

The Choir of St. Thomas-on-The Bourne Waverley Singers



Sat 6 December 2025, 6pm

St Thomas-on-The Bourne, GU9 8HA

St Nicolas Britten

TENOR - PETER DAVOREN ORGAN - PHILIP SCRIVEN

CHAMELEON ARTS ENSEMBLE

CONDUCTORS - RICHARD PEARCE AND JORDAN THEIS

waverleysingers.com

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RETIRING COLLECTION IN AID OF LUNCH BAGS FOR CHILDREN



Lunch Bags for Children

Every school holiday while most of us are being thankful for quieter traffic on the roads or even in our lives if we have school children, a significant number of families will be suffering from food anxiety.

Leafy Surrey is not the place where you expect to encounter poverty; it is hidden, which makes it harder to ask for help and harder to address.

Brambleton Hall in The Bourne Parish is located in an area of relative deprivation, where almost 50% of the children at the local school receive free school meals. We have a community fridge and warehouse that weekly addresses need, but school holidays make significantly further demands on families.

For the last three years we have been giving children in vulnerable families a week's worth of groceries to make simple, healthy lunches. This programme, Lunch Bags for Children, has been feeding 100 children each holiday and across the summer until now.

Our Borough Council had been funding Lunch Bags for Children, but this budget was discontinued 10 months ago at a time when more families are experiencing greater need. Local charities have plugged the gap, but that funding will run out in 7 weeks. We find ourselves in a situation that after 3 Lunch Bags for Children sessions this summer, we will have to stop the programme. It's heart breaking.

Every pound we receive goes directly into a hungry mouth. All overhead costs and other resources needed are borne by our church. The only spending is on the food that we buy for the children. We do not believe that this need will continue indefinitely, but until our economy becomes healthy and parents are given a chance to make ends meet, we long to offer hope in the form of actual help.

Thank you for listening,

Sandy Clarke

Vicar of The Bourne and Tilford



Programme

Britten - *A Hymn to the Virgin*

Franz Biebl - *Ave Maria*

Britten - *Rejoice in the Lamb*

Britten - *Corpus Christi Carol*

Jonathan Dove - *Seek Him that Maketh the Seven Stars*

Interval

Britten - *Saint Nicolas*

Benjamin Britten (1913 -1976)

Benjamin Britten was born on 22 November 1913 (St. Cecilia's Day) in Lowestoft, Suffolk. His father was a dentist, and his mother was an accomplished pianist and amateur singer. Britten was extremely precocious, composing before he could read or write; he began playing the piano at two years old. At seven he was reading symphony and opera scores, by nine he had completed a string quartet and an oratorio, and by 16 years of age a symphony, six more string quartets, ten piano sonatas and many smaller works.

Britten studied at the Royal College of Music with Arthur Benjamin for piano, and Frank Bridge and John Ireland for composition. Bridge was one of the most forward-looking English composers and introduced Britten to the music of Alban Berg, Béla Bartók and Arnold Schoenberg.

After his father's death in 1935, Britten joined the General Post Office film unit to provide the soundtracks for several innovative documentary films. One of Britten's co-workers, the poet W.H. Auden, became a personal friend and mentor. Auden broadened Britten's literary taste, educating him in poetry and word setting, as well as helping him to acknowledge his homosexuality, and to develop his pacifist and political opinions. 1937 proved a crucial year for Britten; in January his mother died and in March he met the tenor Peter Pears who would become his partner, both personally and professionally. In October that year he moved to Snape in Suffolk.

Britten's reputation was now growing. His new works were receiving widespread publicity and repeat performances. In July 1937 he was asked, at very short notice,

to provide a new work for a string orchestra visiting the Salzburg Festival. The resulting work, *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge*, Op. 10, was written in 10 days. Its wit and invention made it an immediate success and brought him international attention. In 1938 Britten was the soloist in his *Piano Concerto*, Op. 13 at a BBC Prom concert, and went on to play it in three concerts in the following weeks.

In 1939 Britten and Pears went to America, partly in the hope that Britten would achieve the same success over there as he was having in England, and partly 'to do some really intensive thinking ... to do some work to please myself and not necessarily the BBC ...'. Initially it seems Britten thought he would remain in America, but this soon passed and as early as January 1940 he wrote home saying 'I am gradually realising that I'm English, and as a composer I suppose I feel I want more definite roots than other people'. Britten's three years in America saw him produce many mature works including *Les Illuminations*, Op. 18 (1939) a song cycle setting words by the French poet Arthur Rimbaud, the *Violin Concerto*, Op. 15 (1939), the *Sinfonia da Requiem*, Op. 20 (1940), and the operetta *Paul Bunyan*, Op. 17 (1941) to a libretto by Auden.

Britten and Pears arrived home on 17 April 1942 and headed back to Suffolk. They registered as conscientious objectors. Britten was exempted from military duty and allowed to continue composing on condition that he performed in concerts as part of the war effort. Soon after his return he composed *Rejoice in the Lamb* but his first major work after returning home was the opera *Peter Grimes*, Op. 33 (1945) inspired by the poem 'The Borough' by George Crabbe. *Grimes* is the work that cemented Britten's international reputation and is said to have marked the rebirth of British opera. It was the start of a string of stage works including "The Rape of Lucretia" (1946); "Albert Herring" (1947); "Billy Budd" (1951); "The Turn of the Screw" (1954) an opera based on Henry James's novel of that name; "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (1960); and "Death in Venice", Op. 88 (1973).

In 1947, whilst on a tour with the English Opera Group (a group they had founded), Pears suggested that they start their own music festival - a small festival at Aldeburgh with a couple of concerts given by friends. The inaugural festival was held on 5-13 June 1948, and it quickly grew in size until in 1967 it moved to the converted Maltings building in Snape. Despite a set-back in 1969 when the building burnt down; it was rebuilt in time for the 1970 season, and has remained there ever since.

In 1961 Britten was approached to write a work to celebrate the consecration of the new Coventry Cathedral, built to replace the original 14th century Cathedral destroyed during a WWII bombing raid on 14 September 1940. Britten realised the importance of the commission as a 'kind of reparation'. The *War Requiem* sets words from the Latin mass for the dead, juxtaposed with poems by Wilfred Owen, who served as the commander of a rifle company until he was killed in action one week

before the Armistice.

As he started writing his opera “Death in Venice”, Op 88 in 1973, Britten’s underlying heart disease came to the fore and he was operated on in May. Afterwards he had to give up performing, and his rate of composition slowed. In 1965 he had been awarded the Order of Merit, and in 1976 he accepted a life peerage, the first one to be granted to a composer. He died on 4 December 1976 at the Red House, his home in Aldeburgh since 1957.

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Britten – A Hymn to the Virgin

A Hymn to the Virgin was composed in July 1930 when Britten was just 16 and confined to his school infirmary. He found the 14th-century poem in a copy of the Oxford Book of English Verse that he had won as a school prize. It sets words from medieval English and Latin and is scored for two antiphonal choirs, with the first choir singing the English text, and the second, smaller choir responding with the Latin text. The first two stanzas are set to similar music but in the third stanza Britten initially abandons the call-and-response pattern of the opening pages, though antiphony is restored towards the end. The Hymn appears to be in A minor; however, individual lines and cadences, with their recurrent references to the Phrygian mode, suggest pre-tonal practices. Britten retained a soft spot for this youthful work, and it was one of two pieces performed at his funeral on 7 December 1976.

Franz Biebl (1906 – 2001)

Franz Biebl studied in Munich and worked as a choir director and professor before being drafted during WWII, after which he was a POW in Michigan from 1944 to 1946, a life experience that some suggest influenced his music’s emotional depth. Post-war, he became the musical director in Fürstenfeldbruck Church, and later headed the choral music department at Bavarian Radio.

Biebl - Ave Maria

Franz Biebl’s Ave Maria was composed sometime before May 1959, but first published in 1964 while he was serving as choirmaster at the Fürstenfeldbruck

Church, near Munich. It was requested by a member of his church, for his workplace choir of firefighters to perform at a local choral competition. It was originally written for double male chorus and only achieved international fame after it was recorded in the 1990's by the American a cappella group Chanticleer. It has since been arranged for all combinations of voices and instruments.

The text is a combination of the Angelus Domini prayer, which is recited three times daily in the Catholic Church and recalls the Annunciation, in which the Angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she would conceive a child by the Holy Spirit, along with the standard Ave Maria text. The structure involves a bass soloist chanting the Angelus versicles, which are then answered by a larger four-part choir singing the "Ave Maria" refrain. It builds to an emotional and powerful climax before concluding with "Amen". The harmonies are conservative but poignant, and the piece effectively blends medieval chant with rich, 20th-century harmonies.

Angelus Domini nuntiavit Mariae
et concepit de Spiritu sancto.

The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary
and she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

Refrain:

Ave Maria, gratia plena,
Dominus tecum.

Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.

Benedicta tu in mulieribus,
et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesus.

Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb,
Jesus.

Maria dixit: Ecce ancilla Domini.
Fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum

Mary said: Behold the handmaid of the
Lord. Be it unto me according to thy word

Et Verbum caro factum est
et habitavit in nobis.

And the Word was made flesh
and dwelt among us.

Sancta Maria, mater Dei,
ora pro nobis peccatoribus

Holy Mary, mother of God pray for us
sinners

Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis
nunc et in hora mortis nostrae.
Amen

Holy Mary, pray for us now and at the
hour of our death.
Amen

Britten – *Rejoice in the Lamb*

Rejoice in the Lamb was written to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the consecration of St. Matthew's Church in Northampton and was first performed on 21 September 1943. It was commissioned by the Reverend Walter Hussey (1909-

1985), a stalwart patron of the arts whose other commissions include the *Chichester Psalms* by Leonard Bernstein, *A Festival Anthem* by Lennox Berkeley, the sculpture *Madonna and Child* by Henry Moore and a stained-glass window for Chichester Cathedral by Marc Chagall. Britten had only recently returned from America where he had fled the war, and so Hussey's choice to commission a work from a conscientious objector and a homosexual was a brave one. The critical reviews recognised the work's creativity and uniqueness, one critic saying that it "has about it a freshness unlike anything in our music".

The librettist, Christopher Smart (1722-1771) was born in Shipbourne, Kent, and attended Pembroke College, Cambridge. He earned a living in London as an editor and writer of articles for periodicals, and songs for the popular theatre. He also became well known for his profligate drinking and spending, being arrested for debt in 1747. Around the 1750s Smart started to show signs of religious fanaticism, finding himself compelled to pray to God continuously, "falling on his knees to pray in the street, or in any other unusual place", as his friend Samuel Johnson remarked. From 1757, until his death in 1771, he was confined to various asylums and it was at this time that he wrote his two major poems: *A Song to David* (1743) and *Jubilate Agno* (1758-63) which Britten sets in *Rejoice in the Lamb*. The incomplete manuscript to *Jubilate Agno* was only discovered and published in 1939. Britten selected ten stanzas that capture the overall feeling of the poem, namely that all creatures and things praise God in their own manner.

Also known as *Festival Cantata*, *Rejoice in the Lamb* is scored for treble, alto, tenor and bass soloists, choir and organ. It consists of eight sections, broadly arranged into three 'movements'. The work opens with *Rejoice in God O ye tongues*. At the words *Let Nimrod the mighty Hunter* the music erupts into jubilation, characterised by some very energetic and complex rhythms. Here the poet praises God by linking various biblical figures with members of the animal kingdom. This then leads to a *Hallelujah* chorus, whose quiet melismatic passages show the influence of Purcell.

The 'slow movement', features three sections given to the soloists. The treble soloist is first, as he lists the qualities of his cat Jeoffry; how he worships God and how this, in turn inspires his owner to worship God. Next the perspective shifts as the alto soloist extols the mouse for his great valour, and Jeoffry becomes the villain. Finally the tenor explains how the flowers in the garden glorify God.

In the last 'movement' the choir sings in octaves, with stark harmonies reminiscent of the opening of the work, whilst the poet compares his anguish at being in an asylum with the persecution that Jesus suffered. After a bass solo the choir lists various musical instruments and provides rhymes for their sounds, in another highly rhythmic section. They settle on the trumpet and harp as the music relaxes and leads us into a reprise of the chorus of *Hallelujahs*, which ended the first section – bringing the work to a restful and joyous close.

Britten - *Corpus Christi Carol*

Britten's setting of the traditional "Corpus Christi Carol" exists in two forms: as the fifth variation in his 1933 choral work, *A Boy was Born*, and as a standalone song for high or low voice and piano/organ, published in 1961 and dedicated to John Elwes. It sets an anonymous 15th-century Middle English ballad with a mystical and evocative text. The lyrics describe a falcon carrying away a knight ("my make away") to a brown orchard where he lies in a hall, wounded and bleeding, with a maiden weeping beside him.

The text's suggestive, dream-like imagery and allegorical nature (the wounded knight could be seen as Christ, and the maiden interpreted as Mary) perfectly matched Britten's compositional style, allowing him to explore themes of innocence and suffering.

The song version of the work was arranged by Britten for solo voice and piano accompaniment. The piano part beautifully renders the sparse, haunting quality of the melody. This version is known for its plangent, simple lines and chordal texture, focusing on the expressive quality of the medieval text. It features Britten's masterful handling of melody and texture, showcasing his turn towards English musical roots and a more melodic style that still retained his unique, modern individuality. This arrangement was famously recorded by the American singer songwriter Jeff Buckley (1966-1997), which brought it to wider, modern attention.

Jonathan Dove (b.1959)

Jonathan Dove was born in 1959 to architect parents. His early musical experience came from playing the piano, organ and viola. Later he studied composition with Robin Holloway at Cambridge and, after graduation, worked as a freelance accompanist, repetiteur, animateur and arranger. His early professional experience gave him a deep understanding of singers and the complex mechanics of the opera house. Opera and the voice have been the central priorities in Dove's output throughout his subsequent career.

Starting with his breakthrough opera *Flight*, commissioned by Glyndebourne in 1998, Dove has gone on to write more than thirty operatic works. His innate understanding of the individual voice is exemplified in his large and varied choral and song output, and his confident optimism has made him the natural choice as the composer for big occasions, such as the Last Night of the Proms in 2010, and Westminster Abbey in 2018 to commemorate the centenary of the Royal Air Force. Throughout his career Dove has made a serious commitment to community development through innovative musical projects. He won the 2008 Ivor Novello Award for classical music and was made a Commander of the British Empire (CBE) in the Queen's 2019 Birthday Honours for services to music.

Dove – *Seek Him that Maketh the Seven Stars*

The composer has said of this work ‘The theme of light, and star-light in particular, is an endless source of inspiration for composers. I came across these words while looking for a text to set as an anthem for the Royal Academy of Arts’ annual Service for Artists: I thought these images would have a special meaning for visual artists. The anthem begins with a musical image of the night sky, a repeated organ motif of twinkling stars that sets the choir wondering who made them. The refrain ‘Seek him’ starts in devotional longing but is eventually released into a joyful dance, finally coming to rest in serenity.’

It was first performed at St. James’s Piccadilly in May 1995. The text comes from the Book of Amos and the Psalms of David. Scored for choir and organ it explores the journey from wondering at the vastness of the universe to finding a sense of security in a divine presence within it:

Seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion And turneth the shadow of death into the morning. (Amos 5:8)

Alleluia, yea, the darkness shineth as the day, the night is light about me. (Psalm 139)

Britten – *St. Nicolas*

St. Nicolas’s feast day is celebrated on 6 December – today. Most of what we know about his life is based on oral tradition. It is generally agreed that he came from a rich family in Patara, Lycia (on what is now the Mediterranean coast of southwestern Turkey) near the end of the third century. He was reported to have worked miracles even as a child; and was also known for his fasting and giving away his wealth to the poor. He became a model pastor, and was appointed Bishop of Myra in the early fourth century. He is the patron saint of sailors, scholars and children, and is also the patron saint of Russia, Greece, Sicily and Lorraine.

In 1948 Lancing College, Sussex, Peter Pears’s old school, celebrated its centenary. One of the masters’ wives offered £100 as a commission for a work from Britten, and the subject chosen was Saint Nicolas, a co-patron of the college, along with Saint Mary. The original suggestion was that the work should be an ode to Saint Nicolas in the same style as his existing Ode to Saint Cecilia, but it quickly became obvious to Britten, from the episodic nature of the story, that a cantata would be more suitable.

Eric Crozier, who had collaborated with Britten on the opera *Albert Herring* and who wrote the speaker’s part in *The Young Person’s Guide to the Orchestra*, was commissioned for the libretto. Crozier had already started working on it in

September 1947, and by December it was completed and Britten completed the compositional sketch in three weeks. The first performance was given on the opening day of the Aldeburgh Festival in June 1948, but the official premiere was given a month later on 24 July at Lancing College.

This was Britten's first score for performance by amateurs. It is scored for tenor soloist, four-part choir, girls' choir, three trebles, an orchestra comprising piano duet, organ, percussion and strings, and last, but certainly not least, you the audience. The only professional performers required are the tenor, and the leaders of the percussion and string sections.

In the first section, the choir invokes Nicolas to speak to them. He talks of the frailty of life compared to the permanence of faith. The next section relates the remarkable events surrounding Nicolas's birth. The text is broken by repeated chants of "God be Glorified!" sung by a boy treble, until the last one, which is sung by the tenor, to indicate that Nicolas is now grown to a man. The third section tells how Nicolas was orphaned early, gave away his lands and goods to help the poor, and devoted himself to the worship of God. In section four Nicolas journeys to Palestine on a boat. He prophesies a storm, but the sailors mock him. The storm is depicted with pianos and percussion for the waves, and high voices for the wind and lightning. Nicolas quells the storm, and section five depicts Nicolas safely in Myra, being chosen as the bishop. The first part of the cantata is rounded off by the audience joining in to sing the Old Hundredth "All people that on Earth do dwell" (on your hymn sheet).

The next section begins with Nicolas in jail, musing on the persecution the church is suffering under the Romans, and the ungodliness of man. The dramatic climax of the work is the miracle of Nicolas and the Pickled Boys. It takes place at an inn in time of famine. Three mothers mourn for their missing sons, Timothy, Mark and John. A group of hungry travellers orders a meal and are about to eat when Nicolas stops them. He realises that the food contains the flesh of the missing boys. He calls on the boys to come back to life, and they enter singing "Alleluia". The next section describes the marvellous works that Nicolas performs in the next forty years of his life and the final movement prepares us for Nicolas's death and his meeting with God, whilst the choir sings the Nunc dimittis. The work ends with all the performers and audience joining together to sing "God moves in a mysterious way".

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Please apply via email to
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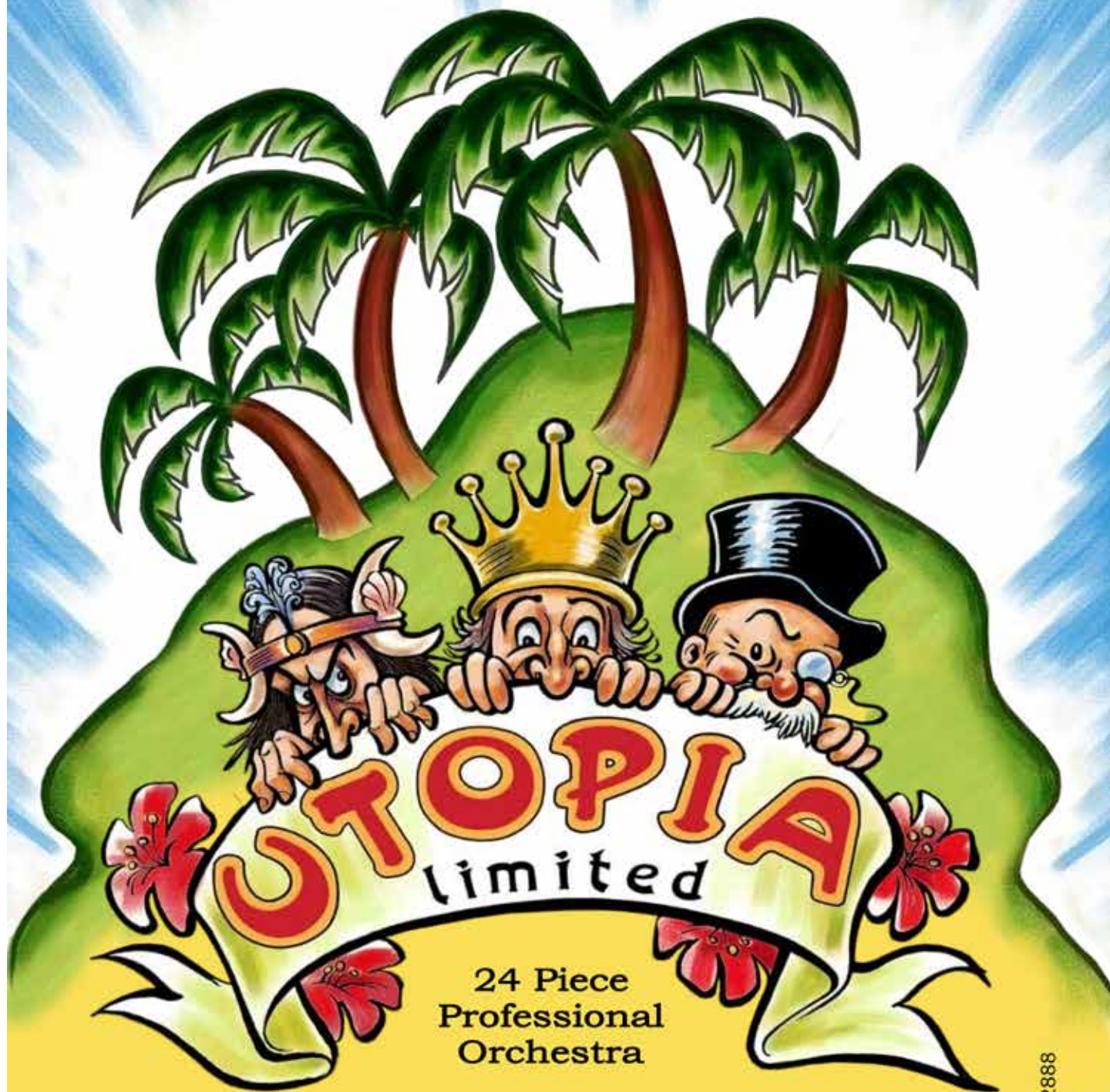


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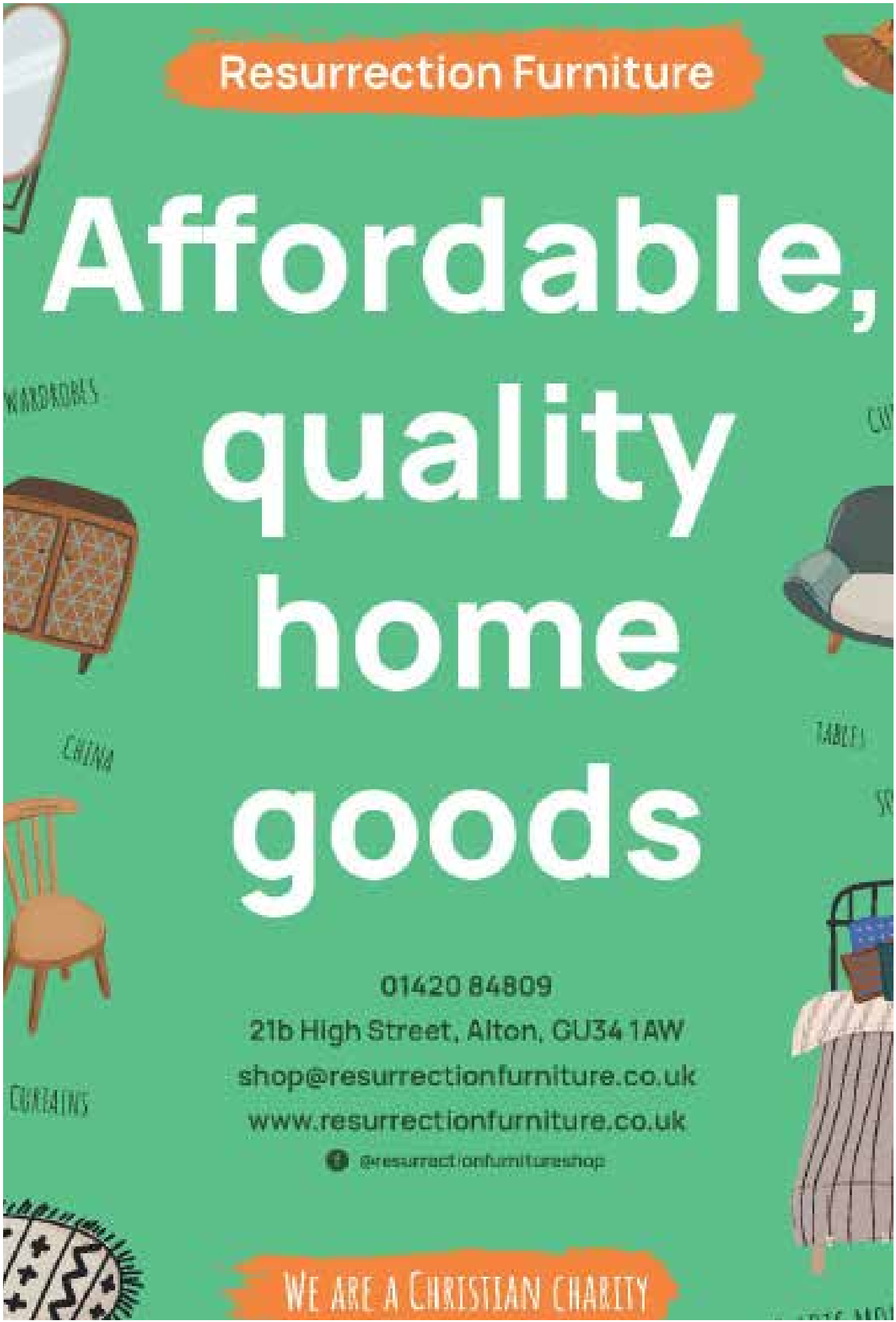
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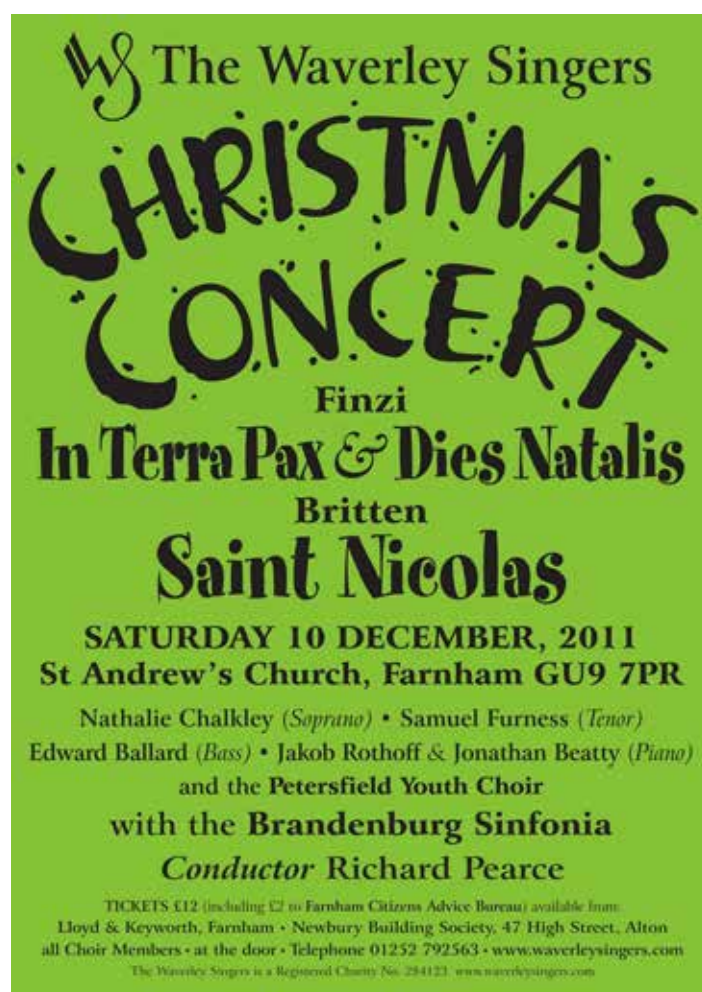
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From the Archive

We have performed *Saint Nicolas* on two previous occasions: in 1969 and again in 2011. In 1969 we were at All Saints Church in Odiham, with Wilfrid Brown, Tenor, the Farnham Girls Choir (conductor Mary Joynes), Margery Wakefield and Charlotte Dunham, Piano, John Foss, Organ, and the Farnham Chamber Ensemble (leader Kenneth Anderson); conducted by John Cotterill. The first part of the programme was a performance by the Chamber Ensemble of Spohr's *Nonet in F major* for violin, viola, cello, double bass, flute, oboe, clarinet, horn, and bassoon!



More recently, in 2011, we were at St Andrew's Church in Farnham, with Samuel Furness, Tenor, the Petersfield Youth Choir, Myran Voices, Jakob Rothoff and Jonathan Beatty, Piano, and the Brandenburg Sinfonia, conducted by Richard Pearce. The first half of the concert was devoted to two works by Finzi: *In Terra Pax* and *Dies Natalis*, for which we were also joined by Nathalie Chalkley, Soprano, and Edward Ballard, Bass.

Tonight is the first time we have managed to perform Britten's masterpiece on St Nicholas' Day!



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Peter Davoren - Tenor

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Peter Davoren received his early vocal training at the Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School in London, before obtaining a Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of Leeds. During his time in Leeds, he was a Choral Scholar at St Anne's Cathedral before being promoted to Choral Conducting Scholar under the guidance of Benjamin Saunders. As Choral Conducting Scholar, he conducted the World Premiere of Colin Mawby's Magnificat for full choir, receiving glowing praise from the composer. As a student, Peter was awarded the Alison Silverside Award for his 'exciting and captivating' recital of Schubert's *Die schöne Müllerin* in his first year. In his final year, Peter was awarded the Elgar Prize for his performance as Orbin in the composer's work *Caractacus*. The Elgar Society stated that 'his performance was magical and amongst the other soloists from Opera North, he more than held his own.'

Peter was awarded the Dr Ralph Kohn Scholarship to attend the Royal Academy of Music, London under the tutelage of the renowned tenor Neil Mackie and Mary Hill. During his time at RAM Peter gained plaudits for his recital singing as a member of the Academy Song Circle, performing at the Chelsea Lieder Festival, Oxford Lieder Festival and the Wigmore Hall. The Independent hailed him as 'excellent' and singing with 'a warm, bel canto style.' These performances led to a Lieder night in the Duke's Hall with Dame Felicity Lott. Peter performed frequently on the oratorio stage and quickly gained a reputation as 'one to watch for the future' after his performance as Evangelist in the RAM performance of Bach's *St John Passion*, conducted by Edward Higginbottom. Peter's experience in Oratorio has led to being a regular performer for the Monteverdi Choir with John Elliot Gardiner and made his BBC Proms debut as a soloist in the Monteverdi Vespers of 1610.

Peter is in very high demand as a consort singer, working with many illustrious groups such as the Monteverdi Choir and English Baroque Soloists, Tenebrae, the Sixteen, The Constellation Chorus and Orchestra, Solomon's Knot, Musica Poetica and La nuova musica. He also is a regular member of the St. Bride's Choir, as well as singing at Westminster Cathedral, Southwark Cathedral, St. Paul's Cathedral, St. George's Chapel Windsor and Westminster Abbey. He also is regularly invited to sing with London Voices on the soundtrack to the latest movies and video games.

Peter is also in demand as a soloist, mainly as an Evangelist in Bach's Passions, working for groups such as Musica Poetica, Leeds Baroque, Irish Baroque Orchestra and many choral societies. Recently Peter has been rediscovering his love for Elgar with frequent bookings as Gerontius in *The Dream of Gerontius*.



Jordan Theis - Conductor

The Choir of St. Thomas-on-The Bourne
thebourne.org.uk

Jordan Theis is Music Director of St. Thomas-on-The Bourne, Musical Director of Basingstoke Choral Society and Assistant Conductor of Barts Choir. He leads the adult and youth choirs at St. Botolph-without-Aldgate and works regularly as a section coach and conductor for the National Youth Choir. With St. Thomas-on-The Bourne, Jordan has conducted in Paris, Belgium and at cathedrals across the UK. In demand as a guest conductor, Jordan has worked with Constanza Chorus, The Waverley Singers, Woking Choral Society, Reigate & Redhill Choral Society and Orlando Chamber Choir. He has prepared Barts Choir for concerts at the Royal Festival Hall and Cadogan Hall, and has conducted Basingstoke Choral at The Anvil in Basingstoke. Jordan studied music at King's College London where he was a first study pianist, training with Nadav Hertzka at the Royal Academy of Music. He returned to KCL for a masters degree in musicology and ethnomusicology. He holds a voluntary position with Cathedral Music Trust and teaches piano at Guildford High School.

The Choir of St. Thomas-on-The Bourne

At St. Thomas's we are blessed to have a strong choral tradition to enhance our worship: a Parish Choir has existed continually since the 1860s. It has a long tradition of excellence and continues to provide music for worship in the way it has done for some one hundred and fifty years. While for much of this time the choir comprised boys and gentlemen, it now includes adult singers, boys and girls. The boy and girl choristers and the adult singers are distinct groups, with their own musical and social identities. Mostly, they rehearse separately and sing services in different combinations; at Christmas, Easter, special parish services and concerts the Choirs all join together.



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*, 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 this year.

Richard Pearce 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.

The Chameleon Arts Ensemble chameleonartsorchestra.uk

The Chameleon Arts Orchestra is a long-running group of top professional freelance players with vast combined experience of the choral repertoire. The players' skills and empathy are invaluable to choirs and conductors working with the traditional limited on-the-day rehearsal. We are proud of the many accolades we have received from conductors, choral singers and audience members from numerous performances in a great variety of venues. Our players perform in ensembles of all sizes depending on repertoire, venue and budget. They are equally at home as a 50+ piece full orchestra as they are with reduced versions of larger works or chamber pieces. Recent events have included a performance of Oliver Tarney's Magnificat at Holy Trinity, Guildford, a wind quintet project supported by the Vaughan Williams Foundation and music by Rutter and Jenkins in Leominster.

For more information about the orchestra, including testimonials and repertoire performed, please see our website chameleonartsorchestra.uk or contact us for a no-obligation quotation for your event at admin@chameleonartsorchestra.uk.

First Violin

Mathias Svensson (Leader)

Cello

Lorraine Deacon

Timpani

Scott Bywater

Second Violin

Carl Beddow

Double Bass

Cath Ricketts

Percussion

Sarah Hatch

Graham Dare

Viola

Jason Glover

Piano

Jakob Rothoff

David Harvey

Elizabeth Barker

The Waverley Singers

During 2025, the Waverley Singers have been celebrating 70 years as a Farnham based choir, currently with nearly 100 members. 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. The choir is 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.

The next event in our calendar is the popular January choral workshop, which is always a lovely occasion to look forward to after Christmas. This year we will be singing Dvorak's *Stabat Mater* here at St Thomas on-The-Bourne on Saturday 17 January 10:30 - 16:30 and we can promise very fine cakes!

Our Spring concert on Saturday 21 March 2026 at 7pm sees a return to Guildford Cathedral for a mainly Vaughan Williams programme, featuring the composer's *Mass in G Minor* and *Te Deum*, with acclaimed violinist Elizabeth Cooney playing his *The Lark Ascending* as well as Mazzoli's *Vespers for Violin and Electronics* and Bach's *Violin Sonata No.1 in G minor*.

We return to St Lawrence Church, Alton, for our summer concert on Saturday 27 June based around music for Coronations and 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 Brahms *Requiem* at Romsey Abbey on Saturday 4 July. Looking further ahead we have exciting future plans, including 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

Sopranos

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

Altos

Juliana Baxter
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
David Edwards
Robert Gussman
Rosie Jeffery
David Martin
Alan Mort
Simon Paterson

Basses

Mike Aaronson
Simon Austin
Andrew Baxter
David Budd
Paul Chambers
David Corran
Sam Coulter
Rod Eckles
Hugh Gammell
Bill Griffin
Max Hadfield
Graham Hey
John Holden
John Hubbard
Jeremy Keep
Michael Manzi
Mark Penfold
Glen Plant
John Rowland
Philip Sharpe
Martin Simpson
Simon Stoodley
Alan Thompson

Accompanist: Jakob Rothoff



Acknowledgements

The Waverley Singers would like to thank their advertisers and Patrons for their continuing support.

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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 Revd. Sandy Clark, Caz Callum, Jordan Theis and the team at St Thomas-on-The Bourne for making them so welcome this evening. Our thanks also to Simon Claiden for photography, Paul Chambers, Mike Aaronson, Sylvia Turner and Jonathan Pickering 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 first concert of the new season: our popular Opera Gala at the Farnham Maltings on 26 October. This evening we are delighted to support the St Thomas-on-The Bourne Lunch Bags for Children. We are very grateful to all who have given so generously.

Please visit our website for further information: **waverleysingers.com**
The Waverley Singers is a registered charity no. 284123



SATURDAY EVENING CONCERT



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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
and Mazzoli Vespers for Violin & Electronics*

Violin - Elizabeth Cooney

Organ - Philip Scriven

Conductor - Richard Pearce

Tickets: in advance/on the door

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