



CHOIRLINK

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

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Editor: Vaughan Reynolds, 26 Longfellow Road,
Banbury, Oxfordshire OX16 9LB, UK

☎ 01295 369289

✉ vaughan.reynolds@talktalk.net

It has been a relatively quiet season for most choirs since the last Choirlink. Therefore, this edition is shorter than many, but there is still news to report - some encouraging, but some sad.

United Kingdom

HIGHLAND GOSPEL MALE VOICE CHOIR

Eric Halkett

Happy New Year: the season of cold days and long dark nights, but Christ lifts the gloom and lights the way.

Since the last Choirlink our choir have been involved in a couple of Care Home visits and sang at 'Inshes Connect' a club meeting each Friday afternoon. The choir sang well on 1st December to an extended gathering, but many members seemed to have caught bad colds the week before our engagement at the Dingwall Mart for the Farmers Community Service. Thankfully all recovered in time to lead the carol singing and render several of our choir songs. What a

joy it was to hear Sandy Shaw bring his powerful Gospel message to a receptive audience that was much larger than the last couple of years. The ladies provided excellent refreshments such that the farming community had a wonderful time after the service to catch up and chat to one another. The charity collection this year was for the local Open Door Project which plans to open a café centre where Christian literature and conversations can be had.

January and February are all fairly well filled - a visit to a Care Home, another Praise night for The Open Door Project, a Lunch club visit and our choir annual dinner and social.

May the Lord bless all of you in

2024 and enrich each of you with many joyous occasions to take the Good News of Jesus to many people from which you will receive His great Peace and Joy.

CHELTENHAM AND DISTRICT MALE VOICE PRAISE CHOIR

David Kendrick

In Choirlink 20 I said it was unlikely we would be able to present a Christmas programme, with insufficient men to form a choir, however the Lord did not want us to miss any opportunities to witness in song and word for Him. I was approached by four of our regular Care Homes to visit and present a programme of carols for the residents. With only a few choirmen we presented a Christmas programme with us singing carols with the residents and staff, including a Bible reading, message and prayer. We proved the truth of Mark 10:27 and we are hoping to build upon it this year, DV.

Mark, our Conductor and his father-in-law, Steve have been unavailable to sing during December, due to the younger of the two boys facing major orthopaedic surgery, which took place on 12th December and was successful. This will entail him remaining in plaster a couple of months, at least, hence Mark and Steve remain unavailable for the foreseeable future. Prayer would be appreciated.

Regarding prayer, may I thank you again for your prayers over the past couple of years, particularly. At a recent appointment with one of my doctors I was given good news about the current state of my health. She was able to reduce some of my medication. Jean and I are thrilled and look forward to, hopefully, having a few more years of active service in the Lord's service, DV.

Our AGM is planned for the end of January or the beginning of February. We would value your prayers regarding the Lord's leading for the future of the choir, particularly in the issues of recruitment of Christian men, subsequent to the pre-Christmas advertising.

This leaves me to conclude by wishing you all God's richest blessing in the New Year, DV.

ST. IVES MALE VOICE PRAISE

Frank Stevens

We are still functioning with 19 members and possibility of two more starting soon, but we lack top tenors. We have two but one lives in Yorkshire and stays in St. Ives from about Easter until September. I think he would find it a bit hard to turn up every Thursday for practice! The other tenor relies on someone beside him to carry the notes but we are getting there. We have a good practice every week, together with the good fellowship and are a happy

bunch of chaps singing the Gospel.

At Christmas we sang at the local Memory Café where the majority of members were suffering from memory loss etc. but when we sang the traditional Christmas carols, we noticed several singing the words even though trying to make 'normal' conversation with them could be hard. We also sang four of Valerie Collison's carols at the local chapel for the carol service.

We would be delighted if any members from the various choirs who may be holidaying in this part of the world would drop in and join us on any Thursday, 7.30pm at Hellesveor Chapel (top of the town and has a car park). A warm welcome awaits!

HERTFORD MALE VOICE PRAISE

Keith Youngman

We give thanks for another year, our 44th, when we have been able to sing and praise the Lord, making His message known. We finished 2023 with a carol service at a local care home which was greatly appreciated with a programme telling the story of Christ's birth using 6 of Valerie Collison's Christmas songs – together with, of course, traditional carols with residents joining in!

For 2024 we already have one firm engagement for a pre-Easter afternoon fellowship in Letchworth and

an enquiry for a Sunday service at one of our regular village chapels we have not been to since Covid.

I pray that our ability to take on these engagements and other opportunities arising, will be helped by attracting more men into the choir – particularly basses!

SWANSEA GOSPEL MALE VOICE CHOIR

Huw Jones

We had our Christmas Praise on the evening of December 9th at The Waterfront Church, SA1. It was very well attended. Speaker Jonathan Stephen gave a powerful message while Bethan Radford sang some beautiful Christmas solos. The choir sang 9 items including, Come and Join the Celebration, Beautiful Star of Bethlehem and Son of the Highest. The choir had been practising since September. It was good to sing with 3 recent new members.

The Friday before Christmas the choir sang at a venue in Swansea city centre to mark the opening of a new Christian shop. Our conductors are John Davies and Gareth Radford. Our accompanist is Helen Dykes. The choir continues to be wonderfully led by Rev. Jim Webber. Our prayer is that The Lord will bless the choir with good health and more men coming forward to join the choir.

Worldwide

BRISBANE FESTIVAL MALE VOICE CHOIR *Malcolm Arnold*

We are pleased to report that the Brisbane Choir continues enthusiastically to proclaim 'Jesus - No Other Name'. We are blessed to have 35 active members of the Brisbane Choir. All are enjoying a two month 'break' as we don't re-commence practice until 2nd February 2024.

Following the Combined Festival in September 2023, we presented a programme in November to a well-attended audience at the Buderim Uniting Church on the Sunshine Coast. The first weekend in December was busy with an 'End-of-year' dinner on the Saturday night and presentations on Sunday 3rd Decem-

ber at The Plains Retirement Village (in a southern suburb of Brisbane) and Wynnum Christian Community Church with good, appreciative audiences in attendance.

We were saddened by the passing of Elaine Fleming, wife of our past long-time Chairman Martin. Martin is a life-member of our choir and was an original member when the choir began in 1955. He was also our chaplain for many years following his role as chairman. We are pleased that he plans to return to practice in February. The choir was honoured to sing at Elaine's Memorial Service in early December. Our thoughts now turn to 2024, with regional festivals planned in Toowoomba and Bundaberg as well as other local presentations.

From here and there

Sad news to begin with: on 18th October Trevor Jones, leader of the White Rose Choir, passed away. Also, on 31st October we lost a very long-serving choir leader and Council member, Bill Lewis from Cardiff. Bill's funeral took place on 22nd November. Bill led the Cardiff choir until it closed; he was also book stockist for Council.

On 21st November, former Purley member Malcolm Sines passed away following an operation. Rev.

Reg West, great supporter of Westcliff Choir and frequent Area speaker, died on 8th December. His funeral is at 2pm on 26th January at Leigh Road Baptist, Leigh-on-Sea. Please also remember Pauline and John Pease in prayer as Pauline has myeloma which is affecting her mobility, with scans and more treatment in hand. Also John Cowell (Luton Choir) who has recently had colon cancer surgery and faces an extended convalescence in hospital.

Please remember the folk mentioned above in prayer, and send items for next Choirlink by Saturday 6th April. Yours in Christ, Vaughan