

# ***Aeolian Singers***

## ***Christmas Concert***



*featuring  
Carols old  
and new*

*(with audience participation)*

*and including a performance of*



## ***Vivaldi: Gloria***

**Antonia Rusenescu** - Soprano

**Lucie Halili** - Mezzo-soprano

**Simon Worley** - Organ and Piano

**Stephen Jones** - Conductor

Thursday 5th December 2024, 7:30pm  
The Potters Bar United Reformed Church,  
Darkes Lane, Potters Bar



# *Aeolian Singers*

## **Life Members:**

Jean Garner, Peter Garner

## **Friends:**

Pat Brown, Rowena Eardley, Rita Fryer

Kevin Griffin, Anna Le Hair

Carole Lewis, Mary Purbrick

Derek and Christine Whiteside

*(Please contact the Friends' Secretary, [friends-sec@aeoliansingers.org.uk](mailto:friends-sec@aeoliansingers.org.uk), for details)*

## **Come and enjoy the pleasure of singing great music**

Singing some of the most beautiful music ever written, in the company of like-minded people, must be top of the list of life-enhancing ways to spend a Thursday evening.

We perform a wide range of choral music, old and new, including music from musicals and pop music arrangements.

Please come along and join us. No audition. We welcome experienced singers but even if you have never sung in a choir come along and try us out for a few rehearsals.

We meet every Thursday, 7.30 to 9.45 (term time only) at Leverstock Green Primary School, Green Lane, Hemel Hempstead, HP2 4SA.

Get more information from our website [www.aeoliansingers.org.uk](http://www.aeoliansingers.org.uk).

Contact our Membership Secretary on [info@aeoliansingers.org.uk](mailto:info@aeoliansingers.org.uk).

Registered Charity No. 281612

# ***Christmas Concert***

<b>Gloria</b>	Antonio Vivaldi	Choir
<b>Interval</b>		
<b>Once in royal David's city</b>	David Willcocks	All
<b>A great and mighty wonder</b>	Michael Praetorius	Choir
<b>Myn Lyking</b>	R.R. Terry	Choir
<b>We three kings</b>	Hopkins/ Ledington Wright	All
<b>Reading 1</b>		
<b>Joy to the world</b>	Mason/Wilburg	Choir
<b>Silent Night</b>	Gruber Arr. Chilcott	Choir
<b>Shepherds' farewell</b>	Hector Berlioz	Choir
<b>Good King Wenceslas</b>	Arr. Chilcott	All
<b>Reading 2</b>		
<b>Sans day carol</b>	Arr. Rutter	Choir
<b>O come all ye faithful</b>	David Willcocks	All
<b>We wish you a merry Christmas</b>	Arr. Arthur Warrell	Choir

## Gloria, RV589

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

Apart from the fact that he was the eldest of six children of a violinist in the orchestra of St. Mark's, Venice, little is known of Vivaldi's early life. A novice from the age of 15, he entered the full priesthood in 1703, when he began service with the *Conservatorio della Pietà*, an orphanage for girls in Venice which placed special emphasis on musical education and had an excellent choir and orchestra. His first duties were as a violin teacher, but he was also to compose a good deal of music for the orphanage, including some Lenten oratorios.

Vivaldi's growing reputation as a composer received a notable boost with the publication in 1711 of *L'estro armonico*, 12 concertos for one, two or four solo violins. The fame of this collection spread abroad, not least to Germany, where J S Bach copied and arranged several of them. Vivaldi from then on spent much of his time writing operas and travelling throughout Italy to supervise their production, whilst retaining his links with the Pietà.

Although Vivaldi's popular reputation rests largely on his numerous instrumental compositions (notably the *Four Seasons*), his vocal music is of considerable importance. The boundaries between the Church and secular society were flexible in the 18th century, and it is therefore not surprising that Vivaldi – an ordained priest – should have excelled as a composer of both operas and sacred music. Ever since its first modern revival in Siena in 1939, this setting of the **Gloria** has been by far the most popular of Vivaldi's choral works.

*This programme note was written by Thomas Radice (August 2010) and supplied through Making Music's programme note service.*

<i>Gloria in excelsis Deo</i>	Chorus
<i>Et in terra pax hominibus</i>	Chorus
<i>Laudamus te</i>	Soprano duet
<i>Gratias agimus tibi</i>	Chorus
<i>Propter magnam gloriam</i>	Chorus
<i>Domine Deus, Rex coelestis</i>	Soprano solo
<i>Domine Fili unigenite</i>	Chorus
<i>Domine Deus, Agnus Dei</i>	Alto and chorus
<i>Qui tollis peccata mundi</i>	Chorus
<i>Qui sedes ad dexteram</i>	Alto solo
<i>Quoniam tu solus sanctus</i>	Chorus
<i>Cum Sancto Spiritu</i>	Chorus

"Gloria in excelsis Deo" is a hymn known also as the Greater Doxology: the name is often abbreviated to Gloria in Excelsis, or simply Gloria, as in this work. The present-day Latin text and English translation are given below.

**Gloria in excelsis Deo**

**Et in terra pax hominibus** bonae voluntatis.

**Laudamus te**, benedicimus te, adoramus te, glorificamus te,

**Gratias agimus tibi**

**Propter magnam gloriam** tuam,

**Domine Deus, Rex caelestis,**

Deus Pater omnipotens.

**Domine Fili Unigenite**, Jesu Christe,

**Domine Deus, Agnus Dei**, Filius Patris,

**Qui tollis peccata mundi**, miserere nobis; qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe deprecationem nostram.

**Qui sedes ad dexteram** Patris, miserere nobis.

**Quoniam tu solus Sanctus**, tu solus Dominus, tu solus Altissimus, Jesu Christe,

**Cum Sancto Spiritu**: in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

Glory to God in the highest,  
And on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you, we bless you,  
we adore you, we glorify you,  
We give you thanks for your great glory,

Lord God, heavenly King,

O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,

Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,

You take away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us;

you take away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer.

You are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High,

Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen

## Interval

Please join us for seasonal refreshments

## Forthcoming Events

*For further details see our attractive website*

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

## Once in Royal David's City

*Choir & Audience*

Music by H.J. Gauntlett (1805-76), harmonized by A.H. Mann (1850-1929)

Words by C. F. Alexander. Descant by David Willcocks (1919-2015).

Once in royal David's city  
Stood a lowly cattle shed,  
Where a mother laid her baby  
In a manger for his bed:  
Mary was that mother mild,  
Jesus Christ, her little child.  
  
He came down to earth from heaven  
Who is God and Lord of all,  
And his shelter was a stable,  
And his cradle was a stall;  
With the poor and mean and lowly  
Lived on earth our Saviour holy.  
  
And through all his wondrous childhood  
He would honour and obey,  
Love and watch the lowly maiden,  
In whose gentle arms he lay:  
Christian children all must be  
Mild, obedient, good as he.  
  
Not in that poor lowly stable,  
With the oxen standing by,  
We shall see him; but in heaven,  
Set at God's right hand on high;  
Where like stars his children crowned  
All in white shall wait around.

## A Great and Mighty Wonder

*Choir*

Old German tune harmonised by M. Praetorius (1571-1621)

Words of St Germanus of Constantinople (634-734), trans. by J. M. Neale

**A great and mighty wonder** is the English rendering of the German original *Es ist ein Ros entsprungen*, which is best-known for its arrangement by Michael Praetorius and possibly dates back to the end of the sixteenth century.

## **Myn Lyking**

*Choir*

Words: 15<sup>th</sup> Century. Music: R.R. Terry (1865-1938)

**Myn Lyking** is a setting of "Lullay, myn liking", a Middle English lyric poem or carol of the 15th century which frames a narrative describing an encounter of the Nativity with a song sung by the Virgin Mary to the infant Christ. The refrain is an early example of an English lullaby.

## **We three kings of Orient are**

*Choir & Audience*

Words & music: John Henry Hopkins (1820-91). Arr Paul Leddington Wright (b.1951)

We three kings of Orient are;  
Bearing gifts we traverse afar,  
Field and fountain, moor and mountain,  
Following yonder star:

*O star of wonder, star of night,      Refrain - Audience*  
*Star with royal beauty bright,*  
*Westward leading, still proceeding,*  
*Guide us to thy perfect light.*

Born a King on Bethlehem plain,  
Gold I bring to crown Him again,  
King forever, ceasing never,  
Over us all to reign:

*Refrain ...      Audience*

Frankincense to offer have I;  
Incense owns a deity nigh:  
Prayer and praising, all men raising,  
Worship him, God most high:

*Refrain ...      Audience*

Myrrh is mine, its bitter perfume  
Breathes of life of gathering gloom;  
Sorr'wing, sighing, bleeding, dying,  
Sealed in the stone-cold tomb:

*Refrain ...      Audience*

Glorious now, behold Him arise,  
King and God and Sacrifice!  
Heav'n sings alleluia,  
Alleluia the earth replies:

*Refrain ...      Audience*

## Reading 1

### Twelve Days of Christmas

*Read by Jennie Whitefield*

#### Joy to the world

*Choir*

Music: Lowell Mason (1792-1872), arranged by Mack Wilberg (b.1955)  
Words Isaac Watts (1674-1748)

**Joy to the World** is an English Christmas carol written in 1719 by the English minister and hymn writer, Isaac Watts, and is usually sung to an 1848 arrangement by the American composer Lowell Mason. Mason was by that time an accomplished and well-known composer and arranger, having composed tunes such as *Bethany*, which was used for the hymn *Nearer, My God, to Thee*.

Mason was a great admirer and scholar of Handel's music, so for a long time the work was assumed to be based on Handel. However, resemblances between *Messiah* and **Joy to the World**, have now been dismissed as 'chance resemblance' by Handel scholars.

#### Silent Night

*Choir*

Franz Gruber (1787–1863) arr. Bob Chilcott (1955- )  
Words Joseph Mohr (1792-1848) trans. John F Young

In Oberndorf, a small Austrian village, just hours before Christmas mass in 1818, pastor Joseph Mohr of St. Nicholas Kirche was in a bind. His musical plans for the evening church service were ruined as his church organ had broken down recently due to a flooding of the nearby river. In a moment of inspiration, he grabbed a Christmas poem he had written two years earlier and quickly set off to the neighbouring village, where his friend Franz Gruber, the church organist, lived. It is believed that Gruber was able to produce the first version, with a guitar accompaniment, in a few hours.

#### The Shepherds' Farewell

*Choir*

Hector Berlioz (1803–69)

**The Shepherds' Farewell** is a very popular chorus from *L'Enfance du Christ*, a sacred work intimate in scale and devotional in style, although Berlioz was not an orthodox believer.



## Good King Wenceslas

*Choir & Audience*

Words JM Neale. Melody from Piae Cantiones (1582) arr. Bob Chilcott

Good King Wenceslas was a Catholic king of Bohemia in the 10th century, martyred following his assassination by his brother Boleslaw and his supporters. Wenceslas is the Patron Saint of the Czech Republic. St. Stephen's feast day was celebrated on 26<sup>th</sup> December, which is why this song is sung as a Christmas carol.

- All* Good King Wenceslas look'd out  
On the Feast of Stephen,  
When the snow lay round about,  
Deep, and crisp, and even:  
Brightly shone the moon that night,  
Though the frost was cruel,  
When a poor man came in sight,  
Gath'ring winter fuel.
- All - lower voices only* 'Hither, page, and stand by me,  
If thou know'st it, telling,  
Yonder peasant, who is he?  
Where and what his dwelling?'  
*Children / high voices only* 'Sire, he lives a good league hence,  
Underneath the mountain,  
Right against the forest fence,  
By Saint Agnes' fountain.'
- All - lower voices only* 'Bring me flesh, and bring me wine,  
Bring me pine logs hither:  
Thou and I will see him dine,  
When we bear him thither.'
- All* Page and monarch, forth they went,  
Forth they went together;  
Through the rude wind's wild lament  
And the bitter weather.
- Children / high voices only* 'Sire, the night is darker now,  
And the wind blows stronger;  
Fails my heart, I know not how;  
I can go no longer.'
- All - lower voices only* 'Mark my footsteps, good my page;  
Tread thou in them boldly;  
Thou shalt find the winter's rage  
Freeze thy blood less coldly.'

## **Good King Wenceslas** *Continued*

*All*

In his master's steps he trod,  
Where the snow lay dinted;  
Heat was in the very sod  
Which the Saint had printed.  
Therefore, Christian men, be sure,  
Wealth or rank possessing,  
Ye who now will bless the poor,  
Shall yourselves find blessing.

## **Reading 2**

### **Letter from the Palace, Prague**

*Read by Colin Hughes*

### **Sans Day Carol**

*Choir*

Cornish traditional carol arr. John Rutter (b.1945)

The **Sans Day Carol** is one of many Cornish Christmas carols written in the 19th century. The title of this folk carol is a corruption of St Day, the Cornish village (named after a Breton saint) in the parish of Gwennap. This carol and its melody were first transcribed from the singing of Thomas Beard, a villager in St Day. John Rutter's setting is one of a number of carol arrangements he made while a student at Cambridge in the 1960s.

### **Hymn – O Come All Ye Faithful (Adeste Fideles)**

*Choir & Audience*

Composer unknown (probably 18<sup>th</sup> century)

Translated F Oakeley, WT Brooke and others

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!  
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;  
Come and behold him  
Born the King of Angels:  
*O come, let us adore Him,  
Christ the Lord.*

God of God, light of light,  
Lo, he abhors not the Virgin's womb;  
Very God, begotten, not created:  
*O come, let us adore Him,  
Christ the Lord.*

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,  
Sing, all ye citizens of Heaven above!  
Glory to God, glory in the highest:  
*O come, let us adore Him,  
Christ the Lord.*

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born that happy morning;  
Jesus, to thee be glory given!  
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing!  
*O come, let us adore Him,  
Christ the Lord.*

## **We Wish You a Merry Christmas**

*Choir*

Trad. West Country Carol, arr. Arthur Warrell (1882-1939)

**We Wish You a Merry Christmas** is a popular English Christmas carol from the West Country. The Bristol-based composer, conductor and organist, Arthur Warrell, is responsible for the popularity of the carol. He arranged the tune for his own University of Bristol Madrigal Singers, and first performed it with them in concert on December 6, 1935.

The origin of this Christmas carol lies in the English tradition wherein wealthy people of the community gave Christmas treats to the carolers, such as "figgy pudding" that was very much like modern-day Christmas puddings. A variety of nineteenth-century sources state that, in the West Country of England, "figgy pudding" referred to a raisin or plum pudding, not necessarily one containing figs.



# Thank you for coming



We hope you enjoyed this concert

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Please give generously to the Retiring Collection

## **Antonia Rusenescu - Soprano**

Antonia Rusenescu is a Soprano born in Romania, who studied in Bucharest at the National University of Music and continued with a Masters Degree at the famous Mozarteum University in Salzburg (Austria). She has made an international career as soloist in Romania, Austria and Germany, singing a variety of repertoire, including sacred music, Mozart, Operetta and Musicals.

## **Lucie Halili - Mezzo-soprano**

Lucie was born and raised in Šumperk, a small town in the Czech Republic. At a young age, she joined Motyli (butterflies) Šumperk, a successful children's choir renowned both locally and internationally. Through choral singing, Lucie developed a passion for classical music, which she now fulfils by singing with the Aeolian Singers.

## **Simon Worley**

Simon Worley was born in 1981 and grew up in Leicestershire. His parents are both keen singers, and so his interest in music began at an early age. He took piano lessons from the age of six, and from the age of ten he also began playing the organ at local churches.

Simon attended the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, where he played in various ensembles as a bassoonist and also sang in choirs. Following his graduation in 2004, Simon took up Director of Music positions at churches in Coventry and Watford. Currently, he directs the choir at King Charles the Martyr Church, Potters Bar, plays with various orchestras in London and the surrounding areas, and sings with the City Chamber Choir and Aurora Choir.

## **Stephen Jones**

Stephen Jones has been Music Director of the Aeolians Singers since 1994, bringing with him a wealth of expertise gained as a conductor, singer, choral animateur and occasional lecturer. He studied piano at London's Trinity College of Music with John Bingham and singing with John Huw Davies and has sung in a host of interesting places from Westminster Abbey to the Café Royal. He is an accomplished continuo player, working with many leading orchestras. Stephen's experience extends to light music and he regularly used to broadcast on BBC Radio 2 with the male voice quartet Original Blend.