



# ***NORTHAM CHORAL SOCIETY***

*presents a*

## ***Christmas Concert***

**Saturday 7th December 2019 at 7.30pm  
in the Parish Church of St. Mary, Bideford**

<b>Conductor</b>	<b>Malcolm Pike</b>
<b>Organ</b>	<b>John Nixon</b>
<b>Piano</b>	<b>Gillian Allin</b>

**Admission: £6.00**

**Interval refreshments included**

Registered Charity Number XT18388

[northamchoral.org.uk](http://northamchoral.org.uk)

***Supported by Bideford Bridge Trust  
and Bideford and Northam Town Councils***

*Northam Choral Society wishes to thank St Mary's Church  
for permission to use the Church for our Christmas Concert  
and for the use of their Christmas Carol booklets.*

*A retiring collection will be held for the Choir's chosen charity,  
North Devon Food Bank.*

# PROGRAMME

<b>ALL</b>	<b>O Come, O Come, Emmanuel</b>	<b>Green Booklet No. 23</b>
Choir	Jesus Child	Rutter
Choir	Infant Holy	Polish Carol
Choir	For unto Us (from 'Messiah')	Handel
	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Ro Day</b>
Choir	The Infant King	Basque Noel
Choir	Adam lay ybounden	Skempton
<b>ALL</b>	<b>Hark the Herald Angels Sing</b>	<b>Green Booklet No. 13</b>
Choir	Welcome Yule	Parry
Choir	Sleep Sweet Jesus	Pike
Choir	I Sing the Birth	Sullivan
<b>ALL</b>	<b>God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen</b>	<b>Green Booklet No. 10</b>

## Interval & Refreshments

<b>ALL</b>	<b>O Little Town of Bethlehem</b>	<b>Green Booklet No. 22</b>
Choir	It Came upon the Midnight Clear	Willis
Choir	Star Carol	Rutter
Choir	O Little One Sweet	Old German Carol
	<b>Reading</b>	<b>John Dare</b>
Choir	Gaudete!	Scandinavian Carol
Choir	Shepherds' Farewell	Berlioz
Choir	The Holly and the Ivy	Gardner
<b>ALL</b>	<b>It Came upon the Midnight Clear</b>	<b>Green Booklet No. 16</b>
Choir	A Babe is Born	Mathias
Choir	Jesus Christ the Apple Tree	Poston
Choir	We Wish You a Merry Christmas	Westcountry Carol
<b>ALL</b>	<b>O Come All Ye Faithful</b>	<b>Green Booklet No. 21</b>

## ***ALL: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel***

**Green booklet no. 23**

### ***Jesus Child***

*John Rutter is our most famous, most loved and most performed writer of carols. His pieces are eminently singable but also challenging, with much exciting rhythmic and harmonic variety. "Jesus Child" is no exception.*

### ***Infant Holy***

*The Polish words of this lovely, tranquil carol are translated by Edith Reed (1885-1933), an English organist and editor. The beautiful tune is arranged by David Willcocks (1919-2015), who is well-known for his association with the choir of King's College, Cambridge and his work on the "Carols for Choirs" series.*

### ***For unto us a Child is Born (Messiah, Part 1/Chorus 12)***

*This popular chorus from Handel's "Messiah" tells of the nativity and bounds along with lots of rapid notes for the singers!*

## ***Reading (Ro Day)***

### ***The Infant King***

*The words of this lullaby are by The Reverend S. Baring-Gould, a 19th century Anglican priest from Lew Trenchard in Devon. The tune is an old Basque Noel.*

### ***Adam lay ybounden***

*English composer Howard Skempton was born in Chester in 1947. His music puts a strong emphasis on melody and, as you will hear in this carol, the sopranos have a highly rhythmic line while the other three parts trundle slowly along underneath! The words are 15<sup>th</sup> century English.*

### ***ALL: Hark the Herald Angels Sing***

**Green booklet no. 13**

### ***Welcome Yule***

*Sir Hubert Parry (1848-1914) is best known for "Jerusalem" but wrote much other music including some carols. This short one, set to words from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, is lively and crisp.*

## ***Sleep, Sweet Jesus***

*Our new Musical Director wrote this meditative carol in 2011 for his Chamber Choir in Wales. However, they never got around to performing it in public, so this is its premiere!*

## ***I Sing the Birth***

*Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900) wrote many works other than his Savoy operas and much preferred most of them! "I sing the birth" is a simple but effective homophonic setting of words by Ben Johnson.*

## ***ALL: God rest ye merry gentlemen***

**Green booklet, no. 10**

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**Interval**

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## ***ALL: O Little Town of Bethlehem***

**Green booklet no. 22**

## ***It Came upon the Midnight Clear***

*The words of this well-known carol by the 19<sup>th</sup> century writer Edmund Sears received new melody and harmonies from the American trio of Richard Willis, Uzziah Burnap and Mack Wilberg. The musical style is lilting and romantic.*

## ***Star Carol***

*This second carol by John Rutter tells of the star over Bethlehem and exhorts us to "Hurry to Bethlehem to see the Son of Mary". The music is a mixture of boisterous jubilation and calm meditation.*

## ***O Little One Sweet***

*The words and melody of this peaceful carol were first found in German composer Samuel Scheidt's "Tablaturbuch" of 1650. The harmonisation is one of many by J.S. Bach.*

## ***Reading (John Dare)***

## ***Gaudete!***

*Gaudete! (meaning "Rejoice!" in Latin), is a carol from the 16<sup>th</sup> century. It first appeared in "Piae Cantiones", a collection of late mediaeval Latin sacred songs published in 1582. It was popularised in 1972 by the group "Steeleye Span", who sang it in rustic style. Our version will, hopefully, be a little less earthy!*

## ***Shepherds' Farewell***

*This beautiful and popular piece by Hector Berlioz (1803-1869) comes from his oratorio "L'Enfance du Christ" (The Childhood of Christ) and tells of the Holy Family's flight into Egypt. Its style is gentle, simple and strophic.*

## ***The Holly and the Ivy***

*This delightful tongue-in-cheek setting of traditional words is by English composer John Gardner (1917-2011), who grew up in Ilfracombe. His output was large in many genres but he is best remembered for this carol and "Tomorrow shall be my dancing day", both written for St. Paul's Girls School, where he taught briefly.*

## ***ALL: It Came upon the Midnight Clear***

**Green booklet No. 16**

## ***A Babe is Born***

*This lively carol by Welsh composer William Mathias (1934-1992) is a setting of 15<sup>th</sup> century words and abounds with exciting rhythms and unusual harmonies. It tells of Christ's birth and the visit of the Magi.*

## ***Jesus Christ the Apple Tree***

*Elizabeth Poston (1906-1987) was an English composer, writer and painter. She wrote many scores for radio and television including "Howards End" and was editor of a number of folksong, carol, and hymn collections. "Jesus Christ the apple tree" is her best-known carol and sets words from 1784 America.*

## ***We Wish you a Merry Christmas***

*We end with this much-loved traditional West Country carol arranged by English composer Arthur Warrel (1882-1939). We hope you enjoy your "figgy pudding!"*

## ***ALL: O Come All Ye Faithful***

**Green booklet no. 21**

*The Choir would like to thank you for coming to our Christmas concert.*

*Your support is appreciated. We wish you a happy and peaceful Christmas.*

*There will be a retiring collection for the North Devon Food Bank*

**Members of the choir singing this evening are:**

**Soprano**

Gill Abbott  
Sally Anderson  
Elizabeth Backway  
Gemma Carter  
Wendy Chiles

Thelma Clarke  
Claire Davies  
Mary Dendle  
Janet Elliott  
Susan Graham  
Josi Macnamara

Margaret Murray-Palmer  
Jackie Page  
Julie Parker  
Marjorie Payne  
Sue Ticehurst

**Contralto**

Sue Chope  
Margaret Cracknell  
Ro Day  
Lucy Giddy  
Christine Holmes

Ann Humphris  
Jane Kivlin  
Heather Laugharne  
Jean Ley  
Anne McKiernan

Jennifer Mills  
Marion Penton-Voak  
Jeannie Smith  
Doris Symons  
Di Warmington

**Tenor**

Geoff Abbott  
Sarah Battams

Graham Hill  
David Mitchell

**Bass**

Michael Crouch  
John Dare  
Michael Elliott

Peter Goodall  
John Humphris

Tony Nicholls  
Rod Wood

**Rehearsal Pianist**

Gillian Allin

***NORTHAM CHORAL SOCIETY***

An article in the North Devon Journal of 17th November 1859 shows that a Choral Society was formed 'for the practice of good secular and sacred music' to complement an evening school opened by the vicar. The society comprised the village choir and young men and women who could 'sing by note'. Today's choir is still open to those who can sing by note -although no audition is required - and concerts are given twice a year.

New members are always welcome and anyone who enjoys singing may come along to the Methodist Church Hall in Cross Street Northam on a Tuesday evening at 7.30pm. Our first rehearsal in the New Year will be on January 7th, 2020.

Our next concert, with Hartland Chamber Orchestra, will be a performance of Handel's 'Messiah' on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2020 in the Bideford Methodist Church.

### ***Malcolm Pike (Musical Director)***

Malcolm was educated at Eton College Choir School and City of London School for Boys before embarking on his musical career, firstly at the Royal Academy of Music and subsequently at Kings College, London University, from where he graduated. He then enjoyed a fruitful year at Reading University doing his PGCE but spending much of his time arranging and conducting concerts!

He was appointed Director of Music at Pierrepoint School in Surrey in 1973 and was, for many years, Musical Director of Farnham Operatic Society and Opera Omnibus in Haslemere. He also ran his own choir and composed for the staff and students.

He moved to Westonbirt School for Girls in Gloucestershire in 1992 and his Chapel Choir appeared on local television and gave regular public concerts.

An accident in 2004 led to him being granted early retirement and in 2005 he retired to West Wales, where he ran a chamber choir and for several years conducted the Teifi Chamber Orchestra in Cardigan.

In the summer of 2015 Malcolm moved to Bradworthy and, for three years was Musical Director of Torrridge Male Voice Choir before joining Northam Choral Society earlier this year.

### ***John Nixon (Organ)***

A chorister at Westminster Abbey in the early 1960s, John Nixon first studied the organ with David Nield at Kingston Parish Church, acting as assistant organist at home in Dorking. There followed three years as a Choral Scholar at King's College, Cambridge with David Wilcox, and a further two years study at the Guildhall School of Music in London where he began his career under the professional name of Leigh Nixon. For the next ten years he sang with groups such as David Munrow's Early Music Consort, the Schütz, John Aldis and Monteverdi Choirs and the Hilliard Ensemble. In 1984 he joined Gothic Voices, with whom he made more than 20 CDs, singing with them for 30 years. He also returned to Westminster Abbey as a Lay Vicar in 1985, retiring in the summer of 2013, before moving to Devon a year later.

Over the last three years John has returned to organ playing, much enthused by the glorious 1865 Father Willis organ of St Mary's Parish Church, Bideford, where he is an assistant organist.

### ***Gillian Allin BA Hons LRAM (Piano)***

Gillian learnt the piano locally, before studying at Dartington College of Arts. She has taught the piano in the local area for some 30 years and has had a long association with the Northam Choral Society as its accompanist.

