

Waverley Singers



Saturday 21 March 2026, 7pm
Guildford Cathedral

Exaltation!

*Vaughan Williams Mass in G Minor,
The Lark Ascending, and Te Deum*

Programme includes Bach *Violin Sonata No.1 in G minor*

Violin - Elizabeth Cooney

Organ - Philip Scriven

Conductor - Richard Pearce



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Programme

Vaughan Williams *Te Deum in G*

J.S. Bach *Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor, BWV 582* (Organ Solo)

Vaughan Williams *The Lark Ascending* (choral version, arr. Paul Drayton)

Interval

Vaughan Williams *Mass in G – Kyrie, Gloria*

J.S. Bach *Violin Sonata No. 1 in G Minor, BWV 1001 – Adagio, Fuga*

Vaughan Williams *Mass in G – Credo*

J.S. Bach *Violin Sonata No. 1 in G Minor, BWV 1001 – Siciliano, Presto*

Vaughan Williams *Mass in G – Sanctus, Benedictus, Agnus Dei*

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

Recognised as the most important English composer of his generation, Ralph Vaughan Williams was a key figure in the 20th-century revival of English music. Although born in Gloucestershire he grew up at his mother's family home, Leith Hill Place, Dorking, and spent most of his life in that area or in London. He started his musical education there at the age of 5, learning the piano and theory, and then the violin. After prep school in Rottingdean he spent three years at Charterhouse, where he switched from the violin to the viola, and played in the school orchestra. His family dissuaded him from pursuing an orchestral career, but allowed him to go to the Royal College of Music for two years before he went up to Trinity College, Cambridge, after which he returned to the RCM. His teachers there were Parry, Wood and Stanford: he said that Parry had passed onto his pupils the torch of the great English choral tradition, starting with Tallis, and it was their duty to keep it alight.

He had been drawn to composition as a schoolboy (composing his first piece at Leith Hill Place when he was 6), and on going up to Cambridge knew that he wanted to be a composer. Initially progress was slow, but his second spell at the RCM and then periods of study with Bruch and Ravel were significant, encouraging him to break out of the "heavy contrapuntal Teutonic manner". In addition to composition, he was also a teacher, conductor and writer. Frequently described as visionary, and well known for his work on English folksongs (collecting over 800), he was a prolific

composer in most genres, his works recognisably English in style though individually different; and his illumination of the human condition, perhaps derived from his sympathy for the aspirations of generations of ordinary men (amongst whom he numbered himself), is regarded as a unique contribution.

Vaughan Williams *Te Deum in G* (1928)

Vaughan Williams' *Te Deum in G* was commissioned for the enthronement of Cosmo Lang as Archbishop of Canterbury in 1928 and was first performed at Canterbury Cathedral on 4th December that year, conducted by Henry Walford Davies. Originally scored for choir, organ, and optional brass, the choral writing is straightforward. It opens with a bold, rhythmic unison passage over an ostinato (continually repeated) organ accompaniment, and develops into antiphonal, angelic choir effects, and a canon between the two halves of the choir. A 6/4 section provides contrast before a new idea is introduced with the words "Thou art the King of Glory", before ending in a quieter, supplicatory mood. The piece blends majestic, forward-moving energy with a serene, contemplative ending.

Due to technical difficulties we apologise for being unable to include the advertised Missy Mazzoli Vespers for Violin in tonight's programme.

Bach – Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor (BWV 582)

Exact details of the date and place of composition of the Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor are not known, as the autograph manuscript is currently considered lost. It most likely dates from between 1709 and 1712-13 (earlier therefore than the Violin Sonata which we hear later), when Bach was living and working in Weimar, where it is said he wrote most of his organ music. Towards the end of this period he developed the formal scheme of two-movement pieces, the first in different forms (prelude, toccata etc), with the second a fugue. BWV 582 comes from this mould, and has been described as "probably the most important work of these years". The first half of the Passacaglia serves as the Fugue's main subject, and appears to be influenced by other earlier composers including Buxtehude. The opening ostinato comprises eight bars played only on the pedals, both unusual features. It is followed by 20 variations in an overarching symmetrical structure, the exact meaning of which continues to puzzle musicologists and scholars to this day. Most agree it reaches its climax in Variation 12, which is followed by three quiet variations forming a short intermezzo, and then five more to conclude the piece. There are also suggestions that the variations can be divided into seven groups, each of which opens with a quotation from a Lutheran chorale. Robert Schumann described the variations of the passacaglia as "intertwined so ingeniously that one can never cease to be amazed."

The Passacaglia is followed immediately by a double fugue, the first subject being the first half of the Passacaglia ostinato, and the second, a transformed version of its second half, with both heard simultaneously at the start, immediately followed by a countersubject which is then used throughout the piece. When all three are heard together they are never in the same voices twice.

The Passacaglia in particular has been much transcribed, for orchestra, piano, brass quintet, viols and even handbells. Tonight however we hear it in its authentic form.

Vaughan Williams *The Lark Ascending*

Vaughan Williams composed his romance *The Lark Ascending* in 1914, revising it in 1919 on his return from service in the First World War, and it was first performed in the version for violin and piano in 1920, with the orchestral version's premiere in 1921. Although not the main item on the programme, it made a favourable impression which has continued to this day.

At the head of the score Vaughan Williams wrote out 12 lines from a 122-line poem *The Lark Ascending* by the Victorian novelist and poet George Meredith, which had inspired the composition.

Tonight we sing Paul Drayton's 2019 arrangement for violin and mixed choir. He comments:

*"A work held in as much affection as *The Lark Ascending* deserves particular respect from any arranger....Nevertheless one may imagine Vaughan Williams, himself a regular arranger and proponent of musical inclusiveness, sanctioning a choral backdrop to his lark. The first orchestral performance came at a time when the wordless chorus was much in vogue, and the composer himself often used the sound to create a spiritual or mystical effect.*

With a "romance" overtly inspired by one specific poem it would seem appropriate to graft some of those same words onto the vocal lines – and more appropriate still with a composer wedded to the English folk-song tradition, and the original Meredith verses seem a fitting tribute, and turn out to be a comfortable fit to the existing music without any painful dislocation of words or rhythms."

He rises and begins to round,
He drops the silver chain of sound,
Of many links without a break,
In chirrup, whistle, slur and shake.

And he the wine which overflows
to lift us with him as he goes.

For singing till his heaven fills
'Tis love of earth that he instils
And ever winging up and up,
Our valley is his golden cup

Till lost on his aerial rings
In light, and then the fancy sings.

George Meredith, 1828-1909.

Johann Sebastian Bach

Johann Sebastian Bach needs little introduction. A scion of a musical family, he is known for his prolific output across a variety of forms and instruments, including voice, and his mastery of counterpoint. Since Mendelssohn precipitated the “Bach revival” with a performance of the *St Matthew Passion* in 1829 he has been known as one of the greatest composers of classical music.

The set of six Sonatas and Partitas for solo violin was completed by 1720, although the exact dates of their composition are unclear.

At the time Bach was living and working in Köthen, before he took up his post in Leipzig. Most of his compositions there were secular: it was only after he moved to Leipzig that he composed his great choral works.

Bach *Violin Sonata No.1 in G minor*

The first of Bach’s six solo works for violin exudes the most calm.

The opening *Adagio* movement is subdued, with an air of desolation, almost plaintiveness. It is followed by the *Fugue*, which by definition is strict in form, and rather serious. Next comes the gently swaying *Siciliana*, the only movement of the sonata in a major key, which provides some relief. But although the atmosphere is more relaxed, there is still a hint of sadness.

The final movement, the *Presto*, offers some tempered gaiety. Though in the minor, there is agitated motion – sharp, spirited and virtuoso. The chord that closed the *Fugue*, spread out over four strings, also ends the *Presto*. And the *Adagio* also starts and finishes with this harmony. This creates linking pauses between the movements, an effect used by Bach in this sonata alone.

Vaughan Williams *Mass in G minor*

The *Mass in G minor* was written in 1921, to a commission from Richard Runciman Terry. Terry was a pioneering English organist and musicologist who revived forgotten Tudor polyphony at Westminster Cathedral and was a keen editor of Renaissance and Tudor Church Music. Vaughan Williams dedicated the mass to his close friend Gustav Holst and the Whitsuntide Singers but the first performance was given by the City of Birmingham Choir on 6 December 1922 in Birmingham Town Hall. After its first performance at Westminster Cathedral, it soon became an accepted pillar of the repertoire.

The early 1920s was a productive time for Vaughan Williams. In 1921 he composed his *Symphony No. 3* the so called “*Pastoral Symphony*” and a ‘pastoral episode’ called *The Shepherds of the Delectable Mountains*. The mass shows strong connections to both his pastoral music and the emerging revival in English polyphonic music, whilst still staying true to his 20th-century sensibilities. Terry summed up the success of the mass when he said:

“I’m quite sincere when I say that it is the work one has all along been waiting for. In your individual and modern idiom you have really captured the old liturgical spirit and atmosphere.”

Written for double choir, the mass is influenced by Tudor modality, false relations and imitative counterpoint, particularly in the *Kyrie*. The interplay between the choir and soloists is reminiscent of the ‘spatial’ effects of the music of the Venetian masters. Some observers have detected the influence of the Eton Choirbook in some of the florid passages in the “Cum Sancto Spiritu” in the *Gloria* and the “Pleni sunt Caeli” in the *Sanctus*. The *Kyrie* starts and ends with a very open, sinuous, and modal melodic line. The *Gloria* and *Credo* feature dramatic effects calling for a wide dynamic range (ff to pppp.) The *Sanctus* is ethereal with its interweaving melodic lines. The playful fugal section at “Pleni sunt caeli” leads to the first *Osanna*. The *Benedictus* is a tender and gentle exchange between the choirs and soloists leading to the second, more assured and triumphant *Osanna*. The *Agnus Dei* combines the solo quartet and choirs in homophony and counterpoint, producing a powerful climax and recalls the music from the opening movement to produce a haunting ending.



Elizabeth Cooney - Violin

elizabethcooney.info

Elizabeth initially studied with Adrian Petcu at the Cork School of Music. During her time there, she represented Ireland at the EBU’s 10th Anniversary concert in Sweden as soloist with Musica Vitae, Sweden and conductor Paavo Jarvi.

She also won the Strings Final of the RTE Young Musician of the Future Competition and went on to study on scholarship to the RCM, London with Itzhak Rashkovsky where she became a Junior Fellow for two years following her studies there. She is laureate of numerous violin competitions including the Sion-Valais International Competition for Violin in Switzerland.

She performs as soloist, chamber musician and orchestral player all over the world and has toured to Europe, Australia and Mexico with the ECO and the dynamic Aurora Orchestra - the latter of which she has memorised thirteen symphonies including Stravinsky’s Rite of Spring, Berlioz’s Symphonie Fantastique and most recently Shostakovich’s 5th Symphony at the BBC Proms at the Royal Albert Hall. Elizabeth has performed as soloist numerous times on tour with the NSO Ireland, the RTE Concert Orchestra and the Ulster Orchestra (recording live for BBC Radio 3) as well as the Slovenian Philharmonic and the Liszt Chamber Orchestra of Hungary. She has collaborated with pianists Finghin Collins, Daniel

Hill and Cristina Ortiz and harpist Sally Pryce and performed at the Wigmore Hall, the Royal Festival Hall and the Weill Hall at Carnegie. She has premiered pieces by Valentyn Silvestrov, Alexander Knaifel, Huw Watkins, Greg Caffrey and Aleksandra Vrebalov among others.



Philip Scriven - Organist

philipscriven.com

Philip Scriven received his early musical training at Westminster Abbey and Charterhouse, and was organ scholar at St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle and St John's College, Cambridge. He subsequently studied conducting at the Vienna Musikhochschule, and at the Juilliard School in New York. Accompanist and Assistant Conductor to The Bach Choir since 2011, Philip has also worked for English and Welsh National Operas, and was Assistant Conductor for Glyndebourne Festival Opera. He has twice performed the complete organ works of J.S. Bach, and transcribed works by Brahms, Warlock and Bernstein for the instrument. He has made numerous recordings including jazz-inspired music for organ, and his own transcription of Holst's *The Planets*. His CD *Piping Hot* was praised in Gramophone magazine for 'the outstanding quality of his playing ... good-humoured and sparkling ... a joy to listen to'. He has held positions at Westminster Abbey, Winchester Cathedral and Lichfield Cathedral, and is currently Organist in Residence at Cranleigh School and Principal Conductor of the Darwin Ensemble Chamber Orchestra. Forthcoming projects include a Royal Festival Hall performance of the Poulenc *Organ Concerto* with the Philharmonia Orchestra.



Richard Pearce - Conductor

Photo - Ian Skelly

Richard has been Musical Director of the Waverley Singers for over 16 years. Particular highlights have been concerts in Guildford Cathedral of Monteverdi *Vespers*, Verdi *Requiem*, Beethoven *Mass in C*, Brahms *Schicksalslied*,



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INSTRUMENTS OF THE SUBLIME

Daniel Collins

(countertenor)

Sylvia Turner (oboe)

Stephanie Waite (violin)

Enrico Alvarez (violin)

Ursula John (viola)

Lawrence Durkin (cello)

Clive Williamson

(harpsichord)

Haslemere Concerts welcomes Daniel Collins, countertenor with The Sixteen, together with a six-piece chamber ensemble, singing and playing some of the great works by J. S. Bach, Purcell and Vivaldi, and premiering new works by local composer, Clive Osgood.



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Mozart *Requiem* and Bach *Magnificat in D*. In 2022 he conducted the Bach *Mass in B Minor*, postponed by the pandemic, and Elgar *Dream of Gerontius* in a combined performance with the Romsey Choral Society. Alongside these major works he has introduced new and varied repertoire to the choir, including commissions by composer Will Todd, and a new commission from Owain Park last year.

Richard was organ scholar at Trinity College, Cambridge. After graduating with first class honours in music, he studied piano accompaniment for two years at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London where he developed his work with solo singers. He is now a professor at the GSMD, coaching singers and instrumentalists for careers in opera and the concert platform, and is a trustee of the Josephine Baker Trust, which supports young soloists at the Royal Academy of Music, the Royal College of Music and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London.

Richard is busy as a conductor, pianist and organist with professional choirs, and is also Musical Director of the Romsey Choral Society. He records and broadcasts regularly with the BBC Singers, and particularly enjoys the challenge of preparing an extremely wide variety of repertoire, including much contemporary and new music. With them, he has conducted works by James MacMillan, Judith Bingham, Britten and Roxanna Panufnik for broadcast on BBC Radio 3. As organist and pianist, he has performed with many of the UK's best-known choral conductors, including David Hill, Stephen Cleobury, Paul Spicer, Bob Chilcott and Sofi Jeannin. Richard has a long-standing association with the Royal Choral Society and performs with them several times a year at the Royal Albert Hall in London. In addition, he makes twice-yearly trips to Sweden to work with groups in the Stockholm and Malmö areas.

Richard is regular organist with the Philharmonia and BBC Symphony Orchestras in London; with them he has performed with many inspirational conductors including Lorin Maazel, Pierre Boulez, Oliver Knussen, Andrew Davis, Sakari Oramo, Marin Alsop and Ed Gardner, as well as Santtu-Matias Rouvali and Jakub Hrůša. He also performs regularly in Promenade concerts and recordings, including at the Last Night of the Proms to a worldwide television audience. Richard frequently conducts and plays for services at St. Margaret's Church, Westminster and at the Houses of Parliament.

From the Archive

We have performed pieces by Ralph Vaughan Williams on numerous occasions over the last 70 years – too many to mention here.

Tonight's opening work, the *Te Deum in G*, featured in Music for a Summer Evening in St Mary's Church, Frensham, in June 2009. The reviewer commented that this and other pieces "allowed the choir to demonstrate both its full dynamic range and its control in the more reflective moments".

We have performed the *Mass in G Minor* twice before: in November 2003, and October 1988, on each occasion in St Thomas-on-The Bourne Church in Farnham – obviously with a very different acoustic to the one we have tonight!

But probably our most remarkable Vaughan Williams concert was in November 1972, to mark the centenary of the composer's birth. In fact, there were two concerts, in partnership with the Grange Choral Society, Christchurch, and the R.A.E. Symphony Orchestra, Farnborough. The first was in Bournemouth on 4 November, and the second, under the banner of the Farnborough Music Society in the Salesian College Hall in Farnborough on 11 November, was attended by Ursula Vaughan Williams, the composer's widow.

The newspaper image below shows her with John Cotterill, conductor, along with Molly Medhurst, Waverley Singers' Secretary, and Jill Dewey, the R.A.E Orchestra's Secretary.



Ursula Vaughan Williams also penned a very nice note (in beautiful handwriting!) on the concert programme:

It is a great pleasure to know that
The Farnborough Music Society are celebrating
the centenary of R.V.'s birth with a concert
that brings amateur & professional musicians
together in a performance of some of his works.
I send my greetings and best wishes to you all.
Ursula Vaughan Williams

Although our home base is Farnham, we have over the years given several concerts in Guildford Cathedral, featuring the Bach *Christmas Oratorio* (1969); the Bach *Magnificat* (2010); the Monteverdi *Vespers of 1610* (2012); the Mozart *Requiem* (2013); the Verdi *Requiem* (2018); we have also sung Evensong here at least four times.

Our next concert in Guildford, on 17 April next year, will be not in the Cathedral, but in Holy Trinity Church, where we will have the privilege of singing Bach's wonderful *St Matthew Passion*.

TBS

Spring Concerts

3-00pm Sunday 22 March

Ignas Maknickas - piano

Schumann, Čiurlionis & Chopin

7-30pm Saturday 18 April

Fibonacci String Quartet

Beethoven, Debussy, Schumann

4-00pm Sunday 3 May

Ivan Martin - piano

Beethoven Piano Sonatas

7-30pm Saturday 16 May

Simorre String Quartet

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The Waverley Singers

In 2025 we celebrated our 70th anniversary as a Farnham based choir. We currently have nearly 100 members, including our first Tenor Scholar. We enjoy singing a wide variety of music, from the standard choral repertoire to new commissions, usually performing four or five concerts per year as well as hosting a choral workshop. We are lucky to be directed and inspired by Richard Pearce, and accompanied in rehearsals by Jakob Rothoff. We are regularly joined in concerts by excellent professional soloists and instrumentalists.

On Saturday 27 June, at 7pm, we return to St Lawrence Church, Alton, for our summer concert, "Crowning Glory". The programme is based around music for Coronations, including Mozart's *Coronation Mass* and Handel's *Coronation Anthems*. Our final performance of the 2025-6 season is a collaboration with our sister choir, Romsey Choral Society, singing the Brahms *Requiem* at Romsey Abbey on Saturday 4 July. Our plans for next season include a workshop and performance of Bach's *St Matthew Passion* in Spring 2027. It's always a good time to join the Waverley Singers, and we welcome prospective members to attend a few rehearsals first. We rehearse at the Spire Church, South Street, Farnham GU9 7QU, on Thursday evenings, 7.30pm – 9.45pm in term time.

If you are interested in joining or simply wish to find out more, please contact:

Carolyn Heathcote
01420 475418
membership@waverleysingers.com
waverleysingers.com

Dates for the Diary

27 June 2026, 7pm - **Crowning Glory** - St Lawrence Church, Alton

24 October 2026, 7:30pm - **Autumn Concert** - St Thomas-on-The Bourne, Farnham

5 December 2026, 7pm - **Christmas Concert** - All Saints Church, Odiham

16 January 2027, 10:30am - 4:30pm - **St Matthew Passion Choral Workshop**
St Thomas-on-The Bourne, Farnham.

17 April 2027, 7:30pm - **St Matthew Passion** - Holy Trinity Church, Guildford

Sopranos

Nicola Anderegg
Claire Bacon
Janet Carne
Joy Cartwright
Johanna Clift
Maureen Collins
Rosie Collinson
Elaine Cook
Philippa Cullen
Diane Drewett
Jane Eckles
Elizabeth Flitcroft
Janet Gunn
Anneliese Handley
Caroline Hardy
Carolyn Heathcote
Sue Hubbard
Pat Kitchen
Sally Maxfield
Catherine May
Alyson Paterson
Carolyn Patey
Eleanor Platt-Williams
Eleanor Raynsford
Margaret Reeder
Vivien Rieden
Miranda Sargent
Susan Sharpe
Tracy Smith
Emily Thomas
Joanne Watson
Maggie Weaver
Sally Wooding

Altos

Juliana Baxter
Sara Burnie
Sarah Church
Sue Crosfield
Jill Denbigh
Fiona Dick
Sheena Ewen
Catherine Hadfield
Jane Kenney
Margaret Mackenzie
Anne Mason
Anna Milburn
Liz Milburn
Faye Mylward
Gillian Pickering
Pamela Poust
Allison Price
Tegwen Robb
Judith Stradling
Rachel Sturt
Sylvia Turner
Esther van Rooyen
Joan Warren
Catherine White
Chris Wilmshurst
Teresa Wishart
Liz Witham

Tenors

Nick Bailes
Vernon Burford
Tim Devis
Sasha Dow
David Edwards
Robert Gussman
Rosie Jeffery
Jeremy Keep
David Martin
Alan Mort
Simon Paterson

Basses

Mike Aaronson
Simon Austin
Andrew Baxter
David Budd
Paul Chambers
Iain Cockburn
David Corran
Sam Coulter
Rod Eckles
Hugh Gammell
Bill Griffin
Max Hadfield
Graham Hey
John Holden
John Hubbard
Michael Manzi
Mark Penfold
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Accompanist: Jakob Rothoff



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Anyone who is interested in becoming a patron of the choir is invited to contact **Gillian Pickering on 07730 478445 or email patrons@waverleysingers.com**.

All Patrons receive advance notice of concerts and priority booking forms and are entitled to reserved seats in the position of their choice. Their names are listed in concert programmes, and they are also invited to the choir's social events. Donations made under Gift Aid are particularly valuable to the choir.

The Waverley Singers would like to thank the clergy and staff at Guildford Cathedral for making them so welcome this evening. Our thanks also to Simon Claiden for photography, Jonathan Pickering, Paul Chambers, Mike Aaronson and Sylvia Turner for programme content, and Sara Burnie for editing and graphic design.

At each of our concerts, we invite a local charity to receive the proceeds of a retiring collection. We were pleased to raise £690 for Phyllis Tuckwell at our Opera Gala on 26 October and £981 for Lunch Bags for Children at our St Nicolas concert on 6 December. This evening we are delighted to support the Guildford based mental health charity Oakleaf. We are very grateful to all who have given so generously.

Please visit our website for further information: **waverleysingers.com**

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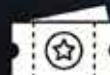


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