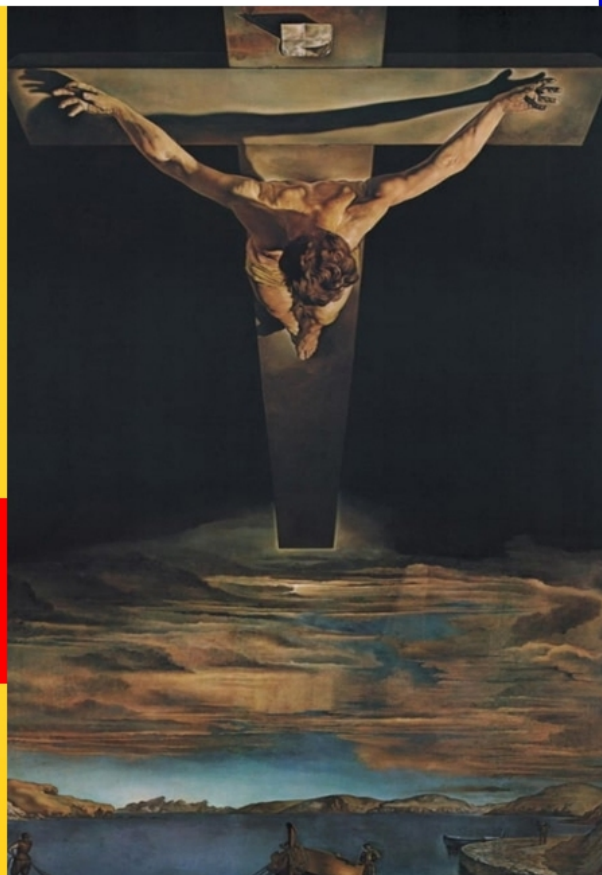
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Salvador Dalí – Christ of St John of the Cross

Stainer - Crucifixion



Refreshments available from 7pm
Our next concert on June 15th marks the 80th anniversary of
D-Day. See inside for more details!

www.warehamchoral.uk

The Crucifixion by John Stainer

Our singers tonight are:

Sopranos: Eve Baker, Teresa Larby, Beatrice Maloney, Ann Manning, Judith Price, Teresa Rekowska, Katie Ricketts, Angela Salter.

Altos: Maureen Bayliss, Rachel Cude, Nancy Gibson, Margaret Harris, Janet Jones, Mary Mathers.

Tenors: Bill Day, Matt Dietz, Jack Haworth, Bob Newnham, Sarah Welton.

Basses: Michael Chitty, Gideon Daly, Ian Grocott, Neil Hirst, Mike Hampton, Matthew Lewis, Brian Wilkins.

Our original plan was that Matt Dietz and David Stewart, both choir members, would be our soloists. However David Stewart is indisposed, so we are particularly grateful to Jonathan Prentice for stepping in at relatively short notice.

John Stainer intended congregations to join in singing the hymns, and we encourage you to do so! The words are given on pages 3 to 4.

REFRESHMENTS

OPENING WORDS

Tenor Recitative

And they came to a place named Gethsemane

Bass, Tenor & Choir

The agony

Choir & Tenor

Processional to Calvary

Bass Recitative

And when they were come

Choir and audience

Hymn – Cross of Jesus, Cross of Sorrow

Bass Recitative

He made Himself of no reputation

Tenor

The majesty of the divine humiliation

Bass Recitative

And as Moses lifted up the serpent

Choir

God so loved the world

Choir and audience

Hymn – Holy Jesu, by Thy passion

Tenor & Choir

Jesus said “Father, forgive them”

Tenor & Bass

So Thou liftest Thy divine petition

Choir and audience

Jesus, the crucified, pleads for me

Bass & Choir

And one of the malefactors

Choir and audience

Hymn – I adore Thee

Tenor & Choir

When Jesus therefore saw his mother

Bass Recitative

Is it nothing to you?

Choir

The appeal of the crucified

Tenor & Choir

After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished

Choir and audience

Hymn – All for Jesus

CLOSING WORDS

Cross of Jesus

1. Cross of Jesus, cross of sorrow,
Where the blood of Christ was shed,
Perfect Man on thee was tortured,
Perfect God on thee has bled!

3 O mysterious condescending!
O abandonment sublime!
Very God himself is bearing
All the sufferings of time!

5 This – all human thought surpassing-
This is earth's most awful hour.
God has taken mortal weakness!
God has laid aside his power.

7 Cross of Jesus, cross of sorrow,
Where the blood of Christ was shed,
Perfect Man on thee did suffer,
Perfect God on thee has bled!

2.(MEN ONLY)
Here the King of all the ages,
Throned in light ere worlds could be,
Robed in mortal flesh is dying,
Crucified by sin for me.

4.(LADIES ONLY)
Evermore for human failure
By his Passion we can plead;
God has borne all mortal anguish,
Surely he will know our need.

6 (MEN ONLY)
From the "Holy, Holy, Holy,
We adore thee, O most high,"
Down to earth's blaspheming voices
And the shout of "Crucify!"

Holy Jesu, by Thy passion

1 Holy Jesu, by thy passion,
By the woes which none can share,
Borne in more than kingly fashion
By thy love beyond compare:
Crucified I turn to Thee,
Son of Mary, plead for me.

3. (LADIES ONLY)
By thy look so sweet and lowly,
While they smote thee on the face,
By thy patience, calm and holy,
In the midst of keen disgrace:
Crucified, I turn to thee,
Son of Mary, plead for me.

5 By the path of sorrows dreary,
By the cross, thy dreadful load,
By the pain, when faint and weary,
Thou didst sink upon the road:
Crucified, I turn to thee,
Son of Mary, plead for me.

2 By the treachery and trial,
By the blows and sore distress,
By desertion and denial,
By thine awful loneliness:
Crucified, I turn to thee,
Son of Mary, plead for me.

4. (MEN ONLY)
By the hour of condemnation,
By the blood which trickled down
When, for us and our salvation,
Thou didst wear the robe and crown:
Crucified, I turn to thee,
Son of Mary, plead for me.

6 By the Spirit which could render
Love for hate and good for ill,
By the mercy, sweet and tender,
Poured upon Thy murderers still:
Crucified I turn to Thee,
Son of Mary, plead for me.

Jesus the Crucified

1 Jesus, the Crucified pleads for me,
While he is nailed to the shameful tree,
Scorned and forsaken, derided and curst,
See how His enemies do their worst!
Yet, in the midst of the torture and shame,
Jesus, the Crucified, breathes my name!
Wonder of wonders, oh! How can it be?
Jesus, the Crucified, pleads for me!

3 (LADIES ONLY)

"Though thou hast left me and wandered
away,
Chosen the darkness instead of the day;
Though thou art covered with many a stain,
Though thou hast wounded me oft and again:
Though thou hast followed thy wayward will;
Yet, in my pity, I love thee still."
Wonder of wonders it ever must be!
Jesus, the Crucified, pleads for me!

2 (MEN ONLY)

Lord, I have left Thee, I have denied,
Followed the world in my selfish pride:
Lord, I have joined in the hateful cry,
"Slay Him, away with Him, crucify!"
Lord I have done it, oh! ask me not
how;
Woven the thorns for Thy tortured
brow:
Yet in his pity so boundless and free
Jesus, the Crucified, pleads for me!

4. (LADIES ONLY)

Jesus is dying, in agony sore,
Jesus is suffering more and more,
Jesus is bowed with the weight of his
woe,
Jesus is faint with each bitter throe.
Jesus is bearing it all in my stead,
Pity Incarnate for me has bled;
Wonder of wonders it ever must be
Jesus, the Crucified, pleads for me!

I adore Thee

1 I adore Thee, I adore Thee!
Glorious ere the world began;
Yet more wonderful Thou shinest,
Though divine, yet still divinest
In Thy dying love for man.

2 I adore Thee, I adore Thee!
Thankful at Thy feet to be;
I have heard Thy accent thrilling,
Lo! I come, for Thou art willing
Me to pardon, even me.

3 I adore Thee, I adore Thee!
Born of woman, yet Divine:
Stained with sins I kneel before Thee,
Sweetest Jesu, I implore Thee,
Make me ever only Thine.

All for Jesus

1 All for Jesus! All for Jesus!
This our song shall ever be,
For we have no hope, nor Saviour,
If we have not hope in Thee!

2 All for Jesus! Thou wilt give us
Strength to serve Thee, hour by hour;
None can move us from Thy presence,
While we trust Thy love and power.

3 All for Jesus - at thine altar
Thou wilt give us sweet content;
There, dear Lord, we shall receive thee
In the solemn sacrament.

4 All for Jesus - thou hast loved us;
All for Jesus - thou hast died;
All for Jesus - thou art with us;
All for Jesus crucified.

All for Jesus - all for Jesus -
This the Church's song must be;

Till, at last, her sons are gathered
One in love and one in thee. Amen.

“The Crucifixion” Programme Notes

John Stainer (1840 - 1901) was one of the most distinguished musicians of his generation. In 1872 he was appointed organist of St Paul's Cathedral, where he raised performance standards and greatly expanded the repertoire. He was renowned for his considerable scholarship as a researcher into, and editor of, early music.

He was regarded as one of the foremost composers of cathedral music, and was closely involved with the compilation of *Hymns Ancient & Modern*, as well as being music editor of several other important publications. He was an Oxford Professor, a general inspector of music education and the president of several professional bodies.

As organist, conductor, composer, teacher and author, the immense contribution that Stainer made to the music of his time can scarcely be over-estimated. However, all this worthy enterprise has long been forgotten, and today Stainer is remembered simply for *The Crucifixion* and a few rather fine anthems and hymn-tunes.

The Crucifixion is scored for tenor and bass soloists, mixed choir and organ. It was dedicated to Stainer's pupil and friend William Hodge, assistant sub-organist at St Paul's Cathedral and organist and choirmaster at Marylebone Parish Church, where the cantata was first performed in February 1887, conducted by the composer with Hodge at the organ.

In composing *The Crucifixion*, Stainer's intention was to provide a Passiontide cantata written in a musical language and on a scale that would put it within the scope of most parish choirs. Its structure is clearly modelled on the scheme of choruses, chorales, recitatives and arias of Bach's *St Matthew Passion*, which in 1873 Stainer had introduced into the Music for Holy Week at St Paul's. The Rev William Sparrow-Simpson, Succentor and Librarian of St Paul's, compiled the libretto, drawing on the Gospel accounts for the narrative elements of the story and writing the texts of the choruses, arias and hymns himself.

The first performance of *The Crucifixion* was well received, but it soon attracted fierce criticism, both for its libretto and its music. The combination of Sparrow-Simpson's shortcomings as a poet and his excessively sentimental language was not a recipe for literary success. Some of the music is also typically sentimental Victoriana, such as the 'Fling wide the gates' choruses and the duet, 'So thou liftest thy divine petition'.

Nevertheless, there are also passages of great beauty - the unaccompanied setting of 'God so loved the world', for example, which continues to be performed as an anthem in its own right - and sections of dramatic interest. Stainer's setting of the seven last words from the cross, for four-part men's chorus, is highly effective, especially since it is followed by the stark, unaccompanied final statement from the tenor soloist, 'And he bowed his head and gave up the ghost'.

Particularly significant in the overall scheme of *The Crucifixion* are the five hymns, which are designed for congregational participation. Of these, *Cross of Jesus* must be counted amongst the finest of all hymn-tunes.

How should we view *The Crucifixion* today? Nearly 140 years have passed since its first performance, and opinions are still sharply divided as to its worth. On the one

hand there is the school of thought exemplified by this excoriating critic, writing back in 1971:

Sparrow-Simpson's appalling doggerel set to Stainer's squalid music is a monument to the inane'.

On the other hand there are many who would agree with the eminent musician Barry Rose, a lifelong advocate of the piece, (his orchestral version has been recorded by Guildford Philharmonic and Guildford Camerata)

'To [Sparrow-Simpson's] words Stainer added his music, writing some of the most memorable hymn-tunes we shall ever hear, and showing a rare sense of understanding in painting the text with music that is both thoughtful and dramatic, whilst also giving us the sublime and unsurpassed unaccompanied setting of God So Loved The World.'

There is little doubt that Stainer's cantata falls far short of the high standards achieved by his contemporaries, Parry and Stanford. But Stainer's aim was a modest one: to provide an extended Passiontide meditation which ordinary choirs could perform and to which congregations could immediately relate. At the time there was no such piece. In this respect he was undoubtedly successful, as its enduring popularity testifies.

Programme Notes by John Bawden, with thanks.

Salvador Dalí's painting "Christ of St John of the Cross"

Salvador Dalí (1904 - 1989) painted this picture in 1951. It depicts Christ on the cross in a darkened sky floating over a body of water complete with a boat and fishermen. Although it is a depiction of the crucifixion, it is devoid of nails, blood, and a crown of thorns, because, according to Dalí, he was convinced by a dream that these features would mar his depiction of Christ. Also in a dream, the importance of depicting Christ in the extreme angle evident in the painting was revealed to him.

The painting is known as the *Christ of Saint John of the Cross*, because its design is based on a drawing by the 16th-century Spanish friar John of the Cross.

On the bottom of his studies for the painting, Dalí explained its inspiration: "In the first place, in 1950, I had a 'cosmic dream' in which I saw this image in colour and which in my dream represented the 'nucleus of the atom.' This nucleus later took on a metaphysical sense; I considered it 'the very unity of the universe,' the Christ!"

In order to create the figure of Christ, Dalí had Hollywood stuntman Russell Saunders suspended from an overhead gantry, so he could see how the body would appear from the desired angle and also envisage the pull of gravity on the human body.

The painting was acquired for Glasgow Corporation in 1952 by for £8,200, a price considered high at the time.

At the time of its purchase the verdict by modern art critics was that producing such a traditional painting was a stunt by an artist already famous for his surrealist art, and the work has continued to generate controversy.

The picture was voted Scotland's favourite painting in 2006. In 2009 *The Guardian* art critic, Jonathan Jones, described it as "kitsch and lurid", but noted that the

painting was "for better or worse, probably the most enduring vision of the crucifixion painted in the 20th century."

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.



She also plays the clarinet, and in recent years has rediscovered the organ – now studying with John Challenger (Salisbury Cathedral) and 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, as well as being the Musical Director of Wareham Choral Society since 2018. She has recently been appointed co-Director of Music at St Mary's Church Fordingbridge where she has the chance to both play and conduct the choir as well as making musical links beyond the church.

Hazel is a well-established piano and clarinet teacher working mainly in schools, previously through Hampshire Music Service, and now as a Teaching Member of Salisbury Area Music Co-operative, as well as teaching piano at Burgate School in Fordingbridge. In addition to her regular commitments at St Mary's, Fordingbridge, she is also in much demand to play at services at many local churches and knows her way to many beautiful villages through this! Hazel enjoys supporting church music making at all levels from parish, to singing in Salisbury Cathedral Chamber Choir.

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

Paul Ellis studied at Manchester University and the Royal Northern College of Music, where his tutors included Gillian Weir (organ) and Robert Elliott (harpichord). He is an experienced organ recitalist, giving performances across the UK and in the USA and in Paris, along with regular recitals in Sherborne Abbey.



Paul developed a love of choral music whilst at university and has conducted choirs ever since. He has worked with many choirs in the South West and earned a reputation for high standards of performance and innovative programming. Choirs with which Paul has worked over the years include the Grange Choral Society, Taunton Camerata, Sherborne School Music

Society and East Cornwall Bach Choir.

Paul has been actively involved in leading music in Sherborne for many years, in particular as Musical Director of Sherborne Chamber Choir, with whom he has given numerous highly acclaimed performances. He was formerly Director of Music of Sherborne Abbey, where for 13 years he was responsible for building a thriving choir of adults and boys. He is also Musical Director of Sherborne Festival Chorus, a community-based choir of around 140 singers, giving annual performances with them in Sherborne Abbey Festival.



Jonathan Prentice read music at Bristol University, singing in the Cathedral choir, before returning to his hometown of Bournemouth to complete a post-graduate degree. His varied career has seen him rattle off the Modern Major General live on television to singing Wotan for the Wagner Society. He has been fortunate enough to have performed in most of the great religious works from the Bach Passions to Mendelssohn's *Elijah* as well as singing many celebrated operatic roles, including *Rigoletto*, *Eugene Onegin*, *Don Giovanni* and *The Barber of Seville*. With the Gala Ensemble he released a recording of Gilbert and Sullivan Opera highlights for the Sony label, which topped the Gramophone classical chart. For the last fourteen years he has worked for the Bournemouth University/Arts University Music Department as vocal coach and accompanist, also acting as musical director for the Performing Arts Society, and putting on operas with the University's music scholars, including *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Carmen* and *Dido and Aeneas*. During lockdown he became a regular online publisher of song and choral arrangements for Sheet Music Press.

Our next concert is at 7pm on June 15th at Lady St Mary Church, Wareham, when together with:

The Wareham Town Band, The Bovington Military Wives Choir, mezzo-soprano Grace Lovelass, the Lady St Mary Handbell group and Lady St Mary bell-ringers and representatives of the Royal British Legion we shall mark the 80th anniversary of D-Day with an eclectic mix of music!

Tickets are only £10 - More details to follow soon!

Some dates for your diary:

On Nov 9th we are holding a Come-and-Sing workshop in Blandford church for Karl Jenkins' *The Armed Man* – join us for an exciting day of singing!

Our Christmas concert this year is on Dec 7th and will include Britten's *A Ceremony of Carols* as well as our usual mix of choir and audience carols. We are delighted to be joined by talented harpist Katie Salomon.

Our new term starts again on Sept 9th – come and sing with us!

The King's Arms in Stoborough is a historic family-run inn.

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