

ACS Musical Notes

Autumn 2024 Newsletter



AYLESBURY
Choral Society



Our Spring Concert in March '24 of an evening of 'Magnificats'

Welcome to this first newsletter of the new season of music from the Aylesbury Choral Society. We had a highly successful 2023-24, including two orchestral concerts and one which was largely a cappella. Our year started with a performance of Bach's ever-popular *Christmas Oratorio*, or at least the first four cantatas of the six that make up this extensive work. We feel - and this is echoed by the audiences and the newspaper reviews - that, with each concert we stage, we are getting increasingly inspirational (one of the words used to describe ACS's singing) in our singing, demonstrating increasing precision and expression. The performance of the Bach was no exception and everyone present (over two hundred in the audience) were enthusiastic and excited. Then, at the end of March, we performed - again, with orchestra - a concert with a theme, something ACS has not done in some time. On this occasion, the theme was 'Magnificat' and included performances of six highly contrasting choral Magnificats (plus two Nunc Dimittises) by Bach, Vivaldi, Purcell, Walmisley, Pärt and Dupré. The Purcell and Walmisley church canticles were specially orchestrated for the evening and this brought a new 'colour' and excitement to the works; and the Arvo Pärt *Magnificat*, an unaccompanied work, provided an extraordinary and beautiful modern contrast to the majority baroque works. Finally, in the summer, as the previous year, we performed a concert of two distinct halves in which the first half consisted of a cappella performances of Palestrina's *Missa Brevis* (it is a long time since ACS performed one of the great Renaissance masses and the sound was beautiful - an extract can be found on our website) and three of Anton Bruckner's motets. Then, the second half consisted of a series of lighter works such as Sir Arthur Sullivan's *The long day closes*, and songs from the jazz and folk repertoires such as *Shenandoah* and *Moon River*.

If you would like to read the reviews of the first two of the season's concerts, printed in the electronic version of *The Bucks Herald*, go to the ACS website and click on 'About' from the main menu and then 'Past Performances'. You will find links there. It is to be hoped that you check our new website (now operating for about a year) on a regular basis as it contains all the most up-to-date information on the choir, links for purchasing tickets, dates of forthcoming concerts, and so on.

The 2024-2025 concert season is detailed in the box at the foot of this page. Please consider attending. It is even possible to purchase season tickets for the year which, not only gets you tickets at a reduced cost but also means that you get termly newsletters like this one and a free programme at each concert (all concerts are at St Mary's Church, Aylesbury at 7:30pm). Tickets for each concert separately and also season tickets can be purchased online, if in person is not possible, by following the links on our website: <https://www.aylesburychoral.org.uk>; go to 'Concerts & Tickets' and click on 'Buy Tickets'

The 2024 - 2025 concert season

(all at St Mary's Church, Aylesbury, 7:30pm):

Saturday 7th December, 2024 Rossini: *Petite Messe Solennelle* (with piano & harmonium)

Saturday 5th April, 2025 Mozart: *Coronation Mass*; Marianna Martines:

Quarta Messa - two great classical pieces, familiar and unfamiliar (with orchestra)

Saturday 21st June, 2025 An evening of opera choruses and arias (with piano)

The 2024 - 2025 concert season - our ticket prices:

		Whole-season tickets (3 concerts):
Adults:	£18	£50
Under 18:	£7	£20

Music, Singing and Good Health

"People talk about the health benefits of singing but to me they are far outweighed by the effect singing can have on your spirit."

Jeff Stewart, ACS Musical Director

"Our aim with choirs is to help the singers to find the best in their voices and teach them how to be really expressive through choral music. We have a lot of fun. Laughter is so important in finding the freedom to really express ourselves."

Jeff Stewart, ACS Musical Director, on his website: theyshallaughandsing.com

"Throughout the performance the joy of Bach's work was etched on the faces of the singers, and this very much carried through in the music of the evening."

Simon Pogson, Bucks Herald, Review following ACS's performance of Bach's 'Christmas Oratorio', November 2023

10 Reasons Singing is good for you....

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| 1 Singing makes you feel better | 2 Singing enhances lung function |
| 3 Singing helps you beat stress and relax | 4 Singing helps improve memory |
| 5 Singing builds a sense of community | 6 Singing lets you express yourself |
| 7 Singing can help with pain relief | 8 Singing boosts your self confidence |
| 9 Singing features in wellbeing studies | 10 Singing is for everyone |

from, with further detail, <https://www.operanorth.co.uk/news/10-reasons-singing-is-good-for-you/>

Sponsorship: becoming a 'Friend' of ACS

Our expenses every year are large and we are offering a range of schemes for individuals, groups and businesses to support the choir and to be part of the musical life of this area. If you would like to become a 'friend' and to sponsor the choir with a regular contribution to our work, please do contact our chairman on acschairman@gmail.com and he would be very happy to discuss options with you.

Would you like to join us?

If you are interested in becoming a member of ACS, do come along to a couple of rehearsals - free of charge - to try out what it is like to sing with us. After this trial period, you will be asked to do a short voice assessment so that we can tell which is the best voice section for you. Being able to read music is an advantage but by no means essential and we give help with learning the music, e.g. by providing audio rehearsal files and Internet links to note-learning websites or within the rehearsals themselves. Please contact our membership secretary at moira.membership@gmail.com or our chairman, Chris Dalladay, at acschairman@gmail.com. We meet at The Church on Fairford Leys, Hampden Square, Aylesbury HP19 7HT on Tuesdays during school term times at 7:30pm. Music will be provided.

We hold 'Open' rehearsals on the 2nd Tuesday of each term - all are welcome. The next is on Tuesday 10th September but, you could, in fact, try us out on any rehearsal evening.

If you would like to join our mailing list, please jot a brief email to our chairman, Chris Dalladay, at acschairman@gmail.com letting him know your name and email address.