

# SOUNDBOARD

A Newsletter for Church Musicians



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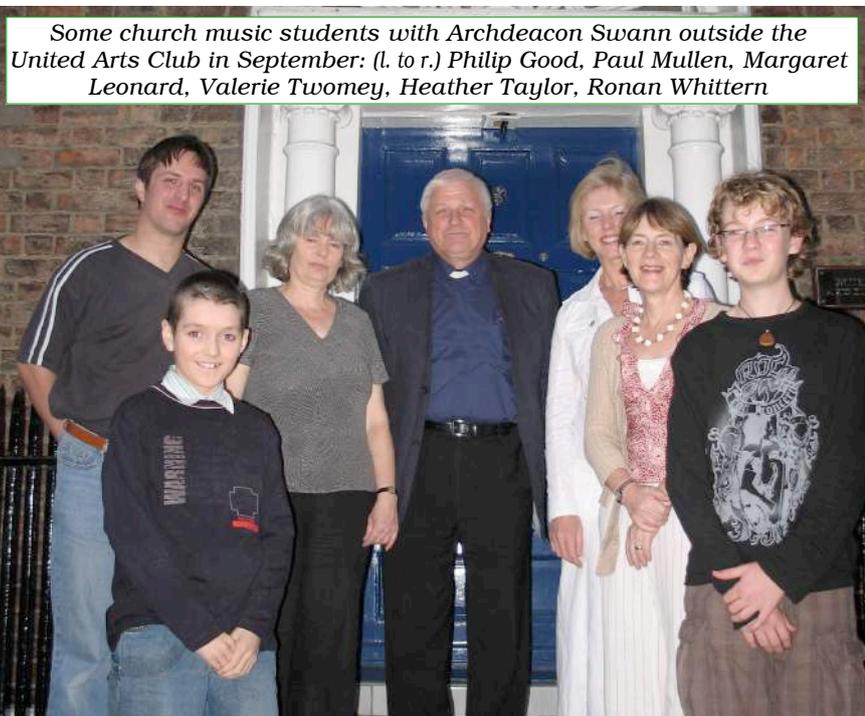
## LIVING WORSHIP COURSE 2008

This popular course will be held again early in 2008. The dates are Saturdays 19 and 26 January, 9 and 16 February from 10 to 1 at the Church of Ireland Theological College, Braemor Park, Dublin 14. The course aims to explore various aspects of music in church in the context of liturgy, theology and participation.

The opening session on 19 January will be led by John O'Keeffe, Director of Sacred Music at the National Seminary, Maynooth. His principal area of interest concerns the role of music in liturgy today. John's principal area of interest concerns the role of music in liturgy and he regularly leads workshops and courses. On 26 February Colin Mawby will review the role of church musicians and their key place in the ministry of the Church. Colin is widely known as a choral conductor and composer and recently was honoured by the award of the Papal Order of Knighthood of St Gregory in recognition of his services to church music. He has been Master of Music at Westminster Cathedral, London, Choral Director at RTÉ and artistic director of the National Chamber Choir.

The Psalms and the different ways of using them will be the topic to be introduced by Judy Martin (Director of Music, Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin) and Alison Cadden (Seagoe Parish Church, Craigavon) on 9 February. Judy and Alison are members of the Liturgical Advisory Committee, which shortly will publish music for organists and singers, indicating a broad range of ways to sing psalms congregationally in worship in parish churches. Finally, on Saturday 16 February, Dr Donald Davison (St John's Malone, Belfast) will talk about hymns, drawing on his extensive experience as organist and organ teacher, musical editor of *Irish Church Praise* and *Church Hymnal* (2000) and co-author of *Companion to Church Hymnal*.

As in the past, each session will include a period of singing and opportunity to exchange views with others and by the end of the course those who participate should have plenty of fresh ideas to bring back to their local church. The fee for the four sessions is €100 and pre-booking is essential. For further information visit the church music website or call/text 087 668 3998.



Some church music students with Archdeacon Swann outside the United Arts Club in September: (l. to r.) Philip Good, Paul Mullen, Margaret Leonard, Valerie Twomey, Heather Taylor, Ronan Whittern

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## PETER BARLEY TALKING TO DAVID CONNOLLY

Organist and Director of Music at St Michael's, Dún Laoghaire



David, perhaps I could begin by asking you to describe your work at St Michael's. There are three liturgies in the church on Sunday mornings, and the music is led by a different group at each. A small children's choir sings at the 11 am service, while the adult choir of about fifteen ladies sings at the 12 noon service. They also sing hymns and motets; I'd like to try and build up this choir in time, adding some men to the ensemble. A third service at 1 pm is led by a cantor.

*How much rehearsal time do you have with each group?*

The members of the children's choir come for an hour beforehand at 10 am, and I rehearse with the adults for an hour on the previous Wednesday evening. The cantor usually just has a brief rehearsal with me before the mass.

*Turning now to the recital series, for which St Michael's is justly renowned, how is that organised?*

The recital series runs on a separate track, although of course it is wholeheartedly supported by the church. We have been fortunate this year not only to receive our customary backing from Dún Laoghaire / Rathdown County Council, but also a grant from the Arts Council.

*Presumably the church values the fact that this series brings people into the building who otherwise probably wouldn't visit.*

That's right, and of course the Parish Priest Fr Mangan is absolutely behind the series, and couldn't be more helpful and supportive.

*Did you have any particular thoughts when it came to putting together your first series of recitals? I must say that it looks a very good programme.*

I set up this year's series using similar structures to before, so that I could get a feel for how things are working, and then after a year or two I will be in a better position to see if there are any changes that could be made to make it more efficient. I tried to create a balance between

organists who play quite frequently and those with some new ideas.

*I presume you're keen to keep a choral element in the series?*

Over the thirteen weeks I'd like to have at least one choral concert (this year there was a popular return of the Palestrina Choir), and then to have one or two other types of group. I hope this will appeal to another part of the audience, who might then come to another concert in the series. Also, particular groups have particular followings, such as both of this year's choirs.

*Let's now turn to talk about the other significant part of your current career, which is your work at NUI Maynooth. What is your role there?*

I am a Senior Tutor, and am in charge of overseeing the practical musicianship aspects of the BMus and BA Arts Music degrees. I organise classes and tutorials, teach a couple of lecture classes in harmony to first and second years and I also have some organ pupils.

*You must presumably be very busy during term time, then?*

There are eleven weeks of hectic activity, and then it's much quieter in January when there are exams. Then another eleven week stint and then the Summer. For the last two years I have also directed the University Chamber Choir, which is made up of about 20 students, who are chosen by audition.

*Looking back now, what was your own path through music education?*

I began piano lessons at age eight, although nobody in my family was musical, nor were there any particular musical structures in the area where I grew up. I did not enjoy music much at this stage, but when I went to secondary school — a diocesan college — I had an inspirational music teacher, Ciarán Tackney. He had a very good music structure in the school. This was rare in a rural school in Ireland at that time — we had concerts, instrumental lessons and so forth. I took up the organ towards the end of my time there, studying with Ciarán.

*It must have been at about this time that you were thinking of Maynooth, with its excellent reputation for tertiary level music?*

I don't remember ever seriously considering anywhere else. I had heard good things about Maynooth, I knew a lot of people who had been there and I had also visited it and liked it a lot. I actually took a double honours in Music and Maths.

*How did you find balancing those*

*two, and was there a particular reason that you chose Maths as well as Music?*

I can't remember how I did it! There did tend to be times when I was a little bit more Music heavy and did neglect the Maths. I was planning to be a secondary school teacher, for which I would need two subjects. After I finished my degree I did the HDipEd, and then I did a performance Master's degree.

*Concurrently with studying at Maynooth you were organ scholar at St Mary's Pro-Cathedral. This must have been a great experience. How long were you there for?*

I was there for four years (with a year away whilst I was doing the H.Dip.Ed). I was there during a period of huge transition. Orla Barry was Director of Music when I started, but within three months she left, and there was an interim Director for six months, and then I spent the remainder of my time watching Blánaid Murphy build the whole thing up. It was a very informative time. Professor Gillen of course also gave me an excellent training as an organist.

*With your experiences of Catholic church music at the Pro Cathedral, Maynooth and now St Michael's, what is your perspective on the state of music in the Catholic Church? It tends to get something of a mixed press, but I must say that I perceive that things are more healthy than some people describe and I am impressed by how much is going on.*

There are indeed more positive aspects than you would be led to believe by some people, although I would say that there needs to be more a straightening out of what's acceptable and what is not. This is particularly the case with weddings. Here you often find poor liturgical and musical practice. There needs to be a stricter set of guidelines, and a clearer delineation between music that is accessible/congregational and music that's just bad. There's an important distinction to be made here.

*How about your own playing? Do you get much of a chance to play?*

When I was doing my Master's degree I seemed to have much more time. In the last year I've probably fallen off a little from it, but I'd certainly like to keep doing recitals. My new position at St Michael's is certainly a great encouragement in this regard.

*Thank you for talking to SOUNDBOARD, David, and I wish you well in all your future work in Maynooth, Dun Laoghaire and elsewhere. All good wishes for the rest of this year's series at St Michael's, and your plans for future years.*

## CHARLES WESLEY (1707-1788) - THE LEGACY

Derek Seymour

This year we celebrate the tercentenary of the birth of Charles Wesley, the hymn writer and brother of John Wesley (1703-1791). The movement they founded (circa. 1729) was in time to become the 'Methodist' Church. Its members being named Methodists because of their methodical use of their time in study and devotion. As an itinerant preacher, Charles, having taken holy orders in 1735, became a leading figure supporting the early development of Methodism. However it is his hymn writing and indeed his musical progeny that define the clearest place for him in literature and music as we look back over the three hundred years since his birth.



### Wesley the hymn writer

The scope of his writing extended to over 6500 hymns many of which remain popular to this day. The finest of his writings have been classed as 'among the greatest achievements of English Protestant Christianity, fit to hold a place with the Book of Common Prayer, the poems of George Herbert and the hymns of Isaac Watts'.

Charles Wesley's hymns, saturated in biblical language and imagery, proved an extraordinary means of teaching people doctrine. Church congregations in his time were often illiterate and would have a hymn 'lined-out' by the preacher who would read two lines of the hymn, which the people then sang, and he would read two more and continue with this until the full hymn had been sung. Variety of metres in Wesleyan hymns often resulted in bright rhythm settings in contrast to the common metre which dominated Church of England congregational music of the day.

The Wesleyan use of elaborate anthem-like tunes is often attributed to the Moravian and German chorale influences which the Methodist movement absorbed in its early days. Singing in these early Methodist congregations was usually unaccompanied with one hymn often sung to many different tunes. In 1780 John Wesley published his definitive version of hymns recommending particular tunes for each hymn. In time the use of chamber orchestras/bands became common in Methodist worship

services. The first organ to be used in a Methodist church in Ireland did not appear until 1869 when the Methodists on St Stephen's Green acquired an instrument.

The current Methodist *Hymns and Psalms* (1983) contains some 156 of Charles Wesley's hymns. The Preface to the earlier 1933 Hymn Book uses the oft-quoted reference that Methodism '*was born in song*'; a banner surely arising from the

seminal influence of Charles Wesley. His brother John, while appearing to have little appreciation of music for its own sake, recognised it as a vehicle for words; his advice to congregations was:

- Sing *all*. See that you join with the congregation as much as you can.
- Sing *lustily*, and with good courage
- Sing *modestly*. Do not bawl.
- Sing *in time*.
- Above all sing *spiritually*. Have an eye to God in every word you sing.

These principles are as relevant to congregational singing today as when first penned.

### Charles and Ireland

Charles Wesley spent two periods in Ireland, September 1747 to March 1748 and August 1748 to October 1748. A hymn book published by him in Dublin in 1749 and entitled '*Collection of Hymns and Sacred Poems*', contained for the first time, the tune '*Irish*' (*God moves in a mysterious way*) with the music editing of this book undertaken by his friend, composer John F. Lampe (1703-1751). A subsequent publication of compositions by Lampe '*Hymns for the Great Festivals*' proved popular in Dublin. The association of G.F.Handel (1685-1759) with Methodism resulted in him composing his series of Methodist Hymn Tunes, '*Gopsal*' perhaps being the best known tune still in regular use today for the Wesleyan hymn '*Rejoice, the Lord is King*'. John Wesley's journal records how impressed he was at hearing '*Messiah*' in Bristol Cathedral in 1758. *Messiah* had of course been premiered in Dublin in 1742. By 1786 a musical society had been formed in Dublin called the '*Sons of Handel*' which undertook performances of Handel's music to raise funds for Methodist charitable work amongst the poor of the city.

### Influence within Anglicanism

By the mid 1750s Charles had gradually withdrawn from the development of Methodism. He was particularly unhappy with John's ordination of preachers to go to America but notwithstanding disagreements remained on good terms with his brother. Charles remained unwaveringly loyal to the Church of England throughout his long and eventful life.

There was some resistance within the Church of Ireland to John Wesley as a 'field preacher' speaking from pulpits in the Dublin diocese but the Dean of St Patrick's, William Cradock, in 1789, while not allowing him preach, nevertheless invited him to assist in the administration of Holy Communion in the Cathedral.

The Church Hymnal (fifth edition) contains 21 hymns by Charles Wesley, some of the better known perhaps being:

- *And can it be that I should gain*
- *Christ, whose glory fills the skies*
- *Jesu, lover of my soul*
- *Hark! the herald-angels sing*
- *Lo! he comes with clouds descending*
- *Love divine, all loves excelling*
- *O for a thousand tongues to sing*
- *O thou who camest from above*
- *Rejoice, the Lord is King!*
- *Soldiers of Christ, arise*
- *Ye servants of God, your master proclaim*

### His musical progeny

Charles Wesley's influence on the development of English church music through his sons Charles the younger (1757-1834) and Samuel (1766-1837) and in turn his grandson Samuel Sebastian Wesley (1810-1876) can not be underestimated.

Before his third birthday, Charles the younger could play on the harpsichord, any tune he heard, adding a correct bass. Samuel, considered more backward, didn't show exceptional music talent until almost age five. By age eight he had presented a draft of an oratorio 'Ruth' to Dr Boyce (1710-1779) who kept it in his library, regarding it as his most precious musical possession. While Charles the younger was a confirmed Handelian, Samuel became a strong advocate of the music of J.S.Bach, which clearly influenced his developing compositional style. The revival of interest in the music of Bach in England can be attributed in a large measure to Samuel Wesley, in collaboration with Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (1809-1847).

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In turn, the work of Samuel Sebastian Wesley who held Cathedral/ parish organists posts in Hereford, Exeter, Leeds, Winchester, and Gloucester was hugely influential in reforming cathedral music standards. *The Musical World* xxiv (1849) 564, said of him 'As a organist, he is, we believe not second to any in the kingdom'. As a composer, his 'Twelve Anthems' published in 1853 were highly regarded and many are in the repertoire of parish choirs throughout these islands to this day. The hymn tune 'Hereford' (*O Thou who camest from above*) is perhaps his most enduring popular achievement.

### **The last words**

So, with the elapse of 300 years since the birth of Charles Wesley it is clear his legacy has touched us in many forms. I'm hard pressed to choose a verse or two to conclude this short review of his impact, particularly on the work of so many church musicians. In leaving the concluding words to Charles I'm torn between the encouragement of:

*From strength to strength go on,  
Wrestle, and fight, and pray  
Tread all the powers of darkness  
down,  
And win the well fought day:  
And the visionary elation of:  
Changed from glory into glory  
Till in heaven we take our place,  
Till we cast our crowns before thee,  
Lost in wonder, love, and praise!*

*Derek Seymour is Organist and Director of Music at Methodist Centenary Church, Leeson Park Dublin.*

### **From 'THE BELL'**

*The Bell* is the magazine of music publishers Stainer & Bell. It often contains a competition. In the last but one issue, readers were asked to compose a limerick starting with 'In London.....'. In the most recent issue, some of the winning entries were published. We hope you like the following two.

*In London, the traffic's a curse,  
But while gridlocked, try scribbling a  
verse,  
If it's limerick-size,  
You could well win a prize,  
From the bottomless S&B purse!*  
Prof. George Pratt

*In London, a young girl called Alice,  
Loved singing the music of Tallis,  
A gifted young Sir  
Sang much better than her,  
But sweet Alice could bear him no  
malice.*

David Macauley

## **INTRODUCING MODERN HYMNS**

*James Pasley*



A couple of years ago a few of us formed a church band called "Wing and a Prayer" and we now play each month at the family service in Lucan. From the start I was keen that we play a mixture of traditional hymns, children's hymns and modern hymns, but what modern hymns should we use? The congregation were accustomed to very traditional hymns – by that I mean that we never strayed outside the Church (of Ireland) Hymnal. I wanted to ensure that whatever the band did we would bring the congregation with us, so it was important that we chose carefully. Everyone in the band felt strongly that we should judge our success in terms of congregational singing.

All my previous experience was as an organist – so I had hoped to find someone who could advise me on what to do with a church band. A list of suggested hymns would have been very useful. That didn't happen, so I had to do my own research. This consisted of some trial and error, lots of CD purchases and faithfully watching *Songs of Praise* for a couple of years. As a result, we now have a number of modern hymns in our repertoire with which I am very happy. If you find yourself in a similar situation, I hope this list of hymns will help.

The new Church Hymnal (are we still allowed to call it the 'new book?') contains a large number of modern hymns. Our experience has been that these are a safe bet. Having worked our way through most of the modern hymns in the book, I have to say that those who selected them for the hymnal obviously understood the typical situation in which they would be used. Among our favourites are: 138 *Soon and very soon*, 195 *Shine, Jesus Shine*; 325 *Be still, for the presence of the Lord*; 606 *As the deer pants for the water*; 112 *There is a Redeemer*; and 219 *From heav'n you came*.

Stepping outside the hymn book, we've found a number of hymns that work really well. We started with a couple of very old hymns for which new tunes have been written. Ian

Hannah has written a new tune for *O the deep, deep love of Jesus* which is a real favourite. The tune is heavily syncopated so it needs a little practice as there is a tendency for people to sing it in a church style – giving it a more regular beat. Lex Loizides's new tune to

William Booth's (of Salvation Army fame) *Send the fire* also works well.

Two new hymns people like are *In Christ Alone* and the Easter hymn *See what a morning* both by Stuart Townend & Keith Getty. I think the fact that these modern tunes are still structured in a similar way to traditional hymns helped us during this transitional phase.

Now that we have a number of modern hymns in our repertoire, I hope to become a little more adventurous and plan to introduce some of the following over the course of the rest of this year: *Light of the world (Here I am to worship)* by Tim Hughes, *King of kings, Majesty* by Jarrod Cooper, *Lord reign in me* by Brenton Brown, *Blessed be your name* by Beth & Matt Redman, *Giver of grace (You are good to me)* – Stuart Townend and *When I was lost (There is a new song)* – Kate & Miles Simmonds.

These are just a few hymns which I think would work well with a congregation used to singing more traditional fare. They are also firm favourites of my own and the sheet music for most is available at [www.kingswaysongs.com](http://www.kingswaysongs.com). You will also find audio files there so that you can listen to a portion of each song before deciding to purchase.

I've written this article partly in order to share our experience, but also because I would love to hear suggestions of hymns from others. We are still feeling our way and I hope this article will prompt others to share their experience of introducing modern hymns as part of Sunday worship.

*James Pasley is one of the organists in the Leixlip & Lucan group of parishes and is a member of the Church Music Committee.*

## F. C. J. SWANTON, F.R.C.O.

Pat Maybury

I first met F. C. J. Swanton. F.R.C.O. or 'Swanee' as he was affectionally known to his friends, when he was Organist of St Philip and St James Church in Booterstown. I was 12 years old and my mother was a leading soprano in the choir. This was the beginning of a long and happy friendship with him and with other choir members.

After Evening Service 'Swanee' would give a recital to his captive audience, first handing a programme to each person and a giving verbal introduction to each piece. It was here that I came to understand composers such as Messiaen, E.J. Moeran, his beloved J.S. Bach and Marcel Dupré, a man who became a friend to him. He was thrilled when invited to stay in Dupré's home and to meet Dupré's wife. This friendship also gave him the opportunity to play the organ in Notre Dame Cathedral. He gave recitals in London but few in Ireland (except of course his own recitals after Evensong). He would never begin before all were silent, which would be immediate when you came under his glare.

Coming back to these Sunday evenings each member of the choir took it in turn to have supper in our homes and what evenings they were! When it was our turn I would not go to bed until he played *God save the King* and *La Marseillaise* simultaneously!

When the organist position in Mariners' Church Dún Laoghaire became vacant in 1951, 'Swanee' grabbed it eagerly. The acoustics there were superb. When I was older I had the great pleasure of singing solo there in *Messiah*, *Creation* etc., with the Trostan Singers, and a few recitals with him at the organ. I am reminded of an occasion when, while accompanying one of the oratorios, he continued reading a book on the organ seat. On another occasion he came direct from the Mozart Festival in Austria, sat at the piano and played music which he had bought there but

but never seen— amazing sight reading.

'Swanee' worked in a bank and was a whiz at mathematics. He could have a serious conversation while totting up figures. I don't think he made any mistakes!

In those days not many people owned cars and it was quite amusing to see him on a tram or bus taking a very small purse from his pocket to get out the money for his fare, especially if it was Standing Room Only! If ever anyone gave him a lift he would not say he was driven, it was always *motoring*.

He lived with his mother and sister on St John's Road, Sandymount, with St John's Church just up the road (another building great for singing in). It was Heaven for him when he played there. He loved the form of service and every year played Midnight Mass at Christmas with my sister singing *Silent Night*. He just loved playing the organ to the point that he had a pedal board built to fit under his piano for practise. It did look odd to see the piano halfway up the drawing-room wall!

When he was away he always used a very mediocre deputy and we used to say he did this on purpose, so that we would be reminded of his genius when he returned!

On one occasion we were to sing *The Heavens are Telling* from *Creation* for a Harvest Service, but the *Irish Times* in its wisdom gave the title as *The Heavens Artillery*!

These are some of my memories of 'Swanee'—a loveable gifted eccentric.

*F. Calvert J. Swanton: born Co Cork, 1893, died Dublin 1974. FRCO 1930. Organist SS Philip & James, Booterstown, mid-1920s-1951; Mariners' Church, Dún Laoghaire, 1951-72; St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Blackrock, 1972-74-1974.*

## CONGREGATIONAL SINGING WITHOUT ACCOMPANIMENT

*The Revd Graham Doyle is rector of the Athlone group of parishes and sometimes finds himself without an organist.*

**How can one get the congregation to sing unaccompanied?** Some time ago I was asked to write a few lines to answer this question and promised to do so using my past experience of leading a small congregation. The story begins in Belgrade the capital of Serbia where I was chaplain for almost seven years. One of the nice things about church life there was being able to attend an Orthodox Liturgy where both priest and choir sang, always unaccompanied. I often pondered why in Anglican churches congregations have a great reluctance to sing without some type of musical accompaniment. Why are we so afraid—because there is no doubt that we can sing? It wasn't long before I had to answer my own thinking, after our church musician moved to another country.

This was at the time of the developing Balkan war and with a small faithful congregation it was important to make sure our worship was happy and sincere. So one Sunday I said to sudden amazement that we were going to sing a hymn—and we did. I have a loud voice, I knew the hymn and felt sure the people did as well; it was simply a matter of giving them confidence. I began by singing the first verse and suggested they join with me on the second verse and, even if they felt uneasy, to hum along. It worked! Each week we sang. I or the leader had



to know the tune and those who could read music had a copy of the setting. Also, those who 'could sing' were spread around the congregation to help the 'non-singers'. As the years went by we built up quite a repertoire. I discovered that this system not only enhanced the feeling that we had a 'real service' but it also improved relationships

within the congregation. When I left that chaplaincy I genuinely missed the unaccompanied singing.

Now I am in Athlone and at times our community are unable to find an organist or musician so, when necessary, I lead unaccompanied again, using familiar tunes and words. To every one's amazement it works when we have to do so. The secret is to have a strong leader's voice who will sing the first verse, and to get people to join in thereafter. One needs to have other singers spread around the congregation. Also, make sure the 'non-singers' feel comfortable. Have a brief practice beforehand and let them hum if they feel unsure, the leader singing with them. It works, try it. If you are facing the crisis of having no accompanist and see that this is affecting people, just do it. They will join in when they know it is this or nothing. There is something in all of us that wants to sing and if we really feel the need to express our happiness to God in song, it is not the notes that count but the singing.

## CHILDREN'S CHOIRS

Ann Keary

I have been an organist and choir director for about eight years but still feel I'm only just learning! The very few times I feel I've got it right certainly helps me to overcome the many times I'm floundering! I hope fellow organists and choir directors can empathise with this.

My experience as a Junior Choir teacher has varied considerably. This is mainly due to fluctuation in numbers. I began with about ten children ranging from 8 to 12 years, most of whom would not have any other musical training. We practised one evening a week for an hour and sang in church at the family service once a month. The rehearsals always begin with loosening and stretching exercises. At that time the choir participated in church only once a month and there was time to teach basic note reading skills. There was also the opportunity to learn the hymns very well and to have a new anthem to sing each month.

After a few years the number increased to about 20. To add further interest, we began to learn a wider range of songs and participated in a few competitions such as the (now discontinued) Feis Maitiú, the Wesley College Feis, the Feis at Kilcoole and at Newpark Comprehensive School. We were encouraged by adjudicators' remarks and the results we received, a few times gaining 2nd place.

During this period also, we invited other choirs to join us for worship. A particularly memorable weekend was when the young choir from Meath Street visited us. For most of these children, to see trees, green fields and plenty of space, was quite an experience. The energy and joy they put into their singing was quite a wonderful experience for us to hear.

However, as with all choirs, a dip in membership was inevitable. External events, such as participation in competitions brought a halt for a while to visiting other choirs. The important thing was to keep going, even with just six or seven members. What helped maintain the interest even in this few was an increase of participation in church to two Sundays in the month.

Gradually, over the past few years, membership has increased again to eighteen children. However, the number of younger children is much higher than before. I have about eight children under the age of 8. Because of this, rather than practising in the evening we now have our rehearsals at 8.30 to 9 a.m. twice a week. This also ensures a much more consistently high level of

attendance than before. The primary school is next to the church and so the children can arrive for rehearsals before school begins. If there was not a school affiliated with our parish church I know it would be far more difficult to maintain any semblance of a junior choir. Even as it is, the interest in singing with boys or older primary school children has been replaced by other interests. This is my reason for encouraging the smaller children if they want to join the choir. Musically and technically I am much less ambitious, but the chance of holding onto these children as they grow is much greater than waiting for older children of the age of 9, 10, 11 to join.

In the earlier years I always auditioned singers before accepting them to the choir. However, I feel enthusiasm to join a choir and an opportunity in life to sing with friends, especially to the glory of God, is something which shouldn't be denied to anyone. Yes, I do have one or two droners but I have found, time and time again, that with a little patience, they will learn to sing in tune with their friends singing around them. I firmly believe in spending a few minutes at each practice at pitching and other vocal exercises. These definitely help to improve the voice and the general quality of the choir. Games which include using the voice can be great fun. Suggestions and aids through books from the RSCM are invaluable.

Again, because the choir is a very young one, I have not yet used the RSCM *Voice for Life* scheme; but I would love to give it a try. Each year, however, I choose a leader, who must be an all round example to the other members, in attendance, respect and responsibility. This leader wears a special medal which was donated to our parish by the family of Lionel Freeman who sang in my adult choir for many years but has now sadly passed away.

My desire is to keep building up this young choir in the hope that I will see quite a healthy number of 10 to 12-year-olds. My dream would be to be able to hold onto these young singers as they move on into secondary school. So far, because of my limited number of free evenings and because of the busy lives of these young people, I have not succeeded. Any suggestions??

*Ann Keary is organist and director of music at Kiltarnan Parish Church, Co. Dublin. She also teaches at the DIT Conservatory of Music & Drama.*

## MUSIC IN OUR SUNDAY CLUB

Jacqueline Mullen

St Thomas's Church, Mount Merrion has a Sunday Club for those aged three years and upwards; the oldest members are in the early years of secondary school. With such an age range, we have four groups, from the little ones who have a Bible story and a craft, to Bible Study for the senior members. Music within that context would seem to be difficult to choose but is, in fact, a great source of enjoyment for all concerned.

Each time we meet (about twice a month during the morning service) we all form a circle for prayer and singing. The normal pattern is to sing a greeting in the form of a Christian song to any who have birthdays around the time of our meeting. Then we will sing something that we know well followed by whatever we are currently learning. This part of Sunday Club is allocated approximately ten minutes.

### Choice of material

With such a wide age range it might appear difficult to find material to suit everyone but that is not the point from which we start. We have two main goals; to nurture a love of worship through singing to God and to teach Scriptural truths through song.

Worship songs/hymns are plentiful so care is needed when making choices. In this regard we have sung songs with plenty of vigorous actions, clapping etc. and ones that are quiet and reflective. Each session (September to June) we have a theme, a recent one being "the fruit of the Spirit". In order to easily teach the attributes of the Holy Spirit we found the refrain of a song which listed them and used that to help the children remember. Similarly we have taught them the books of the Bible to music, not easy with all those long names. This took an entire session to learn. We nearly came unstuck with the Minor Prophets at the end of the Old Testament and what a relief it was to reach the New Testament and be able to sing confidently "Matthew, Mark, Luke and John"!

The other element with such young non-reading children being involved is that we do not use material with excess words. The words must be simple, meaningful, easily explained and clear. We are conscious that these songs will travel home to be sung later to demonstrate what happened that morning at Sunday Club

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## Resources

We have a keyboard and currently have two people who are able to play it. The church bought a Yamaha Clavinova a few years ago to replace a piano. With the Sunday Club in mind, a sophisticated model was chosen with percussion and many different voices. This gives us the ability to record an accompaniment complete with drumbeats, and at the touch of a button the machine seems to play itself thus freeing the operator to join in the singing with the children at the front. Apart from these, and most importantly, we have our voices. Each new item taught is first sung to the children and then taught bit by bit without any accompaniment.

Difficult rhythms are said together to enable everyone to learn them. Sometimes we clap the rhythm together. Above all, it must be fun. We do not ask the children to learn the words of anything as it becomes reminiscent of school. The words are assimilated by repetition of the songs.

## Effects

While the above might seem lovely for the children involved, they have a part to play in the life of our church. Each and every item learned is brought to the body of the church, usually during a family service. The children sing as a group and then the congregation must join them. In this way new material suitable for use in family and other services has found its way into our worship as a congregation. It is an almost foolproof way to teach the adults because they are extremely supportive of everything the Sunday Club do and will make every effort to encourage the children. Actions have to be treated with care as we found that some of the older members were becoming embarrassed by being asked to do actions in church. An option is to ask a child from the middle age group to lead the younger ones in action songs.

We have taught a simple Alleluia, sung a *capella*, and at times have taught something that has

deeply touched the hearts of those present. Songs written for children can be extremely profound. Those pieces which would be too difficult for the assembly to grasp easily are carefully incorporated into the worship so that applause is not encouraged. The children do not form a choir, nor are they performing, they are exercising their ministry as fellow worshippers within the family of the church.

Finally, our theme for the coming session is the mountains of the Old Testament and their significance to the people of God. I suspect that song is as yet unwritten .....

*Jacqueline Mullen is a music teacher and Sunday Club leader at St Thomas's Church. She is a member of the Church Music Committee and is currently pursuing a Worship & Sacred Music certificate course under the auspices of the RSCM and the University of Wales, Bangor.*

## IRISH ORGANIST WINS INTERNATIONAL PRIZE IN HOLLAND

At the 7th International Schnitger Organ Competition (21–30 June 2007) Irish organist Simon Harden won first prize and additionally the Audience prize.

The competition was held in Alkmaar and took place on the world famous organs of the St Lawrence Church. Forth seven candidates from Europe, Japan, USA, China, Korea and Australia applied for the competition. On the basis of CD recordings, twelve candidates were selected by a preliminary jury and invited to play the first live round in Alkmaar. Six candidates were admitted to the second round and three to the final.

The jury consisted of five world renowned organists, who, during the festival, played concerts on the two organs of the St Lawrence church. The first prize (€5000) was awarded to Simon Harden (Ireland), second prize (€2500) to Julia Tamminen (Russia) and third (€1000) to Gabor Soos (Hungary)

A native of Arklow, Simon Harden received his secondary school education at the Kings Hospital, where he was first introduced to the organ. For many years he studied piano at the RIAM along with violin and theory. In 1995 he began organ lessons with Professor Gillen. The same year he enrolled at Trinity College Dublin to study Music and History of Art. During his time at TCD he was Organ Scholar and later conductor of the chapel choir. As well, he studied the organ with Peter Sweeney at the DIT college of Music and Drama. In 2000 he won



*At the Marcussen organ of the church of St Jürgen in Gettorf, North Germany where he is music director*

the Actor's Church Union Award, the highest award for the organ from that institution. On graduating from TCD with an honours degree in 1999 he took a part-time teaching position at the TCD School of Music and worked as a freelance organist in Dublin. Engagements included regular performances with the NSO and various recitals including a lunchtime recital at the NCH. Since 2001, he has been living and working abroad.

He has held several positions in Hamburg and deputised in many churches there. Simon is at present 'Kantor' at the St Jürgen church in Gettorf in North Germany. There he is responsible for most of the musical activities of the town and custodian of the historic Marcussen organ. Simon has a busy concert schedule alongside his studies and has performed in Germany, France, Italy, Holland, Poland Great Britain and Switzerland.



On a street corner of this Victorian-era warehouse district of Vancouver, is the world's first steam clock—built in 1977. Four organ pipes stand at the tops of the four corners, and every fifteen minutes they sound the Westminster Chimes—belching forth steam as they do so. The clock is powered by steam from an underground system of pipes that supplies steam to heat many downtown buildings.

# Notes and News

## PIPEWORKS FESTIVAL DUBLIN 20—29 June 2008

Pipeworks next festival highlights the wealth of Dublin's musical and architectural heritage, bringing Dublin's churches and historic buildings to life with wonderful music and world-class performances. The international organ playing competition will take place in Christ Church Cathedral Dublin. The jury will consist of Thomas Trotter (UK), chairman, Hans Fagius (Sweden), David Higgs (USA), Margareta Hürholz (Germany) and Daniel Roth (France). The Festival programme will be announced at a Friends' Reception in the Deanery of St Patrick's Cathedral on 15 November. Further information is available on the Festival website: <http://www.pipeworksfestival.com>.

## ARCHBISHOP'S CERTIFICATE IN CHURCH MUSIC (ACCM)

### Results of May 2007 examination

The following successfully completed Year 1: Ruth Clinton (Howth), Liam Flynn (Zion), Paul Mullen (St Thomas, Mount Merrion), Rachel O'Byrne (Rathfarnham), Kate O'Neill (Howth), Helen O'Toole (Kiltiernan), Heather Taylor (Lucan & Leixlip), Valerie Twomey (Lucan & Leixlip).

Breffni O'Byrne (Taney) successfully completed Year 3 (final year). For 2007-08, there are four students in year 1 and six students in year 2.

## ORGANISTS ON THE MOVE

**David Bedlow** is now at Dún Laoghaire Methodist Church.

**Maedhbh Daltún** has succeeded Raymond Russell at Castlcknock.

**David Grealy** has succeeded David Connolly as organ scholar at the Pro-Cathedral.

**Malcolm Wisener** has been appointed organist and master of the choristers at St Fin Barre's Cathedral, Cork, in succession to Colin Nichols.

**Fraser Wilson**, ARCO, has been appointed to St Bartholomew's Church, Ballsbridge. He was organ scholar at Christ Church Cathedral during 2007-08 and currently is acting organist and director of music at St Matthews, Carver Street, Sheffield. Pending his taking up the new appointment, Peter Parshall is interim director of music.

## ANNE LEAHY, 1961-2007

It was with deep sorrow that her many friends learned of the death on 5 October of Dr Anne Leahy after struggling with illness for almost twelve months. Dr Leahy was organist and director of music at St Michael's Church, Dún Laoghaire from 1984 to 2006 and taught at the DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama and NUI, Maynooth. She was awarded a PhD by the University of Utrecht in 2002 for musicological studies on the theological and numerological aspects of one of J. S. Bach collections of chorale preludes for organ.

We also record with regret the unexpected death in October of **Isobel Mulligan**, organist, Tullamore. Mrs Mulligan was one of the early students on the Archbishop's Course in Church Music, completing the course in 1999.

## RSCM SUMMER CONFERENCE 2008

The next RSCM International Summer School and Conference takes place in the beautiful, historic city of Canterbury in August 2008. The RSCM will welcome musicians, singers and clergy from around the world to a stimulating week of music, worship, practical activity, discussion and fellowship which will inspire the transformation of worship through music. The programme is full and varied—from uplifting services in the Cathedral, to challenging workshops and seminars given by inspiring leaders, and much more. This is an excellent opportunity for church musicians and worship leaders to find a fresh perspective on music in the church and community.

You may download a brochure by going to [www.rscm.com](http://www.rscm.com) and searching for 'issc 2008'. There also is a link direct to the brochure on our own website

We will be encouraging students on the Archbishop's Certificate Course to attend this conference. Three of our students went to the 2005 conference in York and you may read what they said about it on [www.churchmusicdublin.org/yorkcourse](http://www.churchmusicdublin.org/yorkcourse).

## INTERESTING WEB SITE

<http://www.rwgiangiulio.com/>  
Here's a web site that is worth a look. Raphi Giangliulio describes how he designed and built a five-stop, five-rank, all wood pipe organ for his house. It took about five years to complete. There are lots of pictures and recordings of the organ on the site. Not only that, the story has a happy ending—when an organ builder saw his web site he was offered a job and now, as he says himself, he's "a real organ builder".

## REMUNERATION

Revised guidelines for 2008 on the remuneration of church musicians will be on the website from mid November. Musicians should have no hesitation in downloading this information and handing a copy to their clergy and church treasurers.

## COMPANION TO CHURCH HYMNAL

*Companion to Church Hymnal, Darling & Davison (The Columba Press, 2005)* would make a very acceptable Christmas present for clergy, singers and other musicians. It is full of fascinating information about the words and music of the hymn book.

## VACANCIES FOR MUSICIANS

Are you aware that vacancies for organists, cantors, singers and other musicians may be advertised on our website? If you wish to advertise, please send the information to [info@churchmusicdublin.org](mailto:info@churchmusicdublin.org).

## NEW MUSIC RESOURCES FOR THE PSALMS

Since the publication of the Book of Common Prayer 2004, the Liturgical Advisory Committee has been working on a number of projects which will offer supplementary resources for its use in parish worship. One such project has been to provide musical settings for the lectionary psalms. The project is being led by two LAC members, Alison Cadden and Judy Martin, and their work is nearing completion. The Hon. Secretary of the LAC, the Revd Gerald Field, tells us that the completed work will provide both tracks of the Sunday lectionary psalms across the three year cycle, with musical settings which will allow for their use responsorially, in plainsong, in anglican chant, or in a simple musical setting for situations where there is no choir.

## ORGANIST NEEDED

The church of Our Lady Help of Christians, Navan Road, Dublin 7 is looking for an organist and a choir director (two people). Details can be got from the parish priest Fr Cassidy at 838 0265.

## BUXTEHUDE RECITALS

This series of organ concerts in the chapel of TCD, organised by Pipeworks Festival to celebrate the 300th anniversary of Buxtehude's birth finishes on 22 November, 7 p.m. on Thursdays 8, 15 & 22 November. Admission €15.

## CONGRATULATIONS

We congratulate **Gerard Gillen** on being conferred with the degree of Doctor of Philosophy *honoris causa* by the Pontifical University of St Patrick's College, Maynooth. Dr Gillen retired as Professor and Head of Music at NUI-Maynooth on 30 September.