

*The West Somerset Singers*



*Friday 29th March 2013*

*Taunton Baptist Church,*

*Reflections  
for  
Good Friday*

Musical Director: David Knight



*Programme*

**Stainer — Crucifixion**

*Interval of 20 minutes*

**Vivaldi — Gloria**

Please join us for light refreshments after this evening's performance.

## *Programme Notes*

### **John Stainer (1840-1901)**

#### **Crucifixion**

1. *And they came to a place named Gethsemane.*
2. *The Agony.*
3. *Processional to Calvary.*
4. *And when they were come.*
5. *The mystery of the divine humiliation.*
6. *He made himself of no reputation.*
7. *The majesty of the divine humiliation.*
8. *And as Moses lifted up the serpent.*
9. *God so loved the world.*
10. *Litany of the Passion.*
11. *Jesus said "Father, forgive them".*
12. *So thou liftest thy divine petition.*
13. *The mystery of the intercession.*
14. *And one of the malefactors.*
15. *The adoration of the crucified.*
16. *When Jesus therefore saw his mother.*
17. *Is it nothing to you?*
18. *The appeal of the crucified.*
19. *After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished.*
20. *For the love of Jesus.*

Like that of some other distinguished writers of church music, the life of Sir John Stainer centred on the church and a university – in his case Oxford. Born in London, he was already a competent sight-reader when he joined the choir of St Paul's Cathedral at the age of seven, and before he reached his teens he had already deputised for the organist John Goss. At the age of 14, he was appointed organist at the church of St. Benedict and St. Peter in London and two years later was chosen to be the organist of the newly-founded St. Michael's College in Tenbury, Herefordshire. He entered Christ Church, Oxford, in 1859 and during his time there he gained several degrees and became University organist. In addition, he founded the Oxford Philharmonic Society and conducted its inaugural concert in 1866. In 1872, he took over from his old master the

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post of organist at St. Paul's Cathedral, where he remained until failing sight obliged him to retire in 1888.

Stainer was both a musical reformer and a careful scholar and researcher. At St. Paul's, he obtained salary increases for the choir and boosted its numbers. He also instituted regular rehearsals and extended the cathedral's musical repertoire. In 1876 he joined the staff of the National Training School as organist, later becoming professor of harmony and (in 1881) principal. A busy teacher, he also found time to conduct research into medieval music. Stainer was too preoccupied with his many appointments and with musical research to be a prolific composer, but nevertheless, in addition to a considerable number of hymns and services, he wrote four works on a larger scale.

The Crucifixion is the last and best-known of these works. It was composed in 1887 and was first performed under the composer's direction in the parish church of St. Marylebone in London, where it is still sung each Good Friday. It is described modestly as a "Meditation on the Passion of the Holy Redeemer" and is a setting for tenor, baritone, choir and organ of a text chosen from the New Testament, interspersed, as in the Bach *Passions*, with hymns with which the congregation may join. It depends for its effect on comparatively simple but mellifluous and effective harmonic patterns. *The Crucifixion* is often criticised for its Victorian sentimentality and its sub-Mendelssohn style. The congregational hymns are perhaps unfamiliar to many of the present generation. Yet it is a heartfelt work, whose beauties are many – consider especially the unaccompanied chorus *God so loved the world* – and whose sincerity and restrained nobility cannot be doubted.

**Author: unknown (May 2011)**

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## Programme Notes

### **Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)** **Gloria in D major, RV 589**

The Venetian composer Antonio Vivaldi learned to be a dazzling violin virtuoso under the tutelage of his father, but he was initially destined for a career in the church. Although he was ordained as a priest, his health was allegedly too delicate to allow him to discharge his religious duties, and he gave up saying mass almost as soon as he was ordained in 1703. From then until 1718 he devoted his life to composing and to teaching at an orphanage for girls in Venice known for short as the *Pietà*. Here he fostered the talents of the young girls who lived there, for whom he wrote many of his instrumental works. In the last 23 years of his life, he visited other parts of Italy, notably Mantua and Rome, and travelled widely in Europe, selling concertos and arranging performances of his operas and other music. In the late 1730s, he returned to the *Pietà*, where his continued frequent absences to arrange musical performances outside Venice angered his employers. In 1741, he travelled to Vienna apparently on just such a trip and died there. Vivaldi was a prolific composer, producing concertos and other orchestral and instrumental works, operas, cantatas, oratorios, and sacred music.

In this last category, his output included motets, settings of the *Magnificat* and a number of psalms, and settings of the Roman Catholic Mass or of isolated sections of it. Among these Mass sections are at least three settings of the *Gloria*, one of which is now lost. Of the other two, the one catalogued as RV 589 is the better known and indeed is arguably Vivaldi's most widely popular choral work. Like the other surviving and rather more elaborate *Gloria* (RV 588), it dates from 1708.

The work falls into 12 sections, each of which displays the clarity and vitality of Vivaldi's text-setting. The first movement, *Gloria in excelsis Deo* (*Glory to God in the highest*), set for chorus and orchestra, is a jubilant call to worship and is cast positively in the major. The chordal writing is homophonic rather than contrapuntal, making a strong declaration with which to start the piece. This movement contrasts noticeably with the *Et in terra pax hominibus* that follows. This is a quieter chorus mainly in the

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minor representing earth's peaceful response to the angels' song. *Laudamus te* is a dazzling duet for two sopranos. The two soloists sing, "we praise Thee, we bless Thee, we adore Thee, we glorify Thee" in a spectacular, typically Italianate style. The setting of *Gratias agimus tibi* (*We give Thee thanks*), another chorus, serves as a chordal introduction to *Propter magnam gloriam tuam*, a short fugue to the words "For Thy great glory". *Domine Deus Rex coelestis* is a soprano solo, with oboe *obbligato*, to "Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father almighty."

The triple-time chorus *Domine Fili*, invoking God the Son, contrasts two distinctive musical figures: one a dotted, almost jaunty theme, the other a melody that proceeds in longer, more legato notes. This is followed by a setting of *Domine Deus, Agnus Dei* (*Lord God, Lamb of God*), which, along with the next two numbers, sets the short litany that forms the core of the text. This first one is set as an alto solo with choral interpolations. The ensuing *Qui tollis* is a short chordal rendering of "Who takest away the sins of the world, sustain our prayers", and is followed by *Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris* (*Who sittest at the right hand of the Father*), another alto solo. The *Quoniam tu solus sanctus* (For Thou only art holy) is musically an abbreviated reprise of the opening number. It sets us up nicely for Vivaldi's grand finish, a double fugue on the words *Cum Sancto Spiritu* (*With the Holy Spirit in the glory of God the Father. Amen.*). This is a splendid chorus, and it need not worry us much that Vivaldi lifted it straight out of a *Gloria* setting for double choir by one of his contemporaries, Giovanni Maria Ruggieri. Indeed, Vivaldi, who used the same finale in his other *Gloria* (RV 588), seems to have filched the movement while the ink on Ruggieri's piece was still wet! Ruggieri's *Gloria* was composed in 1708, just as Vivaldi's settings were. This fugue still makes for a rousing ending, though.

**Author: unknown (August 2010)**

**This programme note was supplied through Making Music's programme note service.**

# *Translation of Gloria*

## **1. Gloria**

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

*Glory to God in the highest.*

## **2. Et in terra pax**

Et in terra pax hominibus, bonae voluntatis.

*And in earth peace to men of goodwill.*

## **3. Laudamus Te**

Laudamus te,  
Benedicimus te.  
Adoramus te.  
Glorificamus te.

*We praise thee.  
We bless thee.  
We adore thee.  
We glorify thee.*

## **4. Gratias agimus tibi**

Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam.

*We give thanks to thee for thy great glory.*

## **5. Domine Deus, Rex coelestis**

Domine Deus, Rex coelestis, Deus Pater omnipotens.

*O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father almighty.*

## **6. Domine Fili unigenite**

Domine Fili unigenite Jesu Christe..

*O Lord, the only begotten Son, Jesus Christ.*

## **7. Domine Deus, Agnus Dei**

Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris, Rex coelestis, Domine Fili unigenite, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.

*O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, heavenly King, O Lord, the only begotten Son, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us..*

## *Translation of Gloria (Continued)*

### **8. Qui tollis peccata mundi**

Qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe deprecationem nostram.

*Thou who takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer.*

### **9. Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris**

Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis.

*Thou who sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.*

### **10. Quoniam tu solus sanctus**

Quoniam tu solus sanctus, tu solus Dominus, tu solus Altissimus, Jesu Christe.

*For thou only art holy, thou only art the Lord, thou only, O Jesus Christ, art the most High..*

### **11. Cum Sancto Spiritu**

Cum Sancto Spiritu, in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

*With the Holy Ghost, in the glory of God the Father. Amen..*

## *Biographies*

### **Musical Director—David Knight MA, MMus, LRAM, ARCM, ARCO**

David was educated at the Royal Academy of Music and the University of London. He has held posts as Director of Music at a comprehensive school and a college of higher education. During this time he also had posts as accompanist and conductor of a selection of choral societies. He has been a church organist for over forty years, not only for the Church of England, but also for the United Reformed Church and the Church of Norway. He has taught at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, and was an examiner for the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. He has performed in cathedrals in England, Ireland, Norway and Hong Kong. In addition to his post with the West Somerset Singers, he is Music Director of All Saints' Church, Dulverton, and Casterbridge Male Voice Choir.

### **Organist—Chris Manners**

Chris was born in Surrey, but moved to Weston-super-Mare with his parents in 1950. He studied the organ initially with W. T. Hooper, FRCO, at his home church of St. Paul, Weston-super-Mare, and later with Garth Benson at St. Mary Redcliffe, Bristol. In 1961 he joined Percy Daniel & Co. Ltd., the Clevedon Organ Builders, becoming Managing Director in the late 1980's.

Chris has been Director of Music at All Saints' Church, Weston-super-Mare, since 1995. In retirement he enjoys teaching organ, piano and theory, and is regularly called upon to accompany singers and instrumentalists for examinations and music festivals.

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### **Soprano—Gillian Wells**

Gillian is in her final year of training on the vocal and opera studies course at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. In 2011 and 2012 she was accepted on the Italian Opera course in Puglia, in which she enjoyed studying the following roles: Susanna- *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Norina- *Don Pasquale*, Despina- *Così fan tutte* and Servilia- *Clemenza di Tito*, scenes from which she performed in front of a local Italian audience.

Over the years Gillian has performed regularly as a soloist in a large number of venues in the area. Highlights of which were her performance as soprano soloist in Handel's *Messiah* at Clifton College Chapel in 2012; and her role as Adele from *Die Fledermaus* at the Porthcawl Pavilion Gala Concert, which was performed alongside members of the Welsh Sinfonia Orchestra following a week's intensive work with international conductors and directors.

### **Alto—Olivia Gomes**

Olivia is in her final year at the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama and is currently studying under Beatrice Unsworth and Jeffrey Howard.

Olivia sings with the BBC National Chorus of Wales and during her time with them has performed various major works including Debussy's *Le Martyre de St. Sebastian* in which she was part of a semi chorus and will be premiering Simon Holt's latest composition *The Yellow Wallpaper* next year where she will be one of six individual solo voices. As part of the BBC National Chorus of Wales' latest CD recording Olivia sang alongside Rebecca Evans, Elin Manahan Thomas & Toby Spence as a soloist in a premier recording of Arthur Sullivan's *The Beauty Stone*.

Most recently Olivia appeared as the alto soloist for the 2012 Mega Messiah in the Wales Millennium Centre, as a soloist with the Hereford Chamber Choir and also as the alto soloist in *Elijah* in Taunton.

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### **Tenor—Dean Ward**

Dean is delighted to be singing for the first time with the West Somerset Singers and this is also his first performance of Stainer's Crucifixion. Dean has undertaken many concert engagements including Handel's *Messiah* and Rossini's *Stabat Mater*. His operatic experience includes the role of Aubry in *Der Vampyr* (Marschner), Gaston in *La Traviata* (Verdi) and M. Triquet in *Eugene Onegin* (Tchaikovsky). Dean has a busy year ahead! He is currently working on the part of Riccardo in Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera* with Wiltshire-based White Horse Opera whilst preparing for his impending marriage in July, a 30th birthday in September and holding down a job as Regional Land and New Homes Manager.

### **Bass — David Fouracre**

David Fouracre was born in Taunton (his family have lived in Milverton since the sixteenth century) and was educated at Huish's Grammar School. After reading chemistry at university he spent 20 years travelling throughout England and Scotland pursuing a career in retail management. He returned to his Westcountry roots in 1992 when he and his wife acquired a business of their own in Colyton, East Devon. He has been actively involved in choral music-making all his life, and has performed as a soloist with choirs from Dundee to Torquay. Since settling in Colyton he has been increasingly in demand as a bass-baritone soloist with choral societies throughout the West of England, and has been fortunate to perform a wide repertoire of choral music during that time. He has a particular personal affection for twentieth-century English song.

# *The Choir*

## **Sopranos**

Judi Boobyer  
Marianne Bray  
Diana Davies  
Alison Edwards  
Gillian Greig  
Jo Hampshire  
Catherine Hartland  
Anne Jordan  
Chris Knapman  
Pat Phillips  
Anne Rogers  
Gill Thompson  
Pam Whittaker

## **Tenors**

John Cottrell  
John Evely  
John Page

## **Basses**

John Gillard  
David Greig  
Bob Hart  
Malcolm Summers  
Keith Taylor  
Bob Town

## **Altos**

Gill Brown  
Hilary Daniel  
Janet Hall  
Louise Hayden  
Marion Jones  
Ann McCabe  
Esther Naguib  
Sheila Ruff  
Sue Sutton  
Dorothy Westman

## *Acknowledgements*

*The West Somerset Singers would like to thank  
**Taunton Baptist Church** for their hospitality.*

Special thanks also to **Rachel Robinson** for accompanying the choir  
during their Monday evening rehearsals.

*Thank you to **Somerset Library and Oxford Library**  
for supplying our music copies.*

*Our thanks also to **Making Music** for programme notes.*

## *Join Us!*

The West Somerset Singers are looking for new members (particularly tenors!) to join them in the Autumn term. At present we do not hold auditions but some experience of singing in parts and the ability to read music would be very helpful.

We meet on Monday evenings for two terms in the Gwyn Williams room at Taunton School. Our next rehearsal will take place on Monday 9th September 2013 at 7.30pm.

For an informal chat please call our Secretary,  
Chris Knapman on (01823) 335303.

**[www.westsomersetsingers.org.uk](http://www.westsomersetsingers.org.uk)**

