

Musical Musings – June

Gosh – it's very hard to believe that it's June already – it only seems yesterday that the choir was preparing for Holy Week and Easter and now here we are in mid summer.

We are starting June with another "Open" Evensong, which is our initiative to encourage local singers to join our choir to sing Evensong on a monthly basis. The first one seemed to go really well and we had about 50 singers. We might not have got every note right, but it sounded pretty good for a first go! This Sunday we shall be singing the lovely introit "If Ye Love Me" by Thomas Tallis, which you will have heard at the recent Royal Wedding if you tuned in. We shall also be singing canticles by Thomas Walmisley and a lovely anthem by the former Master of Music at York Minster, Edward Bairstow.

On Sunday 10th I am giving a trial outing of a new piece that I have written to be included in a new anthology of pieces published by the RSCM especially for choirs that don't have many men. Therefore, instead of being a four-part piece, it is written for soprano, alto and men. I chose quite a challenging text by the contemporary hymn writer, Fred Kaan. I love his work – it is not always comfortable to read, but always socially relevant.

At the end of the month we shall be singing a setting of the canticles by David Fawcett. We have already performed these a few times and we have always enjoyed David's writing. It is not easy in places, but it is a very effective setting of the texts. We are indeed fortunate to have a composer such as David in the local community and as part of our church.

At the end of June we are going to start a short fortnightly series of organ recitals on our recently restored organ. The opening recital will be on Thursday 28th June at 7.30pm and will be given by Dr Gordon Stewart. Gordon has been an old friend for years and is a brilliant organist. For the past 28 years he has given regular recitals on the famous Father Willis organ in Huddersfield Town Hall where he is borough organist. He has been senior organ tutor at The Royal Northern College of Music and teaches most of the organ scholars at Cambridge University. He was for many years a conductor on BBC Songs of Praise and is a marvellous raconteur as well! His programme includes music by Bach, Haydn, Handel and even has an arrangement of "In a Monastery Garden" for those of a sentimental nature! Please do tell your friends about these recitals. Tickets are priced at £10.

Simon Lole