

# Hyfrydol



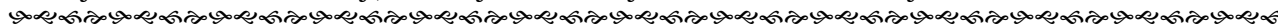
No. 118

St Swithun's Choir e-newsletter

March 2024

## This month

During March, we rehearse twelve choruses from *Messiah*, then present our finished work on the Saturday before Palm Sunday, the day dubbed by Phil "Palm Saturday".

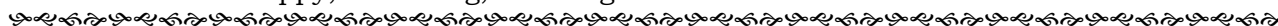


## February

We averaged 27 choristers at the 9 am services during the month; well done!

On the third Saturday, the choir (of 30 voices) presented our Lenten Evensong; S S Wesley's *Lead me, Lord* as introit, Psalm 6, Thomas Noble's *Evening Canticles*, John Stainer's *God so loved the world* was the anthem, and we concluded with John Rutter's *A Clare Benediction*. There was a good congregation and a very generous "refreshment" table to follow.

We welcomed two new sopranos during the month; Isabelle Fife and Heila Lilgoen. We trust their time with us will be happy, rewarding, and long.



## The Lord hath been mindful

Phil has programmed Wesley's *The Lord hath been mindful* as the anthem for the 9 am service on a Sunday in mid-March to illustrate musically the set reading from Isaiah 49.

We have written of Samuel Sebastian Wesley previously. He was a chorister in the Chapel Royal. In the 17th century, the Chapel Royal had its own building in Whitehall, but that was destroyed by fire in 1698. Since 1702, it has been based at St James's Palace; that is where Samuel would have sung, as a boy.



The Chapel Royal, St James' Palace

As an adult he worked first as a choral conductor in London and as a free-lance pianist. His career in the church began in 1832 when he was appointed organist of Hereford Cathedral. It was the beginning of a journey through a procession of cathedrals, largely following the same pattern: success at first, but soon turning into conflict. In 1835 he moved to Exeter Cathedral, then to Leeds Parish Church in 1842. From 1849 to 1865 he worked at Winchester Cathedral and he ended his career at Gloucester Cathedral (1865-1876). His views on church music were not in line with common opinions, and it is said he was a rather prickly character, something which seems to have run in his family. Today he belongs among the icons of English church music.

We sing half-a-dozen or so of his compositions quite regularly, including:

- *Lead me Lord*
- *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace*
- *Wash me thoroughly*, and
- *The Lord hath been mindful of us*.

While at Winchester, he composed the substantial anthem *Ascribe unto the Lord*, using the modified version of Coverdale's text of Psalms 97 and 115 used in the 1662 Book of Common Prayer.

Our library carries copies of the whole work, but we cannot remember ever singing it at Swiz.

(Bass & tenor recitative, Psalm 96:7-8)

Ascribe unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people: ascribe unto the Lord worship and power.

Ascribe unto the Lord the honour due unto his Name.

(SATB chorus, Psalm 96:9-10)

Let the whole earth stand in awe of him.

Tell it out among the heathen that the Lord is King: and that he shall judge the people righteously.

Let the whole earth stand in awe of him.

(SATB quartet, Psalm 96:2-3)

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

Sing to the Lord, and praise his Name: be telling of his salvation from day to day, and his wonders unto all people.

(SATB full, Psalm 115:2)

As for the gods of the heathen, they are but idols.

(SATB quartet recitative, Psalm 115:4-7)

Their idols are silver and gold: even the work of men's hands.

They have mouths, and speak not: eyes have they, and see not.

They have ears, and hear not: noses have they, and smell not.

They have hands, and handle not; feet have they, and walk not: neither speak they through their throat.

(SATB quartet, Psalm 115:8)

They that make them are like unto them: and so are all such as put their trust in them.

(SATB full chorus, Psalm 115:3)

As for our God, he is in heaven: he hath done whatsoever pleased him.

(SATB chorus, Psalm 115:12-15)

The Lord hath been mindful of us, and he shall bless us: he shall bless the house of Israel, he shall bless the house of Aaron.

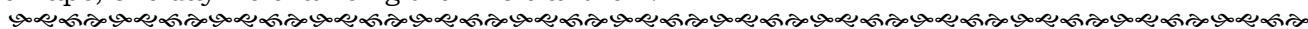
He shall bless them that fear the Lord: both small and great.

Ye are the blessed of the Lord: you and your children.

Ye are the blessed of the Lord: who made heaven and earth.

As you can see, Wesley has composed a very dramatic piece, the final chorus of which is the section we shall sing at the mid-March service. It actually makes up about one third of the whole work.

Perhaps, one day we shall sing the whole anthem.



### **My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood**

One Sunday in February we sang the hymn *My hope is built on nothing less* to fit with the sermon topic *We are family – depending*.

My hope is built on nothing less  
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;  
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,  
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.

*Refrain:*

On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;  
All other ground is sinking sand,  
All other ground is sinking sand.

When darkness veils His lovely face,  
I rest on His unchanging grace;  
In every high and stormy gale,  
My anchor holds within the veil.

*Refrain*

His oath, His covenant, His blood  
Support me in the whelming flood;  
When all around my soul gives way,  
He then is all my hope and stay.

*Refrain*

When He shall come with trumpet sound,  
Oh, may I then in Him be found;  
Dressed in His righteousness alone,  
Faultless to stand before the throne.

*Refrain*

The words of this hymn were written by an English Baptist minister named Edward Mote. He was born in London in 1797 and, to use his own words, “re-born in Tottenham Court Chapel, under John Hyatt, in 1813. My parents having no fear of God, I went to a school where no Bible was allowed; so that I was totally ignorant of the word of life when I entered that place of worship; but though I knew not the letter of the law, the Holy Ghost brought the spiritual contents of it into my conscience that morning.”



Living in Southwark near London, he established a successful cabinet-making enterprise and became a Baptist minister in 1852, at 55 years of age. He ministered for 26 years at the Baptist Church in Horsham, Sussex. He wrote over 100 hymns; *My hope is built* is by far the best known, and is the only one by him in our hymn book, *Hymns for Today's Church*, No. 462.

In a letter to the *Gospel Herald*, Mote wrote:

One morning it came into my mind as I went to labour, to write an hymn on the ‘Gracious Experience of a Christian.’ As I went up Holborn I had the chorus,  
On Christ the solid Rock I stand,  
All other ground is sinking sand.

In the day I had the first four verses complete, and wrote them off. On the Sabbath following I met brother King as I came out of Lisle Street Meeting...who informed me that his wife was very ill, and asked me to call and see her. I had an early tea, and called afterwards.

He said that it was his usual custom to sing a hymn, read a portion, and engage in prayer, before he went to meeting. He looked for his hymn-book but could find it nowhere. I said, ‘I have some verses in my pocket; if he liked, we would sing them.’

We did, and his wife enjoyed them so much, that after service he asked me, as a favour, to leave a copy of them for his wife. I went home, and by the fireside composed the last two verses, wrote the whole off, and took them to sister King...

As these verses so met the dying woman’s case, my attention to them was the more arrested, and I had a thousand printed for distribution.

I sent one to the *Spiritual Magazine*, without my initials, which appeared some time after this. Brother Rees, of Crown Street, Soho, brought out an edition of hymns [1836], and this hymn was in it. David Denham introduced it [1837] with Rees’ name, and others after...

Your inserting this brief outline may in future shield me from the charge of stealth, and be a vindication of truthfulness in my connection with the Church of God.

*Edward Mote*

Mote published his hymn as follows:

**THE IMMUTABLE BASIS OF A SINNER’S HOPE**

Not earth, nor hell my soul can move,  
While I rest on unchanging Love:  
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,  
But wholly lean on Jesus’ name.  
On Christ the solid rock I stand,  
All other ground is sinking sand.

My hope is built on nothing less,  
Than Jesus’ blood and righteousness:  
Midst all the hell I feel within,  
On his completed work I lean.  
On Christ, &c.

When darkness veils his lovely face,  
I rest on undisturbed grace,  
In every rough and stormy gale,  
My anchor holds within the vail.  
On Christ, &c.

His oath, his covenant and blood,  
 Support me in the sinking flood:  
 When all around my soul give way,  
 He then is all my hope and stay.

On Christ, &c.

I trust his righteous character,  
 His council, promise, and his pow'r:  
 His honour and his name's at stake  
 To save me from the burning lake.

On Christ, &c.

When I shall launch in worlds unseen,  
 O may I then be found in him,  
 Drest in his righteousness alone,  
 Faultless to stand before the throne.

On Christ, &c.

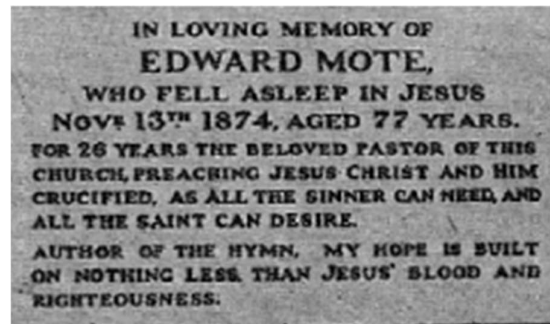
Carlton Young, American editor of two United Methodist hymnals, notes that “the hymn is of uneven quality. Indeed, the version in our hymnals today is the result of careful editing of the original six stanzas into four, choosing the most coherent lines from the original.”

He went on to comment on the revised product: “(This hymn’s) compelling topic—the parable about the security of building a house on rock, as opposed to sand (Matthew 7:24-27) .... (has emerged) to form a hymn of faith that over the generations has proved useful and comforting to many in their daily spiritual journey.”

Mote died in 1874 and was buried in the small yard beside his church in Surrey.



**Baptist Church,  
 Horsham, Sussex**



We sing his hymn to the tune *Surrey*, attributed to Henry Carey (1687-1743), an English poet, dramatist and songwriter.



**Calendar for 2024**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Service/activity</b>
Saturday	2 March	9 am	St Andrew's Cathedral	RSCM workshop with Hugh Morris
Saturday	2 March	6 pm	Swiz	RSCM dinner with Hugh Morris
Saturday	23 March	6:30 pm	Swiz	Messiah presentation
Sunday	31 March	9 am	Swiz	Easter Day Communion
Saturday	26 October		Swiz	Nelson Mass concert

Hugh Morris is the present Director of RSCM. He is in Australia briefly after visiting New Zealand. Peter Hamilton met with Hugh while we were in Salisbury last year. We now all have a chance to meet him.