

Music Report 2018

Music continues to play an important part in the life of our church. We are still very fortunate to have our 2 excellent organists, Dan Eaton and Nick Castell, and we are delighted that Nick is still able to take charge of the choir, even though he has been called on to help out more at Seal church. Choir practices are most enjoyable, and we try to prepare an anthem for every week, though sometimes the choice of music depends on who is available on a particular Sunday. New singers are always most welcome to our practices (on Thursday evenings at 8pm).

First and foremost, we now have a splendid set of new hymn books. We are very grateful for a bequest from the late Jean Knaggs, a long-standing member of the choir, and for all those who have sponsored copies, as this was a major expenditure. As musicians, some of us are finding slightly annoying little alterations from what was in the old book, but there's a fine selection of more modern hymns, and we are enjoying exploring all that the new book has to offer. We have significantly reduced the amount of paper used each week, as on the whole, there is far less need to print out the words of worship songs.

The choir has taken part in several church events this year. In September we joined forces with our friends in the London Estonia choir, (and 3 bishops) when St Mary's hosted the Diocesan Link service, with a special emphasis on Estonia (several of us had visited this beautiful country in July). St Mary's was also responsible for hosting the annual North West Fellowship Advent Carol service, and we were delighted to be joined by many other singers from local churches, to make a combined choir for a very successful evening, ably accompanied by Nick on the organ.

Earlier in the summer, the choir sang at a special concert in church, organised by our previous Music Director, Edwin Davis, when his band of young brass players entertained us. We sang an anthem by Rutter, and then joined in a Vera Lynn selection with the band at the end.

Christmas time brought its usual round of carol-singing – down in Riverhead Square for the Christmas lights turn on, at Abbeyfield for their Christmas party, and also at the Bullfinch pub in aid of the Children's Society, when we all shared a meal together after singing. Plus of course the 9 Lessons and Carols and all the usual Christmas services.

My grateful thanks are due to the Music Group, who are very loyal and hard-working. We lost two valued members to university in September, and we're now down to just 4 instrumentalists in total. We would all love to have some more players to swell the numbers, so please do think about whether your child could manage to play an instrument in this group, it's good experience in playing with an ensemble, and it's a way for them to contribute to the musical life of our church.

Members of the choir continue to join in the combined choir for services elsewhere, such as the Christian Unity service at St Mary's Kippington, and the Good Friday music at The Drive Methodist.

Many thanks are due to our wonderful organists, Nick and Dan, and for all they do to make sure we are covered for music every Sunday, especially now that I'm finding it much harder to play the organ, with numb legs and feet and failing eyesight! Last but by no means least, thank you to our loyal choir for all that they do to enhance our worship every week.

Janet Sharp