

Can you sing for us?

St Andrew's Parish Church, Chippenham, is at the heart of the town where there has been a church for over a thousand years. The present large building has parts that date from the 14th century and there is a long musical tradition. The organ case installed in 1752 is one of the glories of the church and still encloses some of the original pipes.

The choir is a mixed ensemble of adults who sing a repertoire that covers over five centuries, drawing on sources from across the continents from plainsong to pieces by modern composers of quality. There is a choral Eucharist on Sunday mornings at 10.00am according to the Common Worship rite, and Evensong at 6.30pm according to the Book of Common Prayer.

The robed choir sings over 100 choral services during the year, not only for the great festivals at Christmas, Holy Week, Easter and Civic occasions but, just as important, for the weekly worship of a town-centred parish church. Members are paid for singing at weddings and memorial services.

Music lists are published on the parish website: www.standrewschippenham.org.uk where there is also a detailed description of the organ.

Writing of the choir in the Parish Magazine, the Vicar of St Andrew's, the Rev. Simon Tatton Brown, wrote, "They all 'give up' their Friday evenings, week after week, year after year. It's a tremendous commitment, and those of us who enjoy their singing are in their debt. But our choir members don't think of it in terms of what they give up. They have made space so they can sing. They've not only experienced a wide range of music, they have learned what it is to make music. At the same time they've made deep and long lasting friendships. They've achieved a cumulative richness in their lives which no amount of 'variety' could deliver."



Recent Cathedral visits have included Bristol, Guildford, Hereford and Wells. During 2007 the choir sang at Bath Abbey and St Paul's Cathedral and at Exeter Cathedral in 2008. Potential

choristers in all voices will be very welcome to join with the existing team in making a really practical contribution to the musical life of the church. The choir is made up of adults of all ages from all walks of life, who enjoy the singing, camaraderie and working as a team. Several members sing in other choirs as well. Commitment is important, of course, and rehearsals are on Friday evenings when the atmosphere is one of enjoyment and professionalism. If you can read music, why not come along to a rehearsal or two before deciding if it's for you. Or perhaps you know someone who could be encouraged to join the musical side of worship at St Andrew's.....

Contact any member of the choir or David Chandler, Director of Music, at Church on a Sunday, or on 01454 619056, or on fevik.note@blueyonder.co.uk to learn more.

"To listen seriously to music and to perform it are among our most potent ways of learning what it is to live with and before God, learning a service that is a perfect freedom..... In this 'obedience' of listening and following, we are stretched and deepened, physically challenged as performers, imaginatively as listeners. The time we have renounced, given up, is given back to us as a time in which we have become more human, more real, even when we can't say what we have learned, only that we have changed."

Dr Rowan Williams
Archbishop of Canterbury

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