Collaborative working

The Church Music Committee is conscious that many musicians, working faithfully week by week, can feel somewhat isolated. How much worse for them if they sometimes feel that their effort is irrelevant. But have consideration for the busy Rector, who may avoid meeting with the organist regularly due to unresolved difficulties. We can all point the finger at others, so perhaps it is time we organists reflected on how the clergy (to whom we report) perceive us. This issue of Soundboard deals with a subject that many church musicians and clergy face probably at least once in their experience – the relationship between people with different roles, attempting to collaborate in an area on which both may have very distinct and strongly held views – namely, the function of music in the worship of Almighty God in the context of the local church family. We all hope that as Christians we will agree and that everything will go swimmingly, at times forgetting that our preferences and choices are to a large extent determined by upbringing, cultural differences, natural preferences and experiences of various types and genres of music. Andrew Maries deals with this subject in a sensitive and sensible manner.

Derek Verso discusses the potential conflict and unhappiness that may occur when church musicians are trained to a high standard of musicianship, coupled with some understanding of theology and liturgy, and then such knowledge is simply ignored. We are back to relationships again – the need to cultivate mutual respect and to make time (away from the Sunday experience) to talk, discuss ideas and get to know what motivates each other.

Short reports on another successful Living Worship course are included. Other courses due to take place this year are also noted. We encourage you to attend at least one of these. As a response to paying reasonable fees to organists, parishes that implement the recommended diocesan remuneration arrangements are entitled to expect their musicians to engage in regular in-service training. This is one of the stated recommendations and is no more than any modern employer requires. The enjoyment of meeting other like-minded people and sharing ideas is tremendous, and in addition to the learning experience.

Our latest venture is to include new resources on our website – do take a look! We have uploaded simple accompaniments for some hymns, and hope to continue to do so. These are not only helpful to those who find arrangements in Church Hymnal a bit tricky but may also be of use when persuading young pianists to become involved in church music. They are there to be used and it is no disgrace to play a simple accompaniment accurately and rhythmically rather than to struggle with something more challenging.

As a taster and with Trinity Sunday in mind (lots of time to practise then!) we offer on page 7 a simplified version of Nicaea to which we sing ‘Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God almighty’.

Finally, we remind everyone that the closing date for those wishing to join the three-year Archbishop’s Certificate in Church Music course is 31 May. For over 20 years the diocese has subsidised this useful training, which is recognised in Ireland and beyond as a model of its kind.

So, please enjoy what we believe to be another great issue: we hope that you will find it useful. We always welcome feedback. If you wish to write a letter to Soundboard but are shy about adding your name, please feel free to use a pseudonym - but do send us your correct contact details so that we may verify the origin of the letter.
Living Worship 2012

The annual Living Worship course took place, as usual, on four Saturday mornings during January and February. While primarily intended for students on the three-year Archbishop’s Certificate course, Living Worship has developed a wide appeal since it started in 2006. 25-30 people attended sessions on Why Christians Worship? (Dean Tom Gordon), Church music in a changing world (Prof John Harper), the Liturgical Advisory Committee (Canon Gerald Field) and Making music work (Jonathan Rea).

The value of this training is clear from the following extracts from student reports:

The first part of the workshop led by Dean Tom Gordon revolved around the reasons why Christians worship. Some of the ideas put forward by those present were: God’s command to assemble and worship, a way in which to express faith, a place to pray, and a method of thanksgiving and rejoicing. While all these reasons broadly apply to most world faiths; there are two messages that particularly relate to our Christian faith: Revelation and Response. The revelation, or the belief in God’s saving actions and his purposeful love, and our faithful response to this, form the core reason why we worship. The second part of this workshop was ‘Where does church music fit into worship?’ and a couple of simple yet effective ideas were brought forward regarding this. We needn’t sing the same hymns week after week in a church service but what we do use should always have a clear meaning that is easy to recognise. Care must always be taken that the music and the performance aspect do not overpower the real message of the service.

The final part of the workshop was based around planning the music for the Eucharist. The organist / music director needs to give careful consideration to the style and appropriateness of the music. Hymns should be chosen to reflect the appointed Scripture readings for the day and the overall structure of the Eucharist needs to be kept in mind. Stephanie Maxwell, (Year 1), Clontarf parish

Dean Gordon focused on the theological background and theories around our worship and how knowledge of these matters is important for church musicians. The church musician must understand why we worship and the component parts that make up Christian worship, so as to help the congregation engage with what is going on. A key word was anamnesis, which is a special form of remembering, involving re-entering events that are central to Christian belief, such as Creation, the Covenants, the life of Jesus. Music can facilitate this process. Tom also highlighted that hymns can be intrusive and that they should not overpower the messages in the service. He emphasised the importance of participation not only in the hymns but in the psalms and that the purpose of choirs is to augment and encourage participation, not exclusion. While choirs and microphones may aid inclusion, they can also have the opposite effect and so should be used with care. Helen Dawson, (Year 3), All Saints’, Grangegorman

Professor John Harper discussed with us the difference between Liturgical Music, Church Music and Sacred Music. Liturgical Music is music that corresponds with the liturgy. For example, a psalm or a hymn the text of which was derived from liturgical texts. Church music is more difficult to define—it is music that contributes to the overall Church in the community, such as an organ voluntary, which serves a purpose in the overall worship. Sacred Music is not specifically related to the liturgy but is sacred or religious in nature or purpose. Examples may be drawn from anthems which praise God. Dr Harper suggested that a piece’s function can change over time. His engaging and thought-provoking lecture provided a good insight into the innovations taking place in the Church. Joseph Bradley (Year 1), Newcastle parish

Tom Gordon said that the main purpose of coming together on a Sunday was to worship God. Worship is defined as expressing feelings of profound adoration for God. In simple terms this is about recognising who God is, what He is like and how that affects the individual and/or group. The Scriptures provide us with an insight into God’s character, His involvement with His people from Old Testament times right up to His coming among His people through Jesus as set out in the Gospels. A Sunday morning service is about combining various elements of Worship, such as Scripture, Music, Prayers and Sermons into a meaningful experience for the congregation. Matthew Breen (Year 1), Taney parish

continued on page 4
'Behold how good and pleasant...’ (Psalm 113)

ANDREW MARIES suggests ways to foster good relationships between clergy and musicians

Music has such an influence on so many important areas of church life: the freshness and quality of corporate worship; spiritual integrity and harmonious relationships; the distinctive roles of lay and ordained; control and delegation; teamwork; expressing the heart of a community, and so on. In fact one could take the music ministry as a microcosm of a church’s life.

For this potential to be realised however, the relationship between clergy and musicians is crucial. Yet it’s one that may often go through trying and testing times. In my forty years as a full-time church musician I have experienced wonderful and inspiring periods of collaboration and fulfilment but there also have been times of intense trauma and frustration! Every experience has value and the difficult times in particular have brought me greater self-knowledge, which has helped me maintain a hopeful and positive attitude. In an environment of such change and challenge, mutual understanding is especially needed. With the help of a little role-play, let’s look at some of the expectations that we might have of one another, and how we could develop a greater understanding of our distinct yet complimentary roles.

A CLERGY VIEW

PULLING TOGETHER: As we develop our vision for worship, I need to know that you are on board and that the music is serving and encouraging it. Sometimes I hear of situations where musicians and clergy have pulled in different directions and it’s become a major impediment to growth.

LOYALTY: Sometimes as leader, I may need to make decisions for the good of the church with which others may have difficulty. I would appreciate your loyalty and respect as we share in leadership. Musicians can be a formidable force in the life of a church.

TEACHABILITY: I want to be able to speak into your ministry – to make suggestions about the way things are done so that it matches the whole thrust of our worship. I’d like to be able to suggest certain hymns and songs without feeling that you disdain my comments. I’m not particularly musical but my opinions deserve a hearing.

A SERVANT SPIRIT is an important qualification for ministry. I wish to serve and encourage you as you seek to use your musical gifts for the benefit of the Body of Christ, its worship and its mission.

MUSICAL BREADTH: Our church represents many backgrounds and age-groups, so there is a need for musical diversity. While I know and respect that you value certain styles of music above others, please don’t dismiss preferences which differ from your own. If you rubbish the style, you can rubbish the person too!

KEEPING UP TO DATE: I expect you to keep abreast of the wider worship scene, and to ensure that the congregation is introduced to a range of quality music. I also expect that you will attend appropriate in-service training from time to time. The parish will help with the cost. I particularly look to you to help me to develop our own distinct music repertoire that reflects our particular needs and priorities.

BEING A MODEL: I acknowledge the tremendous gift and potential of music in worship. You and the whole music ministry can become a model and inspiration to the congregation – an embodiment of worship, a sample of what the Body of Christ can be.

A MUSICIAN’S VIEW

VISION: I need you, as leader, to hold open the wider vision for me in case I get things out of perspective. Music is a ‘service’ industry and if both of us can be clear about the overall vision, direction and emphasis of our church, then we can develop music and worship styles which reflect and serve it.

MUSIC CAN’T DO EVERYTHING: It sometimes feels as if people expect the music to glue everything together. Music does not equal worship and can only reflect the response of the people, never substitute for it. Please don’t leave me with the entire responsibility of making worship ‘happen’ within the congregation.

EARNING MY RESPECT: I will submit to your leadership but would rather do it out of respect than out of obligation. You will earn my respect by admitting that you don’t have all the answers and, particularly, by your willingness to acknowledge mistakes. When I summon up the courage to discuss with you an issue about which I feel deeply, I hope that you won’t be dismissive and defensive. I want us to share mutual trust.

FACILITATING: Many of us within the church have very specific gifts. As the overall leader I look to you for the ability to ‘facilitate’ them and allow ministries to flourish for the good of the whole. We don’t expect you to be gifted in every direction, but to provide continuity and oversight, a covering under which we may operate. After all, if you’re holding up the umbrella, you’ll only have one hand free!

FEEDBACK: I expect support and feedback. I know you are busy but the leader’s role is ‘to equip the saints for the work of ministry’. Please don’t be so preoccupied that you haven’t time or energy to nurture and encourage those you have appointed to various ministries within the church.

RESPECTING MY CONTRIBUTION: Please allow me into the decision-making process. I have ideas to offer – I’m a creative person, after all. I’m also a mature individual with responsibilities and talents in my secular work. When I operate within church life, I don’t expect to be patronised, bossed, or treated as a novice. If you persist in doing this, I may gradually withdraw my expertise – and possibly drift out of the church altogether.

Andrew Maries works through Keynote Trust to encourage and stimulate the best practice of music and worship at every level. Initially, he was music director of the pioneering church of St Michael-le-Belfrey, York in the ‘70s and ‘80s but moved to SW England in the 1990s when the Trust was set up, and where he is also part-time Consultant for Liturgy and Music in Exeter Diocese and chairman of RSCM Devon. At one point he was a regular conductor for BBC Songs of Praise.
Singing Psalms is an important tradition of Psalm singing is an important tradition of the Anglican churches but some are difficult to sing. Singing Psalms is a collection of responsorial psalms set to simple chant. This is easier than Anglican chant and therefore encourages congregational singing. The three volumes reflect the three-year cycle of the lectionary. This method of singing psalms is an alternative to Anglican chant, not a replacement. Singing Psalms is very versatile. The psalms can be sung in unison, four parts, by choir and by congregations. Beth Burns (Year 2), Geashill parish

**SORTING THE SUMMER SCHOOLS**

**PIPEWORKS SUMMER SCHOOL IN CROSSHAVEN**
The first Pipeworks Summer School will take place in Holy Trinity Church, Crosshaven, Co Cork from 29 June to 1 July. Eminent German organist and scholar Harald Vogel (Hochschule für Künste, Bremen) will make his first visit to Ireland on this occasion. Prof Vogel will give two masterclasses plus the keynote address discussing the instruments and communities of Ostfriesland at a symposium which will explore the idea of a native organ tradition in Ireland. He will also give an organ recital. Other speakers will include Paul McKeever, Mark Duley, David Forde, Trevor Crowe, Henk van Eeken and Kate Manning. Details of the symposium will be posted on the Pipeworks website. [www.pipeworksfestival.com](http://www.pipeworksfestival.com)

**GLENSTAL ABBEY ORGAN SUMMER SCHOOL**
The Glenstal Abbey Organ Summer School (left), which runs from 7 to 9 August, will consist of teaching workshops by the renowned organists Douglas Hollick and Ansgar Wallenhorst. [www.glenstal.org](http://www.glenstal.org) & [cyprian@glenstal.org](mailto:cyprian@glenstal.org) and see page 6

**CHARLES WOOD SUMMER SCHOOL**
This year’s Charles Wood Summer School for singers, organists and choir directors will take place in all the main churches in Armagh from 19 to 26 August. A rich and varied programme will feature lunchtime and evening concerts, services, and teaching and workshop sessions. David Hill, Chief Conductor of the BBC Singers, will direct the Charles Wood Singers, the forty-strong festival choir, assisted by Daniel Hyde, Director of Music at Magdalen College, Oxford. The festival’s Boys’ Choir will be directed by Nigel McClintock, assisted by Ian Keatley. Internationally famous specialist voice coach Paul Farrington will conduct workshops and give individual tuition. [www.charleswoodsummerschool.org](http://www.charleswoodsummerschool.org)

**AOIC INTERNATIONAL CHORAL CONDUCTING SUMMER SCHOOL 2012**
The Association of Irish Choirs (AOIC), under the guidance of Bernie Sherlock, Director of Educational Programmes (right), runs a year-round programme of courses, initiatives and events designed to stimulate choral activity, increase the skills of choral conductors and singers and raise the profile of choral music in Ireland. Conductors, singers and musicians wishing to develop their skills can choose from a number of training and professional development opportunities such as courses, masterclasses and mentoring positions offered by AOIC. Members of AOIC avail of reduced rates for all courses.

The 33rd Annual International Choral Conducting Summer School for conductors, teachers, music students and choral enthusiasts will be held in the University of Limerick from 12 to 17 August 2012. The only one of its kind in Ireland, this six-day intensive course offers a wealth of expertise from international and Irish tutors, all of whom are active conductors and experienced teachers of conducting. [www.aolic.ie](http://www.aolic.ie)

**ICMA SUMMER SCHOOL 2012**
This year’s ICMA residential Summer School will be held at St Patrick’s College, Maynooth from 4th to 6th July. Musicians from Ireland and beyond will have the opportunity to sing and pray together, learning the best music of past and present. Tutorials and group sessions will include training for cantors and organists, choir training and conducting, liturgical composition and Irish in the liturgy. The Guest Director will be Marty Haugen, the liturgical composer, workshop presenter, performing and recording artist and author from Eagan, Minnesota. He has over 35 recordings and more than 400 separate printed editions available through GIA Publications. He has several published mass settings for Roman Catholic communities, including the Mass of Creation, and several liturgical settings for Lutheran congregations. [www.irishchurchmusicassociation.com](http://www.irishchurchmusicassociation.com); contact the Registrar, Tomás Kenny, 086 368 3778 tomaskenny1@eircom.net

**Living Worship—continued from page 2**

Canon Gerald Field, Secretary of the Liturgical Advisory Committee, explained the role of the LAC and its impact on music in church. I found the session very interesting and informative. The LAC plays a large role in developing and sourcing liturgical resources to support those involved in leading and participating in the worship of God within the Church of Ireland. Inga Hutchinson (Year 2), Geashill parish

Paul Barlow and David McConnell
Training is all good— or is it?

DEREK VERSO asks whether some of the training given to church music students is fully appreciated in the parishes

In 1990 the Dublin and Glendalough Diocesan Council set up a church music committee. This was in response to the "Silent Worship?" report and a growing concern about the difficulty in filling organist posts in parish churches. From the outset the Diocesan Church Music Committee realised that the absence of formal training for church musicians (quite different to tuition in organ playing) was part of the problem and very soon the three-year course leading to the Archbishop of Dublin’s Certificate in Church Music came into being. And the rest is history. Remarkably the committee has stuck rigidly to its original mandate and continues to train people as church musicians, principally for the Church of Ireland.

While the nuts and bolts of learning organ-playing skills was motoring along nicely year after year, and the basics of choir training were covered, it became apparent that there was a considerable gap in knowledge about the other important aspects of a church musician’s position. Certainly there was nothing available in Ireland that covered the large areas of liturgy, service planning and selection of music, administration and what might be described as the ministry of church music.

In 2006 the annual Living Worship sessions were established in an attempt to fill this need and they too have been remarkably successful. Living Worship is a core part of the Archbishop’s Certificate and aims to show how the role of the church musician and music supports, complements and interacts with liturgy and theology. The church music students (up to 12 persons over the three-year cycle) attend these sessions as a module of the course. However, the sessions are open to anyone interested, and from 20 to 35 people attend each year. The Diocesan Church Music Committee very wisely has a policy of inviting only leading practitioners in their field to direct the sessions, so now, eight years later, the list of speakers reads like a who’s who of international church music and liturgy.

Perhaps if we were to summarise the eight years of Living Worship, the core message might be described as ‘to examine critically what we do each week in worship and see if it’s the best we can do and the most appropriate for our particular situation’.

This is great. Wonderful! It all sounds marvellous! But what happens if nobody else fancies this and nobody else in your church wishes to hear this new gospel? Chief amongst this group may well be your boss – the rector! What happens if he or she is quite happy with the way worship is run, thank you very much; and, as incumbent of the parish, knows that the management of worship is (under canon law) their sole responsibility and one of the areas of parish life into which neither the select vestry nor any one else has a right to poke their nose? What happens if the only thing the sponsoring church requires of you, the church musician, is to play the three hymns selected each week, probably by the rector? What if clergy and other key persons in your parish are not particularly ready for open discussion and lateral thinking on issues relating to music in worship, so compellingly put forward in training subsidised by the diocese? Perhaps change means decay in your church, as in the words of the hymnwriter ‘change and decay in all around I see’, or, better not upset the few people we have so don’t make any changes: ‘No change my heart shall fear, for nothing changes here’.

Ideally - and this is the message coming very clearly and consistently from the Living Worship sessions - the organisation of parish worship should be a team experience – from its initial planning through to the actual service itself - with important decisions being made jointly, by a group led by the rector. This way of working requires a commitment and willingness by all involved to discuss their individual roles in a non-threatening environment and to regard liturgy and the worship it supports as a living and growing experience that changes and adapts as our lives change and adapt.

Here lie issues that need to be addressed so that, on the one hand we avoid training a succession of church musicians who will become frustrated in their work, unable to reach their potential; and on the other hand, we actively encourage clergy to have confidence to try new ideas and to see the value of reaching a shared vision with their musicians.

Singing the liturgy
Reprinted from Zion Matters, the magazine of Zion Church, Rathgar

Most churchgoers in our tradition probably regard hymns as the most important aspect of singing in church. The psalms, too. There is a renewed emphasis in the Church of Ireland on the value of the psalms in worship and I am very pleased that in Zion Church we now sing a psalm at almost every Sunday morning service. But our worship also reflects a strong liturgical tradition and a recent report from the Dublin and Glendalough Diocesan Church Music Committee recommends that clergy and organists should actively encourage all worshippers to sing certain sections of the Liturgy. Three sections, in particular.

The first is the Acclamation before the Gospel reading – this is referred to on page 204 of the Book of Common Prayer. An Acclamation, traditionally the Alleluia (except during Lent) may be sung as we stand to greet the proclamation of the Gospel. Next there is Holy, holy, holy Lord – the Ter-Sanctus – one of the earliest Christian hymns, with its powerful word-picture, resonant of the biblical books of Isaiah and Revelation. Finally the Great Amen, which concludes the Eucharistic Prayer. Even if said, this Amen should always be proclaimed firmly by everyone present – affirming that we all celebrate this central act of worship.

In Zion, for several years the choir has sung these three short items to very simple melodies that are used in many other churches in Ireland. They add significance to key parts of the liturgy and I encourage everyone in church to join in singing them, as well as the hymns and psalms. In doing so, you will add to the sense of community and active participation that is an essential feature of all celebrations of the Eucharist, whether by three or four people on a Wednesday morning or by a packed church at a Confirmation Service.

David McConnell, organist
Glenstal Abbey organ workshops

Following his highly successful Workshops on organ improvisation over the last three years, Glenstal will once again welcome Ansgar Wallenhorst. He studied improvisation with Günther Kaunzinger, Thierry Escaich, Olivier Latry and Jean Guillou. A winner in the 3ème Concours d’orgue de la ville de Paris and laureate of the Grand Prix of the 43rd International Improvisation Competition in Haarlem, the Netherlands in 2000, he has toured extensively in Europe, the United States and Australia. For more details, see www.ansgar-wallenhorst.de

His Workshop will be held from 7th to 9th August, with group sessions in the mornings, and individual lessons in the afternoons. Teaching will include arabesque techniques, the harmonic languages of Mendelssohn, Tournemire, Duruflé and Cochereau, and contrapuntal styles including fugue. Evening sessions will include short recitals and explorations of Gregorian chant from an improviser’s perspective.

Immediately following this, from 10th to 12th August, Douglas Hollick will be returning again after two highly successful previous Workshops. He studied with Peter Hurford, Marie-Claire Alain and Gustav Leonhardt and teaches at Birmingham Conservatoire. In recent years his main area of interest has been North German 17th century organ music. His CD, recorded in Buxtehude’s church of St Mariae at Helsingor in Denmark: Buxtehude, Master and Pupil (2003) enjoyed great critical acclaim. See www.rvrcd.co.uk for his recordings. He has published articles on performance practice, especially in Choir and Organ. His Workshop will involve individual lessons in a group context, and private lessons will also be available. He will give a recital, with works from 17th-century Hamburg illustrating something of the music J S Bach would have experienced during his visits to that city.

For further information please e-mail events@glenstal.org

Titanic commemorated in Belfast observed by CLARE STEVENS

As this year’s centenary commemorations of the sinking of the Titanic reached their apotheosis over the anniversary night of 14-15 April, the mood of many events seemed to be celebratory, rather than elegiac. But in Belfast’s two cathedrals the reality of a disaster that claimed 1500 lives was powerfully acknowledged by the performances of Requiem for the Lost Souls of the Titanic by Philip Hammond (pictured right), a composer who has spent his entire life in the shadow of the shipyard that built Titanic.

The first performance, in St Anne’s Cathedral, was theatrical in its presentation, with the audience facing one another down the length of the nave like passengers in a ship, flanked by the Belfast Philharmonic Choir at the west end, amateur chamber choir Cappella Caeciliana and members of Downshire Brass Band in the crossing, and the trebles of St Peter’s Schola Cantorum in the choirstalls. Sections from the Latin Mass were given primarily to these forces (with three conductors) in varying combinations that exploited their distinctive timbres and the antiphonal possibilities of the space. Out of an attenuated choral ‘Dies irae’ came an exquisite and wonderfully original ‘Pie Jesu’, entrusted to Belfast-born mezzo-soprano Jacqueline Horner-Kwiatek, a member of the internationally known vocal quartet Anonymous 4. An equally magical moment was the entrance of chamber choir Anúna, in candle-bearing procession, to encircle the audience in the centre of the nave and sing the spellbinding ‘Sanctus’.

Interpolated between the sections of the Mass were five short meditations by novelist Glenn Patterson, inspired by the lives of passengers on the Titanic, read by the author from the pulpit and paired with five musical meditations by the Fidelio Trio, representing the musicians who so famously went down with the ship. Beginning in near darkness at 9pm, the performance culminated in a procession led by a solo piper to the Titanic Memorial at Belfast City Hall, where the Dean of St Anne’s, the Very Reverend John Mann, led a tribute to the victims of the disaster – who in Philip Hammond’s view include the survivors, whose lives were changed for ever by their horrific experience.

Next morning the Requiem was performed liturgically in St Peter’s Cathedral, without the meditations but otherwise with the same forces. Here it was apparent that this is a work that transcends the specific associations of the Titanic commemoration. It is dedicated to the memory of two more recently departed souls: the elderly Jewish-American mother of the composer’s best friend, referenced in the setting towards the end of a Hebrew prayer for the dead; and the young daughter of one of his former colleagues at Arts Council Northern Ireland. But it is a requiem for anyone and everyone – a genuinely original and deeply moving work which deserves an honoured place in the canon.

Gospel Rising festival

The third annual Gospel Rising music festival, bringing together music enthusiasts and gospel choirs from around Ireland for workshops and gigs, took place this year in Bray, Co. Wicklow from 11 to 13 May. The workshops were led by gospel instructors from Ireland, the UK and the USA. The weekend showcased the rise and diversity of Ireland gospel choir music. A highlight was the open-air gig on Saturday 12 May on the bandstand at Bray seafront. www.gospelrising.com

Hymnathon

Sandford Parish Church, Ranelagh will host a Hymnathon in aid of essential repairs to the Rectory on Saturday 9 June. Please check sandford.dublin.anglican.org for more details in due course. Any organists or choirs who might be interested in taking part please contact David O’Shea on 087 274 0352, doshea3@gmail.com

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Next morning the Requiem was performed liturgically in St Peter’s Cathedral, without the meditations but otherwise with the same forces. Here it was apparent that this is a work that transcends the specific associations of the Titanic commemoration. It is dedicated to the memory of two more recently departed souls: the elderly Jewish-American mother of the composer’s best friend, referenced in the setting towards the end of a Hebrew prayer for the dead; and the young daughter of one of his former colleagues at Arts Council Northern Ireland. But it is a requiem for anyone and everyone – a genuinely original and deeply moving work which deserves an honoured place in the canon.
Simplified hymn accompaniments

In 1985, the Joint Committee for Church Music (which operated from 1976 to 1990) published *75 well-known hymn tunes*, arranged simply and set in lower keys for congregational singing, under the general musical editorship of Dr Edgar (Billy) Boucher. Regrettably, this publication did not circulate widely, as many copies were destroyed in a flooding incident. A number of these arrangements have recently been uploaded to the Church Music Dublin website and more will follow. Below is the simplified accompaniment for *Nicaea* by the Revd J.B. Dykes, a tune inextricably linked to Bishop Reginald Heber’s inspiring and awesome words in praise of the Holy Trinity. The hymn was included in the first (1861) edition of *Hymn Ancient and Modern* and has remained a quintessence in most hymn books ever since. While particularly appropriate for Trinity Sunday (3 June this year) it may be used with great effect as the gathering hymn at any Sunday morning liturgy. Jacqueline Mullen has supplied the following note:

Bishop Reginald Heber’s hymn commences with the words of the Trisagion – Holy, Holy, Holy – and Dykes’ melody starts with the notes of the tonic triad. The tonic triad demonstrates beautifully the idea of the Trinity, three notes, each independent, but in harmony becoming one. Joyce Irwin points out that as ‘the modal system was replaced by the major/minor system, music theorists found theological significance in the emphasis on triads and harmony. The analogy of a musical triad and the divine Trinity was too obvious to be ignored, and various theoreticians and theologians reinforced their positions by making this connection’. So, not only do we affirm our belief in the Trinity by singing the words, we experience a Trinitarian reference in the tune. Nicaea is the eponymous name of the town where in 325 AD, 300 bishops at the council of Nicaea, agreed the Nicene Creed, affirming that Christ is both divine and human and refuted the Arian heresy, which denies the divinity of Christ.


Holy Rosary Church Choir, Greystones, celebrated its 30th anniversary on Saturday 28 April, with a special Mass, followed by a reception. The music included items by Haydn (*Missa Brevis Sancti Ioannis de Deo*), Schubert (*Laudate Dominum*), Neidermeyer (*Ave Maria*), Lecot (*Lourdes Mass*), and Joncas (*Agnus Dei*), and Irish composers Fintan O’Carroll (*Praise the Lord*), and Shaun Davey (*The Deer’s Cry*), plus parts of Bernard Sexton’s recently commissioned *Mass of Renewal*. Soloists were Niamh O’Brien and John Magee with Colm Byrne (trumpet) and Donard McGee (organ). The choir’s director is Derek Verso (*first left in photo*), who also is organist and choir director at St Paul’s Church, Glenageary.

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**Holy Rosary Church Choir, Greystones, celebrates its 30th anniversary.**

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**Holy, holy, holy! Lord God almighty**

*Nicaea* 11 12 12 10

Melody: John Bacchus Dykes (1823-76)
Notes from the North

This column may well become a regular, keeping you up to date with some of the church music and organic goings-on in “de norte”.

One of our longest-running annual events is still running, the Charles Wood Summer School in Armagh. Many of you will have heard of this week-long festival held at the end of August, with its slant on singing, organ playing and church music generally.

Running alongside but not officially part of the CWSS is the Northern Ireland International Organ Competition. Set up in only a few months last year by BBC producer Richard Yarr, it garnered great support from quite far afield, despite the relatively small prize fund. This year, the prize fund is larger and the entries are flooding in. Chair of the jury is Kimberley Marshall. Further details may be found at www.niioc.com and on Facebook.

The 2013 European City of Culture Derry/Londonderry continues to be the primary location for organ concerts in the north. Since the installation of the new four manual Wells-Kennedy organ, St Columb’s Cathedral (pictured right) runs regular recitals throughout the year, and has hosted several big names, including Naji Hakim, Martin Neary and David Briggs. This year’s summer visitors include Kevin Bowyer and Charles Harrison.

St Anne’s Cathedral in Belfast has recently appointed David Stevens to the post of Master of the Choristers and we all look forward to a resurgence of music-making there, along with a reawakening of interest in its Harrison organ.

The Ulster Society of Organists and Choirmasters is very active, organising events every month except July, August and December. One of these is always a trip covering the May public holiday weekend, and recently 28 members headed off to Frankfurt to examine loads of exciting organs by Klais, Rieger, Sauer, Ahrend, Kuhn and Oberlinger to name a few. New members are always welcome and indeed there are quite a few members “down south”. Why not have a look at their website: www.usoc.org.uk

‘Doubleopenwood’

Future Strategy

Recently the Church Music Committee considered future policy and strategy. Priorities are:
- to set up a foundation course in organ-playing, catering to those who already play the piano and occasionally play the organ in church
- to extend the mentoring scheme to students in Years 2 and 3 of the ACCM
- to make greater use of web-based distance-learning technology, such as vodcasts
- to ask clergy to be more proactive in encouraging their musicians to engage in regular in-service training.

Tristan Clarke, who completed the Archbishop’s Certificate course in 2011, has accepted an invitation to join the Committee. Tristan teaches at St Columba’s College, Rathfarnham. Others on the committee are Archdeacon Ricky Rountree, Jacqueline Mullen, Maedhbh Abayawickrema, Judy Cameron, Ann Keary, David McConnell, Donald Maxwell, James Pasley, Derek Verso and Fraser Wilson.

Our website www.churchmusicdublin.org needs a makeover. If you have web development skills and would be willing to help, please contact David McConnell on 087 668 3998.

A renewal reminder for existing Soundboard subscribers is enclosed with this issue. If you are not an annual subscriber, please consider becoming one. Only €15 or £13. There is a form on page 12.

The deputy organist list is on the website (and also in the diocesan directory). Do let us know if your contact details change or if you wish your name to be added / removed.

Trinity College Chapel Choir at 250

On 15 April, the chapel choir of Trinity College Dublin (pictured above) celebrated its 250th anniversary with a Sung Eucharist, broadcast live on Lyric FM. Former Dean of Residence Bishop Michael Burrows preached. At a reception afterwards, director of chapel music Kerry Houston thanked all who had travelled long distances to be present and also the conductor, Margaret Bridge and organ scholar, Kevin O’Sullivan. Provost Peter Prendergast observed that, while proud of its tradition and respectful of the past, the choir is evolving, dynamic and contemporary, as evidenced by the Kyrie sung at the Eucharist, composed by a recently graduated organ scholar, George Jackson.
FESTIVAL SERVICE FOR PENTECOST
RSCM Northern Ireland will hold a Pentecost themed Festival service on Saturday 26 May in St John’s Church, Malone, Belfast. The choir, directed by David Stevens, will meet to rehearse at 2pm and the service will take place at 4.30pm. Refreshments will be served after the service. All are welcome to attend. For further details, please contact Emma Gibbins: emma.gibbins@rscmirland.com

RSCM AWARDS
We are delighted to announce that Deirdre Macklin (St Macartan’s Cathedral, Monaghan—pictured right) has successfully completed her RSCM Church Music Skills Award. Deirdre is the first person in Ireland to complete the award and will be presented with her certificate at the RSCM Ireland Awards Service later this year. Details of the Church Music Skills course are available here: www.rscm.com/education/skills.php

VOICE FOR LIFE
An excellent number of candidates have entered for the May sitting of the Voice for Life exams at Bronze and Silver level. Examinations will be held in May in Dublin and Belfast and again later in the year. It is hoped to have some candidates for the Gold level later this year, examinations which will take place in Dublin (these are normally held in the UK). If you are interested in entering candidates for the Voice for Life examinations, please contact awards@rscmirland.com or check the website at rscmirland.com/voiceforlife/

FUTURE EVENTS
All events relating to both the ROI and NI committees are available at the website rscmirland.com/events

RSCM 2013 SUMMER SCHOOL
Those from Ireland who went to the RSCM Summer Schools in York (2008) or Canterbury (2011), or of course the 2009 event here in Dublin (pictured right; credit Richard Bloomfield), will be interested to learn that the next conference will be held from 12 to 18 August 2013, again in York. This will be a great opportunity to recharge the batteries in a truly re-creational context!

SUNG WORSHIP IN SCHOOLS
The Church of England’s Liturgical Commission, working with the National Society and the RSCM, has launched a new ‘Worship Workshop’ website (www.worshipworkshop.org.uk), designed ‘to empower and enrich worship in our schools’. Along with prayers and other liturgical texts, there is a song-bank that allows users to download the words and music of a wide range of hymns and songs suitable for particular seasons and themes (including values such as courage, hope, truthfulness and humility). This could become a valuable resource for parishes as well as schools and should help to overcome the disparity in repertoire between what is sung at school and at church. Among the useful features of the website is the provision of ‘echo tracks’ that demonstrate the music, giving space for singers to repeat the lines just sung, assisting the learning of new material.

RSCM DIRECTOR TO LEAVE
Lindsay Gray, who has been Director of the RSCM since 2008, will move on from the post later in 2012 to pursue other professional interests.

For MORE DETAILS on the work of the RSCM in Ireland please contact the co-ordinator, Mark Bowyer, who will be happy to discuss any queries and arrange a visit if necessary. mbowyer@rscm.com + 353 (0) 87 117 2995

PSALMS DAY
RSCM Ireland, in association with the National Centre for Liturgy, hosted a very successful ‘Psalm Day’ in Renehen Hall, Maynooth on Saturday 11 February. The event involved a morning session of discussion stimulated by three presentations. Fr Michael Mullins spoke on the history of psalms and their place in worship, Fr Senan Furlong OSB gave an account of the intrinsic part which psalms play in monastic life, and Dr Ursula O’Donovan gave a history of the psalmody in the reformation church.

In the afternoon the Revd Peter Thompson and Fr Paul Kenny facilitated a session on psalm repertoire and on some of the challenges facing church musicians. The sessions were chaired by Fr Liam Tracy and Fr Patrick Jones. The day finished with Evening Prayer, incorporating some of the material from the afternoon session. One of those present commented that “three eminent speakers gave a thorough insight into areas concerning the psalms” while another said “most interesting for me was that I learned so much more about psalmody in the Church of Ireland”. It is hoped that further such events will be held in the future.
Michael van Dessel

BRIAN MCIVOR writes about one of the many Belgian and German musicians who worked in Irish churches during the last century

In 1923 a young Belgian organist found himself in Dundalk, Ireland on a temporary contract, until the local parish priest found a replacement for the previous organist who had died suddenly. While a successor had been appointed, he had become nervous on hearing reports of life in post-war Ireland. His replacement, Michael van Dessel (b.1898) had no such qualms and in fact stayed for life after the year was up.

Why was he here? Following Catholic Emancipation in 1829, the Roman Catholic Church engaged in a flurry of church building throughout Ireland. However, due to the underground nature of the church during Penal times there was no indigenous school of church musicians and composers, so help was needed in re-establishing the Church. In addition, there was a requirement by Rome to counteract extreme secular tendencies in Church music. Church directives, particularly the 1903 motu proprio, stressed the primacy of Gregorian Chant and the music of composers such as Palestrina. Secular instruments were banned from the sung Mass - or the Missa Cantata, as it was known.

Late 19th-century operatic style choral music, mixed-voice choirs, and even the piano were banned from many churches and created bitter divides in some parishes - one of these is detailed in James Joyce's story The Dead. Centres of church music such as Regensburg (Ratisbon) and Malines (in Belgium) trained musicians who would be familiar with the approved repertoire. Michael van Dessel was one of their most celebrated alumni and sought to develop the music in whatever church he found himself. He was assistant organist at St Rombout’s Church in Malines at the time of his journey to Ireland.

What kept him in Ireland for the rest of his life? Obviously, the prospect of making a living - which was denied him in post-World War I Belgium - but also a fine Father Willis organ in the local church and a community that needed and valued his many musical gifts. He stayed until his death in 1974, marrying a local woman, Celia Hammill and enjoyed a good standing locally.

For Michael van Dessel and over 40 other church musicians from Germany and Belgium, Ireland became home in the last years of the 19th century and all of the 20th. Others included René Segers (Longford), Ernest de Regge (Ennis), Karl Seeldrayer (Carlow), Joseph Koss (Kilkenny), Staf Gebruers (Cobh), Louis Evers (Galway), Jozef Delafaille and Gus Torremans (Newry). The last arrival, Baron George Minne, came to Ireland in the early 1950s and now lives in contented retirement in Armagh.

Life for Ireland’s church musicians was busy but by no means affluent. Most had to make ends meet using a combination of fees for playing for services, weddings, funeral and private teaching. Young Michael van Dessel added to this by playing for local musical societies and by doing exam work. He also found time to compose - writing masses and motets in the approved post-Palestrina style. Dr Gerard Gillen has expressed the opinion that the music produced by composers such as van Dessel was a type of Gebrauchs - or utilitarian style music - reverent and fit-for-purpose, but in no way sensual or romantic.

Michael van Dessel formed a men’s and boys’ choir and presented a varied programme of masses, motets and chants. However, it was as organist that he really shone. St Patrick’s Church in Dundalk installed a Father Willis Organ in 1900 - an instrument still in use - and over his lifetime van Dessel got the best out of it in his accompaniments and voluntaries.

But what is his legacy? Van Dessel’s choir of boys and men morphed over time into an adult choir of men and women - which still exists. They perform some of the old repertoire but also newer music that is completely integrated into today’s liturgies. Brendan McCourt, one of van Dessel’s successors and an ex-choirboy still uses tonic solfa to teach the psalm tones.

Tonic solfa tends to stick with those who studied at school. There is a thriving musical scene still in the Dundalk region, including an interdenominational choral society, the Setanta Choir. The Louth Contemporary Music Society and similar bodies attract international figures such as Arvo Paert, who have played to packed audiences in Dundalk Cathedral.

With the advent of the Second Vatican Council, men like Michael van Dessel struggled to adapt to the demands of the new liturgy but many groups disbanded. There was a strong feeling that the old music, particularly chant, was out of touch with the times. However, van Dessel and some others managed to keep both the musical heritage and their commitment to the liturgy on track. History has proven him right as chant has now returned to a prominent position in the Roman Catholic Church.

Last year Louth County Museum mounted an exhibition dedicated to the life and work of Michael van Dessel. It was extremely successful and revived many happy memories in the town. RTE Lyric FM ran a documentary on his life which attracted a lot of notice. Thanks to the efforts of musical pioneers like Van Dessel Ireland’s musical future is a bright one.

Brian McIvor was a pupil of van Dessel and is a freelance producer of classical music recordings and radio documentaries. His programme on van Dessel is available from www.rte.ie/lyricfm/features
Happy hymn-playing

I have tried out the hymn accompaniments that are on the Church Music Committee website and am very impressed.
I was able to play all of them. However, as a amateur, I found the ability to tackle the Easter music particularly rewarding. I especially liked the arrangements of ‘Jesus Christ is risen today’ and ‘Thine be the glory’. An additional benefit was that I found the confidence to look again at hymns which I would have previously dismissed as beyond my competence. I also liked the fact that the arrangements did not sound ‘thin’ when played. Many of the easy-to-play options I have tried in the past sound so inadequate that one would be embarrassed to use them in public. The arrangements on the website sound well. I applaud the efforts and the vision of those involved in making these arrangements available and hope they will give confidence and encouragement to others such as myself.

Naomi Pasley
Leixlip, Co. Kildare
naomi.pasley@gmail.com

The youth of today...

Recent correspondence about young people not knowing ‘traditional’ hymns inspires me to write. Five years of ministry in the Church of England enables me to tell you that at English funerals and weddings, when churches were full of non-attenders, hardly anyone knew anything other than ‘All things bright and beautiful’ and ‘Morning has broken’. Nobody knew the Lord’s Prayer. Those days are coming here. At Portlaoise, Maryborough, national school staff and I have started a programme of teaching and using traditional tunes at the weekly assembly. We’re starting with Old 100th, Slane, Repton, Cwm Rhondda, Monk’s Gate, Praise my soul, Crimond, and St Columba. We sing unaccompanied. It’s interesting to see that the older lads, who would rather be knocking hell out of a ball, are more inclined to sing old tunes than trendy tripe.

Stanley Monkhouse
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http://ramblingrector.wordpress.com/

Theodore Saunders’ House Organ in Armagh

In a number of issues of Soundboard, we have had articles about house organs. In this issue, THEODORE SAUNDERS, Organist and Master of the Choristers at St Patrick’s Cathedral (Col), Armagh, writes about his Peter Collins instrument and the music room which he has had constructed for it, replacing his garage and half of his back garden. As some of you will know, Theo has been off work with cancer, thus enjoying the benefits of Northern Ireland’s National Health Service of which he speaks very highly. His consultant has recently declared him fit for work, much to his delight. We look forward to his presiding over the music at the cathedral again.

For many years, I have wanted to have a pipe organ in my house, and last year seemed like a good time to get on. I have been off work since September 2010, due to ‘multiple myeloma’, for all sorts of tests and treatments, and was having to stay at home in the warm most of the time.

I was talking to Barry Williams, an organist friend of mine, and he said he knew of two excellent second-hand instruments built by Peter Collins of Melton Mowbray. I got the details of these, and also started trawling the net and contacting organ builders to see what they could do, or had second-hand. Eventually I had quite a thick folder of instruments which looked good, including some eighteenth-century instruments. Working out what I wanted was going to be hard, until I decided that any instrument must have two manuals and pedals. This narrowed down the number of possibilities quite dramatically, and the best two turned out to be the ones which I had heard about first of all. So I arranged to visit both of these instruments, which were very different in many ways. The first would have been excellent, but the second one captivated me even before I heard it. The vendor was particularly keen that it should go to a home where it would be appreciated — and I keep in touch still with the vendor, to let him know how I am getting on with it!

The instrument was built about ten years ago, which for a pipe organ is the equivalent of a car being run in! It has four stops on each manual and on the pedals. There is a tremulant, but no couplers. The casework is fantastic, even though there is not enough room in its present location (my study) — by about half an inch — for the cornice, and thus the front panel cannot go in, since it is supported by the cornice.

However, when my new music room is complete, which should be very soon, there will be plenty of room for it, since it is just under 26’ by 18’, and almost 12’ high.

The instrument is voiced for a house, rather than a church, so it is not loud. You would not get earache playing it! The stops are mainly flutes, but all with different characters. The choruses balance nicely. There is a reed stop, and that has bags of character. The Sesquialtera gives an authentic voice to the instrument.

Manual I: Stopped Diapason 8’, Principal 4’, Gemshorn 2’, Bassoon 8’
(tenor G) II
Pedal: Bourdon 16’, Bass Flute 8’ (Manual II), Principal 4’ (Manual I), Bassoon 8’ (Manual I)

Tremulant to the whole organ
CONCLUDING SNIPPETS

The 39th series of summer organ recitals on Sunday evenings will take place in St Michael's Church, Dún Laoghaire from 17 June. As well as showcasing the best in Irish organists, the series will feature John Kitchen (University of Edinburgh) and John Cantrell (Louisville, Kentucky). There will also be concerts involving organ, soprano and trumpet, organ and flute and organ duet. The series opens with a concert by the award-winning Dublin-based choir Cantairi Avondale. See www.dunlaoghairorganconcerts.ie

ORGAN WORKSHOP WITH DAVID GRAHAM

Professor-in-charge-of-organ, Royal College of Music, London Saturday 8 September 2012, 10.30am – c.5.00pm, Hillsborough Parish Church

This one-day workshop is designed for organists who are engaged in the serious study of the instrument and its repertoire. It will be led by David Graham, a distinguished and experienced teacher and performer. It provides an opportunity to benefit from specialist tuition and a valuable sharing of practice. Participants may be invited to contribute to a composite recital at the end of the workshop. A scholarship may be awarded to one of the participants. Contact Desmond Hunter: dmh.jph@btinternet.com

HYMNAL SUPPLEMENT NEWS

The provisional list of items to be included in the proposed supplement to Church Hymnal is listed in the General Synod Book of Reports and in May the Synod will be asked to agree to move the process to the next stage. The Hymnal Sub-Committee has selected almost 200 items, including liturgical material, reflecting a wide variety of styles and needs.

MUSIC – A JOY TO SING!

People often ask why liturgical music is so miserable and depressing. This is not a fair question - music covers the whole spectrum of human emotions and you would therefore expect to find sadness in some liturgical music. The text governs the composition and By the Waters of Babylon could hardly be set to cheerful music!

The important thing about all church music is that it should be sung with a sense of joy - paradoxically this also applies to sad music. Christianity is a religion of hope and joy, and these qualities must be reflected in our music.

One of the reasons church music is perceived as being miserable is the often poor standard of its performance. It’s not the music that’s at fault, it’s the way it is sung. This again underlines the importance of good quality choirs and fine standards of direction. Choirs must sing with joy and communicate this to their congregations. Miserable, badly sung and depressing music has no place in our worship.

Colin Mawby KSG

www.music-for-church-choirs.com

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Edited & designed by Fraser Wilson
Photography by FW, named contributors, & public domain sources

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The next issue of Soundboard will be published in August, so material should arrive by 31 July please

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APPOINTMENT

ST CANICE’S CATHEDRAL, KILKENNY

The Dean and Select Vestry are delighted to announce new developments for the cathedral music programme with the appointment of David Forde who has joined as Assistant Organist and Choirmaster to Malcolm Proud. Originally from Waterford, and a former pupil of Malcolm Proud, David moved to Kilkenny in 2011 and is Deputy Principal at Carlow Vocational School & Institute of Further Education. Prior to this, David lived in the UK and was Head of Performing Arts at Bridgewater College in Somerset, organist and director of music at St Patrick’s Bristol, and organ advisor to churches in West Country Clifton Diocese.

The cathedral music programme is developing an apse with increased choir membership and a broadening repertoire. In addition the cathedral is introducing an organ scholarship and a number of choral scholarships for September, with Andrew Burrows announced as the organ scholar for 2012-13. Thanks to the generosity of Ecclesiastical Insurance and other supporters, the choral scholarships will be offered to upper secondary school students from September.

The organ at St Canice’s Cathedral is an outstanding mechanical action instrument by Trevor Crowe Ltd. Sympathetic to its Victorian origins, the organ is acclaimed for its exceptionally well-finished voicing. Music in Kilkenny are presenting organist Catherine Ennis in a recital of J.S. Bach, Franck, Reger, Karg-Elert and Duruflé on Saturday 19 May at 5pm (www.musicinkilkenny.com). June sees the launch of a new recital series for the cathedral – The Chapter Room Concerts. St Canice’s own organist and choirmaster, the internationally renowned virtuoso harpsichordist Malcolm Proud, will perform the six Partitas by J.S. Bach on Sundays 3, 10, and 17 June at 5pm as the first concerts for this series. Further details on www.stcanicescathedral.com and www.dunlaoghairorganconcerts.ie

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