

THE HEXHAM ORPHEUS CHOIR

(Glenn Davis: Conductor)

presents

W E L C O M E S

Y U L S !

A varied programme of
Christmas Music

with

Janet Bennett (Harp)

Paul Berry (Organ)

and

Margaret Huntington (Piano)

St Mary's R.C. Church, Hencotes

Saturday, 21 December, at 7.30 p.m.

Hexham Orpheus Choir

Registered Charity no. 514942

www.hexham-orpheus-choir.org.uk

Our Choir

As a non-auditioned choir, the Orpheus encourages people of differing musical backgrounds and levels of musical skill to meet in order to perform classical choral music. We have sung works ranging from the Renaissance to the late twentieth century. We give three major concerts each year, performing in Hexham's Abbey and High Schools, as well as churches throughout the region. In addition, Christmas carol singing (sometimes in a formal concert, but also *al fresco*) is a standard activity. We also have sung for various local charities and are available for private functions. New members will find a warm, friendly group with a busy social calendar.

Sopranos

Claire Arnold
Sarah Barker
Carolyn Below
Evelyn Blenkinsop
Elspeth Christie
Geraldine Coombes
Judi Cornforth
Janet Davies
Jill Dexter
Pip Emler
Rosemarie Herdman
Annette Marlowe
Tanja Pless-Mulloli
Bronya Read
Ann Reed
Nuala Rose
Jay Thacker
Carolyn Vasey
Brenda Waton
Carrie Winger

Basses

Paul Barrett
Barry Bates
Paul Berry
Robert Firth
Nick Lord
Keith Mallinson
Owen McArdle
Don Macleod
Tony May
John Rose

Tenors

John Barker
John Below
Malcolm Chainey
Tim Grew
Barry Kadleck
Chris Little
Peter Vasey

Altos

Lou Baxter
Jennifer Britton
Wendy Busby
Sylvia Chainey
Sheila Dance
Rita Howell
Claire Huddleston
Vivien Hubbuck
Anita Jeffries
Louise Khazaee
Linda Lord
Jenny McKay
Val Mallinson
Judith Murray
Liz Nisbet
Rachel Ogilvie
Pat Rose
Janet Storrie
Gill Thompson
Jean Wilks



NEW MEMBERS ARE ALWAYS MADE VERY WELCOME.

We rehearse at Trinity Methodist Church, Beaumont Street, Hexham NE46 3LS, on Wednesday evenings in school term-time from 7.30pm to 9.30pm. If you are tempted to join us, please feel free to come along to a rehearsal, or contact us for more information on info@hexham-orpheus-choir.org.uk

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK

Cogito Books, Hexham, for their continued sponsorship, Core Music for professional support, and St. Mary's Church for their co-operation.

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OUR NEXT PERFORMANCE

MASTERWORKS FROM THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Saturday, 5th April, 2014 in St Andrew's Church, Corbridge

We shall be singing John Rutter's 'Requiem', probably the most heartfelt of all his many works for choirs, together with Leonard Bernstein's exhilarating 'Chichester Psalms', and a short group of 'Ave Maria' settings by Rachmaninov, Holst, and Arvo Pärt.



The words for your Christmas hymns are on a separate sheet

CEREMONY OF CAROLS:

1. Processional: Hodie Christus natus est
(before no.2 Jay Thacker will read 'The Shortest Day' by Susan Cooper)
2. Wolcum Yole!
3. There is no Rose
4. (a) That yongē Child
(b) Balulalow (solo: Pip Emler)
5. As dew in Aprille
6. This little babe
7. Interlude (Harp solo)
8. In Freezing Winter Night (solos: Judi Cornforth and Peter Vasey)
9. Spring Carol (duet: Carolyn Below and Val Mallinson)
10. Deo gratias
11. Recessional: Hodie Christus natus est

Benjamin Britten, arr. Julius Harrison

By 1942 the 29-year-old composer had been in self-imposed exile in the USA for three years. His homesickness and subsequent decision to return to England were sparked by discovering the poetry of the Suffolk-born George Crabbe, whose work inspired the opera Peter Grimes. Britten and Peter Pears secured a place on a small Swedish cargo boat. The month-long voyage in an airless, cramped cabin, crossing the Atlantic at the height of the campaign against German submarines, was the unlikely occasion for the composition of this carol collection. "One had to alleviate the boredom" was his only comment, though it seems to have lifted the depression that had made him think of giving up composition altogether. The texts are all medieval, and the decision to use only a harp as accompaniment followed a suggestion that he write a concerto for the instrument.

PIANO SOLOS: Two contrasting movements from Christmas Pieces Op. 72

Felix Mendelssohn

Played by Margaret Huntington

AUDIENCE AND CHOIR: O Little Town of Bethlehem

Ralph Vaughan Williams

CHOIR CAROLS:

1. Ding Dong! Merrily on High
2. I sing of a maiden
3. Adam lay ybounden

trad. arr. Charles Wood
Lennox Berkeley
Boris Ord

AUDIENCE AND CHOIR: See amid the winter's snow

John Goss, arr. Richard Lloyd

Interval

THREE MOTETS FOR THE SEASON OF CHRISTMAS:

Francis Poulenc

1. O Magnum Mysterium
2. Videntes stellam
3. Hodie Christus natus est

In his best-selling survey of twentieth-century music 'The Rest is Noise', Alex Ross comments on the paradox that the general decline in organised religion in the Western world "generated devotional masterpieces by the dozen". France was particularly prominent in this respect. In Poulenc's case, the religious reawakening was prompted by the loss of a friend in a horrific car accident in 1936 coinciding with the composer's visit to the shrine at Rocamadour. "Ruminating on the frailty of our human condition, I was once again attracted to the

spiritual life," he wrote. Works like the Mass in G, the opera The Dialogue of the Carmelites, the famous Gloria and a set of Motets for Christmas followed over the next 20 or so years of his life. Written in 1952-53, tonight's pieces are in a style that would have seemed astonishingly conservative to the avant-garde of the time, but Poulenc's declared ambition in works like these was to create a simple "peasant devotion".

AUDIENCE AND CHOIR: God rest you merry, gentlemen

trad. arr. David Hill

HARP SOLOS:

1. The Christ Child's Lullaby
2. Angelus

Traditional
Henriette Renie

AUDIENCE AND CHOIR: Of the Father's love begotten

trad. arr. Richard Lloyd

CHRISTMAS MOTET: O Magnum Mysterium

Tomás Luis de Victoria

HARP SOLOS:

1. Mary's Boy Child
2. It's Christmas

Jester Hairson
Janet Bennett

CHOIR CAROLS AND CHRISTMAS SONGS:

1. Jingle Bells
2. White Christmas
Sung by Peter Vasey, John Below, Paul Berry and Glenn Davis
3. Silent Night

J. Pierpoint arr. Ralph Allwood
Irving Berlin, arr. Thomson and Davis

Franz Gruber, arr. Barry Rose

AUDIENCE AND CHOIR: O come, all ye faithful

J.F. Wade, arr. David Willcocks

Janet Bennett

Janet studied harp and singing at The Royal Scottish Academy of Music, and has performed with many professional ensembles. Now enjoying a successful solo career, she gives recitals, plays for weddings and regularly appears on TV and radio. In 2006 she was appointed official harpist to the Lord Mayor of Newcastle upon Tyne, and has also performed to the Queen, Prince Charles, Juan Carlos of Spain and the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland. As well as her solo performances, Janet has a flute and harp duo and is a member of the popular and multi-talented Border Minstrels trio. She is a respected teacher and adjudicator, and has produced five books of her own arrangements and original compositions for harp. She gives regular workshops and is the main teacher of both pedal and Celtic harp in the Newcastle area.

Janet has released three solo CDs:

Clarumbria is a collection of her favourite songs and music from Northumberland, accompanied by herself on the Celtic harp.

A Touch of Class contains a mixture of classical and popular music, including jazz, and a guest flautist.

Romantic Moments is Janet's most recent CD and again has a mixture of classical and popular music suitable for the many weddings and special occasions for which she is asked to play. Her website is www.janetbennett.co.uk

