

Shepway Singers

Sop's: Jenny Bayford, Becky Berridge, Hilarie Hill, Anne Johnson*, Belinda Lewis, Isolde Swinfin

Mezzos: Ruth Golding, Elizabeth Hopkin, Janet Hughes, Margaret Ritchie, Jane Spencer, Bridget Wight

Tenors: Robert Aylward-Lopez, Patrick Bayford, Peter Bettley, Timothy Hill*, Brin Hughes, Harry Strachan

Basses: Robert Dennis*, Duncan Lord, Roger Parker, Tim Parsons, Kenneth Tee, John Wright, Simon Wright

Conductor Berkeley Hill

* Not singing today.

The Shepway Singers, based in Hythe, is a choral group formed (under another name) in the mid-1970s to perform choral music requiring about twenty singers. Some five concerts are given each year, usually in response to invitations from various parts of Kent. The Singers' range of pieces extends from 15th Century church music to the contemporary and includes both sacred and secular, obscure and familiar. Though specialising in *a cappella* pieces, the repertory includes works written for organ or piano accompaniment. In 2010 three performances of the *St Mark Passion* by Charles Wood were given in the weeks before Easter, and a concert performed in November containing music by composers with names beginning with B (Britten, Bach, Bruckner etc.). In April 2011 the Shepway Singers sang an Evensong in Canterbury Cathedral.

The Shepway Singers have also performed with professional orchestras where the composers had this size of choir in mind. J S Bach's *Mass in B minor*, Handel's *Messiah* and choral works by Scarlatti and Pergolesi have been presented in recent years.

**Friends of St Leonard's Church,
Hythe**

Shepway Singers

with

Margot Rusmanis – violin

Jane Gow – violin

Molly Parsons-Gurr - 'cello

Sian Battenfield - harp

Tim Parsons – organ

**7.30 Saturday 10 November
2012**

Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643) – Beatus vir (8-part choir, strings and continuo). Born and educated in Cremona, Monteverdi worked later in Mantua and Venice (as choir director at St Mark's). Famous for madrigals and operas, his church pieces include renowned setting of the Vespers service. *Beatus vir* was written in about 1630 and sets words from Psalm 111.

'Blessed is the man who fears the Lord: He delights greatly in his commandments. His seed will be mighty on earth; The generation of the upright will be blessed. Wealth and riches are in his house; And his righteousness endures for ever and ever.

Unto the upright there arises light in the darkness: He is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous. Good is the man who is full of compassion and lends. He will guide his affairs with discretion: Because he will not be moved for ever.

The righteous will be in everlasting remembrance. He will not be afraid of evil tidings. His heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord; His heart is established: He will not be moved, Until he gazes at his enemies.

He has dispersed, he has given to the poor: His righteousness endures for ever and ever, The strength of his soul will be exalted with honour. The sinner will see it, and will be grieved; He will gnash with his teeth, and melt away'.

Allessandro Scarlatti (1660-1725) was born in Scicily and worked mostly in Rome and Naples. He wrote operas, chamber cantatas, instrumental music, and for the church.

➤ **Exultate Deo**

'O sing joyfully unto God our strength; Praise the God of Jacob. Allelujah'.

➤ **Ad te Domine levavi animam meam**

Psalm 25, vv 1-3. To You, O Lord, I lift up my soul. O my God, I trust in you; Let me not be ashamed; Let not my enemies triumph over me. Indeed, let no one who waits on You be ashamed

W A Mozart (1756-91) - Two 'Epistle Sonatas'

Mozart wrote seventeen 'Epistle Sonatas' between 1772 and 1780. These one-movement works (the early ones only using for two violins,

cello and organ) were intended to be played between the Epistle reading and the Gospel reading at the Mass, 'covering the action' in the manner of a Gradual Hymn in modern Eucharist services.

Henry Purcell (1659-1695) was born in Westminster, joined the Chapel Royal as a treble and later became one of its Gentleman. His brief life nevertheless provides ample evidence of Henry's genius as a composer for the church (in diverse styles) and the stage.

- Thou knowest Lord the secrets of our hearts
- God, the King of Glory

Zoltán Kodály (1882-1967) 'Jesus and the Traders'

Published in 1927, this mini-opera by the Hungarian composer tells the story of Jesus casting out the money-changers and traders of sacrificial animals from the Temple in Jerusalem. It is concise but hugely dramatic. Tonight it is sung in an English translation.

INTERVAL

Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924) -Requiem (new chamber version by David Hill. 2011). Roger Parker and Kenneth Tee – baritones; Hilarie Hill – soprano

The Requiem setting by Gabriel Fauré exists in several versions, growing from its initial liturgical form of 1888 in terms of number of movements and complexity of orchestration until it finally became a large-scale secular concert piece. It had been intended for a funeral service at the church of La Madeleine in Paris, where the composer was the choir director from 1877 (though not the main organist until 1896). Unlike the settings by Verdi and Berlioz, there is little of hell-fire, torment and judgement in Fauré's work. The emphasis is on how those caught in the dark shadow of death are to set out toward the eternal light and the glorious company of the saved; it seeks to evoke not the sorrowing of parting souls but the brotherhood of the living and the dead. The work is sung in Latin.

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| 1. REQUIEM AETERNAM – KYRIE | 4. PIE JESU |
| 2. OFFERTORIUM | 5. AGNUS DEI |
| 3. SANCTUS | 6. LIBERA ME |
| | 7. IN PARADISUM |