

THE HYTHE SINGERS SPRING CONCERT



A JOYFUL NOISE

**BACH, BRUCKNER, BYRD
POULENC, BRITTEN**

**Saturday 28th March 2026, 7:30pm
St. Mary's Church, Thorpe, TW20 8TQ**

www.thehythesingers.com



2026 - 2027 CONCERTS

**11
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Prima le Parole
Debussy, Poulenc, Ravel

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Britten & Janáček

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St. John Passion
Bach

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A Joyful Noise!

The Hythe Singers Spring Concert

Saturday 28th March 2026, 7:30pm
at St. Mary's Church, Thorpe

(Patrons – Cecilia McDowall, Richard Mothersill and Ben Spencer)

Soprano

Demelza Coppin
Joan Hellyer
Jo Ive
Mary Morris
Myra Owen
Rebecca Saunders
Cathy Villiers
Carolyn Walters

Alto

Vivien Ambery-Smith
Eileen Bruce
Bridín Mills
Sarah Morris
Elaine Sturman
Chris Thomas
Susi Thornton
Clare Vardon
Jenni Whiteside

Tenor

Jason Crampton
Tony Dowson
David Moncur

Bass

Daniel Brown
Kiran Chatterjee
Rüdiger Schack

Musical Director: Richard Harker

Organist: Bel Comeau

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Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750) Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied

Bach's motets are the only part of his vocal works to remain as part of mainstream choral music from his death to the present day. The fortuitous presence of Mozart at a performance of the choir of St. Thomas, Leipzig – the custodians of Bach's legacy – is the reason. He was so struck by the work that he demanded all the parts be laid out in full before him, for him to study. By the 1790s, the fame of the motets had spread to the Sing-Akademie in Berlin, and the first printed edition was issued in 1802-3.

All Bach's motets are occasional works, though the occasion for which *Singet dem Herrn* was composed is unknown. Written around 1727, it could have been for a funeral, a memorial feast, or perhaps the birthday of Princess Charlotte Friederica Wilhelmine von Anhalt-Köthen on 30 November 1726, given her father, Prince Leopold, employed Bach as Kapellmeister.

1. *Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied, die
Gemeine der Heiligen sollen ihn loben.* Sing to the Lord a new song, the
assembly of saints shall praise him.

*Israel freue sich des, der ihn gemacht
hat. Die Kinder Zion sei'n fröhlich
über ihrem Könige* Let Israel rejoice in him who made her.
Let the children of Zion be glad in their
king,

*Sie sollen loben seinen Namen im
Reigen; mit Pauken und mit Harfen
sollen sie ihm spielen. [Psalm 149:1-3]* they shall praise his name in the dance;
with timbrel and with harps they shall
play for him.

2. Chorale:

*Wie sich ein Vater erbarmet
Gott, nimm dich ferner unser an,
Über seine junge Kinderlein,
So tut der Herr uns allen,
So wir ihn kindlich fürchten rein.
Er kennt das arm Gemächte,
Gott weiß, wir sind nur Staub,
Denn ohne dich ist nichts getan
Mit allen unsern Sachen.
Gleichwie das Gras vom Rechen,
Ein Blum und fallend Laub.* Just as a father has compassion God,
accept us furthermore,
for his young, little children
so does the Lord treat us, the poor,
so we fear him purely, like children.
He recognizes poor humanity,
God knows we are but dust,
for without you there is nothing done
toward any of our concerns.
Just like grass from a rake,
a blossom or a fallen leaf.

*Der Wind nur drüber wehet,
So ist es nicht mehr da.
Drum sei du unser Schirm und Licht,
Und trügt uns unsre Hoffnung nicht,
So wirst du's ferner machen.
Also der Mensch vergehet,
Sein End, das ist ihm nah.*

The wind simply blows it about
and it is there no more.
Thus be our shield and light,
and lest our hopes deceive us,
you will continue to do so.
So too the human passes away,
his ending is nigh.

*Wohl dem, der sich nur steif und fest
Auf dich und deine Huld verlässt.*

Blessed be the one, who fast and firm
surrenders himself to you and your grace.

*3. Lobet den Herrn in seinen Taten,
lobet ihn in seiner großen Herrlichkeit!
[Psalm 150:2]*

Praise the Lord for his acts, praise him in
his great splendour!

*Alles, was Odem hat, lobe den Herrn
Halleluja! [Psalm 150:6]*

Let all that has breath praise the Lord.
Hallelujah!

Anton Bruckner (1824 – 1896)

Locus Iste

Bruckner came to composition late in life, but trained as an organist from a very young age – practising up to 12 hours a day at school, under the guidance of his father, a music teacher. He started composing seriously aged 37, but broader fame and acceptance of his music didn't come until he was in his sixties and had premiered his Seventh Symphony.

Locus Iste was written in 1869 for the dedication of the Votivkapelle at the New Cathedral in Linz, where he had been the cathedral organist.

*Locus iste a Deo factus est,
inaestimabile sacramentum,
irreprehensibilis est.*

This place was made by God,
a priceless sacrament;
it is without reproach.

Anton Bruckner (1824 – 1896)

Ecce Sacerdos Magnus

Ecce Sacerdos Magnus ("Behold the great priest") is a musical setting of an antiphon intended as processional music for the entrance of a bishop into the cathedral. It was written to be performed at Linz Cathedral to mark the 100th

anniversary of the founding of the diocese and was completed in April 1885 and delivered in good time, but for reasons not entirely clear wasn't then performed. Its premiere, by the Vöcklabruck women's choral society, took place in 1921, long after Bruckner's death.

*Ecce sacerdos magnus,
qui in diebus suis placuit Deo.
Ideo jurejando fecit illum Dominus
crescere in plebem suam.
Benedictionem omnium gentium dedit
illi, et testamentum suum confirmavit
super caput ejus. Gloria...*

Behold the great priest,
who, in his days, pleased God.
Therefore, by an oath, the Lord made
him increase among his people.
He gave him the blessing of all nations,
and confirmed His covenant upon his
head. Glory be to the Father...

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750) Prelude and Fugue in C Major

Likely first written before 1717 while Bach worked as court organist to the Duke of Saxe-Weimar, this Prelude and Fugue – BWV 545 – remained a work in progress for several years, developing a low C “frame” at the start and end of the work, and gaining, then losing an entire middle movement. The “final” Prelude and Fugue reflects Bach's maturing style and mastery of counterpoint, moving from the “*Sturm und Drang*” of his youth to a tighter, more Italianate structure.

Heinrich Schütz (1585 – 1672) Jauchzet dem Herrn

Schütz, perhaps the most important German composer before Bach, began his musical journey aged 13, when local nobility staying at his father's inn heard the boy singing, and asked that he be allowed to attend court for further training. After being a choirboy, he briefly studied law, and then moved to Venice to study music with Giovanni Gabrieli. In 1615 he relocated to Dresden to work as court composer for the Elector of Saxony, and published his *Psalmen Davids* – including *Jauchzet dem Herrn* – on his wedding day, in 1619.

Jauchzet dem Herrn is a choral setting of Psalm 100, set for two four-part choirs using echo effects, and draws strongly on his Venetian musical training.

*Jauchzet dem Herren, alle Welt!
Dienet dem Herren mit Freuden;*

O be joyful in the Lord, all the earth!
Serve the Lord with gladness and come

*kommt vor sein Angesicht mit
Frohlocken.*

*Erkennt, daß der Herre Gott ist.
Er hat uns gemacht und nicht wir
selbst zu seinem Volk und zu Schafen
seiner Weide.*

*Gehet zu seinen Toren ein mit Danken,
zu seinen Vorhöfen mit Loben.
Danket ihm, lobet seinen Namen.*

*Denn der Herr ist freundlich, und
seine Gnade währet ewig und seine
Wahrheit für und für.*

*Ehre sei dem Vater und dem Sohn und
auch dem heiligen Geiste, wie es war im
Anfang, jetzt und immerdar und von
Ewigkeit zu Ewigkeit.*

Amen.

before his presence with a song.

Know that the Lord is God;
it is he that has made us and we are his;
we are his people and the sheep of his
pasture.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving
and his courts with praise; give thanks
to him and bless his name.

For the Lord is gracious; his steadfast
love is everlasting, and his faithfulness
endures from generation to generation.

Glory be to the Father and the Son
and to the Holy Ghost as it was in the
beginning, now and for ever and from
eternity to eternity.

Amen.

Francis Poulenc (1892 – 1983)

Exultate Deo

A composer and pianist, Poulenc was one of “Les Six” – a group of Paris-based composers, formed initially under the auspices of Erik Satie, whom Poulenc adored, and then shaped later by Jean Cocteau to yield an avant-garde artistic collective intended to mirror the surrealists and cubists, while also providing a musical counterpoint to the impressionism of Debussy and the complexity of Wagner.

Initially well known for his high spirits and irreverence, Poulenc’s religious music showed a more serious side – in his words, “*the monk and the street urchin*”. *Exultate Deo* was composed in 1941 during the occupation of France, and despite its religious nature has a distinctly secular, almost jazz-inflicted energy.

*Exultate Deo, adjutori nostro,
Jubilate Deo Jacob.
Sumite psalmum, et date tympanum*

Sing aloud unto God our strength: make
a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob.
Take a psalm, and bring hither the

Psalterium jucundum cum cithara.
Buccinate in neomenia tuba
Insigni die solemnitatis vestrae.
[Psalm 81:1-3]

timbrel, the pleasant harp with the
psaltery. Blow the trumpet in the new
moon, on our solemn feast day.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750)

Lobet den Herrn, alle Heiden

A work of unknown date, and written for an unknown occasion, and quite possibly not actually written by Bach at all, *Lobet den Herrn* is nevertheless a delightful addition to the modern collection of “Bach” motets. Doubts regarding its origin arise as it was not included in the original collection of 1802-3 and was unknown until first published separately in 1821. Musicologists also argue about potential errors in the counterpoint of the two themes that open the piece – and if anyone knew counterpoint, it was Bach. All that notwithstanding, it remains a joy to sing!

Lobet den Herrn, alle Heiden,
und preiset ihn, alle Völker!
Denn seine Gnade und Wahrheit
waltet über uns in Ewigkeit. Alleluja.
[Psalm 117:1-2]

Praise the Lord, all the heathens
And celebrate him, all the peoples!
For his grace and truth
Reign over us for ever. Alleluja!

INTERVAL

Benjamin Britten OM CH (1913 – 1976)

Rejoice in the Lamb

Baron Britten of Aldeburgh was one of the central musical figures of his generation, with the revival of British Opera one of his many lasting legacies. While most famous for *Peter Grimes*, he and his partner, Peter Pears, established the Aldeburgh Festival of Music and the Arts, which continues to this day.

Composed for the 50th anniversary of the consecration of St. Matthew’s Church in Northampton, the lyrics of *Rejoice in the Lamb* are taken from *Jubilare Agno*, written by Christopher Smart, during and after being confined to St. Luke’s Hospital for Lunatics, in 1757, aged 35. A graduate of Pembroke College, Cambridge, Smart had a distinguished early academic and literary career, before moving to London in 1749 to work for his future father-in-law, John Newbery, as a writer for “The

Midwife”, a popular magazine for which Smart used the persona “Mrs Mary Midwife” for both practical and humorous reasons.

Smart instigated and became deeply embroiled in the Grub Street Paper War of 1752 that involved many of London’s writers, leading to numerous attacks on his poetry, substantial debts, and a growing rift with Newbery, a highly controlling figure. Enormously overworked, he suffered a seizure in 1755, and in 1757 his father-in-law took out the “Commission of Lunacy” that led to his confinement in St. Luke’s.

In hospital, he was left predominantly alone, except for his cat, Jeoffry, until his discharge in 1763, after which Newbery renewed his attempts to ruin him. Smart continued to write and publish, but was arrested for debt in 1770, and died in the King’s Bench Prison in Southwark in 1771.

William Byrd (1540 – 1623)

Laudibus In Sanctis

Byrd was “bred up to musick” under Thomas Tallis, likely at the Chapel Royal. His first employment was as organist and master of choristers at Lincoln Cathedral, and in 1572 he became a “Gentleman of the Chapel Royal” – an appointment for life that came with a good salary. Byrd’s connection with Tallis continued – his second son was Tallis’s godson – and together they held the monopoly for printing music and ruled music paper, granted by the Crown.

That Byrd should have such good relations with Queen Elizabeth is remarkable, given his involvement with Catholicism in a Protestant nation. Ultimately, though, his membership of the Chapel Royal was briefly suspended, and in his fifties he moved to Standon Massey in Essex, and into semi-retirement.

Laudibus in Sanctis, a setting of Psalm 150, was published in *Cantiones sacrae II* in 1591 and dedicated to the Earl of Worcester and Baron Lumley – both influential at court. The composition is notable in that collection as it adopts a madrigal, rather than motet, style as reflected the changing tastes of Catholic patrons of the time.

*Laudibus in sanctis Dominum celebrate
supremum: Firmamenta sonent inclita
facta Dei. Inclita facta Dei cantate,*

Praise the Lord most high with praises
in his sanctuary: Let the firmament
resound the glorious works of God. Sing
the celebrated works of God: And in a

sacraque potentis. Voce potestatem saepe sonate manus.

Magnificum Domini cantet tuba martia nomen, Pieria Domino concelebrate lira. Laude Dei, resonent resonantia tympana summi, Alta sacri resonent organa laude Dei.

Hunc arguta canant tenui psalteria corda, Hunc agili laudet laeta chorea pede.

Concava divinas effundant cymbala laudes, Cymbala dulcisona laude repleta Dei.

Omne quod aetheris in mundo vescitur auris, Halleluia canat, tempus in omne Deo

[Psalm 150]

voice of holy might sound forth often the power of his hand.

Let the martial trumpet sing the Lord's splendid name: Together praise the Lord with the Pierian lyre. Let resounding drums sound to the praise of God most high: Let high organs sound the praise of God most holy.

To whom skillful psalteries sing with subtle string: To whom let joyful dance give praise with nimble foot. Hollow cymbals pour out divine praises: Sweet-sounding cymbals full of the praise of God.

All on earth that is fed by the breath of heaven: Sing hallelujah in eternity to God.

David Bednall (b. 1979)

Everyone Sang

Bednall is a renowned composer and organist, studying at Queen's College Oxford, and the University of Bristol. He is well known for his organ improvisations – not least for having appeared as a “stunt organist” in Doctor Who – and is Choral Director at Clifton Cathedral, and Director of the Bristol Bach Choir.

Everyone Sang is a setting of a poem by Siegfried Sassoon (1886 – 1967), written shortly after Armistice Day, and first published in 1919.

Errollyn Wallen CBE (b. 1958)

Tiger

Born in Belize, Wallen moved to London aged two, training initially as a dancer before turning to music composition, studying at Goldsmiths' College, King's College, London, and then King's College, Cambridge.

She is the first black woman to serve as the Master of the King's Music, and now lives in Orkney.

Sir William Walton OM (1902 – 1983)

Jubilate Deo

Walton's musical career started aged 10 as a chorister at Christ Church Cathedral School in Oxford (albeit it nearly didn't, as he arrived at the audition late as his father had spent his train fare at the local pub). He continued as an undergraduate at Christ Church, having been identified by Hubert Parry as having potential. Aged just 16, he may have been Oxford's youngest undergraduate since Henry VIII. Having excelled at music, but failed at compulsory Greek and algebra, he left Oxford without a degree, but with the friendship of Sacheverell Sitwell, who invited him to stay in London with his brother and sister, Osbert and Edith.

The Sitwells encouraged his cultural education, and contributed to his first musical success, *Façade*, in which Walton conducted an ensemble of six players, while Edith Sitwell recited verses through a megaphone. The performance was considered so avant-garde that Noel Coward marched out before it had ended.

Walton's *Viola Concerto* of 1929 brought him to the forefront of British classical music, and in 1931, *Belshazzar's Feast*, a massive choral cantata written in collaboration with Osbert Sitwell, cemented his reputation as a great composer.

Jubilate Deo was first performed in Christ Church Cathedral, at one of several events to celebrate Walton's 70th birthday, and is a setting of Psalm 100, as used by Schütz earlier. Both require double choirs, tossing phrases back and forth to each other, but being nearly 400 years apart, contrast markedly in colour, texture, and harmonic energy.

Richard Harker (Musical Director)

Richard is musical director of The Hythe Singers, Henley Choral Society and Henley Youth Choir. He is a Chorus Master at Opera Holland Park and works as a music teacher in schools. Richard is an organist and accompanist, and graduated with an MA in Choral Conducting from the Royal Academy of Music. Richard read music at, and was organ scholar of, Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge.

At Opera Holland Park Richard has worked on *Pagliacci*, *La Bohème*, *La Traviata*, *Eugene Onegin* (Assistant Conductor & Chorus Master), *Carmen*, *Don Giovanni*, *Così fan tutte*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*; *Manon Lescaut* and *Un ballo in maschera* (Chorus Master), *Ruddigore* and *Pirates of Penzance* (Chorus Master and Assistant Répétiteur). Other operatic engagements have included *L'Elisir d'amore* for West Green House Opera (Chorus Master), *HMS Pinafore* for Windsor and Eton Opera (Conductor), Terterian's *Fire Ring* at the Grimeborn Festival with London Armenian Opera (Conductor).

Bel Comeau (Organist)

Bel Comeau is an organist, pianist & composer, active mainly in the classical and jazz worlds. Grounded in the European classical tradition, they were a chorister at Truro Cathedral as a child, and later graduated top of their year in music from Cambridge University.

At the age of 18 they won the Northern Ireland International Organ Competition; a couple of years later they won the Cambridge University Composition Competition, leading to a commission from the Britten Sinfonia. Their compositions and arrangements have been heard in the Royal Albert Hall, the Wigmore Hall and Birmingham Symphony Hall. They have performed as a solo recitalist in venues including Westminster Abbey and King's College Chapel, Cambridge. Their solo repertoire incorporates five centuries of the classical canon alongside repertoire from Björk to Michel Legrand to Fats Waller and Herbie Hancock, as well as frequent improvisations on audience requests. They have been featured on BBC Radio 3's In Tune programme. Their formal education also includes postgraduate study at Guildhall School of Music and Drama and the Hochschule für Musik und Tanz, Cologne.

Programme: Daniel Brown

Acknowledgements

The Hythe Singers is grateful for the support of the Humphrey Richardson Taylor Charitable Trust, which provides financial support to organisations for a range of musical activities in the geographical and historical areas of Surrey.

More information about the trust can be found on their website:
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