

June 2008 Newsletter

A great deal has happened since our last full newsletter in February; including a music day in April at St Margaret's Cathedral led by Noel Donnelly, and an event in Our Lady and St Cuthbert's, Maybole, called 'Singing the Mass' just a couple of weeks back.

Information about our annual Galloway Music Festival Mass (to be held this year on Sunday 17 August) is included in this newsletter.

Have a good summer! And we hope to see you on 17 August!

Visit our website at www.gallowaymusic.net

PAST EVENTS

Music Day on 12 April 2008 with Noel Donnelly

'Singing of God's love: Keeping up to date with the past'

We were very pleased to welcome Noel Donnelly to lead this music day for us, and Jane McKenna who acted as accompanist. Noel has been actively involved in Catholic music for many years and is well known as a composer and liturgist.

The event was held in St Margaret's Cathedral hall - it was the first time we have met there, the surroundings were warm and pleasant, and the lunch excellent!

During our first session we looked at new psalm settings, and this was interspersed with background information about the Mass from Noel. The psalms were all Noel's own compositions. After a short break, we tried out some unaccompanied plainsong - and were happy to be able to take the books for this home with us at the end of the day!

In the afternoon we sang through some Communion antiphons and processional songs. We ended with a prayer service in the Cathedral.

Singing the Mass on 7 June at Our Lady and St Cuthbert's, Maybole

This was held on Saturday 7 June in Our Lady and St Cuthbert's Church, Maybole. About 20 singers and instrumentalists came together to share their musical gifts, and to spend an afternoon preparing music for the Vigil Mass of the 10th Sunday in Ordinary Time.

The three instrumentalists covered between them organ, piano, violin and (two) guitars and they met at 11 am to sort music and practise themselves. The singers joined them at 1 pm for a soup and sandwich lunch. After a short time of prayer, we started the real work, with only a short mid afternoon break before Mass at 5.30 pm. Fr Stephen

McGrattan bravely attempted to 'manage' the rehearsal and keep everyone in order!

We learnt some new hymns and new parts of the Mass, descants to well known music, and tried some four part harmony. We found a volunteer to sing the verses of a Communion processional hymn. Most of this held together very well during Mass - although the four part harmony and the new hymns may have been remembered more easily if they had been practised on more than one occasion!

Our thanks are due to Maybole parish for hosting this event. Feedback has been very positive and it appears that the majority of the parishioners enjoyed the occasion of a more-lively-than-usual musical experience of the Vigil Mass.

If any other parishes would like to host a similar event, please let us know

FUTURE EVENTS

Galloway Music Festival Mass

As indicated on the cover, our annual Galloway Music Festival Mass will be held on Sunday 17 August at 2.30 pm, at Smithstone House, and this will be our ninth open air Mass. Booking forms, a bulletin notice and a poster are enclosed. We hope to see as many people as possible present. If you are able to, bring a musical instrument, or simply come along and sing. Seating should be available for most people, but if you prefer bring a rug to sit on. It is not essential to book, but if you did it would help to give us an approximate idea of the numbers who will be attending. However, if you need a power point for a musical instrument, please telephone Nicola on (01465) 714797 and we will do our best to arrange it.

A list of the music planned is also enclosed to give everyone the opportunity to practise and to know what music to bring on the day. We will again be singing the virtually unknown Kyrie and Lamb of God from James MacMillan's St Anne's Mass, but the Holy Holy and Memorial Acclamation will come from Bernadette Farrell's Mass of Hope. If you can't find or aren't sure about anything, please telephone and we will try and help sort it out! We will be rehearsing from 1 pm (the Mass starts at 2.30 pm) so that everyone who can be there early will have had the opportunity to try out the music.

Please invite your Parish Priest to concelebrate the Mass. Bring a picnic for after!

OTHER EVENTS THAT MAY BE OF INTEREST

Are you looking for a musically based summer holiday. If so, then read on

- The RSCM's international summer school is 11 - 17 August 2008 in Canterbury Cathedral and Canterbury Cathedral Lodge. They welcome musicians, singers and clergy from around the world to a stimulating week of music, worship, practical activity, discussion and fellowship. The programme is full and varied - from uplifting services in the Cathedral, to challenging workshops and seminars given by inspiring leaders, and much more. One of the presenters is James MacMillan. Visit www.rscm.com/issc for more information.

- 'How can I keep from singing' is the title of the National Network of Pastoral Musicians weekend conference to be held from 18 - 20 July at Worth Abbey. The NNPM is an informal group of people of many denominations whose aim is to meet to learn from each other and experience prayer and music in common. The keynote address will

be given by John Bell and Michael Joncas - other workshop leaders include Martin Foster and Stephen Dean, Christopher Walker and Margaret Rizza. Information can be obtained from Jennifer Burrridge on 01792 775598 or e-mail jeni_burrridge@yahoo.co.uk.

- Also to be held at Worth Abbey, from 28 July - 1 August, is the Society of St Gregory Liturgy and Music Summer School. Leaders include Martin Foster, Stephen Dean and Michael Joncas (who have been at Worth Abbey the week before on the above event!) as well as Daniel Bath and Martin Jakubas. For more information visit www.ssg.org.uk.

Closer to home, the RSCM are holding a young voices festival on Saturday 21 June at Dunblane Cathedral and their annual Dunblane Singing Break from 14 - 17 July. 'Exploring music, worship and ministry', an afternoon workshop for clergy, musicians and worship leads of all churches, led by Alistair Warwick and Patricia Lynch, also at Dunblane, is on Sunday 21 September. Visit www.rscmscotland.org for more information.

A JOB OPPORTUNITY

Musician at the Iona Community

Do you know of anyone who may be interested in this job, or would you like to apply yourself? The closing date is 20 June - more information can be found at www.iona.org.uk.

The Iona Community maintains a group of resident staff members on Iona and Mull to run its island centres. The task of the musician is to provide a range of music suitable for worship and the common life activities of the Iona Community, to act as a resource and enabler for guests and

staff, and to explore creativity through musical expression.

You need piano skills at minimum grade 6, experience as an accompanist, good sightreading skills, experience and ability in confidently teaching songs and music to large and small groups, the ability to enable others to engage musically, and a knowledge of the world and church music scene. You should share the Iona Community's open and inclusive Christian commitment and understand its aims, values and ethos.

YOUR FAVOURITE HYMNS . . .

There are a lot of modern hymns written that describe or address some aspect of spirituality, that can be set to well known tunes. An important aspect of our ministry as musicians is whether we are helping people to pray, and the following hymn addresses the question, 'what is prayer?' You may agree or disagree with some of the ideas expressed, but it is an example of a hymn that could easily be sung by a congregation. The words are 'common metre' and so it could easily be sung, for example, to 'Amazing grace' or 'Crimond' (The Lord's my shepherd) or 'Belmont' (My God accept my heart this day). Some of its verses follow

- 1 Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, unuttered or expressed, the motion of a hidden fire that trembles in the breast.
- 2 Prayer is the burden of a sigh, the falling of a tear, the upward glancing of an eye when none but God is near.
- 3 Prayer is the Christian's vital breath, the Christian's native air, our watchword at the gates of death, we enter heaven with prayer.
- 4 The saints in prayer appear as one, in word, in deed, and mind, while with the Father and the Son, sweet fellowship they find.

- 5 Prayer is not made by us alone: the Holy Spirit pleads,
and Jesus, on the eternal throne, for sinners intercedes.
- 6 O Christ, by whom we come to God, the Life, the Truth, the
Way,
the path of prayer yourself have trod, Lord, teach us how to
pray.

The words were written by James Montgomery (1771 - 1854), who incidentally was born in Irvine. When he was five his family moved to the Moravian settlement near Ballymena, County Antrim. Montgomery wrote about 400 hymns and this was for Edward Bickersteth, who wanted them for his book 'Treatise on prayer'. Bickersteth was closely related to at least 3 Anglican Bishops. Montgomery died and was buried in Sheffield.

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