



St George's Singers 2015-16 Season

St George's Singers



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Marcus Farnsworth, MA, ARAM

Vice-Presidents

Susan Roper

Deputy Head of Vocal Studies and Opera, RNCM

Mark Rowlinson

Former Senior Producer, BBC Radio 3; Repertoire Tutor, RNCM

Stephen Threlfall

Director of Music, Chetham's School of Music

Stephen Williams

Director of Music, Uppingham School

Musical Director

Neil Taylor

Assistant Musical Director

Joseph Judge

Accompanist

Peter Durrant

Assistant Accompanists

Tim Kennedy, Julia Mayall



St George's Singers

Welcome to our 2015-16 season



Dear Friends,

Writing this as I do at the close of a very successful 2014–15 season, I look back with enormous satisfaction at a marvellous year of music-making. The Choir is delighted that our former assistant musical director, Marcus Farnsworth ARAM, has agreed to be our new President. Marcus sang for us in *The Dream of Gerontius* and we're thrilled that he will be returning next June to sing in *A Sea Symphony*. We also welcomed Peter Durrant last season as our new accompanist, and with our inspiring Musical Director Neil Taylor and talented assistant Musical Director Joseph Judge, we are fortunate to have an excellent team of professionals to lead us.

I look forward with great enthusiasm to 2015–2016, and a programme of exciting music. We very much value collaborating with Chetham's and in our first concert we will be joined by their talented musicians and a quintet of excellent young soloists for an uplifting Mozart programme. Our family concert 'Carols with Brass by Candlelight' continues our theme of collaboration as we involve local young people, this year The Youth Brass Band for Stockport and Bradshaw Hall Primary School Choir. Come and share the Christmas spirit with us!

On 23 April 2016, the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death, we bring you 'Sounds and sweet airs - A Shakespeare celebration', featuring settings of Shakespeare's words and other music of the period sung by the Choir with solos from soprano Ella Taylor and lute accompaniment. Even though we are a large choir, our versatility enables us to sing music written for smaller groups and a wide range of styles, and this will be a lovely spring concert in the comfortable and more intimate setting of St George's Poynton. In contrast, we follow this with a big venue and a large-scale work when in June 2016 we return to The Monastery for Vaughan Williams's *A Sea Symphony*.

Do you like to sing? If so then please do come to our Singing Day in January 2016, when we will be spending the day with *Elijah*. This is a very popular event so sign up early to avoid being disappointed. You might even be thinking of joining us permanently? If so, you will receive a warm welcome at any of our rehearsals, or you may want to try our new Come and Sing evening in April. We are currently looking to increase our tenor and bass sections.

We are a very friendly and happy choir and I think the new members who have joined us this year would agree. We are directed and accompanied by the finest team a choir could wish for, we love to sing and we want to share our music-making with you whenever we can. We hope to see you at our concerts and that you will continue to enjoy our music.

Andrea Millington

Chair, St George's Singers

Saturday 21 November 2015, 7.30 pm
Royal Northern College of Music, Oxford Road, Manchester

Mozart Mass in C minor (K427)

Concerto for flute no 2 in D major (K314)

Serenade for orchestra no 6 in D major ('Serenata notturna') (K239)

Conductor **Neil Taylor**

Soprano **Alison Rose**

Mezzo soprano **Kitty Whately**

Tenor **Alex Banfield**

Bass **Terence Ayebare**

Flute **Lucy Driver**

Chetham's Chamber Orchestra, conductor **Stephen Threlfall**

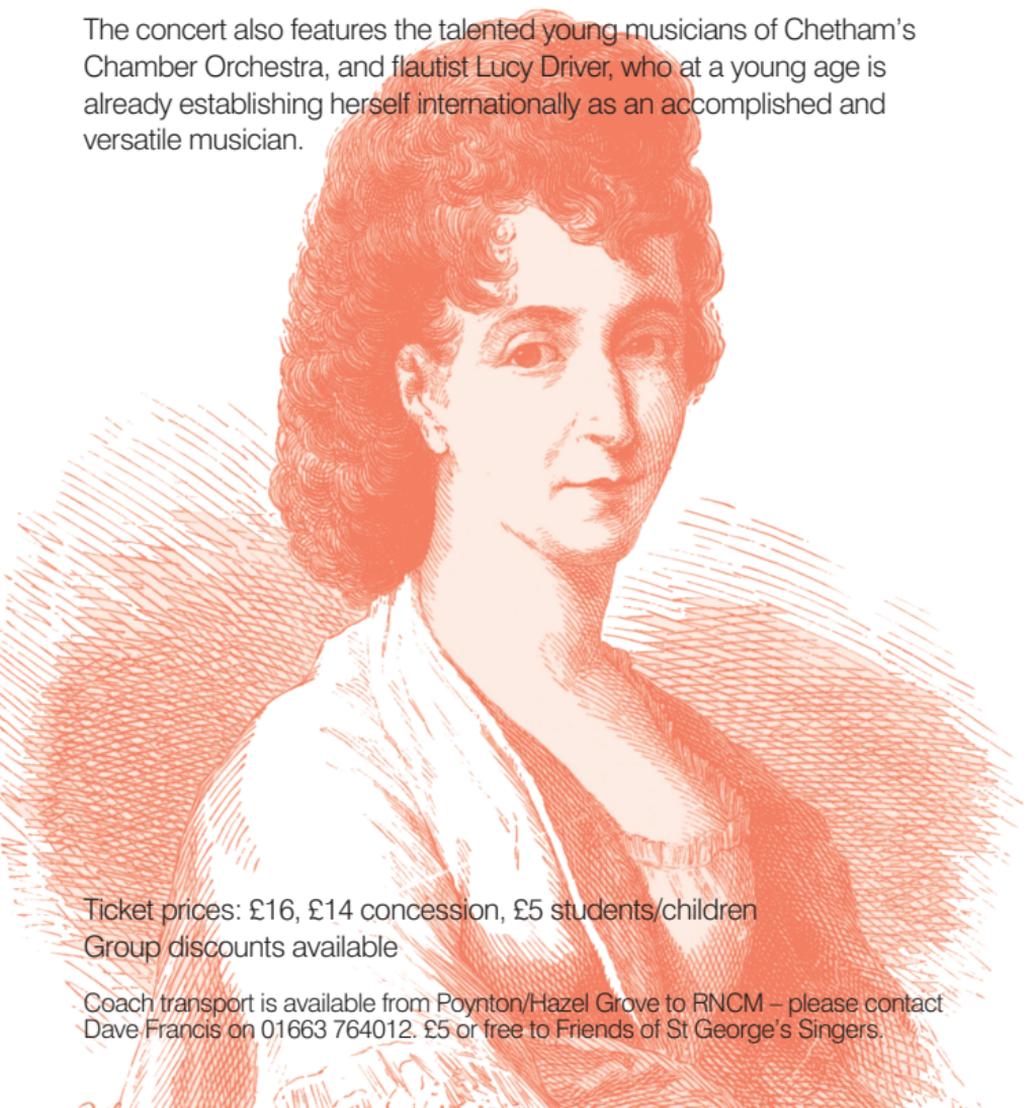
Mozart began work on his Mass in C minor (often called the 'Great') in 1782, shortly after his marriage to Constanze Weber, in fulfilment of a vow that he would compose a mass in her honour. Although never completed, the 'Great Mass' remains one of Mozart's most ambitious and elaborate church works, planned on a scale comparable to that of Bach's Mass in B minor, coloured by the Italian operatic style, and full of Mozart's humanity and compassion. We are delighted to welcome some of the country's rising stars as soloists including the BBC New Generation Artist and 2011 Kathleen Ferrier prize winner Kitty Whately, and winner of the prestigious 2015 Maggie Teyte prize Alison Rose.

The concert also features the talented young musicians of Chetham's Chamber Orchestra, and flautist Lucy Driver, who at a young age is already establishing herself internationally as an accomplished and versatile musician.

Ticket prices: £16, £14 concession, £5 students/children

Group discounts available

Coach transport is available from Poynton/Hazel Grove to RNCM – please contact Dave Francis on 01663 764012. £5 or free to Friends of St George's Singers.



Saturday 5 December 2015, 7.00 pm
St George's Church, Buxton Road, Stockport

Carols and Brass by Candlelight

Conductor **Neil Taylor**

Organ **Peter Durrant**

with

SSBB The Youth Brass Band for Stockport

Director **Tim Dines**

and

Bradshaw Hall Primary School Choir

Directors **Vicky Sunderland** and **Louise Bousfield**

St George's traditional festive offering this year features not one but two groups of talented young musicians. Once again the children of Bradshaw Hall Primary School will be entertaining us with their lively and action-packed carol singing, joined this year by the prize-winning Youth Brass Band for Stockport.

As well as lighting the candles, making mulled wine and serving mince pies, the members of St George's Singers will be performing Christmas carols old and new, and our MD Neil Taylor will be encouraging the children and adults in the audience to join in. A treat for all the family!

Please note the early start time of 7.00 pm.



Ticket prices: £12, £10 concession, £2 students/children
Group discounts available

Saturday 16 January, 2016
9.30–10.15 am (registration for singers), 6.00 pm (concert)
St George's Church, London Road, Poynton

2016 Singing Day

Mendelssohn *Elijah* (Part 1)

Conductor **Neil Taylor**
Accompanist **Peter Durrant**



Since its first performance in Birmingham in 1846, when it was greeted with 'a unanimous volley of plaudits' and 'shouts of exultation', Mendelssohn's *Elijah* has been on every choral singer's list of must-do works. Alternately energetic and zealous, wrathful and gloomy, pleading and joyful, the selected choruses we will be rehearsing provide challenging yet accessible music for singers of all standards.

We will be joined by our new accompanist, Pete Durrant, who will be working up a storm on the piano throughout the day, and we'll receive expert tuition from our musical director, Neil Taylor. Punctuated by our splendid home-made food, the day finishes with a short concert performance with professional soloists.



Ticket prices: £22 to sing (including music), £5 students, £5 audience

Download our Singing Day application form from www.st-georges-singers.org.uk
or contact Gillian Banks, Tel 01925 213949, email gillian.m.banks@gmail.com.

Saturday 23 April 2016, 7.30 pm
St George's Church, London Road, Poynton

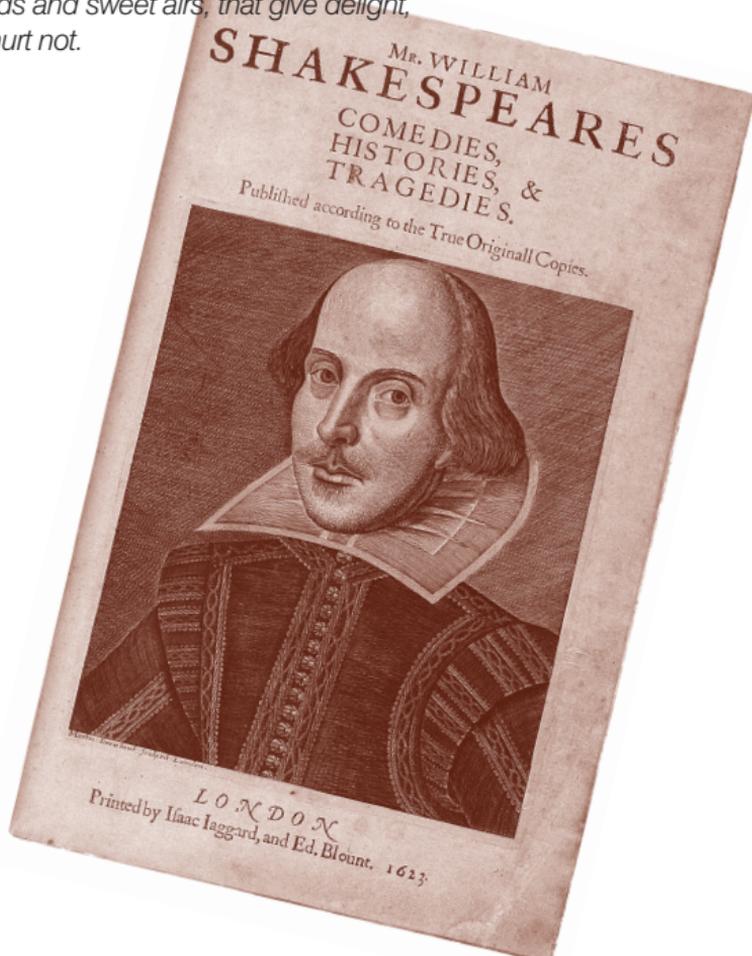
Sounds and sweet airs: A Shakespeare celebration

Conductor **Neil Taylor**
Accompanist **Peter Durrant**
Soprano **Ella Taylor**
Lute **Richard MacKenzie**

To celebrate the anniversary of Shakespeare's death on 23 April 1616, we present on St George's Day itself a delightful concert of music inspired by the Bard.

Spanning four centuries, works will include settings of his sonnets and songs, as well as music from the Elizabethan court that Shakespeare himself may have heard.

*Be not afeard: the isle is full of noises,
Sounds and sweet airs, that give delight,
and hurt not.*



Ticket prices: £12, £10 concession, £2 students/children
Group discounts available

Coach transport is available from Poynton/Hazel Grove to RNCM – please contact Dave Francis on 01663 764012. £5 or free to Friends of St George's Singers.

Sunday 26 June 2016, 7.30 pm
The Monastery, Gorton, Manchester

Vaughan Williams *A Sea Symphony*

Holst

Choral Hymns from the Rig Veda, Ave Maria

Walter-Kühne

Fantasy on themes from Tchaikovsky's 'Eugene Onegin'

Conductor **Neil Taylor**

Soprano **Alison Rose**

Baritone **Marcus Farnsworth**

Harp **Louise Thomson**

Stockport Symphony Orchestra

Ralph Vaughan Williams's first and longest symphony, and his first major large-scale work, *A Sea Symphony* was written between 1903 and 1909 and premiered at the Leeds Festival in 1910, with the composer conducting. One of the first symphonies to use the chorus as an integral part of the musical texture, *A Sea Symphony* set the stage for a new era of British symphonic and choral music in the 20th century. The text is from *Leaves of Grass* by American poet, Walt Whitman, whose verse, although little known in Britain at the time, attracted Vaughan Williams for its humanistic philosophy, and its vision of a world inspired by human and scientific endeavour and the spirit of adventure.

We are joined by soprano Alison Rose and our President, Marcus Farnsworth, as soloists, and with harpist Louise Thomson the ladies of the Choir have the opportunity to perform four of Holst's *Choral Hymns from the Rig Veda*, inspired by the ancient Sanskrit poems of praise and thanksgiving from Hindu scripture.

Ticket prices: £17, £15 concession, £5 students/children
Group discounts available

Coach transport is available from Poynton/Hazel Grove to The Monastery – please contact Dave Francis on 01663 764012. £5 or free to Friends of St George's Singers

The Cheshire Consort



The Cheshire Consort is St George's Singers' wedding chamber choir, and performs regularly at ceremonies throughout the Cheshire, North Wales and Greater Manchester area. The choir's repertoire covers sacred and secular choral music to suit any venue and style of venue.

The Consort is led by St George's Singers' Assistant MD, Joe Judge, who in 2015 was awarded a Fellowship under the National Youth Chamber Choir's inaugural programme. Organists accompanying the Consort regularly include well-known north-west musicians Pete Durrant, Elin Rees and Graham Eccles.

To discuss your wedding plans and book the Consort, contact Alison McLay on 0161 969 7698, or email enquiries@cheshireconsort.org.uk. For more information about the wedding choir or to download a guide to choosing your wedding music, visit our website www.cheshireconsort.org.uk, or follow us on Facebook.

"The glorious singing of the Cheshire Consort made a wonderful day even more special"



All funds raised by The Cheshire Consort go to fund St George's Singers' work in promoting and commissioning new choral music.

Friends and Patrons

St George's Singers finances all its own concerts, no small task when putting on major concerts or touring overseas. So we rely heavily on fund-raising activities, and particularly on our Friends and other Supporters.

Friends

The Friends of St George's Singers was formed a few years ago as an easy way for supporters to stay in touch with us, and in return be rewarded for their loyalty through a range of benefits. The group has now expanded to include music lovers as far as afield as Germany and South Africa.

The Friends play an important part in the social and musical life of the Choir, as well as providing vital financial support. Annual membership of the Friends costs only £15 for Red Rose, and £30 for Gold Rose Membership, and many Friends make even more generous donations. Many long-standing Friends have also been invited to become Honorary Life Friends, in recognition of their contribution to the Choir.

In return Friends receive a number of generous benefits:

reserved seats at concerts, where available, for Friends plus two guests

acknowledgement in programmes

free coach transport to city centre venues, when available

free concert programmes

entry into the Friends' Concert Draw for a chance to win **free tickets** to our next concert

invitations to social events, open rehearsals and pre-concert receptions

the choir newsletter, *Hemiola*

early notice of concert information and priority booking

special rates on CDs

To join our Friends

To join our Friends, simply complete and return the Application Form in this brochure, or contact Barbara Forshaw on friends@st-georges-singers.org.uk, tel 0161 215 2112.

Patrons

We are immensely grateful to our Patrons, individual and corporate supporters of the Choir who contribute funds for specific purposes, such as sponsoring concerts, soloists, new music commissions or other Choir activities. All Patrons are acknowledged in our Season Brochure and concert programmes, and depending on the level of support, on relevant concert publicity.

If you or your company are interested in becoming a Patron, please contact the Chair, Andrea Millington, on chair@st-georges-singers.org.uk, or our Choir Secretary on 01625 875437.

2015-16 Season Patrons

We would like to offer our grateful thanks to our Patrons for their support this season:

Season supporters:

PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP

Intuitive Media Ltd

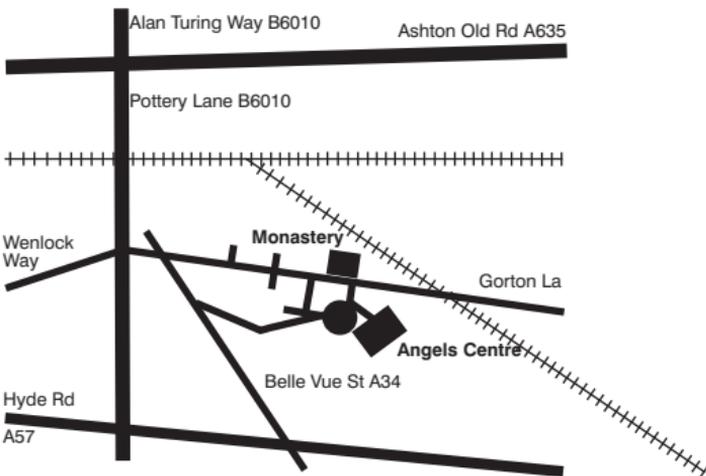
We acknowledge with gratitude the help provided by Cheshire East Library Services throughout the season

Concert venues

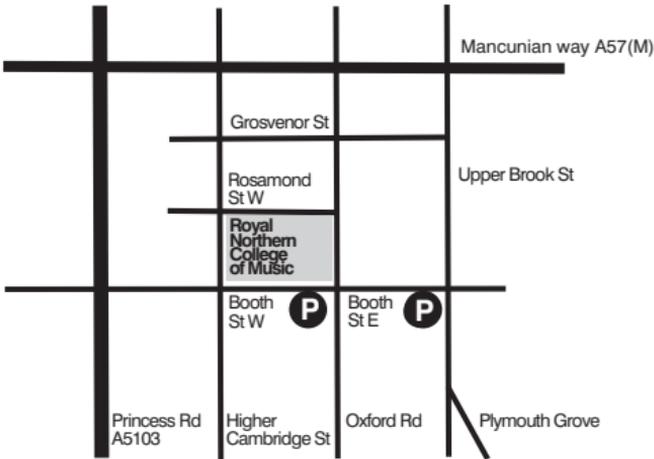
St George's Church, Buxton Road, Stockport SK2 6NU



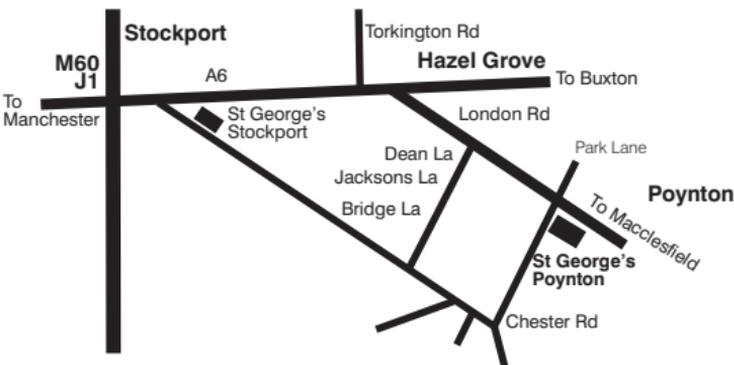
The Monastery, Gorton Lane, Gorton, Manchester M12 5WF



Royal Northern College of Music, Oxford Rd, Manchester M13 9RD



St George's Church, London Road, Poynton SK12 1AF



Ticket Information

There are four easy ways to buy tickets for our concerts:

Online booking

To buy online using PayPal or credit card, or to download a booking form, visit our website at www.st-georges-singers.org.uk, and go to 'Online Tickets'.

Telephone

Ring the Ticket Hotline on 01663 764012.

Email

Email your requirements to: tickets@st-georges-singers.org.uk.

Post

Complete the Application Form in this brochure and post with your cheque, payable to 'St George's Singers Poynton', to:
The Ticket Secretary, 11 The Ridgeway South, Disley, Stockport,
Cheshire SK12 2JG

Concessions

Concessionary rates are available for Senior Citizens, claimants, students and children. All concessionary prices are detailed alongside each concert in this brochure.

Group Discounts

Discounts are available for group bookings as follows:
10% off 5–9 tickets and 15% off 10 or more tickets. Please contact the Ticket Secretary on 01663 764012 for more information.

Singing Day

To book a place on the Singing Day on Saturday 16 January 2016, please see our separate Singing Day brochure, available to download from the website at www.st-georges-singers.org.uk, or by contacting Gillian Banks, tel 01925 213949, email gillian.m.banks@gmail.com.

Mailing list

For early notification of concerts, ticket availability, special events, and to receive a copy of our Choir newsletter, please register with our Mailing List by completing the Application Form overleaf, or register online at www.st-georges-singers.org.uk.

detach along dotted line

Application Form

Please complete this form and tick the appropriate boxes below

Title **First Name**

Surname

Address

Postcode **Telephone**

Email

Mailing List Registration

- Please include me on your Mailing List (please tick)
- I agree to my details being stored on the Choir's database and used for publicity relating to St George's Singers only. I understand my details will not be divulged to third parties (please tick)

I would prefer to receive information by (please tick one):

- post email

Note: to reduce our costs, please consider receiving information by email.

Friends of St George's Singers

I would like to:

- Become a Red Rose Friend for the 2015-16 Season and enclose a cheque for £15
- Become a Gold Rose Friend for the 2015-16 Season and enclose a cheque for £30

I am already a Friend, and would like to:

- Renew my Red Rose membership for the 2015-16 Season and enclose a cheque for £15
- Renew my Gold Rose membership for the 2015-16 Season and enclose a cheque for £30

To order tickets, please remember to complete the Ticket Booking Form overleaf

Ticket Booking Form

Please complete the form and post with your cheque, made payable to 'St George's Singers Poynton', to:
Ticket Secretary, St George's Singers, 11 The Ridgeway South, Disley, Stockport, Cheshire SK12 2JG.

Remember to complete your name and address details overleaf!

Concert	Date	Price	No. full price	No. conc	No. stdnt/chldn	No. coach tickets	Total £
Mozart Mass in C minor	21/11/15	£16, £14 concession, £5 students/children					
Carols & Brass by Candlelight	5/12/15	£12, £10 concession, £2 students/children					
Singing Day Mendelssohn Elijah	16/1/16	Audience tickets only £5					
Sounds and Sweet Airs	23/4/16	£12, £10 concession, £2 students/children					
Vaughan Williams Sea Symphony	26/6/16	£17, £15 concession, £5 students/children					
Grand Total £							

Return coach tickets available from Poynton/Hazel Grove to Gorton Monastery and RNCM concerts only: Friends of St George's Singers – free, Others - £5 per person.

For information on group discounts, please contact the Ticket Secretary on 01663 764012.

Other events

Beethoven - Symphony no 9

On 10 October 2015, St George's Singers join Stockport Symphony Orchestra in a performance of Beethoven's Symphony no 9 (the 'Choral Symphony') at Stockport Town Hall.

Come and Sing evening - 26 April 2016

Why not come along and spend an evening singing with St George's Singers? Open to all, our special Come and Sing evening will be held on Tuesday 26 April 2016 at St George's Church in Poynton. If you already sing with another choir and just want an extra evening's music-making, or are thinking of joining St George's Singers, you are invited to join Neil Taylor, accompanist Pete Durrant and all the choir members in rehearsing a selection of music from our current repertoire. More details will be found on our website towards the end of 2015, or contact Jacqui Smith on enquiries@st-georges-singers.org.uk, telephone 01625 875437.

About St George's Singers

Although a large choir with around 100 members, St George's Singers is also an extremely friendly and welcoming group of people! We hold a number of social events throughout the season, including the annual end-of-season social evening when choir members have the opportunity to take the solo stage!

Joining the Choir

Entry to the Choir is by audition, and all Singers are re-auditioned every three years. New members can join at any time, and are welcome to come along to a few rehearsals before auditioning. We rehearse on Tuesday evenings in St George's Church Hall, Poynton, SK12 1AF (located on the A523 London Road) from 7.30 pm to 10.00 pm. For more information about joining St George's Singers, please contact our Secretary, Jacqui Smith, tel 01625 875437, email enquiries@st-georges-singers.org.uk.

CDs

The Choir has made a number of CD recordings, available to purchase at concerts or via our website. The most recent, *The Christmas Life*, was selected for broadcast by Classic FM, and features traditional and modern carols, including special commissions by St George's Singers. Other CDs include *Our Spirits Sing*, recorded for the Choir's Golden Jubilee in 2006, and *Carols from St George's*.

Newsletter

If you want to read more about St George's Singers and our activities, pick up a copy of the choir newsletter *Hemiola* at our concerts, download it from our website, or sign up to our Mailing List on the website.

For more information on all our activities through the year, visit our website www.st-georges-singers.org.uk



St George's Singers

St George's Singers was formed in Poynton, Cheshire in 1956 with 23 founding members drawn from the local community. Today, the Choir has over 100 members who travel from Cheshire, Derbyshire, Yorkshire and Greater Manchester, and is widely recognised as one of the most enterprising and innovative choirs in the North of England. Under Musical Director Neil Taylor, the Choir performs an extensive repertoire that covers baroque, classical, jazz, modern and newly commissioned choral works. Concert venues include the Bridgewater Hall, Gorton Monastery, Manchester Cathedral and the Royal Northern College of Music. The Choir sings with world-class soloists and orchestras, and tours regularly in the UK and overseas.

2015-16 Season at a glance

10 October 2015	Beethoven 'Choral Symphony'
21 November 2015	Mozart Mass in C minor
5 December 2015	Carols and Brass by Candlelight
16 January 2016	Singing Day – Mendelssohn <i>Elijah</i>
23 April 2016	Sounds and Sweet Airs – A Shakespeare Celebration
26 April 2016	Come and Sing evening
26 June 2016	Vaughan Williams <i>A Sea Symphony</i>

Ticket hotline 01663 764012

Online ticket bookings www.st-georges-singers.org.uk

General enquiries 01625 875437

St George's Singers is a Registered Charity, No 508686, and a member of Making Music, the National Federation of Music Societies

