

NANTWICH CHORAL SOCIETY

Come and Sing

THE CREATION

An Oratorio by

FRANZ JOSEF HAYDN



Milly Forrest – Soprano

Christopher Barnes - Tenor

Jacob Philips - Bass

Simon Russell - Organ

John Naylor - Conductor

**St Mary's Church, Nantwich
Saturday April 30th 2016**

Welcome

On behalf of the Nantwich Choral Society I would like to welcome you to our concert. The choir, now in its 43rd season, began its life as an evening class but rapidly took on a life of its own and has become one of the most accomplished and well-regarded choirs in the North West of England. For the last ten years we have been fortunate to have the inspirational John Naylor as our Music Director and we are also blest with a fine accompanist, Simon Russell.

The concert tonight is the end product of one of our very successful 'Come and Sing' events which we hold annually. Members of the Nantwich Choral Society are joined by singers from many other choirs in the region to spend the day rehearsing a work and then perform it in the evening. These events are designed to widen choral singers' experience of the choral repertoire, as well as bringing singers together for an enjoyable day out. Our work for today, Haydn's *Creation*, is a much-loved piece which NCS last performed in 2011. Among its many delights is the great chorus 'The heavens are telling the glory of God' which is almost as popular as the Hallelujah Chorus and is often performed as a stand-alone piece.

The resources required to put on these concerts are considerable, and we wish to acknowledge our gratitude for the legacies, sponsorships, gifts, grants and donations which help maintain and develop our musical standards. Recently we have received grants from Cheshire East and Nantwich Town Council. Without the generosity of these bodies and others it would not be possible for our choral society to have the opportunity to take part in concerts of a high standard, using professional soloists and orchestral players as required; and it would not be possible for you, the audience, to listen to great choral works here in the wonderful setting of St Mary's Church.

Kay Foster

Commentary

Haydn witnessed many radical changes in music during the course of his long life. He was eighteen when Bach died in 1750, not long before the close of the Baroque era, and seventy-two when Beethoven's 'Eroica' Symphony was first performed in 1804, ushering in the Romantic period. Old forms of music were superseded by the symphony, sonata and string quartet, patronage moved from the church to the royal court, and public concerts were rapidly becoming immensely popular. Throughout all these changes, Haydn remained a pioneering figure. Other composers had written symphonies, sonatas and string quartets before him, but it was Haydn who first exploited the untapped potential of these forms, expanding and developing them to a hitherto unimagined degree.

The almost childlike cheerfulness of Haydn's music, its inexhaustible inventiveness and its perfection of design conceal a considerable inner strength. This fusion of exuberance, originality, classical elegance and intellectual power explains to a large extent the compelling appeal of his music. These are the qualities that placed Haydn far and away above the level of all except Mozart amongst his contemporaries, and kept him at the forefront of music during most of the eighteenth century. No wonder he was hailed as a genius throughout Europe, admired and revered by the public and by his peers. Mozart said, '*Haydn alone has the secret both of making me smile and of touching my innermost soul*'. Even Napoleon, on capturing Vienna, immediately ordered a guard of honour to be placed round Haydn's house.

For much of his life Haydn's energies were devoted primarily to composing orchestral and instrumental music. The supreme choral masterpieces of his old age – *The Creation*, *The Seasons* and the six last great masses, including the well-known *Nelson Mass* – were all composed after 1795, the year in which he completed the last of his 104 symphonies. The oratorio as a musical form appeared briefly in seventeenth century Italy, but was soon eclipsed by the much more popular operas. It was Handel who resurrected the oratorio from obscurity, transforming it from little more than an extended cantata into a powerful choral music-drama that was soon to dominate public music-making in eighteenth and nineteenth century England.

The succession of masterpieces that Handel wrote inspired many later composers, notably Haydn and Mendelssohn. During his first visit to London, Haydn attended one of the great Handel festivals held in Westminster Abbey and was completely overwhelmed by the experience, as a result of which he resolved to write an oratorio himself that would be worthy of Handel's supreme examples. In 1796, inspired by what he had heard whilst in London, Haydn set to work on the score, which was not completed until 1798, by which time he was sixty-six. 'I was never so devout as during that time when I was working on *The Creation*,' he observed. The work received its first public performance in

1799 and was immediately recognised as a supreme masterpiece, receiving many performances all over Europe.

The text of *The Creation* has a long history. The three sources are Genesis, the Biblical book of Psalms, and John Milton's Genesis epic *Paradise Lost*. In 1795, when Haydn was leaving England, the impresario Johann Peter Salomon (1745–1815) who had arranged his concerts there handed him a new poem entitled *The Creation of the World* whose author remains anonymous. This original had been offered to Handel, but the old master had not worked on it, as its wordiness meant that it would have been 4 hours in length when set to music. The libretto was probably passed on to Salomon by Thomas Linley Sr. (1733–1795), a Drury Lane oratorio concert director.

When Haydn returned to Vienna, he turned this libretto over to Baron van Swieten. The Baron led a multifaceted career as a diplomat, librarian in charge of the imperial library, amateur musician, and generous patron of music and the arts. He is largely responsible for recasting the English libretto of *The Creation* in a German translation (*Die Schöpfung*) that Haydn could use to compose. He also made suggestions to Haydn regarding the setting of individual numbers. The work was published bilingually (1800) and is still performed in both languages today. Haydn himself preferred for the English translation to be used when the work was performed for English-speaking audiences. Van Swieten was evidently not a fully fluent speaker of English, and the metrically-matched English version of the libretto has given rise to criticism and various attempts at improvement. Indeed, the English version is sufficiently awkward that the work is sometimes performed in German even in English-speaking countries. One passage describing the freshly minted Adam's forehead ended up, "The large and arched front sublime/of wisdom deep declares the seat". Hmm..! (NCS members and their audience may recall Van Swieten's hand in the original libretto of *The Seasons* which we performed in 2009 in a much more acceptable translation.)

The first performances of *The Creation* in 1798 were sponsored by a group of noble citizens, who paid the composer handsomely for the right to stage the premiere (Salomon briefly threatened to sue, on grounds that the English libretto had been translated illegally). The performance was delayed until late April—the parts were not finished until Good Friday—but the completed work was rehearsed before a full audience on April 29.

The first public performance the next day was a private affair, but hundreds of people crowded into the street around the Schwarzenberg Palace to hear this eagerly anticipated work. Admission was by invitation only. Those invited included wealthy patrons of the arts, high government officials, prominent composers and musicians, and a sprinkling of the nobility of several countries; the common folk, who would have to wait for later occasions to hear the new work, so crowded the streets near the palace that some 30 special police were needed to keep order. Many of those lucky enough to be

inside wrote glowing accounts of the piece. In a letter to the *Neue deutsche Merkur*, one audience member wrote: "Already three days have passed since that happy evening, and it still sounds in my ears and heart, and my breast is constricted by many emotions even thinking of it."

The first public performance at Vienna's Burgtheater on 19 March 1799 was sold out far in advance, and *Die Schöpfung* was performed nearly forty more times in the city during Haydn's lifetime. It had its London premiere the next year, in an English translation, at the Covent Garden Theatre. The last performance Haydn attended was on March 27 1808, just a year before he died: the aged and ill Haydn was carried in with great honour on an armchair. According to one account, the audience broke into spontaneous applause at the coming of "light" and "Papa" Haydn, in a typical gesture weakly pointed upwards and said: "Not from me—everything comes from up there!"

In common with opera, and like most oratorios – though not *Messiah - The Creation* has named characters and is divided into acts and scenes. The oratorio depicts and celebrates the creation of the world as described in the biblical Book of Genesis and in *Paradise Lost*. It is scored for soprano, tenor and bass soloists, chorus and a symphonic orchestra (tonight replaced by organ accompaniment), and is structured in three parts. These consist of sequences of choruses, recitatives and arias. The work begins with an extended orchestral introduction, 'Representation of Chaos.' Parts One and Two then describe the six days of Creation, each of which follows a threefold pattern comprising biblical narrative, descriptive central section and hymn of praise. The three soloists represent the archangels Gabriel (soprano), Uriel (tenor) and Raphael (bass), with the chorus fulfilling an important role portraying angels glorifying their maker. Part Three is devoted entirely to the appearance of Adam and Eve (bass and soprano) who sing of the wonder and perfection of God's newly created world and of their happiness together. Soloists and choir combine for the final uplifting chorus of praise.

Part I celebrates the creation of the primal light, the Earth, the heavenly bodies, bodies of water, weather, and plant life.

No. 1. *The Representation of Chaos* - One of the most famous numbers in the work, an overture in C minor in slow tempo, written in sonata form. Haydn depicts Chaos by withholding musical cadences from the ends of phrases.

No. 2. *In the beginning God created Heaven and Earth* - This movement relates the words of Genesis 1:1–4. It begins with a recitative for bass solo in C minor, followed by choral presentation of the creation of light. The latter is depicted first with a soft pizzicato note from the accompaniment, followed by a sudden surprise fortissimo C major chord on the word 'Light'. This moment created a sensation at the public premiere of the work in Vienna. According to a friend of the composer:

'at that moment when light broke out for the first time, one would have said that rays darted from the composer's burning eyes. The enchantment of the electrified Viennese was so general that the orchestra could not proceed for some minutes.'

Audiences today generally let the moment speak for itself! Following the appearance of light is a brief tenor recitative on the words "*and God saw the light, that it was good*", leading into:

No. 3. *Now vanish before the holy beams* - an aria for tenor with chorus in A major portraying the defeat of Satan's host, from *Paradise Lost*.

(End of the first day).

No. 4. *And God made the firmament* - an extended recitative for bass in C major. The bass part first gives the words of Genesis 1:6-7, then follows tone painting in the accompaniment describing the division of the waters from the land and the first storms.

No. 5. *The marv'illous work behold amazed* - Soprano solo with chorus, in C major. The heavenly hosts praise God and the work of the second day.

(End of the second day).

No. 6. *And God said, let the waters* - A brief recitative for bass (Genesis 1:9–10), leading into:

No. 7. *Rolling in foaming billows* - Aria in D minor for bass, narrating the creation of seas, mountains, rivers, and (a coda in D major) brooks. It has been pointed out that the stylistic inspiration here appears to be the "revenge aria" of 18th century opera buffa, as for instance in "La vendetta", from Mozart's *Le nozze de Figaro*.

No. 8. *And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass* – a brief recitative for soprano (Genesis 1:11), leading into:

No. 9. *With verdure clad the fields appear* - Solo aria in B flat major for soprano, in Siciliana rhythm, celebrating the creation of plants.

No. 10. *And the Heavenly host proclaimed the third day* - a brief recitative for tenor, leading into:

No. 11. *Awake the harp* - Chorus celebrating the third day, with a four-part fugue on the words "For he both heaven and earth has clothed in stately dress".

(End of the third day)

No. 12. *And God said: Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven* - Recitative for tenor, with portions of Genesis 1:14–16.

No. 13. *In splendour bright is rising now the sun* - tenor narration, the accompaniment portraying a brilliant sunrise, then a languid moonrise. The tune of the sunrise is simply ten notes of the D major scale, variously harmonized; the moon rises in the subdominant key of G, also with a rising scale passage. The end of recitative briefly alludes to the new-created stars, then introduces:

No. 14. *The heavens are telling the glory of God*

This is perhaps the most famous chorus from *The Creation*. The text is based on Psalm 19:1–3, which had been set by Bach as the opening chorus of his cantata *Die Himmel erzählen die Ehre Gottes*, BWV 76. Haydn's century, following on the discoveries of Newton, had the view that an orderly universe - particularly the mathematically-governed motion of the heavenly bodies - attests to divine wisdom. Haydn, a naturally curious man, took the trouble to visit William Herschel, ex-composer and discoverer of Uranus, in his observatory in Slough.

"*The heavens are telling*" is not in the Part 1's home key of C minor, but is instead in C major, showing the triumph of light over dark. It begins with alternation between celebratory choral passages and more meditative sequences from the three vocal soloists, followed by a choral fugue then a final homophonic section. ("*The wonder of his works displays the firmament*" is the English text here, with a word-order drawn from the German, which is somewhat awkward compared to the Authorized Version's "And the firmament sheweth the handywork of God".) Haydn piles coda upon coda, each occurring at a point where the music seems about to end, building to a final intense conclusion.

(End of the fourth day)

Part II celebrates the creation of sea creatures, birds, animals, and lastly, man.

No. 15. *And God said: Let the waters bring forth in plenty* - Recitative for soprano (Genesis 1:20), leading into:

No. 16. *On mighty pens uplifted soars the eagle aloft* - aria for soprano in F major, celebrating the creation of birds. The species mentioned are the eagle, the lark, the dove and the nightingale. The lyrics include the conceit that, at the time just after the Creation, the nightingale's song was not yet melancholy.

No. 17. *And God created great whales* for bass solo, in D minor. A recitative (from Genesis 1:21–22) followed by a very brief aria, the latter a verse paraphrase on the biblical words (Gen. 1:22) "Be fruitful and multiply." The bass sings in the voice of the Almighty, as quoted by the Archangel Raphael.

No. 18. *And the angels struck their immortal harps* - brief recitative for bass, with notable harp imitations in the accompaniment, leading into:

No. 19. *Most beautiful appear* - Haydn breaks the regularity of the pattern "Recitative–Elaboration for solo–Celebratory chorus" with a meditative work in A major for the trio of vocalists, contemplating the beauty and immensity of the newly created world. This leads without a break to:

No. 20. *The Lord is great* for the chorus with all three soloists, in A major, celebrating the fifth day.

End of the fifth day

INTERVAL

No. 21. *And God said: Let earth bring forth the living creature* - Recitative for bass (Genesis 1:24), leading into:

No. 22. *Straight opening her fertile womb* - A movement of tone painting with bass narration. Haydn's gentle sense of humor is indulged here as the newly created creatures appear, each with musical illustration: lion, tiger, stag, horse, cattle, sheep, insects, and worms. As always in Haydn's oratorio tone painting, the sung verbal explanation comes after the orchestral portrayal. The transition from glamorous animals (the first four) to prosaic ones (the last four) is marked with an unprepared modulation from D flat to A major. The farm animals are portrayed (as in No. 8) with Siciliana rhythm, which plainly had bucolic associations for Haydn.

No. 23. *Now heaven in fullest glory shone* - Aria for bass in D major, in 3/4 time.

"But all the work was not complete; there wanted yet that wondrous being that, grateful, should God's pow'r admire, with heart and voice his goodness praise."

No. 24. *And God created Man* - Tenor recitative (Genesis 1:27, 2:7), leading to:

No. 25. *In native worth and honour clad* - A favourite aria for tenor, in C major, celebrating the creation of man, then woman. Often sung outside the context of *The Creation*. Although the aria relates a Biblical story, the virtues attributed to Adam (and not Eve) clearly reflect the values of the Enlightenment. This was almost certainly the last music from *The Creation* that Haydn ever heard: it was sung for him several days before his death in 1809 as a gesture of respect by a French military officer, a member of Napoleon's invading army.

No. 26. *And God saw everything* – a brief recitative for bass (text amplifying Genesis 1:31).

No. 27. *Achieved is the glorious work* - A celebration for chorus alone, in B flat, of the sixth day.

No. 27a *On thee each living soul awaits* - Another meditation for the three angels (in E flat major), on God's omnipotence and mercy, quoting Psalm 145:15–16. The end of the trio is followed without pause by...

No. 27b. *Achieved is the glorious work* - This chorus begins with the same music and words as No. 26, and is in the same key of B flat but it quickly moves into a large double fugue on the words "Glory to his name for ever". As appropriate to the finale of Part II, this repeat chorus is longer and ends more intensely than the first.

Part III takes place in the Garden of Eden, narrating the happy first hours of Adam and Eve.

No. 28. *In rosy mantle appears* - An instrumental prelude in slow tempo depicting dawn in the Garden of Eden, followed by a recitative for tenor representing Uriel. Adam and Eve are seen walking hand in hand. The key is E major, very remote from the flat keys that have dominated the work so far. Various commentators suggest that this was meant by Haydn to convey the remoteness of Earth from Heaven, or to contrast the sinfulness of people with the perfection of angels.

No. 29. *By thee with bliss, O bounteous Lord* - Adam and Eve offer a prayer of thanks in C major, accompanied by a chorus of angels. This movement, the longest in *The Creation*, has three parts. In the first, marked adagio, Adam and Eve sing their prayer, with the chorus singing underneath them. In the second section, the tempo picks up, and Adam, Eve, and the angels praise the newly created world. The final section is for chorus alone, a celebration on the words ("We praise thee now and evermore").

No. 30a. *Our duty we have now performed* - Recitative for Adam.

No. 32. *O happy pair, and ever happy henceforth*

Uriel briefly explains to the pair that they will be happy always if they will refrain from wanting to have, or wishing to know, more than they should. This is the only reference to the fall of humanity.

No. 33. *Sing the Lord, ye voices all*

Final chorus in B flat major. There is a slow introduction, followed by a double fugue on the words "The praise of the Lord will endure forever", with passages for the vocal soloists and a final homophonic section.

Milly Forrest - soprano

At the age of 10, Milly commenced her studies at the Junior Royal Academy of Music where she stayed for eight years as a singer and flautist. She is now in her third year of the undergraduate course, learning with Kathleen Livingstone and Iain Ledingham. Across her two years at the Royal Academy, she has regularly performed in the chorus of the Bach cantata series.

Milly has been a soloist in a number of oratorios, most recently Haydn's *Nelson Mass*, Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's *St John's Passion*, Haydn's *Creation* and *Elijah* by Mendelssohn. She is looking forward to performing Handel's *Athaliah* with Whitehall choir at St John Smith's square in November and then Handel's *Silete Venti* with Iain Ledingham and the South Bucks Choral society in January.

Milly was awarded first place in the AESS song competition in 2011. Last year she won first place in the Hart Male Voice choir competition for young singers and was highly commended in the Major Van Someren–Godfrey prize. This year she was runner up in the Courtney Kenny English song competition.

Milly has worked with conductors including Sir Colin Davis, Peter Robinson, Yan Pascal Tortellier, Bob Chilcott, David Hill and Peter Stark. Her operatic experience includes Fiordiligi from *Così fan tutte* by Mozart, Pamina from *The Magic Flute* by Mozart, Nanetta from *Falstaff* by Verdi and Clorinda from *Cenerentola* by Rossini. In 2013 Milly produced, directed and sung Susanna in The London Youth Symphony Orchestra's production of *The Marriage of Figaro* by Mozart as part of the Bedford Park Festival, working closely with Diana Montague.

Last summer, Milly took part in an operatic summer school in Italy under the direction of Iain Ledingham.

Christopher Barnes - tenor

Chris was born and raised in rural Norfolk and was introduced to music at the age of three when his parents bought him a violin for Christmas. Violin lessons followed and continued throughout his school career. At the age of sixteen Chris was awarded a scholarship to Greshams school in Holt where he studied A Levels and met Angela Dugdale, the choir director and now friend, who introduced him to singing. Chris was lead Tenor in the Greshams School Chapel Choir and toured Russia in 1990.

In 1992 Chris started a degree in Mechanical Engineering at Brunel University and graduated in 1996.

Whilst he had not done any singing at University the passion for music was still there, and after securing his first job, took private lessons with Kathleen Mackie of The Royal College of Music and then Barbara Robotham of the Royal Northern College of Music after moving to the North West.

Chris now runs his own business in Warehousing and Distribution employing 100 people in the North West, North East and Midlands and lives just outside Tarporley with Sarah-Jane and his four children, Olivia, Isabella, Francesca and William.

Jacob Phillips - baritone

Jacob is a scholar at the Royal Academy of Music where he studies singing under the tutelage of Mark Wildman and Matthew Fletcher. His musical roots were modest and his attendance at the JRNCM for three years has helped him to follow music thus far. Whilst attending the JRNCM he studied Piano and classical guitar and was involved in various projects including his first solo recital in the autumn of 2014 and his debut Bach cantata (No.82). In 2015, he was awarded The Sylvia Swiffin Trust Prize for his contribution to the school before leaving.

Jacob has already sung for a number of recitals for societies in the north of England including Wigan and Leigh music society and is planning on singing in a morning concert series in Nottingham for a rare performance of Schubert lieder arranged guitar and voice. He is also featuring in the Kohn foundation Bach cantata series in the coming year at RAM.

Simon Russell - organ

Simon was born in Liverpool. He studied organ at Birkenhead School with Timothy Lawford and gained his ARCM and FTCL diplomas while still at school then on to Cambridge as Organ Scholar at St. Catharine's College, where he continued studies with Dame Gillian Weir and the late Peter Le Huray.

After Cambridge he was appointed Assistant Organist at Chester Cathedral but decided after a while to keep music as a hobby and gain his fortune from computer keyboards. He was firstly accompanist and then Music Director of the Hoylake Choral Society from 1982 until he moved, in 2000, to Nantwich where he is Organist at St Mary's Parish Church. He is an annual recitalist at Bangor and Chester Cathedrals and is on the 'reserve' organist list playing for visiting choirs and covering holiday periods and other absences. He is also in demand as an organ, piano and theory tutor and has many Associated Board and other pupil distinctions and diploma successes to his credit. Since May 2014, he has been a full-time professional freelance musician and as well as being

accompanist to the Nantwich Choral Society, he is also accompanist to the Jubilate Chamber Choir, based in Cheltenham. Simon is also an examiner for the London College of Music and the Regional Coordinator for the North of England for the Royal School of Church Music.

John Naylor - conductor

As conductor, singer and organist, John combines extensive performance experience in world-class choirs with a lifelong passionate interest in choral music and its performance. Following a successful business career he now devotes most of his activities to conducting and choir development. His original training was as a choral scholar at St John's College, Cambridge with the great Dr George Guest after keyboard studies with Conrad Eden at Durham Cathedral where he was a chorister, a music scholarship at Rossall School and singing studies with Wilfrid Brown and Lyndon van der Pump from The Royal College of Music.

He subsequently became a professional member of the Chapel Royal Choir of St Peter ad Vincula at H.M. Tower of London and The Monteverdi Choir and Louis Halsey Singers, appearing at The Proms, The South Bank, The Aldeburgh Festival and in numerous broadcasts and recordings. He has sung in the cathedral choirs of Carlisle, Christ Church Oxford and Chester where until recently he could still be occasionally spotted on the back row!

John has been Director of The Lydian Singers since founding the choir in 1980. They are now one of the leading chamber choirs in the North West and have performed extensively in the North West, Spain, France, Italy and in most of the cathedrals in Great Britain, often returning several times by invitation. He also conducts The Open University Chapel Choir.

John was appointed Music Director of Nantwich Choral Society in September 2005 for whom he has now conducted highly acclaimed performances of works in the mainstream choral repertoire including Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Bach's *St John Passion* and *St Matthew Passion* (both in Chester Cathedral), and Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610*, Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms* Fauré's *Requiem*, Karl Jenkins' *The Armed Man* with Ensemble Vocal Arpège de Mâcon, Mozart's *Requiem* and Bach's *B minor Mass* with the 18th Century Concert Orchestra, Vaughan Williams *Sea Symphony* and *The Lark Ascending*, Haydn's *The Seasons* and *The Dream of Gerontius* in Chester cathedral, Coleridge Taylor's *Hiawatha* and Elgar *Enigma Variations* with the Northern Concordia Orchestra, and Handel *Coronation Anthems* and the *Dettingen Te Deum* with the 18th Century Sinfonia.

Performances in 2015 included Handel *Judas Maccabeus*, Haydn *Harmoniemesse* and Duruflé *Requiem* with NCS, Tewkesbury Abbey, Brecon Cathedral and Handel's *Dixit*

Dominus and Schubert *Mass in G* at The Lymm Festival with The Lydian Singers, and Ely and Ripon cathedrals with OUCC.

2016 includes *St John Passion*, Will Todd *Mass in Blue* and Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Requiem* with NCS, Peterborough and St Albans cathedrals with OUCC , and Worcester Cathedral, Tewkesbury Abbey and The Lymm Festival (Bach *Lobet den Herrn*, Handel *Utrecht Jubilate* and Vivaldi Gloria) with the Lydian Singers.

Singing Day

**St Mary's Church, Acton
Saturday 22 October 2016
1000 – 1630**

Ave Maria - Composers and their music

Following a similar format to last year's hugely popular event, our 2016 Singing Day will explore settings of the greatest Marian text of all by composers as diverse as Josquin Desprez, Arcadelt, Robert Parsons, Bruckner, Rachmaninov, Stravinsky, Verdi, Elgar and Dvorak together with some of their other music.

This unusual Singing Day is designed to appeal to singers of all abilities – many of the settings are very straightforward, some are very well known, some have a few musical challenges but none are outside the abilities of most regular choral society singers. Whatever your level of musical ability, all these settings are well worth a day's musical exploration in the company of like-minded singers under John Naylor's encouraging direction.

The beautiful and comfortable church of St Mary's at Acton is an ideal venue for this occasion. There is a large (free) car park in the village, refreshments will be available and all music will be provided.

Registration forms will be available from early September on our website www.nantwichchoral.org.uk or from David Jones, Bramble Cottage, Newtown, Sound, Nr. Nantwich, Cheshire, CW5 8BG, Tel 01270 780854.

Email: david.jones@soundcare.co.uk

Participants in the 2015 Singing day wrote:

- *Excellent day as we have come to expect from NCS and John. The music pack was superb. Enjoyed singing all the different versions of Ave Verum and John's descriptions of the composers and the time they lived in was really enlightening. Very good day Thank you.*
- *First experience of Singing day. Wonderful. Will be a "must do" in future. Thank you.*
- *Always a lovely day – just keep them going.*
- *Progressing through the centuries with one work was particularly interesting. Well done!*

- *The pace of study was perfect – we got through everything with interest and some detail, just what was required for the occasion.*
- *The organisation was without fault, the venue just the right temperature (and lovely with the harvest festival décor) and the tray bakes a tasty bonus!*

Concerts and Other Events 2016

Saturday 25 June 2016

St Mary's Nantwich

Mass (and more) in Blue

Mass in Blue – Will Todd

Choral arrangements of Classic Popular Songs

Saturday 22 October 2016

St Mary, Acton

Singing Day

Ave Maria - Settings throughout the ages

Saturday 12 November 2016

St Mary's, Nantwich

Requiem – Andrew Lloyd Webber

Saturday 17 December 2016

St Mary's, Nantwich

Family Carol Concert

with Nantwich Young Voices

2017

Saturday 5 January 2017
Come and Sing: Handel's *Messiah*
with The Nantwich Sinfonia

Sunday 26 March 2017
Nantwich Civic Hall
Mendelssohn: *Elijah*
with The Northern Concordia Orchestra

Saturday July 1 2017
St Mary's Nantwich
John Rutter: *The Sprig of Thyme* and *Magnificat*
with Ensemble Vocal Arpege Macon and
The Nantwich Sinfonia

Sunday October 22 2017
Victoria Hall Hanley
Verdi: *Requiem*
with Ceramic City Choir and
The Northern Concordia Orchestra

Acknowledgements

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