

## July-August

Twenty-seven choristers will be in the Cathedral city of Salisbury, Wiltshire, from Thursday 6 to Monday 17 July. To that number we need to add the choir director, Phillip Linquist and organist Peter Hamilton, and another eleven parishioners, including our senior minister, Stuart Holman. The total travelling party adds up to 40. To this number we might add a couple more Swiz parishioners who will just happen be in the UK while we are there. After the Salisbury gig, many choristers will go on to various activities around the world, before returning to resume domestic duties in the choir pews on Sunday 13 August.

That leaves at least half-a-dozen choristers at home to support the hymn singing, week by week, while the others are away. Perhaps some of the recent retirees might join them in the choir pews for a few weeks. Two very fine organists will be sharing the 9 am service duty; Katie Choi and Peter Kneeshaw. It has been suggested that a blue-shirted small choir should occupy the front choir pews and keep the home fires burning for the five weeks of the full choir's absence.



## Last month, June

We had two special events last month: the annual Huguenot service, and a concert featuring much of the music the choir will be singing in Salisbury.

**The annual Huguenot service** gave us a chance to show off our French singing skills. We have been singing the Huguenot 'national anthem' *La Cévenole* for a number of years now and our pronunciation has to be improving with all of the repetition. Many of the 20 choristers who participated volunteered to show off their linguistic skills and sing the first verse of *Thine be the glory* in French as well. Why don't we all try it next year?

There was a good-sized congregation for the service. Andy Bell gave a fine address based on the second reading which was from Paul's epistle to James: *Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.* Another possible reason for the good attendance might have been the generous afternoon tea put on by the Huguenot Society afterwards.



**A toi la gloire, O Ressucité!**

## The farewell concert

To inform the parish about the music we shall sing in Salisbury Cathedral, we presented a concert which included much of that music on a Saturday afternoon just over a week before we departed. The choir pews were full, and the church also was full. We didn't sing all of our Salisbury repertoire, just a representative sample: two Magnificats, three Nunc Dimittises, a Jubilate Deo, two pieces by Australian composers (Colin Brumby and Peter Hamilton), and six anthems by past and current English composers. Our Senior Minister was heard to say, afterwards, that our singing on the evening was the best he had heard.

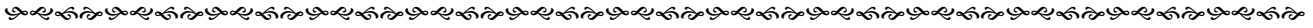
The High Tea afterwards was special; heartfelt thanks to all who contributed and all who helped during the evening.

We spoke to a lady from the congregation who said she had been an organ student of Herbert Howells in her youth and hadn't heard the anthem he composed, and we sang during the concert, for a long, long time.



### Some last-minute reminders for travellers

- Please remember to include Peter Hamilton's Evensong Responses in the music you pack for Salisbury. The librarians will have very few spares of any pieces we shall be singing;
- Please pack your choir robe and music in carry-on luggage on the plane – it will be no use to you if it is packed in a suitcase that the airline misplaces before, during, or after your forward flight/s;
- If you have booked the trip to Dyrham Park on Tuesday 11 July and you are a member of The National Trust in Australia, please have your current membership card with you when you arrive at the property. You might save yourself £17.
- Travel safely and well, with smiles in your hearts, by the grace of God.



### Dear Lord and Father of mankind

We have previously published the story of this particular piece (*Hyfrydol*, Feb 2022). During June, we sang it again, twice; once to the simple hymn tune *Repton* (based on the Parry tune), and once again to the more ornate Parry setting during the Huguenot service.

A reader has passed us a copy of a letter written some time ago to the Editor of *Church Music Quarterly*. We offer it, without comment, to our readers, in full:

Dear Lord and Father of mankind  
Forgive our foolish ways;  
For most of us, when asked our mind,  
Admit we still most pleasure find  
In hymns of ancient days.

The simple lyrics, for a start,  
Of many a modern song,  
Are far too trite to touch the heart;  
Enshrine no poetry, no art,  
And go on much too long.

O, for a rest from jollity  
And syncopated praise!  
What happened to tranquillity?  
The silence of eternity  
Is hard to hear these days.

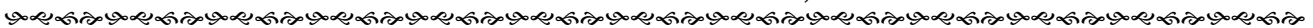
Send Thy deep hush, subduing all  
Those happy claps that drown  
The tender whisper of Thy call;  
Triumphalism is not all,  
For sometimes we feel down.

Drop Thy still dews of quietness  
Till all our strummings cease;  
Take from our souls the strain and stress  
Of always having to be blest;  
Give us a bit of peace.

Breathe through the beats of praise-guitar  
Thy coolness and Thy balm;  
Let drum be dumb, bring back the lyre,  
Enough of earthquake, wind and fire,  
Let's hear it for some calm.

P BAKER

Newent, Gloucestershire



## My song is love unknown

This hymn is on the list for Sunday morning, 9 July, with Peter Kneeshaw playing the organ. It is one of nine sacred poems written by Samuel Crossman, published in 1664. Our hymn book, *Hymns for Today's Church*, has two of Crossman's texts; No. 136 is *My song*, and No. 565 is *Jerusalem on high*, which we don't recall ever singing.



Samuel Crossman was a casualty of the British Act of Uniformity, 1662. The act prescribed the form of public prayers, administration of sacraments, and other rites of the Established Church of England, according to the rites and ceremonies prescribed in the 1662 Book of Common Prayer. Adherence to this was required in order to hold any office in government or the church, although the version of the Book prescribed by the Act was so new that most people had never even seen a copy.

He was exiled from the Church of England because of his opposition to the new act.

Crossman published *My song* the year before his re-admission into the Church of England and his appointment as curate of St. Gregory's and St. Peter's in Sudbury, Suffolk. The original publication was without music, in seven stanzas of eight lines, and headed with Galatians 6:14 – *God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ*.

Underlying the text is a rich connection to a pair of hymns by Crossman's poetic predecessor, George Herbert (1593-1633). Crossman's opening line, "My song is love unknown," recalls Herbert's poem "Love unknown" in which the narrator describes the faults of his heart, but takes comfort in knowing, "all my scores were by another paid, who took the debt upon him." The clearest connection between the texts is in Herbert's line, "Never ever grief like mine," which was quoted by Crossman with a shift of person as "Never was grief like thine".



The most commonly used tune for *My Song* bears the title *Love Unknown*. It was written by John Ireland in 1925 and was said to have been composed in 15 minutes on the back of a menu. Geoffrey Shaw recounted the time when he was involved in the preparation of the hymn book, *Songs of Praise*, published in 1925. He asked John Ireland for a setting of the hymn:

"Ireland took a scrap of paper from his pocket, and within a quarter of an hour had produced what in my opinion, is one of the loveliest tunes in any collection – and a perfect setting for Crossman's equally beautiful poem."

Ireland's tune is credited with bringing the hymn out of the obscurity into which it had fallen during Victorian times.

## Calendar for 2023

Day	Date	Time	Location	Service/activity
Thursday	6 July		Salisbury	Travellers arrive
Sunday	9 July	6 pm	Salisbury	Evensong at St Thomas Church
Mon - Sat	10 – 15 July	5:30 pm	Salisbury	Services in Salisbury Cathedral
Sunday	16 July	9:30 am	Romsey	Eucharist in Romsey Abbey
Sunday	13 August	9 am	Swiz	Full choir returns
Saturday	23 September	7 pm	Swiz	Psalm celebration
Saturday	4 November	5 pm	Swiz	Evensong for All Saints
Saturday	2 December	5 pm	Swiz	Advent carols
Sunday	17 December	10 am	Swiz	Lessons and carols
Sunday	24 December	10 pm	Swiz	Christmas Eve
Monday	25 December	8:30 am	Swiz	Christmas Day Communion