



Musical Direction

Mark Edwards, originally from Edinburgh, is a trained percussionist who transitioned to conducting, earning his Masters in Conducting at the Royal Northern College of Music, where he received the Brierley Kershaw Prize. He won the National Brass Band Conducting Competition in 2017 and was a semi-finalist in the Città Di Brescia Conducting Competition. He has served as assistant conductor for the RTE Concert Orchestra and covered for the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, collaborating with notable ensembles like the BBC Philharmonic.

Simon Davies-Fidler, a choral conductor in the Northeast, is music director of Voices of The River's Edge, based at The Glasshouse International Centre of Music. The choir is preparing for a BBC Proms performance with Dinis Sousa and future concerts with Royal Northern Sinfonia and Ellie Slorach. Simon founded and was former music director of the multi-award-winning chamber choir Voices of Hope. This choir toured Europe, recorded multiple albums, broadcast regularly on BBC radio and television, won National Choir of the Year in 2016, and represented the UK at the 2017 European Choir of the Year.



Until recently, Simon was Director of Music at St James' & St Basil's Church in Newcastle, where he still directs Fenham Ensemble, J's & B's Singers, The Newcastle Phoenix Choir, and The St James Consort. He has prepared the Chorus of Royal Northern Sinfonia for conductors like Nicholas McGegan and Paul McCreesh, and as a conductor, he's premiered works by composers such as Will Todd and Kathryn Tickell.

Simon's extensive work in the Northeast includes many years with university choirs, as well as regular collaborations with Streetwise Opera and Sunderland Opera. He has also directed several choirs for The Glasshouse ICM, including Quay Voices, the youth choir of Royal Northern Sinfonia.

VOICES of HOPE



A new album featuring Voices of Hope, the one-time National Choir of the Year, features previously unrecorded choral works by Durham-born composer Will Todd.

The album is available on CD or download from

signumrecords.com

We are delighted to be joined tonight by

Mary Houlton, Gail Davies-Fidler, Owain Bennett and Lewis West

Supporting Music across the region

The Hexham Orpheus Choir alongside the J's and B's Singers are proud to be performing with tonight's other professional musicians. We are truly grateful for the kind and generous support and donations which have helped us bring together this event. If you would like to support future concerts, please speak to our choir members or contact us through our Facebook or Website.

Accompanists

Len Young is a multitalented composer, conductor and performer who initially studied at the Royal College of Music in London. He taught in London and Newcastle for 14 years, then served for 10 years as Adviser for Music with Newcastle Education Authority before becoming Head of Music, then Asst. Head (Performing Arts College), at Queen Elizabeth High School from 1995 to 2008. He conducted Newcastle Choral Society from 1976 to 2007 and also led Newcastle City Chorus and Felling Male Voice Choir.



Len has recently recorded carols with Simon Davies-Fidler and the St James Consort. He also works with Simon as accompanist for Js and Bs Singers, the Morning Chorus, and occasionally the Fenham Ensemble. Other freelance work includes composing, arranging, and occasional collaborations with Voices of Hope and Hexham Orpheus Choir.



Warren Smith is currently Director of Music and organist for Saint Mary's Parish Church, Ponteland, Director of Music for the Tyne Valley based chamber choir Jubilate and sings bass in the 2016 BBC Choir of the Year, Voices of Hope.

In 2019, Warren took up the role of Head of Choir, Music Teaching, Piano & Singing Tutor at Mowden Hall Preparatory School, which certainly fills up his daylight hours

In his free time, Warren enjoys travelling the world and exploring the culinary delights on offer at fancy restaurants with his wife, Michelle.



Come and Sing!

A taster session with the
HEXHAM ORPHEUS CHOIR

Wednesday 10 September 2025
7.10pm for 7.30 in Trinity Methodist Hall
No audition and no fee

Experience singing with Mark Edwards, our professional director, in a large choral society that performs the greatest choral works.

You'll be taking part in an early rehearsal for

THE ARMED MAN
A MASS FOR PEACE
by Sir Karl Jenkins

We'll be singing this wonderful Mass under the Gaia installation in Hexham Abbey
Friday 14 November

Come along, try us, join us!

hexham-orpheus-choir.org.uk
for more details and to contact us

Acknowledgements

- Members of the committees and the many others who have helped put together this event, including Anabel Gammidge, Julia Grint, John Below, Bob Hull, Jenny McKay, Steve Lloyd, Graeme Helliwell, Charles Drax, Nick Lord, Mark Edwards and Simon Davies-Fidler
- Programme design by Graeme Helliwell
- Special thanks to Christine Beard for sponsoring the programme printing
- Accompanists. Special thanks to Warren Smith and Len Young for being with us through it all.



HEXHAM ORPHEUS CHOIR
WITH J'S AND B'S SINGERS

HEXHAM ABBEY
5TH JULY 2025

Choir Members

Not all our subscribing members are singing with us this evening, but we are indebted to everyone's ongoing support and input throughout the year. Together, they are our choirs

HOC are:

Soprano

Anne Bagley, Sarah Barker, Deborah Beasley-Suffolk, Carolyn Below, Paddy Burridge, Elspeth Christie, Lizzie Cooper, Judi Cornforth, Sally Dodgson, Fiona Hewitt, Meg McCaldin, Liz McNeil-Grist, Anna Pattinson, Tanja Pless-Mulloli, Mary Oswell, Ann Reed, Nuala Rose, Maeve Selby, Judi Singleton, Esther Urwin, Carolyn Vasey and June Welch

Alto

Celia Atherton, Marion Bates, Lou Baxter, Sheila Dance, Camilla Drax, Anabel Gammidge, Liz Gray, Julia Grint, Julie Harrison, Caroline Howard, Carolyn Howell, Margaret Huntington, Linda Lord, Val Mallinson, Hilary McKendrick, Susan Morse, Joanna O'Neill, Bronya Read, Jenny Sadgrove, Siobhan Stephenson, Pam Vennart and Jean Wilks

Tenor

Malcolm Chainey, Bill Day, Charles Drax, Tim Grew, Leigh Harrison, Bridget Holton, Steve Lloyd, Pat Marriott, Stella Mason, Denis McCaldin, Jenny McKay, Steve Middleton, Rachel Ogilvie, David Pattinson and Peter Vasey

Bass

John Below, Paul Berry, Stuart Dearlove, Warwick Eden, Martyn Farrer, Graeme Helliwell, Chris Hewitt, Bob Hull, Richard Jackson, Nick Lord, Keith Mallinson, Owen McArdle, Bruce Reed, John Rose, Michael Scott, Jim Vennart and Chris Welch

J's and B's are:

Aileen Duncan, Alan Verheyden, Anne Henderson, Anne Podmore, Apsara Panikkar, Barbara Harrington, Cath McNaught, Charles Walmsley, Chris Gardner, Christine Baker, Christine Bullmore, David Buckley, David Patterson, Eduardo Bouda, Gael Henry, Hanno Kossen, Hayley Llandro, Helen Marr, Hilary Broomfield, Hugh Mellish, Jim Miller, Joe Painter, John Keddie, Joo Li Ng, Jude Parks, Judith Brown, Judith Urwin, Judy Elliot, Jules Williamson, June Thomas, Les Hodgson, Libby Chamberlin, Linda Surrey, Liz Richmond, Lizi Norman, Lottie Bridgewater, Margaret Reid, Maggi Shepherd, Maggie Fitzsimons, Margaret Henderson, Margaret Selman, Marilyn McCoull, Marjorie Rochester, Mary Hogarth, Matthew West, Matthias Schmid, Michael Clarke, Monica Newcombe, Monika Smialkowska, Niel Soulsby, Peter Berrie, Rachael Adeney, Rosalind Walmsley, Rowena Ward, Ryan McKeon, Sandra Marsden, Sue Birkett and Tom Donnelly

