

Newsclaf

Upcoming Events

Famous Annual Midwinter Dinner at St Paul's Burwood
12 August 2022 (see foot of p.2)

Kiama choral workshop
10 September 2022 (see p.4)

Prom Praise
Sydney Town Hall, 7.30pm
24 September 2022 (see p.3)

Senior School Choirs Festival
17 October 2022

Junior School Choirs Festival
18 October 2022

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From the Chair

Don't miss our upcoming events: the famous annual Midwinter Dinner, a choral workshop in Kiama and PROM PRAISE in the Sydney Town Hall (details on the following pages).

One of my heroes as a church musician has long been Simon Preston, sometime organist of Christchurch Cathedral Oxford and of Westminster Abbey. It was sad therefore to hear from mutual friends last month that he had passed away.

Preston was the most prolific recording organist ever, with well over 100 recordings to his credit. His first was apparently made with one week's notice whilst he was still a student, as organ scholar of King's College, Cambridge. He had first been a chorister there under the legendary Boris Ord, and was the equally-legendary David Willcock's first organ scholar.

Of the records he made, pretty much all of them are the definitive versions. His pursuit of excellence was legendary, and it was a great sadness to the cause of church music when he left Westminster Abbey aged only 50, to pursue his concert and recording career full time, after a row with the clergy.

Despite his pursuit of excellence, Preston was one of the most extraordinary people you could meet. A fireball of nervous



energy, he had a wicked sense of humour and a keen and furious interest in the world around him which made him always the life and soul of any social gathering.

These qualities, his good looks, together with his well-dressed urbanity made him a very attractive role model for many generations of aspiring organists, and he seemed so different from the mac-wearing stereotype of organists discussing tubas and wind pressures! Tragically, his last decade was clouded by Alzheimer's disease, which quickly and cruelly put an end to his brilliance.

Blessed by God in so many areas of his life, Preston was still modest of his own achievements and abilities. May he rest in peace as we give thanks for his life and legacy. When faced with such talent, it is easy to begin to envy. However, as church musicians, we are servants, drawing attention away from ourselves, and seeking to draw worshippers' attention to Jesus. I've found this song, written by

the talented Irish worship-leader and songwriter, Robin Mark, particularly affecting:

When it's all been said and done
There is just one thing that matters
Did I do my best to live for truth?
Did I live my life for you?

When it's all been said and done
All my treasures will mean nothing
Only what I've done for love's reward
Will stand the test of time

Lord, your mercy is so great
That you look beyond our weakness
And find purest gold in miry clay
Turning sinners into saints.
Hallelujah

And I will always sing your praise
Here on earth and ever after
For you've shown me heaven's my true home.
When it's all been said and done
You're my life when life is gone...

Amen.

Ross Cobb *is the Chairman of the RSCM NSW Branch and President of RSCM Australia*

RSCM NSW Famous Annual Midwinter Dinner - 12 August 2022

St Paul's Anglican Church Burwood (Evensong with the St Paul's choir at 6pm followed by dinner in the church hall). Our after dinner speaker will be Assoc Prof Stuart Pigg, winner of the 2019 Australian Christian Book of the Year award for "The Fountain of Public Prosperity". Stuart will speak to us about the role of music in Australian church life - a real 'must listen'. More details soon by email re tickets.

Enquiries: nsw.midwinterdinner@rscmaustralia.org.au



Sydney Town Hall

Saturday 24 September 2022

7.30pm

featuring

City Alight, Gospel Orchestra
and soloists

Register to sing in the Prom Praise choir [here](#)

Interested in being a sponsor for this amazing event? Contact nsw.chair@rscmaustralia.org.au

[REGISTER TO SING](https://forms.gle/BMKABvTec39bc8c38) <https://forms.gle/BMKABvTec39bc8c38>

Choral Workshop

Saturday 10 September 2022

Church Point Centre

Kiama Anglican Churches

2 Terralong St, Kiama NSW 2533

A day of music, fellowship and worship as we rehearse a selection of hymns and anthems to sing at a service at 3.30pm. This will be a lead in to our Prom Praise event with City Alight and Gospel Orchestra at the Sydney Town Hall on 24 September.

With Ross Cobb, Director of Music, St Andrew's Cathedral Sydney



Come by yourself or bring your whole choir! All denominations welcome.

10.30 am	Registration & morning tea
11.00 am	Rehearsal
12.30 pm	Lunch (own arrangements)
1.30 pm	Rehearsal
3.30 pm	Songs of Praise service led by Rev. Aiden <u>Sibrava</u>

RSCM members \$30 Non-members \$40

Bookings: <https://www.trybooking.com/CAWFJ>
or phone Gerry Hayes on 02 9150 5219

Enquiries: Naomi Spencer ph. 4422 4166 or
email to nsw.southcoast@rscmaustralia.org.au
www.rscmaustralia.org.au



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New South Wales Branch



Reports of Branch Events

Evensong and “St Nicholas Feast”

6 December 2021

On 6 December 2021, after a few COVID pandemic and lockdown-caused false starts, the (usually) annual RSCM Dinner was celebrated. The dinner was preceded by Evensong in St Andrew’s Anglican Cathedral before migrating to the nearby Queen Victoria Building Tea Room, where the appreciative gathering of over ninety people was addressed by Rev. Dr. Michael Jensen. This event marked a most welcome return to “normality” following the ravages of the pandemic.

Evensong was led by Canon Christopher Allan, with Rev. Michael Deasey (FRSCM) serving as cantor. The vibrant St Andrew’s Cathedral Choir, conducted by Ross Cobb and accompanied by Sam Giddy, opened with a joyful rendition of Parry’s “I Was Glad” during Evensong. The Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis were by Howells and the anthem was “Jesu, the very thought of Thee” by Gordon Slater.

Housed within Sydney’s iconic Queen Victoria Building, the historic Tea Room offers European-inspired grandeur, with ornate ceilings and crystal chandeliers. Once transferred to the Tea Room, attendees enjoyed catching up with old friends before the tasty dinner was served: a choice between chicken and risotto for entrée, barramundi or lamb for main course, and pavlova or berries for dessert. Between courses, several diners contributed musical items from the grand piano in the room.

Our guest speaker, Rev. Dr. Jensen, related his personal journey in coming to appreciate the timeless music of J.S.Bach, fired by the US theologian David Bentley Hart who described Bach as “the greatest of Christian theologians”. Renewing his musical investigation from this point, Dr. Jensen found pieces that were meticulously designed and intricately patterned – and made beautiful sound. Further, Bach signed his pieces *Soli Gloria Deo* – to God alone be the Glory. He was extremely conscious of his vocation as a church musician to serve God and the people of God, and to refresh the soul.

Dr. Jensen referred to John Eliot Gardiner’s 2014 biography to remind us that the cantatas form the heart of his work, where words and music form an impressive bond reflecting his deep devotion to the Bible as a book which can shape a human life and open the human soul to God. Bach’s cantatas were designed to fit in around the liturgy, preparing for and reflecting on the readings and the sermon. They were an adornment to the word of God derived from Bach’s deep sense of the mercy and love of God in Jesus Christ. Rev. Dr. Jensen concluded with a challenge to church musicians of today: to capture even a fraction of Bach’s inspiration, to the glory of God alone!

This address was a fine conclusion to an afternoon and evening that seemed to end too soon, at least before this writer had the opportunity of catching up with all those with whom he was wishing to speak.

Philip Reichardt

Philip Reichardt is the Director of Music at All Saints’ Anglican Church Hunters Hill, Secretary of RSCM NSW and RSCM National Council



Rev Dr Michael P Jensen, Rector of St Mark's Darling Point, has kindly shared the text of his after dinner speech

To God Alone be the Glory: Johann Sebastian Bach

The great Swiss theologian Karl Barth once said:

“It may be that when the angels go about their task praising God, they play only Bach. I am sure, however, that when they are together *en famille* they play Mozart.”

I have to say that I once shared the opinion of Barth's angels. My appreciation of the music of Johann Sebastian Bach has been slow to awaken. I remember as a teenaged musician seeing his pieces as worthy, but not exciting. They were exact, and exacting – but who wants music to be a technical exercise only?

Where was the freedom, the joy, the heart in his music? The lines of his melodies seemed to wind and twist their way on, and on, and on, without a pause for breath. My clumsy fingers could not ever quite master him. At one school concert, I slammed the piano in disgust at my tangle of errors. Bach wouldn't forgive me: why should I forgive him? (As my Dad used to say: “last night Michael Jensen played Bach. Bach lost.”) I found the music that grabbed me was played by jazz maestro Miles Davis, or composed by the Russian innovator Stravinsky. This was music with a human heartbeat, rather than the mechanical pulse I heard in Bach.

Or so I thought. My interest in Bach was fired a couple of years ago by a comment from the US theologian David Bentley Hart, who wrote in his masterful book *The Beauty of the Infinite* that Bach was ‘the greatest of Christian theologians’. Perhaps I had been missing something vital in the music of JSB, even its very essence. As a theologian myself, I felt compelled to look further into the work of the master.

So, trying to see what Bentley Hart might mean, I purchased for myself a copy of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, a book of forty-eight preludes and fugues. There's two complete cycles of pieces in every major and minor key in the scale. As I drove myself through a couple of the best known of these pieces, with my lazy technique and half-remembered scales, I found that the pieces were meticulously designed, and intricately patterned – and made beautiful sound. I think I had been taught to expect that music ought to be *about* something – it should have a theme, or a title. Whereas, the instrumental music of Bach has no other subject than itself. It doesn't attempt to portray a landscape, or a storm, in sound. It just is itself.

But there's more to this than meets the eye: Bach famously signed his pieces *Soli Gloria Deo* – to God alone be the Glory. He was extremely conscious of his vocation as a church musician to serve God and the people of God. The bulk of his work consists of cantatas and chorales to be performed in church settings.

But this sense of the purpose of music was not limited to his church music, which was ostensibly about something, because it had words. Bach once wrote:

“The aim and final end of all music should be none other than the glory of God and the refreshment of the soul.”

That is: even his instrumental music is itself a theological statement. A way of putting this might be to say that his work sings to us of the order in the creation – but also of its redemption from chaos. Bach's designs test the limits of order. Trying to learn to play the C minor Fugue, I discovered passages of seeming harmonic chaos as the three fugal voices introduce and expand the main theme, before finally drawing to a frantic, whirlwind close.

But of course it is in his choral music that Bach makes his most obvious theological statement. A marvellous new biography by John Eliot Gardiner entitled *Bach – Music in the Castle of Heaven* (Alfred A Knopf, New York: 2014) offers for us an extensive and appreciative account of Bach's religious music. Gardiner, an acknowledged Bach expert who has conducted and performed his choral music for many years, argues that the cantatas, which have been unjustly overlooked in the standard analysis of Bach's work, actually form the heart of his oeuvre. In Bach, words and music form an impressive bond, which reflects his deep devotion to the Bible as a book which can shape a human life and open the human soul to God.

The bulk of Bach's church music was composed after he was appointed as the Cantor of the Thomasschule at the Thomaskirche in Leipzig (we would say "Director of Music at St Thomas' School and Church") in 1723. This was to be the post that he held for 27 years, until he died following an eye operation in 1750.

Bach worked furiously in his first few years at Leipzig, composing a cantata every week for some years. A cantata is a piece of several movements sung by a choir backed by a small orchestra. Usually, Bach's cantatas involve the set gospel readings for the Lutheran liturgy; but they also incorporated well-known hymns and words that commented on the texts. They were designed to fit in around the liturgy, preparing for and reflecting on the readings and the sermon. They were an adornment to the word of God, not a distraction from it.

It is thought that Bach composed more than three hundred cantatas, though more than a hundred have been lost. How did he find the creative energy to do it? He worked in cramped and noisy conditions, surrounded by students, working with a scratchy pen on expensive paper, handwriting all the parts for his musicians. He had to cope with their idiosyncrasies and limitations (you can imagine him trying to figure out how to hide a lazy baritone, or a wobbly treble), and, as church musicians have always found, with the quirks and complaints of the clergy. Then he had to rehearse the pieces on a Friday and Saturday, and perform it on Sunday. He then turned around and did it all over again the next week!

Was Bach just a journeyman composer, composing music for his ecclesiastical masters to order, rather than from his own personal conviction? Written evidence of Bach's personal convictions is very sketchy. We do know that he purchased and clearly read large and sophisticated Bible commentaries. He also had in his keeping a de luxe edition of the works of Martin Luther, the great German reformer. As Gardiner says, "Bach's working library, estimated to have contained at least 112 different theological and homiletical works was less like a typical church musician's and more what one might expect to find in the church of a respectably sized town", or indeed, in a pastor's study. Clearly, he was a committed reader of the Bible and of theology.

And it was more than that, as Gardiner shows through his analysis of the music of the cantatas and the other great works, such as the St Matthew Passion. Bach clearly resonated with Luther's

profound description of the Christian's experience of life in the midst of suffering and death. The Christian hope is not given, like a greeting card, as a trite fix to despair. It is a wrestling of hope from despair. Bach, orphaned at the age of twelve, lost his first wife while he was away travelling and returned to find her long buried. Of his twenty children, only eight survived infancy. In his Christian music, we do not find a denial of the crushing reality of life's hardships, and its bewilderments. We do not find an avoidance of doubt. Nor is everything simply neatly resolved. But we do also find lines of hope and joy; and we are drawn again and again to the cross of Jesus Christ.

Gardiner writes: "in his hands, music is more than the traditional analogue of hidden reality, more even than an instrument of persuasion or rhetoric; it encapsulates the role of religious experience as he understood it, charting the ups and downs of belief and doubt in essentially human terms and in frequently dramatic ways, and rendering these tensions and quotidian struggles vivid and immediate."

By all accounts Bach was an ordinary fellow in person, and a bit grumpy with it. He once got into a mess when he called an inadequate bassoonist "a %&#& of a bassoonist" in a rehearsal – an argument that later on led to Bach attacking the man with a knife in (he claimed) self-defence. His correspondence is filled with complaining about his pay and conditions, just as any of us would. But his musical output clearly comes from somewhere real – a deep sense of the mercy and love of God in Jesus Christ.

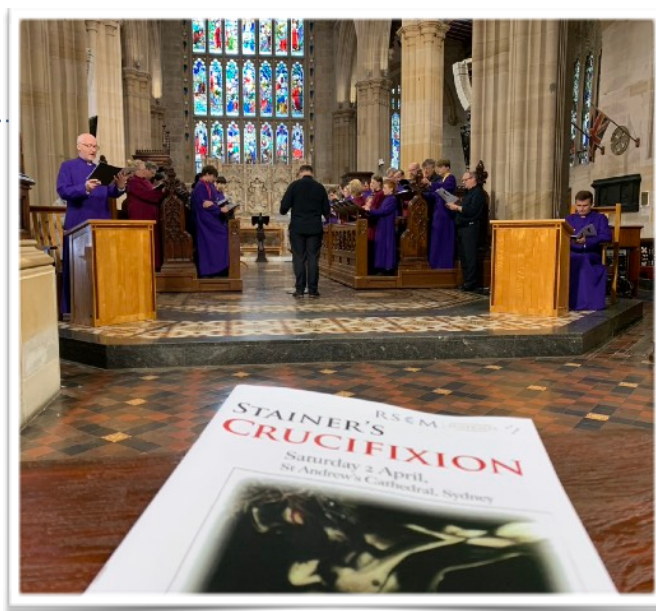
Would that the church musicians of today could capture even a fraction of Bach's inspiration, to the glory of God alone!

Stainer's CRUCIFIXION : NSW Branch workshop and performance - a review

On Saturday 2 April 2022, I attended a concert in St Andrew's Cathedral - a performance of Stainer's oratorio, **The Crucifixion: A Meditation on the Sacred Passion of the Holy Redeemer**. This was the very fine outcome of a workshop held earlier in the afternoon by RSCM NSW with Ross Cobb as musical director.

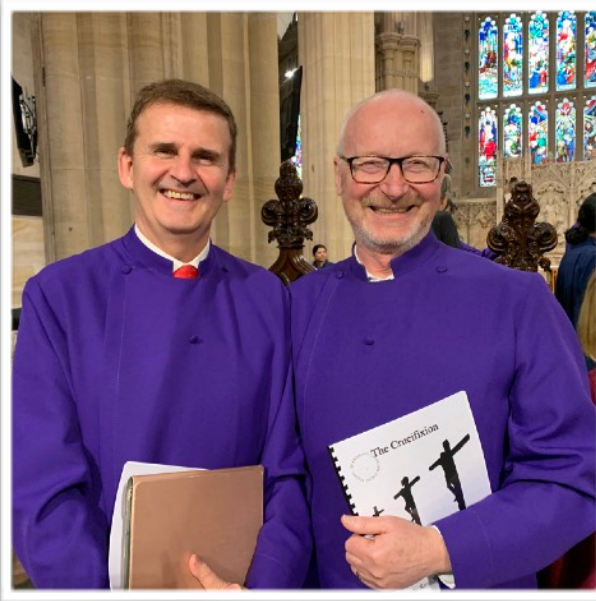
Somehow, this famous work had managed to pass me by, so it was the first time I had ever heard it! Ross, in his introduction, explained that the work was composed by John Stainer in 1887 for the choir of St Marylebone Church in London, where Ross himself had had lessons on the organ. Hugely popular with choirs all over the world, it had nevertheless been nineteen years since its last performance at St Andrew's.

Nearly fifty choristers of all ages, including a sizeable contingent from Goulburn, joined together to rehearse and then present the work. What an unplanned treat for tourists who were able to attend



- at a tiny ticket price - a concert of this quality. It's a pity though that there were only about twenty five or thirty people there to hear the performance. Ben Oxley, tenor soloist, and David Watson, bass soloist, both gave very moving and professional performances.

Sean Henderson on the Cathedral organ produced all the musical light and shade that the Cathedral instrument can deliver, including some wonderful word painting with ominous organ sounds at the end of the duet, "So Thou lightest Thy divine petition" and also before "There was darkness over all the land" in a later recitative.



At left: Soloists, Ben Oxley and David Watson

For perhaps the most famous part of the work, the chorus "God so loved the world" (John 3: 16 - 'the gospel in a nutshell' as it is sometimes called), the lower voices had a beautiful blended sound, and the choir overall showed its attention to consonants, no doubt the fruit of rehearsal during the earlier workshop. The moment of Jesus' death, "And he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost" - sung unaccompanied - was profoundly moving.

Four congregational hymns allowed those of us attending to be participants also as the story of Christ's journey to the cross unfolded musically. The work ended with one of these

congregational hymns, and the final lines were a good way to end the afternoon:

All for Jesus - all for Jesus -
This the Church's song must be;
Till, at last, her sons are gathered
One in love and one in thee. Amen.

Pamela Summers

Pamela Summers is the editor of Newsclef and sings with the St Swithun's Anglican Church Choir Pymble and the Mater Chorale



What was it like to be in the workshop and performance?

Barbara Griffin, Director of Music at St Saviour's Cathedral Goulburn writes -

In the last few months I have had a few more junior choristers join our choir. They participate along with the adults and I have always thought that children are capable of so much more than most people think, and the St Andrew's Cathedral choristers are proof of this.

I had previously taken some of our junior choristers to hear the St Andrew's choristers in action (for Messiah and Carols) and they were totally blown away. When this chance came up to sing Stainer's Crucifixion WITH the St Andrew's choristers, I jumped at the chance and organised as many of us as I could to come along.

At right: the Goulburn participants!

I didn't really know how the younger ones would do, not being familiar with the work and not being sight-readers (yet!) let alone confident readers of text (yet! one of our choristers was only 7 and has only just started!).

We crammed the Barry Rose version of the work from YouTube in the car on the way down to Sydney. I thought it was just amazing to see our choristers taking their spots in the front row right in between the amazing St Andrews choristers who were so welcoming, while being so impressive. It was a great chance for us to be part of it.



I had never sung the work before, actually, and must say I was pleasantly surprised at how fun it was to sing. Sean was amazing on the organ, and Ross Cobb was as inspiring, warm, fun and professional as always. I think it was actually a miracle Ross worked that got us to sound as good as I thought it did after only a pretty short rehearsal. It was also heart-warming for me that the choristers enjoyed it so much and seemed to be quite well-behaved and alert. The St Andrews Choristers are such great role models. They are kids and have fun, but also know how to snap into professional mode.

Shame that there wasn't a higher take-up for this great opportunity! Saw a Facebook post and it was short notice but I was so glad we could make it. Please let us sing with you guys again Ross! Thank you RSCM for a fantastic amazing experience that will mean a lot to our choristers. 'Fling wide the gates!' was our juniors' earworm for weeks!

Barbara Griffin is the Director of Music at St Saviour's Cathedral, Goulburn



Denominational Reports



Catholic Church in Australia

In Memoriam Richard Connolly

When Richard Connolly's funeral was celebrated at St Mary's Cathedral by Archbishop Anthony Fisher on 19 May, a capacity crowd of mourners had gathered physically and many more online to farewell this outstanding composer of Australian church music. Richard Connolly's life and work brought people together in a special way demanded by the reforms of Vatican II, and ongoing tributes have reflected that achievement since his death on May 4 at the age of 94.

The Sunday after Connolly's death, my parish paid tribute to him in a service in which all the music was written by him. Though this was not announced officially, several members of the congregation commented on it afterwards. I suggest that no other Australian church composer of our time is as recognised or identifiable by the general public.

Connolly had studied for the priesthood at Propaganda Fide in Rome in 1946-1950 but did not pursue ordination. He went on to respond to the need for contemporary congregational hymns answering the call of Vatican II in his collaboration with the poet James McAuley, Hymns for the Year of Grace, a core part of [The Living Parish Hymn Book](#) (now out of print, though much of Connolly's output has recently been reissued by [Willow Publications](#)). Hallmarks of Connolly's compositional style are a melodic dignity, a singable range and a well-crafted use of harmony, perfectly married to McAuley's theologically sound, universal yet somehow distinctly Australian lyrics. Cognoscenti smile at Connolly's most popular hit, "There's a Bear in There" aka the ABC's *Playschool* theme, and few realise he was also head of ABC Drama and Features for many years.

I met Richard Connolly only once, and he was already elderly at that time, but I will not forget his energy or his focus and interest in our conversation. Others who knew him better have written more erudite pieces to farewell him, and I include links to these from other publications below. It was fitting for this composer of the people, that social media exploded with recollections and tributes to him on his passing, a selection of which are included here:

"Richard Connolly was a very special person. He leaves us a great legacy."

"A magnificent legacy from a true scholar and artist - may he rest in peace."

"Vale Richard Connolly, a giant of modern Catholic liturgical musical composition. May he find rest in the Father's house whom he served so well."

"Such a kind, talented and good man."

"A wonderful composer who has left his beautiful hymnody to enrich our liturgical worship. May he sing and dance to the eternal song of joy."

<https://www.catholicweekly.com.au/richard-connelly-a-musical-light-for-a-priestly-people/>

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-05-10/richard-connelly-play-school-theme-song-composer-dies/101048718>

<https://tvtonight.com.au/2022/05/vale-richard-connelly.html>

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-10803591/Australian-composer-Richard-Connelly-best-known-Play-School-theme-dies-aged-94.html>

<https://www.sydneycatholic.org/homilies/2022/pontifical-mass-of-christian-burial-for-richard-connelly/> (the sermon from Connelly's funeral)

Josie Ryan

Josie Ryan is the Roman Catholic representative on the RSCM NSW Branch Committee



Uniting Church in Australia

In state-based UCA news, Glen Powell is no longer Executive Director of Uniting Mission and Education, as the position has been deleted. Reference was made in the last issue to the musical contributions that Glen has made, including the worship music resources provided by UCA people, freely downloadable from [Uniting Creative Worship Resources](#).

Holding unity in diversity – rather than through homogeneity – is hard and continuing work. That's why our denomination has a present participle – an “-ing” form – as its adjective.

The Uniting Church has no copyright on the aspiration to reach across divisions. We can celebrate our own traditions without always invalidating those of others.

Along with charitable good works, maybe hymnody – the people's song – is an area that most successfully crosses denominational borders. Some of these sentiments themselves can be put to verse, as we can see in our life member, John Bunyan's, summary compendium of poetry and hymns: *From Golden Gully to Kingdom Come* (recommended!).

The Church I believe in is catholic and broad,
one kingdom-come family at home - and abroad,
where saints-come-from-sinners can see our Lord's face
in poor, sick and lonely, and share in God's grace.

Another example is in the wonderful writing of Thomas Troeger, who passed away in April. In the preface to his compilation *Above the moon earth rises*, he wrote that this collection of hymns and anthems “rooted in Christian conviction, is intermixed with poems that do not draw upon faith. I am trying to map the landscape of the heart that still rejoices in God yet lives in a world that is largely oblivious to the spiritual dimension of life. I hope that the juxtaposition of the two perspectives opens each to the other” (p vii.) This man was both an ordained Presbyterian minister

and an Episcopalian priest, who had a significant voice on the Catholic North American Academy of Liturgy.

The last issue of *Newsclaf* also included an invitation of John's to receive books from his library. I became the happy owner of a recent book by Douglas Galbraith, *Assist our Song: Music Ministries in the Local Church*. It received a review in the March *Church Music Quarterly*. Julian Elloway shared there that Galbraith "is a Church of Scotland minister, but his discussion of the role of music in worship is relevant and valuable for musicians and clergy across countries and denominations" (p. 53). Truly so, though why use the conjunction "but"? We all come from a particular tradition. We might all expect to learn from those outside our own.

Douglas Galbraith certainly does this. He does not limit himself to learnings that stem from his qualifications in ministry and in music. He is broadly travelled, broadly read, and a listener to many voices.

Elloway's review covers the kinds of content in the book, which offers both principle and practice. I love Galbraith's specifics for organists, including how to adapt worship songs. However, I'll focus on some specifics of how he brings together ideas from across the world and across "Christendom".

Aside from Hillsong, there are a couple of instances where Australian context is drawn on. As Elloway acknowledges, the author builds on Wesley Milgate's work when he outlines how all of clergy, musician and congregation can take responsibility in sung worship. Professor Milgate wrote those 'obligations' in his companion to the *Australian Hymn Book, Songs of the People of God*.

Another Australian reference is to a lay preacher's comment at a church service in South Australia. Galbraith had dropped in to observe incognito, with an eye to developing the worship under a brief he'd taken on of the related congregations there. The lay preacher spotted him and offered a defensive welcome, reassuring the congregation, "The Lord doesn't look for quality in worship; He looks for effort!" (p 258). This was how Galbraith launched his final chapter about making musical judgements. While there are obvious counters to that lay preacher's position, he takes up with approval the focus on effort. Struggle has a theological basis – working to appreciate new or challenging forms has its parallel in what we do in wider life, growing into full maturity in Christ (p. 271). He commends the RSCM program run by Helen Bent, *Inspiring Music in Worship*, the 'short course of guided conversations' that help congregations locally explore the role of music in a worshipping church, to develop a new vision recognising untapped potential, and to take steps to realise it (p 268).

Douglas Galbraith brings so many voices to his writing. He quotes Erik Routley, Matt Redman, and numerous American sources – and of course can call on the Iona experience from his homeland. (He himself was part of the construction working bee that put theologians and tradespeople shoulder-to-shoulder, learning from each other.) One source that he cites more than once is *Universa Laus*, a Catholic initiative – now ecumenical – started in 1966 with Fr Gelineau among others (p. 265). This body discerned two approaches on which church music might be judged: aesthetic and 'holiness'. The latter is more productive, but still dependent on the local context. As Galbraith says, "church traditions approach this in their characteristic ways – Calvinistic, Ignatian, Charismatic etc" (p. 266).

The author's very last words quote *Universa Laus*, both in his main story (p. 277) and in a prayer he wrote, which he offers as the final Appendix (p. 300):

"In all the music we make
may we and all believers be enabled
to cry out the *Kyrie eleisons* of the oppressed,
to sing the *Alleluias* of those restored to life,
and to uphold the *Maranatha* of the faithful
in the hope of the coming of the Kingdom."

I think Galbraith's work shows the best of what a group like RSCM can provide. It comes from active listening to and learning from others. It comes from making the serious effort to involve all in the body-building work of worship, worship which connects with the world we're in.

I have received a simple Christmas choral work from William Miles, who would be happy if any who wants it can use it. It was set many years ago by a young Stuart Forster, who now has a senior position in the USA.

Titus Grenyer is leading the music at St John's Uniting Church, Wahroonga. Some idea of what this might mean for the church may be gleaned from Titus' YouTube channel (<https://bit.ly/PepOrgan>) - creative, innovative, and accomplished, yet accessible, musical and genial.



David Powell

David Powell is a member of the Uniting Church in Australia Church Music Committee and UCA Representative on the RSCM Branch Committee since 2011

Sing the world God imagines

Rev. John Bunyan has remarked that there is no hymn society based in Australia, and that locally RSCM might serve a role here.

There is such a body in Great Britain and Ireland, of which John is one of just three non-institutional Australian members. There is another known as The Hymn Society (United States and Canada) which is celebrating its centenary this year. The theme is "Sing the world God imagines", reflecting its increasing welcome of diversity in origin and style. All the same, the Society supports established forms, for example with scholarships for young organists.

Along these lines was a competition for a hymn that would relate the organ to congregational song. I spotted this soon after joining both societies (through the North American body) last October, and I worked some words for the looming deadline. The winning entry - "The magnificence of God", by Jane Southwick Cool, is still to be published, but here is a further working of my submitted attempt.

Hymns need to be fairly direct with their imagery, and maybe the verse below assumes too much knowledge about organs on the part of the typical singer. It's offered freely here anyway, with openness to feedback.

Can we be one (ABAB)

Recommended tune^[i]: Derry Air (Londonderry Air), e.g., Voices United 586 (final melisma collapsed)

II.IO.II.IO.II.IO.II.I2

- 1 Can we be one, our many parts uniting?
A sound example brings the lesson near:
The body Paul imagined in his writing
is like this organ present with us here!
For as but one is seated at the console,
relating many varied tools of art,
there is but One^[ii] to whom we should respond so,
a managed mixture, breathing praise from every part.
- 2 We take delight in tones of such variety,
and then the blend of flutes and strings is sweet,
so we commend the craft of musicality
by which such different colours^[iii] gladly meet.
Then let us pray that in our faithful duty
we will unite in chorus just as fine,
that in diversity we may show beauty:
God surely smiles when seeming opposites combine.
- 3 At times we hear a solo stop asserting:
our ears beguiled, the focus turns to one,
and yet we know that other ranks are serving^[iv]:
the tuner works till every pipe^[v] is done.
Our role must neither swell us nor appal us:
If we are featured, let us sing with grace,
but if our part is singing in the chorus,
may we be pleased to gladly take the humble place.
- 4 In times of old, the Spirit of God's presence
was seen in wind^[vi], in constant flowing air.
And still today: while now informed by science,
we sense the Holy Spirit active there.
There is arousal when the wind is blowing.
It should be surging as the organ plays,
and^[vii] in our joined voices ever growing:
Let every thing that carries breath unite in praise!^[viii]

[i] Melismas are sometimes broken other than in the last line. I think singers handle these naturally (unconsciously) with this tune.

[ii] repetition of 'one' in this stanza employs the stylistic device in Eph 4:6.

[iii] originally 'timbres'

[iv] 1 Cor 12:22, 27-31

[v] or "note" for a non-pipe instrument

[vi] Obviously, the parallels are fewer in verse 4 if the instrument is not a pipe organ. The thesis in verse 1 has already been expended: this verse is like a doxology (also providing a reference to the third person of the Trinity). Verse 4 may be useful in a multi-faith context as it references only pre-Christian scripture.

[vii] You can substitute "Yes," for "And" if the organ is not a wind instrument.

[viii] Ps 150:6, adapted

The Hymn Society of USA and Canada conference will be held in Washington DC from 17 to 21 July 2022 (<https://thehymnsociety.org/event/>).

David Powell

David Powell is a member of the Uniting Church in Australia Church Music Committee and UCA Representative on the RSCM Branch Committee since 2011

Farewell and best wishes

We bid farewell to Peter Guy who was the Organist and Master of the Choristers at Christ Church Cathedral, Newcastle. Before that, he was Director of Music at St Stephen's Uniting Church, Macquarie St, Sydney and was the inaugural Director of Chapel Music at St Andrew's College, University of Sydney. Peter has recently left his position at the Cathedral in order to undertake a Master's degree at the Kodaly Institute in Hungary.



We will miss his input on the NSW Branch Committee where he has for many years been our valued Regional Representative for the Newcastle/Hunter Region and an active participant in many RSCM summer and winter schools and other NSW branch activities. Thank you for

your service, Peter, and all the very best!

At right: Peter on his last day at Christ Church Cathedral, Newcastle.



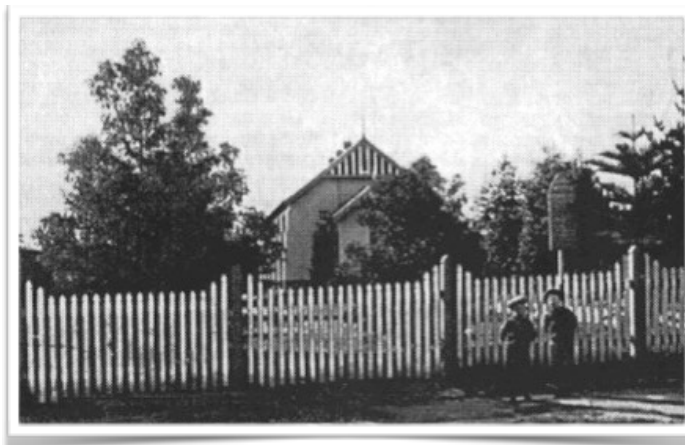
At right: at the Eucharist service, presenting one of his choristers with her RSCM Voice for Life dark blue ribbon and medallion.

Below: Peter conducting the choir at Evensong.



In Memoriam

In our last issue, we congratulated Mrs Heather Tredinnick of Bowral on the award of the Medal of the Order of Australia. RSCM NSW has since been advised that Mrs Tredinnick sadly passed away on 14 April 2022 aged 85 years. Sincere sympathies go to her family. May she rest in peace.



Scots Kirk Mosman's 124th

Left: Mosman Presbyterian Church in 1898

The Presbyterian church in Mosman, a pleasant coastal suburb on Sydney's lower north shore, began in the late 19th century, meeting in a small building in Belmont Rd. The foundation stone of this building, now forming part of the church hall, dates from 1898. The current church, a large and

imposing brick building was constructed in 1911, and became known as Scots Kirk. The fine Richardson pipe organ arrived in 1917. Our congregation celebrates its 1898 foundation on the 2nd Sunday of March every year.

During the anniversary service we try to include a setting of the psalm bearing the same number as the age of the church, and reflect what that psalm may have to say to us today.

Five years ago we inevitably met up with Psalm 119 and its 176 verses! For a while we attempted a portion every few weeks, but unfortunately never made it to the end.

I looked for various settings of Psalm 124, whether a choral or congregational setting, a modern worship song, a chant, a paraphrase, or an anthem – finally returning to the traditional setting in our own hymn book, *The Church Hymnary (3rd edition)* published in 1973 by the Church of Scotland, together with several other Presbyterian and Reformed churches throughout the UK.

The original paraphrase was by William Whittingham and first appeared in the Anglo-Genevan Psalter of 1561, only slightly changed when it appeared in the Scottish Psalter a century later in 1650, from which the Church Hymnary published it unchanged:

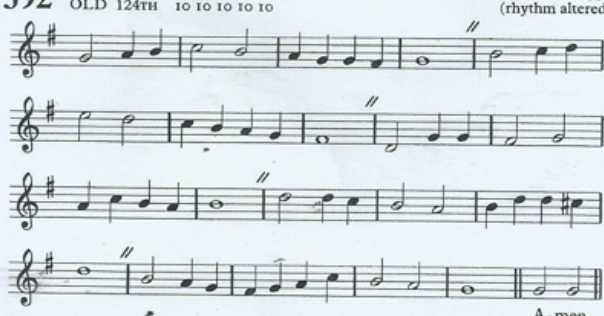
Now Israel may say, and that truly,
If that the Lord had not our cause maintained;
If that the Lord had not our right sustained,
When cruel men against us furiously
Rose up in wrath, to make of us their prey;

Then certainly they had devoured us all,
And swallowed quick, for aught that we could deem;
Such was their rage, as we might well esteem.
And as fierce floods before them all things drown,
So had they brought our soul to death quite down.

The raging streams, with their proud swelling waves,
Had then our souls o'erwhelmed in the deep.
But blest be God, who doth us safely keep,
And hath not given us for a living prey
Unto their teeth, and bloody cruelty.

Even as a bird out of the fowler's snare
Escapes away, so is our soul set free:
Broke are their nets, and thus escaped we.
Therefore our help is in the Lord's great Name,
Who heaven and earth by his great power did frame.

392 OLD 124TH 10 10 10 10 10 French-Genevan Psalter, 1551 (rhythm altered)



PSALM 124 (ii)

NOW Israel may say, and that truly,
If that the Lord had not our cause maintained;
If that the Lord had not our right sustained,
When cruel men against us furiously
Rose up in wrath, to make of us their prey;

2 Then certainly they had devoured us all,
And swallowed quick, for aught that we could deem;
Such was their rage, as we might well esteem.
And as fierce floods before them all things drown,
So had they brought our soul to death quite down.

3 The raging streams, with their proud swelling waves,
Had then our soul o'erwhelmed in the deep.
But blest be God, who doth us safely keep,
And hath not given us for a living prey
Unto their teeth, and bloody cruelty.

4 Even as a bird out of the fowler's snare
Escapes away, so is our soul set free:
Broke are their nets, and thus escaped we.
Therefore our help is in the Lord's great Name,
Who heaven and earth by his great power did frame.

5 Glory to God the Father, God the Son,
And unto God the Spirit, Three in One.
From age to age let saints his Name adore,
His power and love proclaim from shore to shore,
And spread his fame, till time shall be no more. Amen.

Phew! I was fairly sure that this hadn't been sung at Scots Kirk for many, many years. (Though I remember singing it as a child in my local church, and loving the image of the bird flying free.) What would everyone make of all this bloodthirsty violence? Sure, it ends on a positive and triumphant note, but where is the peace, love and gentleness? One can readily imagine this being sung during the turbulent days of the Reformation in England and Scotland, when violence and religious persecution was rife. But nowadays aren't we and the rest of the world more peace-loving, secure and civilized?

Just over a fortnight earlier, Vladimir Putin had declared war on Ukraine. The lives of innocent people and the sovereignty of their land had been violated. Several commentators regarded this to be the worst outbreak of war in Europe since World War 2. We have a Ukrainian couple in our congregation, with their families in danger.

Our church also receives news from the Open Doors organisation, supporting persecuted Christian communities in many parts of the world. They encounter such danger, threats and “bloody cruelty” on a daily basis. Their faith, courage, and willingness to give up comfort and security, and even their own lives if necessary, is a challenge to us all.

Early in March, parts of our state experienced disastrous flooding, with entire towns being “o’erwhelmed in the deep”. Suddenly the words of Psalm 124 felt very real. In our own safety and prosperity we were challenged to continue remembering and praying for those in the midst of real danger.

War was never far away from the lives of the ancient Israelites. But as they made their pilgrimage to the temple at Jerusalem, they were still able to sing these words in praise of the God whom they were learning to trust for their deliverance and freedom.

We will never know what music was used for such an occasion, but fortunately we have the tune known as The Old 124th, originally from the French-Genevan Psalter of 1551, albeit with some differences in rhythm. It was taken into the Scottish Psalter and set, in the now familiar rhythm, to Psalm 124, one of the few Genevan melodies to enter the Scottish book unchanged. In both Scotland and Geneva it has been sung on many occasions of national importance.

The congregation with the 124th anniversary birthday cake.



Wesley Milgate’s commentary on metrical psalmody from his book *“Songs of the People of God”* (A Companion to the Australian Hymn Book) is worth quoting: “The metrical psalter of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland has been as much a part of the fabric of Scottish life through the centuries as the chorales of German life. Calvin, taking the Bible as the sole authority on all matters of faith and practice, would allow nothing in public worship but what that book contained....The Psalms were for the day to day use of the people in their ordinary occupations as well as worship in the church...the metrical psalter became a familiar part of popular culture and devotion, and at last

part of the national identity.” There was also the assumption that “rhymed verse was the nearest equivalent to the Hebrew verse form.”

Attitudes slowly changed and broadened. *The Revised Church Hymnary* of 1927 contains over 700 hymns from a great variety of denominational sources. The entire Psalter comprises the first part of the book. People still remark on the unique layout of the Psalter section, with its split pages of tunes at the top and words on the lower half, giving the ability to conveniently mix and match. For a long time, singing was unaccompanied and led by a precentor. Organs made a relatively late appearance during the mid-to-late 19th century – but were embraced with enthusiasm, with larger churches installing some very fine and substantial instruments.

A further sign of the times appeared with the 1973 edition of *The Church Hymnary*, which no longer included the entire Psalter. Instead there are about 80 psalm-based items scattered throughout the book, sometimes with several versions of the more popular psalms, with not only metrical settings but also plainsong, Anglican chant, and settings by Gelineau. Further modernisation was achieved in 2005 with *The Church Hymnary 4*, a diverse and comprehensive book.

The 1973 and 2005 revisions never really took off in Australian churches. Likewise the ecumenical Australian Hymn Book was not widely used. Many congregations clung to their beloved 1927-era books until the Presbyterian Church of Australia published *Rejoice!* in 1987. This book contains only a relatively small selection of metrical psalms in their entirety. A rather curious addition is the significant number of 19th century ‘revivalist’ hymns.

As with so many churches today, Presbyterian congregations are frequently abandoning the use of traditional hymn books in favour of contemporary worship songs displayed on a screen. Psalm singing has all but disappeared – except in the case of a small minority of churches known as the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia. Such an example is St George’s in Elizabeth St in the Sydney CBD, with their exclusive diet of unaccompanied metrical psalms! Various churches and individuals of Reformed persuasion have published metrical versions of the full Psalter in contemporary language, still sung to largely traditional tunes. One of the more successful of these is the *Psalter Hymnal* from the USA.

Today’s churches have an almost bewildering array of musical options. Surely one of the great blessings of the latter half of 20th century church life was the ecumenical movement, with the acknowledgement that Christians from different traditions share so many things in common, far outweighing our differences. In many ways, musicians led this movement – they had been sharing their hymnody for many years earlier. Presbyterians were rather late adopting standard hymnody, but they did contribute their unique gift of metrical psalmody, examples of which can be still found in most Christian hymn collections today.

Heather Moen-Boyd

Heather Moen-Boyd is the Organist, Scots Kirk Mosman and the Presbyterian Representative on the RSCM NSW Committee.



O mighty God, the joy is ours

To sound thy welcome from our towers...

When we speak of church musicians, we tend to think of choir singers, organists, band members, conductors and worship leaders, but have you ever wondered about bell ringers? We hear them, but most of us have no opportunity to see them at work - so here is a small window into their world.

What does it take to be a bell ringer? According to the Australian and New Zealand Association of Bellringers' website, "bellringing does not require great physical strength, nor do you need any knowledge of music or mathematics. It's all about rhythm, memory and concentration." The Association currently has about 500 members who ring at 70 bell towers in Australia and New Zealand. St Paul's Burwood recently held an Evensong service with about 80 bellringers in attendance in connection with the Association's 60th anniversary.



Pam Brock, People's Warden and Bellringer at St Paul's Anglican Church Burwood, says that she first learnt to ring there in 1965 and since then she has rung in all of the 70 towers in Australasia as well as nearly 400 towers of the 6,000 that are in the UK.

The oldest ring of bells in Australia was installed in 1847 at Holy Trinity Church in Hobart. As Pam Brock (pictured at left) writes in a recent article in "The Epistle" parish magazine of St Paul's Burwood, "In Sydney there are many towers that have bells but only 14 towers have a peal of 5, 6, 8, 10 or 12 bells...

There are another 19 towers in Greater Sydney and NSW with a peal of bells".

In Roman Catholic churches in Sydney, there are peals of bells in St Mary's Cathedral, St Patrick's Cathedral Parramatta, St Benedict's Broadway, St Leonard's Naremburn and Holy Family Lindfield. There are peals in the Sydney Anglican churches of St Philip's Church Hill, Christ Church St Laurence, St Mark's Darling Point, St Jude's Randwick, St James' Turramurra, St Paul's Burwood, St Andrew's Cathedral and St James' King St.

Pam writes that young trainee bell ringers at Burwood have often been recruited from among confirmees there, and they currently have four young learners. One of the challenges for St Paul's when bell ringing started in 1960 was having enough local Council-permitted rehearsal time to allow everyone to learn. With only half an hour weekly practice and half an hour before services, this was a difficult task. But practice time was gradually extended by various means including installation of additional sound proofing on the louvres of the bell tower so that they can now ring for an hour and a half each week.

At St Paul's, the ringers ring each Sunday at 9am for the 9.30am service, and for the occasional Evensong, wedding or special service. Pam writes that "occasionally the ringers ring for 45 minutes continuously (this is called a quarter peal) to commemorate special events and important dates for the church calendar and civic events. [For example, St Paul's Burwood rang a quarter peal dedicated to Queen Elizabeth II for her Platinum Jubilee.] They can also ring for 3 hours continuously (this is called a full peal)."

Pam sums up her feeling about bell ringing as follows: “Ringing is a major part of my life and a great hobby for meeting an amazing mix of people from around the world.”

So is there any ‘sheet music’ for bell ringers? Or is everything committed to memory? Apparently, change ringing can be written down using numbers. “Plain Hunt” where adjacent bells swap place with each other is the simplest pattern or ‘method’. Pam tells me her practice when learning a new method is to memorise the ‘blue line’ or path of the bell and then write out the path to test her memory.

The website of the UK Central Council of Church Bell Ringers contains a bell ringing composition library. I was interested to read the names of the bell ringing options available for the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee: “Jubilee Court Bob Triples, Jubilee Surprise Royal, Queen Elizabeth II Surprise Minor, Queen Elizabeth Treble Bob Major, Platinum Bob Triples, Platinum Surprise Major, and many more.”

Have you seen bell ringing actually in progress? There are some fascinating YouTube clips available if you just write “bellringers” as your search term. The first few that come up include the bell ringers at St Mary’s Church, Nantwich and St Mary Redcliffe in England, and from Sydney, the bell ringers at St Mark’s Darling Point.

Please read on for more about bellringing at St Mark’s Darling Point.

Pamela Summers

Pamela Summers is the editor of Newsclef and sings with the St Swithun’s Anglican Church Choir Pymble and the Mater Chorale

Newsclef is grateful to Pam Brock for permission to reproduce quotations from her excellent article, “Bells and Bellringing”, in the Lent to Easter 2022 edition of *The Epistle*, St Paul’s Anglican Church Burwood NSW.



St Mark’s Bell Ringers strike a chord

Each week a faithful group of bell ringers joyously rings out the bells of St Marks, for the encouragement of the community.

Richard Winkler, Tower Captain has kindly shared his reflections on the history of bells at St Mark’s, the St Mark’s Bell Ringers as a group, his own experiences as a bell ringer, as well as an explanation of what is involved in actually making the bells ring!

Bells at St Mark's – A brief history

The St Mark's Darling Point bell tower is one of the oldest towers in Sydney, dating back to its opening in 1862. At that time, it was one of only a few suburban bell towers, resulting in St Mark's being popular within the ringing community to ring for regular Sunday services and other various ringing events. Indeed St Mark's was usually one of the first towers in the southern hemisphere to herald royal occasions (weddings, coronations, funerals, etc.), given its convenient location on the East Coast of Australia.

The heaviest six bells in the tower were originally cast in 1861 and donated by Thomas Ware Smart. The bells were rung for the first time for the wedding of Mr Smart's step-daughter. Later in 1923, two additional bells were added to the tower, being the two lightest bells today, to make a full eight bell peal. All bells were overhauled in 1988 at the bicentenary of the church, removing them from the tower to be shipped over to the UK for retuning. Retuning involves removing small amounts of metal from the bell which changes the tone, all done by hand back in the 20th Century. The bells were then shipped back to Australia and rehung with new ropes and frame structures, which has since improved the quality of ringing and ability to control the bells. Mr William May (the Parish Clerk-Sexton) was the first Captain of the Bell Ringers.



St Mark's Bell Ringers – A local band passionate about creating joyous sounds

Since the installation of the bells, the local band of St Mark's Bell Ringers has seen many generations come and go. We are often reminded of previous bands who remain in the tower through the many war-time or pre-war photos or plaques commemorating them, in addition to the historical records stored with the Australian and New Zealand Association of Bellringers (ANZAB). The most recent peak in volume of the local band was just before my time in the 2000's and 2010's with a strong community of up to double digits. Much of this group, however, have moved on to other towers or countries for personal and professional reasons. As a result, it was some years before regular ringing restarted in the tower with our now current band.

The local band regularly meets on a Monday evening for practice, which has been instrumental in establishing a current band of six regular ringers in addition to any visitors who join from other towers around Sydney (or elsewhere). This practice session is suited for beginners, first learning the basic two-step movements, and then introducing ringers to ringing 6-8 bells in rounds (ringing the bells in order of weight and tone down the scale). Once comfortable, we work on changing the order of the bells one step at a time known as "calls" or "call changes". The next step is then to learn "methods" where each ringer memorises how the order continuously changes each step, of which there are literally hundreds to learn. Our practice sessions are aimed at enabling service ringing, which occurs every alternate Sunday morning between church services to invite and encourage the community to join the congregation. In addition, we also ring for other occasions including weddings, funerals and to mark royal events as they occur.

The joys of bell ringing – A personal perspective

Personally, there are many joys to ringing bells. Firstly, the mental and physical challenge creates an addictive desire to ring in perfect time and to learn new methods. As I become more experienced, the movements and visual cues start to become more natural, and it's the feeling that guides me into the right position. That accuracy, however, can and often does flee from me just as fast as it arrives if I think too hard, but that simply creates new opportunities to get it right. Similarly, seeing new ringers learn and experience their own bliss in getting it right is exciting to watch as they progress, albeit commonly faster than my own ringing journey. The community of ringers, however, is what brings me back each week. People come from all walks of life, brought together by a common desire to learn the art, adding atmosphere to the worship at the church and the wider community. We have mathematicians, comedians, scientists, and professional musicians amongst many others in the wider community of ringers which makes for never a dull moment, always with a story to tell and something new to learn. All too often we need to remind ourselves to get back to ringing after a good social yarn in the tower. And this all culminates with the positive feeling we have, contributing to the lasting history and tradition in the tower of many generations before us, providing this special community service.

The major challenge is the dedication to the craft and finding members with a sustained enthusiasm to continue learning until that addictive desire takes hold. Typically, it is a few weeks-to-months before ringing in rounds or call changes are achieved and months-to-years before method ringing becomes proficient. We love to see people continuously come back after experiencing the fascination in the history, the movements, and the technique upon their first introduction.



Above: Members of the St Mark's Bell Ringers team in action.

I am reminded of my own personal introduction to bell ringing. My experience at a previous church was that bells were electrically automated, initiated by simply flicking a switch or programming in a

tune. When a now-fellow ringer first asked me at St Mark's if I wanted to learn, I mistakenly thought they were asking me to contribute to a roster or similar of setting the bells off each week after the service. Being invited up to the tower, seeing the ropes and six members standing in a circle, shouting incomprehensible calls, I was taken aback but captivated still at the uniqueness of it all. Seven to eight years later I still find myself learning just how to "set the bells of each week" but enjoy that there is no end in sight.

Bell ringing – Quite a skill!

Bells initially sit in an upside-down position with the mouth facing upwards, held up by plank of wood, known as the "stay", that juts out and rests on the surrounding tower frame. The bell is attached to a wheel with a rope hanging off it, which gives the user control of the rotational movement. The bell ringer pulls on the "sally" or felt part of the rope known as "hand stroke", bringing the stay off its resting position and gravity turns the bell over until it completes just under one full rotation, i.e. just before the stay hits its resting position on the other side. During this movement the clapper strikes the bell and makes the iconic sound. The rope is drawn up into the tower, which requires the bell ringer to pull on the tail of the rope, known as "back stroke", and the bell swings back in the opposite rotation with an additional strike, back to its original position. This two-step process repeats until ringing is stopped, by which time the bell is left again resting on the stay in a safe position. Changing the speed of rotation is how the order of bells is changed to ring different "methods" or "calls". As a member of our local band jokingly puts it; "the scale of the bells, some of them which weigh as much as a small car, ...[have] a piece of string to control it".

Become a St Mark's Bell Ringer

If you'd like to know more about joining the St Mark's Bell Ringers, please contact us at bellringers@stmarksdp.org

If you'd like to know more about the history of bell ringing at St Mark's, a fascinating history is included in *Honourable Engagement – St Mark's Church Darling Point: The First 150 Years* by Susan Mary Woolcock Withycombe. This book is available for purchase at <https://checkout.square.site/buy/Q47Z6EV5FKMNA63KPWQZ67KG>

Enjoy visiting St Mark's

We'd love you to join us for one of our Sunday services or other events at St Mark's. Visit <https://stmarksdp.org> for more details. If you are lucky, you may get to hear the peals of the bells first-hand!

Obituary

We were deeply saddened by the recent sudden passing of one of our bell ringers, Craig Hamilton, who was also a member of the St Mark's 8am congregation. Craig brought such life and humour to the tower and, quite simply, was a natural at the bells. We will surely miss him from our ringing team and congregation at the church.

Richard Winkler

Richard Winkler is the Tower Captain of St Mark's Bell Ringers and member of St Mark's Anglican Church Darling Point.



In memory of the world-wide victims of COVID-19

A Concert of Pilgrimage and Peace

On 27 March 2022, the Mater Chorale presented this concert at St Paul's Anglican Church Burwood, under the direction of Michael Deasey OAM FRSCM with Mark Quarmby, Organist, and in the presence of the founder and patron of the Chorale, Dr Jim Wilkinson OAM.

About the Chorale

The Mater Chorale, a corporate member of RSCM NSW Branch, was founded as 'The Mater Hospital Centenary Chorale' in 2005 by Dr Jim Wilkinson OAM, a senior anaesthetist at The Mater Hospital, North Sydney. The focus of the Centenary Chorale was a concert in July 2006 to celebrate 100 years of service by The Sisters of Mercy to the people of North Sydney. Though it was meant to be dissolved after the Centenary, the enthusiasm of the Chorale members has kept the group alive.

Its founding music director was Sheryl Southwood OAM, succeeded by Ross Cobb and since 2017 Michael Deasey OAM.

Apart from singing at charity events for the Mater Hospital, the choir has become an experienced itinerant liturgical choir. In August 2019, the Mater Chorale visited the UK to be choir-in-residence for a week at Lichfield Cathedral followed by a week at Winchester Cathedral.

About the Concert we presented

As Michael Deasey said in his introduction, it was ironic that the same virus that had given rise to the theme for the concert and caused the deaths of hundreds of thousands throughout the world, also caused the absence of quite a few choir members on the day of the concert! We were grateful to Sarah Dennis, Ross Cobb, Chris Shain and Liam Sullivan who stepped in at very short notice to replace those who were ill or in isolation.

It was a matter of great regret that our guest soloist, Andrew Goodwin, internationally acclaimed tenor was also unwell at the time of the concert. Andrew was to have sung the solo in his own composition, 'Peace I leave with you'. In his absence, we were delighted that Liam Sullivan was able to step in at less than 24 hours' notice. Liam sang the solo as a treble; indeed, it was originally meant to be a soprano or treble solo. Andrew Goodwin was formerly a cathedral chorister at St Andrew's, and appropriately, Liam Sullivan, replacing him, is currently head chorister there.

Part One of the concert - PILGRIMAGE

O Lord, look down from heaven

Music: Jonathan Battisbill (1738-1801)

Words: Isaiah 63:15

O salutaris hostia (O saving Victim)

Music: Thomas Tallis (1505-1585) Words: Antiphon for the Feast of Corpus Christi

Lord, let me know mine end

Music: Maurice Greene (1696-1755) Words: from Psalm 39

Litany to the Holy Spirit

Music: Jeanne de la Mare (b.1944) Words: Robert Herrick (1591-1674)

Hear my prayer

Music: Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Words: W. Bartholomew (1793-1867), after Psalm 55:1-7 (Soloist - Judith Russell)

Michael Deasey introduced these works as follows:

Pilgrimage implies a prolonged journey by faith rather than by sight, often beset by doubt and conflict. Life itself is such a pilgrimage with more questions than answers. I quote the words of Bishop Vincent Long:

Life can present us with myriads of complex situations, dilemmas and predicaments for which we have no satisfactory answers. How many times over the past two years have you asked...Why is the COVID pandemic lasting so long? Why are so many people dying and suffering needlessly? Then there are natural disasters like the devastating floods...further afield. There is a war in Ukraine that has displaced millions...why do tyrants in our world and their aggression against the weak go unchecked? These and other more personal scenarios can severely test our faith. They can gnaw away the core and foundations of our spiritual life: Does God understand my pain? Is he really involved in all of life's unpleasant aspects? Does he hear the many cries of agony and anguish? Does God really care?

So, in the words and music that follow, we ask these questions or else cry out in perplexity.

O Lord, where is thy zeal and thy strength? Are they restrained?

Our foes press hard on every side.

Hold not thy peace at my tears.

In the hour of my distress, sweet Spirit comfort me.

Hear my prayer, O God. The enemy shouteth, the godless come fast.

And then the psalmist becomes so overwhelmed with horror that he prays:

O for the wings of a dove, far away would I rove, in the wilderness build me a nest and remain there for ever at rest.

On such a pilgrimage we can survive only on hope, so we ask, Lord, what *is* my hope? Truly my hope is even in thee.

Organ Interlude

Mark Quarmby played “Elegy” by Paul Fey (b.1998).

Part Two of the concert - PEACE

The silver swan

Music: Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625) Words: Anonymous

The blue bird

Music: Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924) Words: Mary Coleridge (1861-1907) (Soloist - Judith Russell)

Peace I leave with you

Music: Andrew Goodwin (b.1979) Words: John 14:27 (Soloist - Liam Sullivan)

And I saw a new heaven

Music: Edgar Bainton (1880-1956) Words: Revelation 21:1-4

Deep peace

Music: Bill Douglas (b.1944) Words: Gaelic Blessing

I will lift up mine eyes

Music: Chris Artley (b.1963) Words: Psalm 121

Michael Deasey introduced these works as follows:

Our theme now turns to peace. The kind of peace that is not the absence of conflict but the experience of inner calm even in the storms of life.

Peace can be a return to nature, even in the song of a dying swan or the reflection of the blue sky in the lake as the bluebird flies across the water.

We return to the gospel, where Jesus tells us that true peace cannot be found from this world's pleasures, only in the peace that he imparts.

Then we join with John the Divine in his apocalyptic vision of the new Jerusalem where all tears will be wiped away and death, sorrow and pain are abolished.

The words of the Gaelic Blessing return us to God's creation, with the deep peace of the waves, air, earth and gentle night, and where the moon and the stars pour their healing light.

Finally, we cast ourselves on the Lord, with the reminder that our ultimate help comes not from the hills or indeed any part of creation, but from the Creator himself, who made heaven and earth, with the promise that he will preserve us from all evil and keep our souls for evermore.

Evil had a beginning and evil will have an end. Only God is from everlasting to everlasting, so our final doxology is: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

This beautiful programme of music was hopefully a fitting tribute to all those we have lost to this virus.



The Choir of
Christ Church St Laurence
Railway Square, Sydney

Sam Allchurch
Director of Music

David Tagg
Organist

The Choir has now reverted to something approaching what we might consider our 'normal' musical set-up, with the return of regular-sized ensembles and some of our best-loved repertoire. This was perhaps most obvious during Holy Week, when we enjoyed the entire complement of seasonal music, and the chapel was fuller than it had been for quite some time! Just as importantly, the Parish is shortly to re-institute morning tea following Sunday services: for so long, the Parish Hall has felt sadly empty on a Sunday, and it will be wonderful to see the return of further opportunities for social interaction.

In early April the Choir was able to offer its first Lenten concert in two years: J.S. Bach's *St John Passion*. We were fortunate to enjoy the support of a good-sized audience both in the church on the night and, in the week following the performance, watching at home via the Australian Digital Concert Hall. In the lead-up to the concert several last-minute changes to the Choir and among soloists were required due to COVID isolations; these disruptions were manageable, as ever, thanks to individual and group goodwill and flexibility. The performance was accompanied by the Muffat

Collective, our ensemble-in-residence, who will be giving [their own concert](#) at Christ Church St Laurence on the afternoon of Sunday 10 July, featuring a programme of Austrian baroque music.

The full schedule for the Parish's 2022 Organ Recital series is at left. Please join us for an hour-long rehearsal one Sunday evening a month, right before the weekly service of Solemn Evensong. Entry is by 'note donation'.

The Choir of Christ Church St Laurence sings at the Parish's High Mass (10.30am) and Solemn Evensong (6.30pm) services each Sunday, as well as at selected weekday feasts. The scale of the music within each of these liturgies continues to be shaped by the NSW Health guidelines. All of our services are COVID-safe events, and everyone is welcome.

Michelle Imison

*Michelle Imison is the Publicity Officer,
Choir of Christ Church St Laurence*

THE ANGLICAN PARISH OF
CHRIST CHURCH ST LAURENCE
RAILWAY SQUARE, SYDNEY | CONSECRATED 1845

ORGAN RECITAL SERIES 2022

20 FEBRUARY
Samuel Giddy (Sydney)

20 MARCH
Fr Michael Deasey (St Paul's, Burwood)

24 APRIL
Callum Knox (St James', King Street)

15 MAY
Colin Andrews (USA)

19 JUNE
Hamish Wagstaff (Sydney)

17 JULY
Alessandro Pittorino (Perth)

21 AUGUST
Kurt Ison (Sydney)

18 SEPTEMBER
Mark Quarmbay (St Stephen's, Macquarie Street)

16 OCTOBER
Stacey Yang (Sydney)

20 NOVEMBER
Martin Rein (University of Wollongong)

SUNDAYS AT 5:30PM

FOLLOWING EACH RECITAL,
SOLEMN EVENSONG WILL
BE SUNG BY THE CHOIR OF
CHRIST CHURCH
ST LAURENCE AT 6.30PM.
*All are welcome
to attend.*

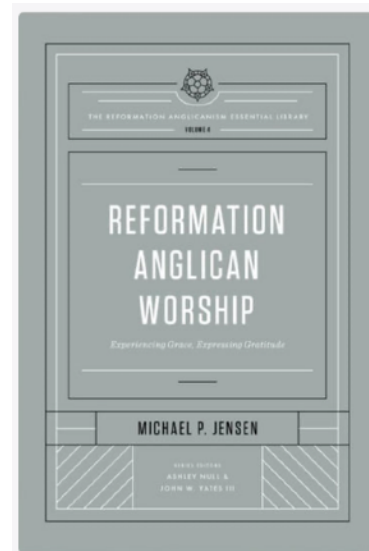
www.ccs1.org.au

Book Review

Reformation Anglican Worship by Michael Jensen (Vol. 4 of the series "Reformation Anglicanism Essential Library", ed. Ashley Null, Crossway 2021)

Practitioners of Church Music will find it worthwhile, even confronting, to reflect on why we do what we do. In the crossfire of day-to-day skill-building, repertoire-planning, rehearsal and communication, pursuing a deeper theological understanding can sometimes be neglected by church musicians, and Jensen's 2021 book is recommended as an accessible entry point.

Jensen unpacks the saying "*Lex orandi, lex credendi*" ("how we pray is how we believe") in his introduction, pondering the chicken-and-egg dilemma inherent in the relationship between worship and belief and, by implication, also between expressions of worship responding to the Word of God in various ways. He traces the variety of worship in Anglicanism today back to Reformation roots, sharing his concern that despite scope for diversity in worship, a shared theological basis should be the foundation. (As a Roman Catholic, I note that his intention is not to address other Christian variants - his scope, as the title suggests, remains Anglicanism).



After exploring Reformation worship, Scriptural reading/preaching, sacraments and prayer, Jensen focuses on church music in his final chapter. He introduces questions about aesthetic, participation and style, and Jensen strongly denounces Kenneth R. Long's observations that "There is always an element of sacrifice in worship" and Cathedral choral services constitute worship "whether any congregation is present or not." He acknowledges that our current generation seeks "to be rooted in something that transcends contemporary culture".

This final chapter does not make overall conclusions, and one is left pondering. The concluding remarks adapted from Colossians 3:16 could form a universal benchmark for Church musicians: "Does the music of the contemporary (insert Christian variant here – original being *Anglican*) church serve the purpose of letting "the word of Christ dwell in you richly"?

Josie Ryan

Josie Ryan is the Roman Catholic representative on the RSCM NSW Branch Committee





ST PAUL'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
Burwood



ORCHESTRAL MASS

celebrating the

125th ANNIVERSARY OF DEDICATION

10:00am – Sunday 10 July 2022

Guest Preacher: **Fr Andrew Sempell** (*Rector, St James' King Street*)

Setting: **Missa Sancti Joannis de Deo** (*J. Haydn*)

205-207 Burwood Road, Burwood NSW 2134



MUSIC @ ST PAUL'S
Recital Series

LUNCHTIME RECITAL

a bi-monthly series presented by
St Paul's Church, Burwood

1:15pm – Third Tuesday of the Month
Note donation or book online
by scanning the QR code:



David Russell
Director of Music

205-207 Burwood Road, Burwood NSW 2134
music@stpaulsburwood.org.au

Sheryl Southwood OAM
Recital Convenor

Celebrating the Psalms



Featuring 20 of the 150 psalms in

- 6 hymns
- 5 choral anthems
- 4 chanted psalms
- 4 spoken responsories
- 4 readings

with St Swithun's Choir directed by Phillip Linquist

Saturday August 20th at 5pm



St Swithun's Anglican Church

2 Telegraph Road Pymble

Free. Followed by refreshments. All welcome!

The churches of Mosman, Cremorne and Neutral Bay will hold a Hymnfest on **Sunday 11th September at 2pm** at Mosman Uniting Church. If you would like to be part of the choir for this joyful ecumenical event, please contact Callum Close, music@stlukemosman.org, or Heather Moen-Boyd, heatherboyd131@hotmail.com.

ACT/NSW Organ Recital - 21 August 2022

As part of its 2022 Organ Recital Series the ACT RSCM Branch, supported by NSW Branch, has arranged an Organ Recital by Jonathan Lee to be held in St Saviour's Anglican Cathedral, Goulburn on Sunday 21 August at 2.30pm.

About Jonathan...



As well as having had an academically brilliant schooling at Canberra Grammar, Jonathan also has a passion for music, his favoured instrument being the pipe organ. In parallel with his schooling he has studied organ for a number of years at The ACT Organ School under the tutelage of Phillip Swanton from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

He gained his AMusA (organ) in 2015 and his LMusA (organ) a year later. Since then he has given numerous organ recitals in the Canberra region. In 2018 he was one of three finalist in the Sydney International Organ Competition, followed in 2019 with a similar official commendation at the Northern Ireland International Organ Competition.

His excellent results in the International Baccalaureate led to new life in the UK commencing in 2019 as sub organist at Hereford Cathedral for a twelve month period. For the last two years he has been studying for a Bachelor of Music degree at the University of Cambridge. While there he has been resident at Trinity College where he enjoys playing the fine Swiss Metzler organ for Chapel services. He recently turned twenty one years of age.

The Recital will be approximately 75 minutes in duration, and entry is by donation.

Positions vacant

Deputy Organist – part time position

St Alban's Anglican Church, 3 Pembroke Street, Epping NSW.

We are seeking a Deputy Organist to accompany our Sunday morning worship services on the second and fourth Sundays of each month. These services, at 8.00 am and 10.00 am, only require organ accompaniment of congregational singing of hymns and the Dudman setting, along with voluntaries and postlude. The Deputy Organist will also be part of a pool of organists who may be asked, on occasion, to play if a rostered organist is unavailable. This position would be ideal for a busy organist looking to earn some extra income.

St Alban's has a Letourneau pipe organ, which is made available to our organists for practise and teaching during the week.

For more information download the [Position Description](#) . Send expressions of interest to the St Alban's Office: office@eppinganglicans.org.au

Male & Female Choral Scholars Sought

All Saints Anglican Church, Hunters Hill

All Saints <https://www.aphh.com.au/> is an Anglican community in Woolwich, Hunters Hill and Boronia Park. Our vision is to be a Christ-centred community, treasuring our diversity, accepting and supporting each other, and reaching out to meet needs within and beyond our Parish, as we share the love of God.

All Saints Choir is a vital part of the traditional Anglican worship at the 10am Sunday Service. The choir sings each Sunday plus special feasts and events, and occasionally for weddings, funerals and for other special services when requested. The repertoire includes singing a setting of the Eucharist, four hymns, psalmody, motets during communion and anthems.

Rehearsals are held every Thursday evening from 7.30pm. The choir is not auditioned, but has sectional leaders to support less confident singers. Short recesses are programmed during the year that match school holidays.

Funds have been generously provided to finance choral scholars. If you are interested in this opportunity and would like more information, please contact:

Philip Reichardt, Director of Music, DOM@aphh.com.au or 0405 001 009

All Saints Anglican Church, Hunters Hill – Male & Female Choral Scholars

All Saints Hunters Hill worship style is traditional, with a robed choir, although we occasionally venture into 21st century music! The choir has continued its activities and rehearsals through the COVID-19 pandemic (in accordance with health regulations). The theology is reformed and Jesus-centred. We have an assistant organist and other choral scholars.

In addition to weekly services the highlight of the choral year is the Advent/Christmas Lessons & Carols service. We also aim to present an Evensong service during the year. We also present "Soirees" which give the choir opportunity to sing lighter-style music.

The scholars we are looking for would be:

- appointed initially for 2022, and then reviewed according to circumstances
- capable of singing both soprano and alto, or tenor and bass lines, as required
- willing to provide sectional leadership
- available for rehearsals on Thursday evenings
- happy to participate in the life of the choir 44 weeks of the year, with a commitment to participate particularly in key church services in Advent, Christmas and Easter
- committed to enhancing Christian worship through good music, and supporting the efforts of the ministry team, Director of Music, Assistant Director of Music and other scholars

Our preferred method of emolument is by directly sponsoring the scholar's cost of music education e.g. singing or instrumental lesson fees up to a defined limit; however this may be discussed.

All Saints Church is one of the most beautiful sandstone churches in Sydney. Built in 1888 by the architect Horbory Hunt, this stunning gothic building displays remarkable stained glass, a long wide, red-carpeted isle and a spectacular timber roof, and houses our historic Bevington pipe organ. St Mark's Church Hunters Hill was originally located on the corner of Joubert and Church Street. Built in 1858 with the dual purpose of a schoolhouse and chapel, it is the oldest public building in Hunters Hill. In 1962, when the new Gladesville Bridge and approaches were constructed, the church was moved to its current location in Figtree Road. St Mark's houses our historic Kinloch pipe organ, which together with the stained-glass windows enhances the traditional ambiance of this glorious church, often described as a beautiful "country church in the city". Our Choir Room is well-equipped and boasts one of the most extensive and well-documented collections of sacred choral music in Sydney.



St Luke's Anglican Church Mosman Choral Scholarship 2022/23

St Luke's Mosman is offering up to two adult (Soprano/Alto) choral scholarships for 2022/23.

Scholars provide musical support and leadership to their section of the choir, including solo and cantor roles, whilst also supporting the Director of Music in the musical leadership of the parish.

Scholars are required to attend Sunday rehearsals and services for a commitment of approximately 3.5 hours each Sunday. In addition, Scholars should be available to sing at additional services, Feast Days, and major festivals (such as Holy Week, Easter, and Christmas).

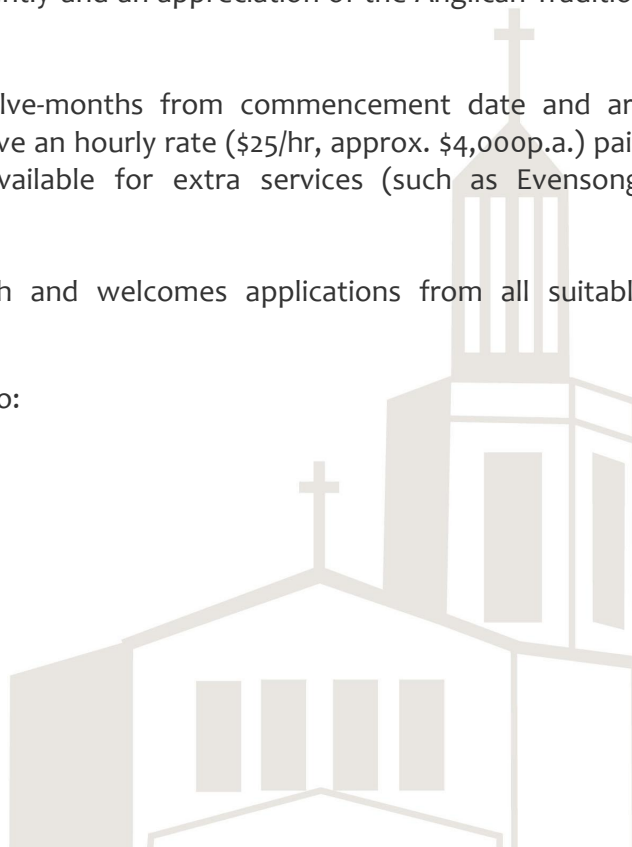
Applicants should have a musical background and experience singing in a choral setting, be able to read music fluently and an appreciation of the Anglican Tradition of Worship.

The scholarship will run for twelve-months from commencement date and are renewable annually. Scholars receive an hourly rate (\$25/hr, approx. \$4,000p.a.) paid monthly, with additional fees available for extra services (such as Evensong, Weddings, and Funerals).

St Luke's is a progressive parish and welcomes applications from all suitable candidates.

Expressions of interest or queries to:

Callum Close
Organist and Director of Music
music@stlukesmosman.org



Contacts

Office holders

Mr Ross Cobb *Chairman*
nsw.chair@rscmaustralia.org.au

Mr Philip Reichardt *Secretary*
nsw.secretary@rscmaustralia.org.au

Mr Gerald Hayes *Treasurer*
nsw.treasurer@rscmaustralia.org.au

Mr David Powell *Membership Secretary*
nsw.membership@rscmaustralia.org.au

Mrs Pamela Summers *Newsclaf editor*
newsclaf@rscmaustralia.org.au

Branch Committee Members

Mr Peter Black

Mrs Michelle Lee

Mr Jack Stephens

Mrs Pamela Summers

Mr Justin Sweeting

Denominational Representatives

Rev. Dr Roger Chilton OAM (Anglican)
nsw.anglican@rscmaustralia.org.au

Ms Heather Moen-Boyd (Presbyterian)
nsw.presbyterian@rscmaustralia.org.au

Ms Josie Ryan (Roman Catholic)
nsw.catholic@rscmaustralia.org.au

Mr David Powell (Uniting)
nsw.uniting@rscmaustralia.org.au

Regional Representatives

Vacant (Hunter)
nsw.hunter@rscmaustralia.org.au

Ms Naomi Spencer (South Coast)
nsw.southcoast@rscmaustralia.org.au

Ms Megan Ainsworth (Northern)
nsw.northern@rscmaustralia.org.au

Vacant (Central West)
nsw.centralwest@rscmaustralia.org.au

RSCM Choristers' Prayer

*Bless, O Lord, us Thy servants
who minister in Thy temple.
Grant that what we sing with our lips,
we may believe in our hearts,
and what we believe in our hearts,
we may show forth in our lives.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

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COVID-19 STATEMENT

RSCM NSW Branch is committed to the principle that all people who participate in church music activities should be able to do so in safety and without compromising their physical or emotional wellbeing.

As well as being our God-given responsibility to those whom he has placed over us, in the interests of our health and safety during this time of COVID-19, your committee urges all members to follow strictly the requirements of the health authorities and also the guidance provided by our church leaders.

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FIND US on Facebook: RSCM NSW
PLEASE SEND CONTRIBUTIONS TO:
newsclaf@rscmaustralia.org.au
COPY DEADLINE FOR NEXT EDITION:
Friday 19 August 2022