



# CHOIRLINK

*The Prayer and Praise bulletin of the  
Festivals of Male Voice Praise*

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## **AREA LEADERS' CONFERENCE REPORT: *Ian Stangoe***

The Area Leaders' Conference took place on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> March in Whiteshill Evangelical Church, Bristol with every area represented except Northern Ireland. The conference was opened with a devotion from David Horton, pastor at Whiteshill from Romans 1 – never stop reaching out; followed by a time of prayer. Reports followed from Council, including the updated constitution to reflect the new structure of Council comprising Area Leaders; finance by Paul Davies with agreement to maintain the annual contribution of £4 per chairman; music including exploratory backing tracks from Alfred Tarring; and Choirlink, the new quarterly prayer focus introduced by editor Vaughan Reynolds.

The afternoon session focused on evangelism opened by Ian Stangoe

highlighting attitudes in Britain today to the Gospel and John Buchanan on ways the North of Scotland choirs evangelise, then groups discussing effective methods to reach unbelievers. The general conclusion was to be proactive in inviting ourselves to events and focus on similar age groups to the choirs. Closing Devotions were given by Kenny Dykes, Wales with thoughts on fellowship from Phil 1.

There was a good sense of unity in the conference and fellowship which was complimented by a delightful meal provided by the local choir ladies. Thanks to all who made the day such a success.

Please pray that the ideas discussed will rejuvenate passion to seek further ways to reach out to our local areas with the Gospel.

# United Kingdom

## HIGHLAND GOSPEL MALE VOICE CHOIR

*Sam Macdonald*

Our choir numbers 30 and carries out 18 or 20 events each year. I would highlight a few events worthy of praise and prayer.

1. Each December for the past 20+ years we hold a service in Dingwall Auction mart for the farming community. We sing from the "Ring" to an audience of 400+. Local charities benefit from collections in excess of £1000.



Dingwall Auction Mart

2. In March this year, we took part in a praise evening on behalf of Christian Aid in Inverness Cathedral. Our choir was asked to lead the evening's praise and we were pleased that comments were made on our clear diction.

3. Our annual festival is held on

the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday in June each year, when we are joined by men from other choirs making a combined choir of 60. We go out during the afternoon to "Sing in the City".

4. During October we are asked to sing in the local prison and proclaim the message of repentance to our captive!! and noisy audience. This has become another annual event and we are happy to bring Good News to that dismal place.

This year our annual festival is on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> June in the East Church, Academy Street, Inverness at 7.15pm. Rehearsal from 2.00pm. We would welcome prayer for all that will be done and for a special service on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> June to welcome our guests, The North Ness Boys from the Shetland Isles who are our guest singers for the weekend.



"Sing in the City"

## KEDRON GOSPEL MALE VOICE CHOIR

*Walter Brown*

Recently we sang at a 50 year thanksgiving ministry service for Tim Barker who serves the outlying churches in our area. It was very well attended and the Word and song were greatly received. We are looking forward to our Festival which is on the 21<sup>st</sup> of April at the Congregational Church in Peterhead.

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## BOLTON MALE VOICE PRAISE

*Mike Dewhurst*

### BACK AT THE VIC

How do you follow the All Britain Festival? Well on April 7<sup>th</sup> the North West Festivals were back at the Victoria Hall Bolton for the 39<sup>th</sup> Bolton Festival of Male Voice Praise.

How was it to be after such a large gathering last year? With a choir of around 60 men and an audience of about 300 we thank and praise the Lord for His blessing upon us. We trust that many would have been challenged as Canon Noel Proctor faithfully preached the word to reinforce our message in song.



Bolton Festival April 2018

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## CHELTENHAM MALE VOICE PRAISE CHOIR

*David Kendrick*

*David, who wrote in haste, says the choir is functioning well and that the fellowship is great. He has included news of several forthcoming engagements which I've added on the back page. Their leader, Mark Mulley, hurt his back last year and needed surgery, but he has recovered well and is now back on the podium. Mark and Debbie are in the process of adopting another little boy, Rhys.*

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## PURLEY GOSPEL MALE VOICE CHOIR

*Allan Turner*

Purley choir no longer operate out of a Purley church but from Brighton Road Baptist. We are a smallish choir of 16 men plus pianist. Our outreach these days is to residential homes, and church groups.

With a choir this small it is not sensible to attempt to have a festival and the last time we did, over ten years ago with over 20 men, we had very few in the audience.

We support the London festival but its future is currently uncertain.

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## ST. IVES MALE VOICE PRAISE CHOIR

*Frank Stevens*

The St. Ives Male Voice Praise Choir was formed in late 2007 and has been proclaiming the Gospel through song ever since. Although we have lost some members we have 25 in the choir and are well balanced. We also have six organists in the choir! Most of our engagements are fairly local: churches, chapels and residential homes. We sang during Easter week at a couple of homes where one could see some of the residents joining in the Easter songs, and listening to a short message. We shall be singing in St. Ives Parish Church on Tuesday, July 3<sup>rd</sup> as part of their lunchtime musical events. Should any choir members venture this far west for a holiday they are more than welcome to come along to our weekly practice, held every Thursday from 7.30pm at Hellesveor Chapel, on the outskirts of St. Ives.

## CHESTERFIELD CHRISTIAN MEN'S CHOIR

*Alan Smith*

Chesterfield CMC has another new member joined in the last couple of weeks which is great news and brings us up to 14 members.

Our appointments to date for the rest of the year total 9 with one other pending.

We're looking forward to joining the Bolton lads at their Festival this coming Saturday.

Our choir holiday is in May and a group of 40 are off to Llandudno for a week of fun and fellowship.

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## YORKSHIRE (EAST) MALE VOICE PRAISE

*David Lindsay*

Greetings in our Saviour's name! At Yorkshire (East) we are a small choir but enjoy singing. We will be going to the Bolton Festival this Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> April and we will renew fellowship with the lads there. On the 12<sup>th</sup> May we will be going to York joined by the White Rose choir for an engagement there.

We would value prayer for our esteemed brother Alec Worthing-

ton who is seriously ill. Also remember his wife Patricia as well as she tends to Alec.

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## UXBRIDGE GOSPEL MALE VOICE CHOIR *Gerald Durrant*

Of the 4 engagements over Easter, the 1<sup>st</sup> was cancelled due to bad weather. At the 2<sup>nd</sup>, in a local Care Home, only 5 sang: one 1T, two 2T, and two 1B. The response was “as a quintet you sounded fine”.

The other 2 engagements were at two of our regular venues when we had 10 men with help from Luton. On both occasions we were heavily weighted in favour of tenors. However the feedback again was most encouraging and we have already been asked again.

The conclusion to this is: don't worry about 4-part harmony but do what you can with the voices you have. If the voices are good, and Praise the Lord we do have good voices and soloists, most of our listeners do not understand the details of harmony but appreciate good singing and a good message.

Our Easter programme included 2 Festival pieces and ended with Valerie Collison's 'A Song of Affirmation': an excellent conclusion.

## BRISTOL EVANGEL MALE VOICE CHOIR

*Paul Davies*

Our choir of around 20 continues with its regular Ministry, mostly consisting of visits to smaller churches in and around the Greater Bristol Area ranging from S. Gloucestershire, through the City of Bristol and down into N. Somerset. Most engagements involve giving our standard FMVP presentation at an evening service, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays, using local speakers to provide a message.

On Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> May we have been invited back to Pinehurst Gospel Hall near Swindon to lead an Evangelistic Outreach programme ending with a light supper. Pinehurst folk issue invites to all around the area. This little church was at a very low ebb a few years ago but the few there are now beginning to see the fruits of their labours and are actually increasing their Sunday congregations through the series of outreach events they hold throughout the summer months.

We continue to support the Exeter Festival, and rallies at Swansea and Cheltenham. Plans are in hand for our 66th Bristol Festival in September - more next time!

## Worldwide

### BRISBANE FESTIVAL MALE VOICE CHOIR

*Ken Pitcher*

The Brisbane choir is going very well and we continue to get new members from time to time - not young men, but they help to keep our numbers up. If all came on any given rehearsal evening we could have up to 50 men present, but there are usually between 35-40.

Already this year we gave a presentation at Retirement Facility, Janoah Gardens. We sing at a Church Friendship Club on May 10<sup>th</sup>, and then a Festival of Praise coming up on 12<sup>th</sup> May at Boonah a small town about an hour's drive from Brisbane.

After that, there is a Festival on June 2<sup>nd</sup> at Maryborough which is about 3 hours' drive north of Brisbane, then on June 30<sup>th</sup> a Festival on the Sunshine Coast around an hour north of Brisbane. Our main event is a combined Festival on 8<sup>th</sup> September in Brisbane which will involve choirs from Brisbane, Toowoomba, Bundaberg, Sydney, Melbourne, and possibly from New Zealand.

At the last main Brisbane Festival in 2015 we had around 90 men in

the combined choir with an audience in excess of 1500. Below are photos from the Festival in 2015.



Brisbane Festival 2015

### BUNDABERG FESTIVAL MALE VOICE CHOIR

*Elaine Stebhs*

Greetings from Bundaberg, Australia. Our choir has 24 current members and we sing at various churches, nursing homes, therapy centres etc on a regular basis and combine with the Brisbane Choir in Brisbane and Maryborough and sometimes Kingaroy. We look forward to again receiving "Choirlink".

## Snippets from here and there...

*At the end of March, Paul Davies received an Email from David Daly, Secretary of the **Ards Choir**, informing of their decision, taken with regret, to close the choir at the end of April due to falling numbers through illnesses etc.*

*This is sad news but, as was mentioned at the Area Leaders' Conference, is indicative of the straitened times the FMVP finds itself in. We give thanks to God for the years of witness the Ards choir have given, and trust that much fruit was borne as a result of their faithful service of the Gospel.*

*The **London and Home Counties Area** have their Annual General Meeting at 2pm on 28<sup>th</sup> April at the Regent Hall in Central London. This is the date and venue where the London Festival was also to be held. However the Festival had to be cancelled as it was felt impractical to hold an event worthy of our Lord, and the message the choirs have to give, in the time available.*

*At the AGM the future of the London Area will be discussed. Please uphold the choirs and their committee in prayer as they tackle difficult issues. May they sense the Lord's presence at the meeting, and His leading as matters are discussed and decisions taken.*

*As many will already know, Peter Bridgens, leader of the **Swansea Choir**, went home to be with the Lord on 31<sup>st</sup> March. Peter was taken ill not long after the ABF in June 2017 and had been in and out of hospital since that time. He had latterly been on kidney dialysis and had also been experiencing heart problems. As I write this, his thanksgiving service is due to be held at Swansea's Waterfront Church on 14<sup>th</sup> April. Please can we pray for his widow Mair, and their sons Mark and Andrew and their families, for whom this is bound to be a difficult time - especially Mair, who had been visiting him in hospital on an almost daily basis and will feel his loss keenly.*

*Welcome to the first edition of Choirlink! I hope you enjoy reading it. It's very encouraging to have so many contributions from all around; my sincere thanks to you all. A number have written by way of introducing their choir to others - if yours isn't among them, how about sending a piece for the next edition? As this is a new venture, please let me know about any practical issues such as print size, picture reproduction, file size etc. Please send your items, however brief, by Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> July for the next edition. Thank you!*

*Yours in Christ, Vaughan*

# Calendar of Events: April - August 2018

## APRIL

- 15 Purley Choir Whitgift House, Croydon  
17 Cheltenham Choir Cambray Ladies Fellowship, Cheltenham  
21 *Peterhead Festival, Congregational Church, Peterhead*  
21 *Exeter Festival, Cowick St Methodist Church, Exeter*  
22 Purley Choir Rylandes House, Wallington  
23 Cheltenham Choir Guid House Residential Home, Gloucester  
25 Uxbridge Choir Rayners Lane Baptist  
28 London & Home Counties Area AGM, Regent Hall, London W1

## MAY

- 10 Brisbane Choir Church Friendship Club  
12 Yorkshire (E) Choir Joint event in York with White Rose Choir  
12 Brisbane Choir Festival of Praise, Boonah  
15 Bristol & West Area AGM, Crossley Farm, Winterbourne  
19 *Glasgow Festival*  
20 Cheltenham Chr Brockworth House Care Centre, Glos

## JUNE

- 2 *Inverness Festival*  
2 Brisbane Choir Festival at Maryborough  
3 Cheltenham Choir Trevone House Nursing Home, Gloucester  
25 Cheltenham Choir Oakhaven Residential Care Centre, Chelt'm  
30 Whitstable Choir Evening of Gospel Music, Beltinge  
30 Brisbane Choir Festival at the Sunshine Coast

## JULY

- 3 St. Ives Choir St. Ives Parish Church  
8 Cheltenham Choir Bay Tree Court Care Centre, Cheltenham  
14 *Swansea Festival, Brangwyn Hall, Swansea*  
17 Uxbridge Choir Tuesday Focus: SRCF (Deane Avenue)  
23 Cheltenham Choir Nazareth House Nursing Home, Cheltenham

## AUGUST

- 2 Swansea Choir Keswick in Wales, The Pavilion, Llandrindod  
14 Uxbridge Choir Holiday at Home: SRCF (Deane Avenue)