

Music in 2023

Martin Penny

2023 saw something of a return to 'business as usual' with a few celebratory exceptions.

Over the course of the year, in addition to the regular cycle of rehearsals and services we:

- Sang an Epiphany Carol Service.
- Sang for the welcome service for Bishop Jane.
- Sang a Jazz Mass for Palm Sunday.
- Held a Meditation on Palm Sunday Evening.
- Sang for a special Civic Service to mark the Coronation of HM King Charles III, featuring music from several coronations.
- Sang for the usual Town Civic Service in May.
- Led the All the Family Service in September.
- Sang the Dove *Missa Brevis* at Jo's Farewell service on 2nd October.
- Welcomed Tilly Langford, Theo Teare and Erykah Makuwatsine to our ranks.
- Ran the usual pattern of Christmas services/celebrations, including our first visit to Isabel Hospice since the pandemic.

People

All this is only possible because of the commitment and efforts of the choir membership. Youngsters spend between three and six hours each week and adults rather more. Huge thanks to them all for doing this week in, week out.

Throughout John Norris continued to provide a solid base for all our work through his excellent and sensitive accompaniments.

Mary also puts in time distributing, collecting in and re-filing 25 sets of music – an average of 1 ½ - 2 hours per week.

Concerts

We consolidated the Soundbites concert series, growing the audience, the range of performers and the fees we could offer, running a very ambitious programme in 2023. A total of 28 concerts raised just short of £12,000.

Due to the considerable sum remaining from the 2019 legacy and the shortfall in the Church's ordinary income, at present the entire proceeds are going to the Church. This will be kept under review.

Thanks to Ann and her teams and, of course, to Chris for juggling performers and budgets to good effect.

We have increased the programme further for 2024 in both duration and scope. If one or two more people were available to act as catering leads then we would be able to go beyond the 29 currently planned – our three 2019 series totalled 37. If you can help, do please speak to me or Ann Stephens-Jones.

In addition to our 'regulars' we added a couple of new Concert promoters to our stable of 'regulars' including two 'sell out' concerts by the London Film Music Orchestra. This raised a further £4000 for the church. More are planned for 2024, with a very busy December!

"Thank you"s

I would like to finish by thanking Jo, Janet (B), Verity, Colin and indeed you all for so many helpful and supportive comments.

Love,
Martin