

Nantwich Choral Society

FAMILY CAROL CONCERT



Nantwich Young Voices

David Mayson – Accompanist

Victoria Palethorpe – Conductor

James Hall – Baritone

Simon Russell – Accompanist

John Naylor – Conductor

St Mary's Church, Nantwich

Saturday 17th December 2022, 6.30 pm

Good evening, and on behalf of Nantwich Choral Society may I give you a very warm welcome to our annual Christmas carol concert. This is an event we always look forward to with great pleasure, and we are again delighted to be joined by the marvellous Nantwich Young Voices, led by their conductor Victoria Palethorpe. It is a joy to have them sing with us, and especially to hear the items they sing on their own.

As always thanks must go to Nantwich Town Council and to the Harding Trust for their continued financial support over the years which helps us to stage events such as these. We are also very grateful to Cheshire East Library service, who are unfailingly helpful in supporting us to source and borrow musical scores for our concerts. Thanks must also go to the rector and staff at St. Mary's for their continued help and support in hosting our concerts.

What better way to get into the spirit of the festive season than by singing traditional Christmas carols, so do please join in with us when invited to do so, let yourself go and enjoy these firm favourites, and may I on behalf of the choir wish you all a very happy Christmas and an enjoyable New Year.

Graham Harbage
Chairman, NCS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Nantwich Choral Society gratefully acknowledges the support during the recent past from the Harding Trust, Cheshire East Council, Nantwich Town Council, Cheshire Libraries, the advertisers in our programmes and other sponsors and donors.



Programme

Choir and Soloist	The truth from above	English traditional, arr. R Vaughan Williams
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Once in Royal David's City

H J Gauntlett, arr. A H Mann
and David Willcocks

Choir	<p>Once in royal David's City Stood a lowly cattle shed, Where a mother laid her baby In a manger for his bed: Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.</p>
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All	<p>He came down to earth from heaven Who is God and Lord of all, And his shelter was a stable, And his cradle was a stall; With the poor, and mean, and lowly, Lived on earth our Saviour holy.</p>
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And our eyes at last shall see him,
 Through his own redeeming love,
 For that child so dear and gentle
 Is our Lord in heaven above;
 And he leads his children on
 To the place where he is gone.

Not in that poor lowly stable,
 With the oxen standing by,
 We shall see him; but in heaven,
 Set at God's right hand on high;
 When like stars his children crowned
 All in white shall wait around.

Choir	A babe is born	William Mathias
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NYV	Jingle Bell Rock	Words and music by Joseph Beal and James Boothe
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	Walking in the Air	Music and lyrics by Howard Blake arr. Lin Marsh
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	Dear Santa	Words and Music by Niki Davies
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The first Nowell the Angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell
Born is the King of Israel!

They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the East beyond them far
And to the earth it gave great light
And so it continued both day and night.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell
Born is the King of Israel!

And by the light of that same star
Three wise men came from country far
To seek for a king was their intent
And to follow the star wherever it went.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell
Born is the King of Israel!

This star drew nigh to the northwest
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
And there it did both pause and stay
Right o'er the place where Jesus lay.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell
Born is the King of Israel!

Then let us all with one accord
Sing praises to our heavenly Lord
That hath made Heaven and earth of nought
And with his blood mankind has bought.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell
Born is the King of Israel!

Silent night! Holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
Round the gentle mother and child.
Holy infant tender and mild,

Rest in heavenly peace,
Rest in heavenly peace.

All Silent night, holy night,
Guiding star, lend thy light!
See the eastern wise men bring
Gifts and homage to our King!
Jesus Christ is here,
Jesus Christ is here.

Silent night, holy night,
Wondrous star, lend thy light!
With the angels let us sing
Alleluia to our King!
Jesus Christ is here,
Jesus Christ is here.

Choir I saw three ships come sailing in English traditional, arr. John Rutter
and NYV

Choir Fantasia on Christmas Carols R Vaughan Williams

All **While shepherds watched their flocks by night** Tune Ilkley Moor
arr. John Bertalot

While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground,
The angel of the Lord came down,
The angel of the Lord came down,
And glory shone around,
And glory shone around, And glory shone around.

‘Fear not,’ said he (for mighty dread
Had seized their troubled mind);
‘Glad tidings of great joy I bring
Glad tidings of great joy I bring
To you and all mankind,
To you and all mankind, To you and all mankind.

‘To you in David’s town this day
Is born of David’s line
A Saviour, who is Christ the Lord,
A Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;

And this shall be the sign,
And this shall be the sign, And this shall be the sign:

The heav'nly Babe you there shall find
To human view displayed,
All meanly wrapped in swathing bands,
All meanly wrapped in swathing bands,
And in a manger laid,
And in a manger laid, And in a manger laid.'

Thus spake the seraph; and forthwith
Appeared a shining throng
Of angels praising God, who thus
Of angels praising God, who thus
Addressed their joyful song:
Addressed their joyful song: Addressed their joyful song:

'All glory be to God on high,
And to the earth be peace;
Good-will henceforth from heav'n to men
Good-will henceforth from heav'n to men
Begin and never cease,
Begin and never cease, Begin and never cease.'

INTERVAL 15 minutes

Choir and Soloist	I wonder as I wander	Appalachian carol arr. John Rutter
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All	God rest you merry, gentlemen	English Traditional, arr. David Willcocks
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God rest you merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay,
For Jesus Christ our Saviour
Was born upon this day,
To save us all from Satan's power
When we were gone astray:
O tidings of comfort and joy.

From God our Heav'nly Father
A blessed angel came,
And unto certain shepherds

Brought tidings of the same,
 How that in Bethlehem was born
 The Son of God by name:
O tidings of comfort and joy.

Now to the Lord sing praises,
 All you within this place,
 And with true love and brotherhood
 Each other now embrace;
 This holy tide of Christmas
 All others doth deface:
O tidings of comfort and joy.

NYV Christmas Dinner Words and Music by Mary Green and Julie Stanley

Little Road to Bethlehem Words by Margaret Rose
 Music by Michael Head

Together at Christmas Time Words by Jamie Copperwheat
 Music by Julian Winn

Choir I sing of a maiden Patrick Hadley

Choir The Three Kings Peter Cornelius
 and Soloist

All: **Good King Wenceslas** Piaa Cantiones
 arr. David Willcocks

Good King Wenceslas looked out
 On the Feast of Stephen
 When the snow lay round about,
 Deep, and crisp, and even.
 Brightly shone the moon that night,
 Though the frost was cruel,
 When a poor man came in sight,
 Gathering winter fuel.

Low voices Hither, page, and stand by me,
 If thou know'st it, telling,
 Yonder peasant who is he?
 Where and what his dwelling?

High voices Sire, he lives a good league hence,
 Underneath the mountain.

Right against the forest fence,
By St Agnes Fountain.

Low voices Bring me flesh, and bring me wine,
Bring me pine logs hither:
Thou and I will see him dine,
When we bear them thither.

All Page and monarch, forth they went,
Forth they went together:
Through the rude wind's wild lament
And the bitter weather.

High voices Sire, the night is darker now,
And the wind blows stronger;
Fails my heart, I know not how;
I can go no longer.

Low voices Mark my footsteps, good my page;
Tread thou in them boldly:
Thou shalt find the winter's rage
Freeze thy blood less coldly.

All In his master's steps he trod,
Where the snow lay dinted;
Heat was in the very sod
Which the saint had printed.
Therefore, Christian men, be sure,
Wealth or rank possessing,
Ye who now will bless the poor,
Shall yourselves find blessing.

Choir
and NYV Every star shall sing a carol

Sydney Carter, arr. John Benson

Star Carol

John Rutter

All (refrain) *See his star shining bright
In the sky this Christmas Night!
Follow me joyfully;
Hurry to Bethlehem and see the son of Mary!*

Choir This Christmas Night

Malcolm Williamson

All	Hark the Herald Angels Sing	Felix Mendelssohn arr. David Willcocks
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Hark! The herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King!
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled:
Joyful all ye nations rise,
Join the triumph of the skies,
With th'angelic host proclaim:
Christ is born in Bethlehem.
Hark! The herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King!

Christ, by highest heav'n adored,
Christ the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold Him come
Offspring of a virgin's womb:
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
Hail th'incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! The herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King!

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Son of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
Ris'n with healing in His wings;
Mild He lays His glory by,
Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King!

Choir	We wish you a merry Christmas	English traditional, arr. Arthur Warrell
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***The members of Nantwich Choral Society wish all their
Friends and Supporters a very Happy and Peaceful Christmas!***

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Nantwich Young Voices are a vibrant children's choir who operate under the umbrella of the Love Music Trust, Lead partners in the Music Hub organisation for Cheshire East. The choir is open to all pupils from the age of 6 - 13 and rehearses every term-time Tuesday at Elim Chapel in Nantwich from 4.15 - 5.30pm. The choir performs locally and beyond at many events, including The Love Music Trust Summer Celebration at Clonter Opera and the North West Choirs Partnership Singing Day at various large-scale venues around the North West. NYV is delighted to be performing with the Nantwich Choral Society once again this Christmas and is one of our favourite concerts in the academic year.



Fantasia on Christmas Carols – Ralph Vaughan Williams 1912

The Fantasia on Christmas carols for baritone solo, chorus, and orchestra, (a full orchestra with organ and set of bells --- RVW didn't do things by halves) was first performed at the Three Choirs Festival in Hereford Festival in 1912. This followed his composition of the Tallis Fantasia in 1910 at Gloucester, and the Five Mystical Songs at Worcester in 1911.

It is unlikely that the audience at that time recognised one of the four constituent carols acknowledged on the title page of the score - *The Truth sent from above, Come all you worthy gentleman, On Christmas Night* and *There is a fountain*. They were quite unlike the Victorian carols then in current use, which were not of folk origin. Most carols then, were still of a hearty character in which the Dickensian idea of Christmas was prominent.

By 1912, the feeling for the mystical and somewhat revived medieval carol was starting to become more prominent and the Cowley Carol book, the principal instrument in the change of style, had already been published for 11 years. The Carol revival in England goes back a long way. In 1833 Sandys published a small collection in which were rescued a few authentic folk carols e.g. *The Cherry Tree Carol, I saw three ships, A Virgin most pure* and *God rest Ye Merry*. The rest we now know so well had to wait for the folksong revival in which Williams and Holst along with Cecil Sharp and others were so prominent from about 1900.

The practice of carol singing had spread under the influence of the Oxford Movement from the home and streets and even into the Church! By 1901, the Cowley Carol book appeared, tapping at the folk tradition from which emerged not only Nativity carols, but carols related to Easter and included pagan Wassail songs. Vaughan Williams made his own contribution. On the title page of the score, three alternatives scoring were permitted to facilitate the wider use of this happy beautiful hearty and mystical Christmas music. These are the strings and organ, piano /organ alone and piano and cello solo.

The importance of the cello is made manifest at once as it opens with an improvisatory passage for solo cello foreshadowing the general shape and beauty of the first carol, *The Truth from sent from above* was first collected in 1909 in from Mr W Jenkins of King's Pyon near Weobley in Herefordshire. The second carol is linked to the first by a brief phrase of cello solo on the same tune but then the key is changed to a bright E major for *Come all you worthy Gentlemen*. Cecil Sharp collected this carol from Bridgwater in Somerset. Sharpe had learned and recorded it from a Mr Rapsey who had learned it from his mother and used to sing it in-the streets.

Here we come a wassailing had its beginning possibly as the *The Wassail Bough* from Yorkshire and could originally been a dance or singing game tune. The baritone solo sings first *On Christmas night* collected by Vaughan Williams himself from Mrs Verrall of Monks Gate, near Horsham in Sussex in 1904. There seems nothing particularly learned or profound about this piece. It is as one might expect tuneful, singable and immediately recognisable stylistically. The text is arranged to tell the story of the Fall of Man and Christ's redemption of the fallen world and rejoice in and reflect on it and finishing with happy New Year wishes to the household.

Quoting Michael Kennedy: *the quiet ending after all the jovial festivities, reaches out into the starlit depths of the winter sky as the wassailer's voices vanish into the distance, across snow-covered fields into the night, as if to indicate there is a greater meaning to the Christmas story that just an occasion for wassailing and a "good sing".*

Ref. Gant, A. (2014) *Christmas Carols from village green to church choir*, Profile Books Ltd
Kennedy, M. (1980) *The works of Ralph Vaughan Williams*. London: Oxford University Press

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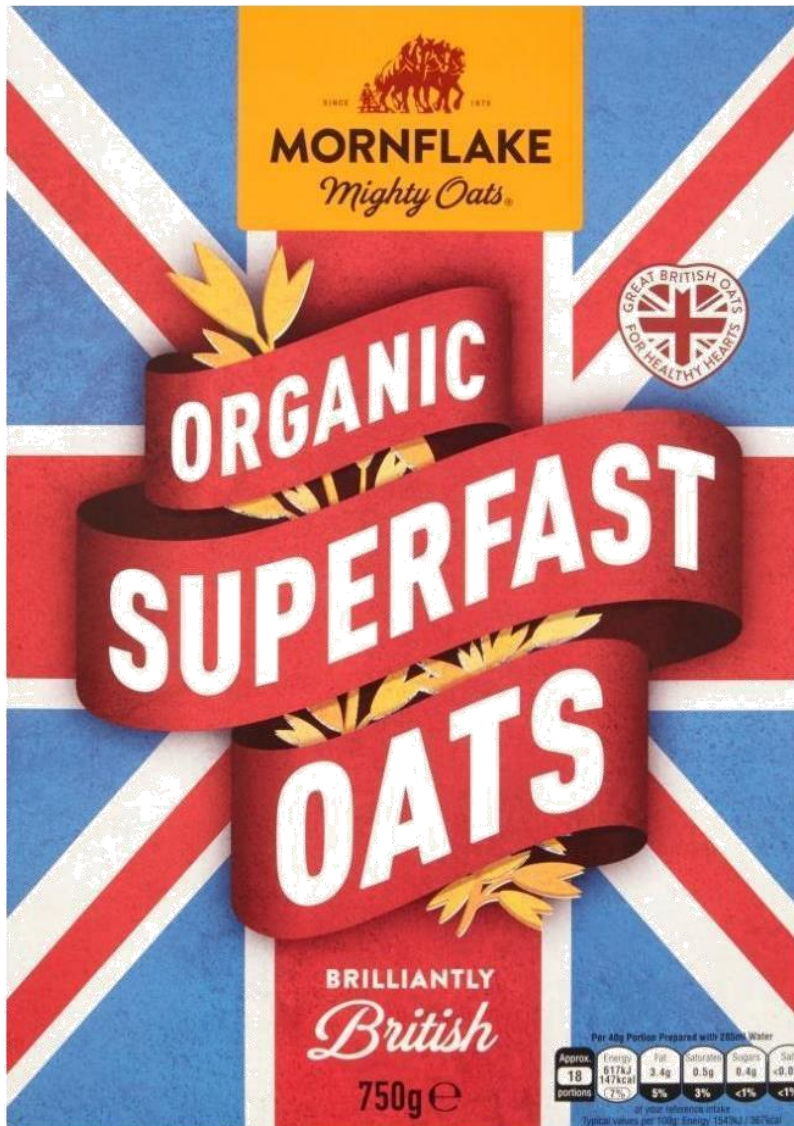
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Programme of events 2023

Saturday 4 February 2023
St Mary's Church Nantwich
Come and Sing
Handel – *Coronation Anthems*
Parry – I was glad

Sunday 19 March 2023, 3.30 pm
Civic Hall, Nantwich
With Nantwich Sinfonia
Haydn – The Creation

Saturday 24 June 2023, 7.30 pm
St Mary's Church Nantwich
with *Ensemble Vocal Arpège Macon*
and Nantwich Sinfonia
Vivaldi – Gloria
Brandenburg Concerto No 2