



# Newsletter

**Patron: Sir Trevor Garland**

**February 2024**

## From the Director

An article in CMQ\* by the Prayer Book Society reiterated what I have been saying for many years - Choral Evensong is growing in popularity in many places while many other aspects of church attendance is dropping.

Having said that, attendance at our evensongs in 2023 was variable. It has been slow but steady increase which the writer says “it seems that the combination of beautiful surroundings and wonderful music draws people to what is so often a special moment out of time – a moment apart from the maelstrom of life.” He also puts some of this down to using the BCP - well he would!



Nevertheless, I think he has a point; there is a timelessness about the words. There are now choirs in the Netherlands who regularly sing choral evensong. Congregations are strong and insist that the liturgy should remain that of BCP rather than modern Dutch liturgy.

There is something more than quaint about “acknowledging and bewailing our manifold sins and wickedness” rather than saying “sorry, I got that wrong!” I am not saying that we should all talk in 1662 language – verily that would be strange, forsooth! However, I do think that a sense of reverence is difficult to achieve if things are very informal.

It is not just clerics and priests that wear garments symbolic of their status but also judges and lawyers. Similarly, governments use words that are slightly antiquated for ceremonial occasions. A sense of ceremony involves many things - usually including words, music and clothing. There are times when both formal and informal language can work.



On Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> February we had our Dedication Service. I hope that you will be able to come to one of our services soon.

**Jim Abraham – Director**

Our Dedication conducted by Fr Robert Happer with Jim Abraham.

## Notes from the Editor

Happy New Year to All!!

Maybe that is a little late as Ash Wednesday is this week, so the Easter season is almost upon us. How the years rush by!

The Cathedral Singers started rehearsing last Wednesday and were all very pleased to see each other again. Of course we had to celebrate by staying for drinks afterwards! – responsibly, of course!!

As usual I asked the choir for some choral “funnies” so start the year off well! I am afraid they are rather irreverent! Enjoy!



However, the main reason for this Newsletter is to publish our calendar for 2024, although doubtless there will be some additions later. These are listed on the next page.

May I take this opportunity to thank you for your support and encourage you to join us in some of these places where we sing.

Blessings

**Jan Kneeshaw - Editor**



After our Dedication service – 11<sup>th</sup> February at St John’s Gordon.

Check out our website and then tell your friends!

[www.cathedralsingers.org.au](http://www.cathedralsingers.org.au)

**Would you like to consider joining us?**

Contact Jan Kneeshaw on 9144 4915 or the Director,

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## New Program for 2024.

<b>Month</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Venue</b>
February	Sunday	11	4.00pm	Evensong/ Dedication	<b>St John's Gordon</b>
	Sunday	25	9.30am	Eucharist	<b>St John's Birchgrove/Balmain</b>
March	Sunday	10	6.00pm	Morning Service	<b>St Ives Uniting Church</b>
	Friday	15	7.00pm	Station of the Cross	<b>Holy Spirit North Ryde</b>
	Friday	29	2.30pm	Stainer's "Crucifixion"	<b>St John's Gordon</b>
April	Sunday	14	4.00pm	Evensong	<b>St John's Gordon</b>
	Sunday	28	11.30pm	Anzac Day Service	<b>St John's Gordon</b>
May	Sunday	10	9.30am	Eucharist	<b>St John's Birchgrove/Balmain</b>
	Sunday	26	3.30pm 4.0pm	Concert Evensong	<b>St Jude's Bowral</b>
June	Sunday	9	4.00pm	King's Birthday Evensong	<b>St John's Gordon</b>
	Saturday	29	5.30pm/ 6.00pm	Vespers Mass	<b>St Mary's Cathedral</b>
July	Sunday	14	6.00pm	Evensong	<b>St John's Birchgrove/Balmain</b>
August	Thursday	8	10.00am	Feast Day Mass	<b>Mary MacKillop Chapel</b>
September	Sunday	8	9.30am	Eucharist	<b>St John's Birchgrove/Balmain</b>
	Sunday	15	3.00pm	Evensong	<b>Holy Spirit Terrigal</b>
	Saturday	28	5.30pm/ 6.00pm	Vespers Mass	<b>St Mary's Cathedral</b>
October	Sunday	TBC			<b>St Ives Uniting Church</b>
November	Sunday	10	4.00pm	Remembrance Day Evensong	<b>St John's Gordon</b>
December	Sunday	15	7.30pm	Lesson & Carols	<b>St John's Birchgrove/Balmain</b>
	Sunday	22	7.30pm	Lessons & Carols	<b>St John's Gordon</b>

## Charles Villiers Stanford (1852 - 1924)

2024 sees the anniversaries of a few church composers. One of the main ones is the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924). He stands as one of the most significant figures in British musical history, celebrated not only for his contributions to secular music but also for his profound influence on liturgical music. Stanford's legacy in church music is characterized by his commitment to tradition, innovation, and the revival of Anglican choral traditions.



Born in Ireland, Stanford's early exposure to church music profoundly influenced his compositions. He studied at Cambridge and later became a pivotal figure in the London. His passion for sacred music, deeply rooted in the Anglican tradition, found expression in a vast body of work that includes anthems, hymns, canticles, and settings of the Anglican liturgy.

His compositions, such as the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis in G and the Three Latin Motets, demonstrate his mastery of choral writing and his ability to evoke profound spiritual depth through music.

One of Stanford's most enduring contributions to liturgical music is his development of the Anglican Service setting. His settings for the Morning and Evening Canticles, including the Te Deum, Benedictus, Magnificat, and Nunc Dimittis, are celebrated for their elegance, craftsmanship, and accessibility. Some can be sung by a reasonably competent choir but others require double choir.

Stanford's liturgical compositions are marked by their melodic richness, harmonic sophistication, and meticulous attention to text setting. His ability to capture the essence of sacred texts through music is evident in works like his "Beati quorum via" and "Justorum animae," where the music serves as a vehicle for spiritual contemplation and transcendence.

Moreover, Stanford's role as a teacher and conductor further solidified his influence. As a professor at the Royal College of Music, he mentored a generation of composers, including Gustav Holst and Ralph Vaughan Williams, who would go on to shape the landscape of English music.

There will be many performances of his works this year.

TCS are starting the year with his Bb Evening Service and there will be other opportunities throughout the year to celebrate one of the most important composers of the Anglican tradition.

**Jim Abraham**  
**DIRECTOR**



