



St George's Singers 2014-15 Season

St George's Singers



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Singer and Conductor

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Deputy Head of Vocal Studies, Royal Northern College of Music

Mark Rowlinson
Singer, former Senior Producer, BBC Radio 3

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
Jeffrey Makinson

Assistant Accompanists
Tim Kennedy, Julia Mayall



Welcome to our 2014-15 season



Dear Friends,

As I write this we are nearing the end of what has been another very successful year for St George's Singers, and are already looking forward with much enthusiasm to the varied and exciting programme for our 2014-15 season.

'Requiem for the Fallen', our first concert in November, is our contribution to the marking of the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of WWI. Appropriately close to Armistice Day we will be singing some beautiful and reflective music as we remember the sacrifice of those who have died or suffered as a result of war. Three weeks later we are back at St George's Church, Stockport, for our annual concert of 'Carols and Brass' which for many is the beginning of their Christmas celebrations. This is a concert for all the family and we are joined by our friends the VBS Poynton Brass Band and for the third year by the brilliant choir from Bradshaw Hall Primary School.

For our spring concert, in the newly refurbished RNCM concert hall, we sing Bach's glorious *Magnificat*, a work we have not performed for some time, together with the less well-known Buxtehude *Membra Jesu Nostra*. St George's Singers enjoy singing baroque music and this is borne out by the very fine reviews we receive. A concert not to be missed! The climax of our year will be a return visit to The Monastery for Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* with The Sheffield Chorale and Stockport Symphony Orchestra. With a great line-up of soloists, we are particularly happy to welcome back our former assistant musical director and a vice-president of St George's Singers, baritone Marcus Farnsworth.

Do you like to sing? If so then please do come to our Singing Day in January. We will as usual be well fed with home-made soup, rolls and cakes, but we do find time to sing too! At the end of the day we give a performance with soloists and welcome an audience. This is a very popular event so sign up early to avoid being disappointed.

You might even be thinking of joining us! If so, please come to our Open Rehearsal in October, to sing or listen. You are of course welcome to come to any rehearsal, you will be warmly welcomed. Look forward to meeting you?

How can we perform such a varied and exciting programme each year, and why are we such a friendly and happy choir? Well, in addition to our love of music and singing, we are very fortunate to have such an inspirational musical director, Neil Taylor and a most accomplished accompanist, Jeffrey Makinson. And this year we welcome our new assistant musical director, Joseph Judge.

I hope that our passion for music shows in all our performances and that our concerts will make you want to come back time and again!

Andrea Millington Chair, St George's Singers

Saturday 15 November 2014, 7.30 pm
St George's Church, Buxton Road, Stockport

Requiem for the Fallen

Walford Davies *Short requiem*
Douglas Guest *For the fallen*
John Ireland *Greater love hath no man*
Geraint Lewis *The souls of the righteous*
Charles Villiers Stanford *Justorum animae*
John Rutter *Requiem*
John Tavener *Funeral ikos*

Conductor **Neil Taylor**
Accompanist **Jeffrey Makinson**

As the nation's thoughts turn in 2014 to the horror that was the First World War, and the millions who died on the battlefield and in their homes, we acknowledge and remember their sacrifice through music. Featuring works by British composers, many of whom lived through the Great War, our concert provides an opportunity for contemplation on the inhumanity of war, the humanity of those who suffered, and the power of music to bring consolation.

'There is music in the midst of desolation
And a glory that shines upon their tears.'
Laurence Binyon *For the fallen* 1914



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

Saturday 6 December 2014, 7.00 pm
St George's Church, Buxton Road, Stockport

Carols and Brass by Candlelight

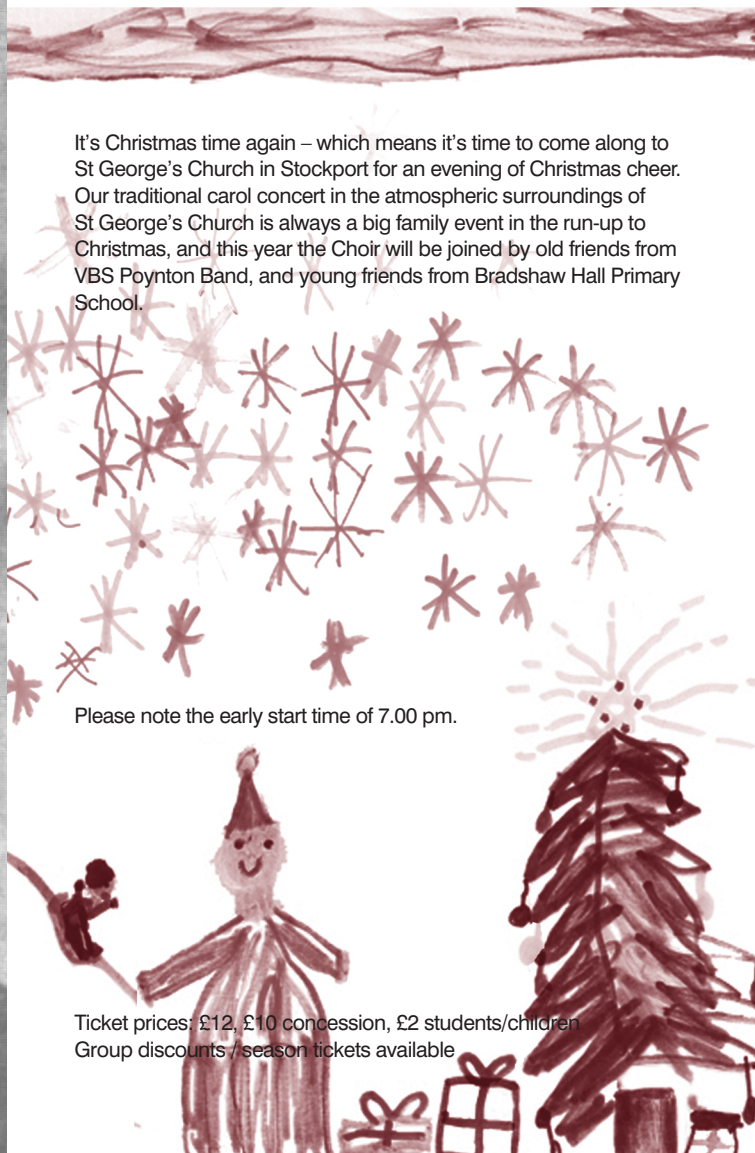
Conductor **Neil Taylor**
Accompanist **Jeffrey Makinson**

with **Vernon Building Society Poynton Band**
Director **Neil Samuel**
and
Bradshaw Hall Primary School Choir
Directors **Vicky Sunderland** and **Louise Bousfield**

It's Christmas time again – which means it's time to come along to St George's Church in Stockport for an evening of Christmas cheer. Our traditional carol concert in the atmospheric surroundings of St George's Church is always a big family event in the run-up to Christmas, and this year the Choir will be joined by old friends from VBS Poynton Band, and young friends from Bradshaw Hall Primary School.

Please note the early start time of 7.00 pm.

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



Saturday 17 January 2015
9.30-10.15 am (registration for singers), 6.00 pm (concert)
St George's Church, London Road, Poynton

2015 Singing Day

Mozart *Coronation Mass* (K317)
Haydn *Te Deum for Empress Marie Thérèse*

Conductor **Neil Taylor**
Accompanist **Jeffrey Makinson**
Soloists **Ella Taylor** soprano; **Cara Cullen** contralto;
Timothy Langston tenor; **Jonathan Ainscough** bass

For this year's Singing Day, Neil Taylor has chosen two of the most popular choral works from the classical era.

Mozart's *Coronation Mass* was completed in 1779, when Mozart was court organist and composer at Salzburg Cathedral. The mass, a 'missa brevis' or short mass, was premiered there on Easter Sunday 1779, but didn't acquire its nickname until after a performance conducted by Salieri in 1791 in Prague at the coronation of Leopold II as King of Bohemia – after which it became the preferred music for royal and imperial coronations. Haydn's *Te Deum for Empress Marie Thérèse* was commissioned by the Empress (no mean singer herself) in 1799, but not performed until 1800, when it was premiered at Eisenstadt to celebrate Nelson's arrival.

Enjoy a great day out with St George's Singers, try our home cooking (soup, sandwiches and cake available) and spend a wonderful day singing with friends.

Scores: we shall be using the Novello edition of Mozart, and the OUP edition of Haydn.



Ticket prices: £22 to sing (including music), £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.

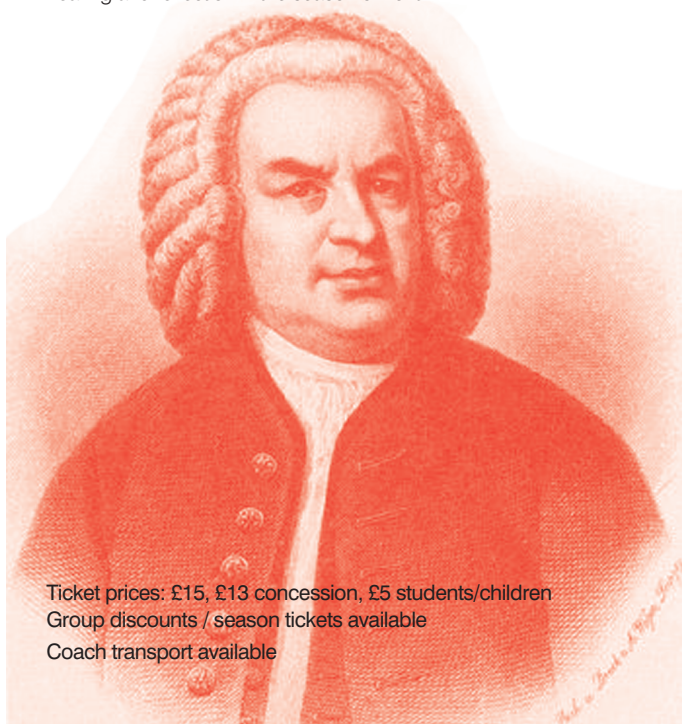
Saturday 7 March 2015, 7.30 pm
Royal Northern College of Music, Oxford Road, Manchester

Bach *Magnificat in D major* (BWV 243)
Buxtehude *Membra Jesu Nostri* (BuxWV 75)

Conductor **Neil Taylor**
Soloists from **Royal Northern College of Music**
Northern Baroque

J S Bach composed his first *Magnificat* in E flat major for the Christmas festival of 1723, soon after taking up the post of Kantor of St Thomas's Church in Leipzig. Ten years later he revised it for Easter, transposing it to the much brighter D major, and introducing significant revisions to make it suitable for performance on a wider range of occasions. Conceived on a grand scale, the *Magnificat* calls for five soloists, a five-part choir, and a large orchestra, and in its splendour, joy and occasional flamboyance is a forerunner of the *B minor Mass*.

Dietrich Buxtehude, born some fifty years before Bach, was a major precursor of the great master. Composed in 1680, *Membra Jesu Nostri* (*The Limbs of our Jesus*) is a cycle of seven cantatas, each addressed to a different part of Christ's crucified body, and known as the first Lutheran oratorio. With sober grandeur, this is a work that warrants hearing and reflection in the season of Lent.



Ticket prices: £15, £13 concession, £5 students/children
Group discounts / season tickets available
Coach transport available



Sunday 21 June 2015, 7.30 pm
The Monastery, Gorton, Manchester

Elgar *The Dream of Gerontius*

Conductor **Neil Taylor**

Mezzo-soprano **Anna Harvey**

Tenor **Joshua Ellicott**

Bass **Marcus Farnsworth**

Harp **Louise Thomson**

Stockport Symphony Orchestra and **The Sheffield Chorale**

Elgar composed his masterpiece, *The Dream of Gerontius*, a setting of a poem by Cardinal Newman, in 1900 for the Birmingham Music Festival. Badly performed at its premiere, as the musicians and singers struggled with Elgar's daring, demanding and complex music, the work also drew suspicion from the Anglican establishment for the Catholic doctrine implicit in the text. Elgar's music triumphed over all obstacles, however, and *Gerontius* is now universally cherished by all music-lovers.

At this concert St George's Singers will be joined by a trio of wonderful young soloists, The Sheffield Chorale, who are also directed by Neil Taylor, and Stockport Symphony Orchestra.

Ticket prices: £17, £15 concession, £5 students/children
Group discounts/season tickets available
Coach transport available

Other events

Poynton Music Festival

Saturday 27 Sept 2014, 4.00 pm
Civic Centre, Poynton, Cheshire

St George's Singers are delighted to be taking part in Poynton's very own Music Festival in the autumn. We will be presenting a varied programme of choral music in an afternoon of song. More information will be announced nearer the day on our website, and on the Poynton website, www.poyntonweb.co.uk

Tour to Germany

Friday 29 May – Monday 1 June 2015

Our 2015 tour will be to Germany, and will be based around the city of Münster. Located in the state of Nordrhein-Westfalen in the north-east of Germany, Münster is not far from the border with the Netherlands, and is regarded as the cultural centre of Westphalia – and the bicycle capital of Germany. The old part of the city, severely damaged during WWII, was extensively rebuilt in the 1950s to match its pre-war state, and the city boasts a number of beautiful churches, halls and buildings in which to perform. Details of the tour will be announced in early 2015.

Holst *The Planets*

Saturday 31 January 2015

The ladies of St George's Singers have been invited by Stockport Symphony Orchestra to join them in a performance of Holst's *The Planets* in January 2015. More information will be available on the Choir website later in the year.

Daily Service

The Choir has performed live on BBC Radio 4's *Daily Service* on a number of occasions, and we are planning to do so again early in 2015. More information will be available on the Choir website.

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 Canada.

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, *Hermiola*
- 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 Tel 0161 442 9370 or email friends@st-georges-singers.org.uk.

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 533779.

2014-15 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

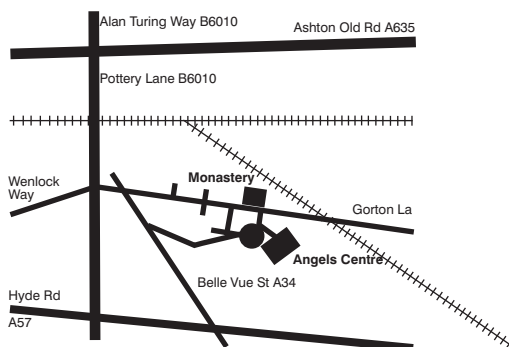
Cheshire East Library Services throughout the season

Concert venues

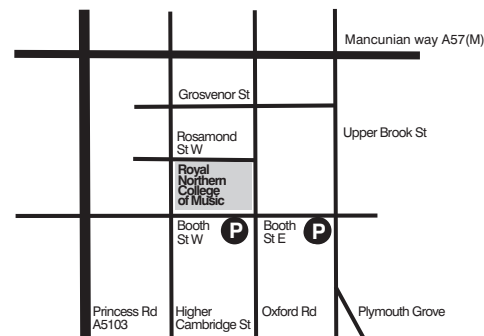
St George's Church, Buxton Road, Stockport SK2 6NU



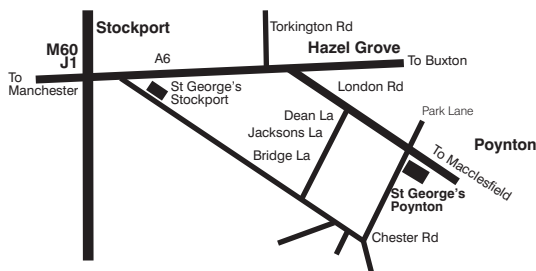
The Monastery, Gorton Lane, Gorton, Manchester M12 5WF



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.

Season Tickets

Buy a season ticket to our four main concerts and save 16-20% on standard ticket prices. A full-rate season ticket costs £48 (saving £8), a concessionary ticket £41 (saving £7).

Singing Day

To book a place on the Singing Day on 17 January 2015, 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.

Coach Transport

Coach transport is available from Hazel Grove/Poynton to The Monastery and RNCM concerts. Contact Dave Francis on 01663 764012 to book seats (£5 or free to Friends of St George's Singers)

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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 2014-15 Season and enclose a cheque for £15
- ☐ Become a Gold Rose Friend for the 2014-15 Season and enclose a cheque for £30

I am already a Friend, and would like to:

- ☐ Renew my Red Rose membership for the 2014-15 Season and enclose a cheque for £15
- ☐ Renew my Gold Rose membership for the 2014-15 Season and enclose a cheque for £30

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

About St George's Singers

A large group with around 100 members, St George's Singers is also an extremely friendly and welcoming Choir. We hold a wide range 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 533779, Email enquiries@st-georges-singers.org.uk.

Open Rehearsal

Once a year we hold an Open Rehearsal, which this season is on Tuesday 7 October 2014 in St George's Church Hall, Poynton. If you're interested in joining St George's Singers, or just want to find out what goes on at our rehearsals, then do come along, sit in at the rehearsal, enjoy a glass of wine and have a chat afterwards with Choir members. For more information, please contact our Secretary, Jacqui Smith.

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.

Cheshire Consort

The Cheshire Consort is St George's Singers' wedding choir, and is available to sing at weddings throughout the Cheshire and Greater Manchester area. You can find more information about our wedding choir on the choir website at www.cheshireconsort.org.uk, as well as a guide to choosing the music for your wedding. To discuss your wedding plans and book the Consort, contact Sue Taylor on 01663 766991, email: setaylor9@btinternet.com, or visit the website www.cheshireconsort.org.uk.

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

For more information on all our activities through the year, visit our website www.st-georges-singers.org.uk. You can also follow us on Twitter and Facebook

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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 2DJ.

Remember to complete your name and address details overleaf!

Concert	Date	Price	No. full price	No. conc	No. stndt/chldn	No. coach tickets	Total £
Requiem for the Fallen	15/11/14	£12, £10 concession, £2 students/children					
Cards & Brass by Candlelight	6/12/14	£12, £10 concession, £2 students/children					
Mozart Coronation Mass	17/1/15	Audience tickets only £5					
Bach Magnificat	7/3/15	£15, £13 concession, £5 students/children					
Elgar, Dream of Gerontius	21/6/15	£17, £15 concession, £5 students/children					
Season Tickets 4 concerts		Full £48, concession £41					
Grand Total £							

Return coach tickets available from Poynton/Hazel Grove to Gorton Monastery and RINCM 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.



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.

2014–15 Season at a glance

27 September 2014	Poynton Music Festival
7 October 2014	Open Rehearsal
15 November 2014	Requiem for the Fallen
6 December 2014	Carols and Brass by Candlelight
17 January 2015	Singing Day – Mozart <i>Coronation Mass</i>, Haydn <i>Te Deum</i>
7 March 2015	Bach <i>Magnificat</i>, Buxtehude <i>Membra Jesu Nostr</i>
21 June 2015	Elgar <i>The Dream of Gerontius</i>

Ticket hotline 01663 764012

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

General enquiries 01625 533779

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



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