



WEST WALES NEWSLETTER – JANUARY 2018

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EVENTS PLANNED FOR 2018

Improve your Organ Skills	10 February 2018
<i>St Peter's, Carmarthen</i>	
Awards Examinations	3 March 2018
<i>St Peter's, Carmarthen</i>	
Rehearsal for Area Choirs' Festival	28 April 2018
<i>Narberth Community Primary School</i>	
Area Choirs' Festival	12 May 2018
<i>St Davids Cathedral</i>	
Meet, Eat and Sing Choral Evensong	7 July 2018
<i>Holy Trinity, Aberystwyth</i>	
Lift Up Your Voice	22 September 2018
<i>Location to be confirmed</i>	
Young Voices' Festival	7 November 2018
<i>St Davids Cathedral</i>	

Our next event is in February, and represents a unique collaboration between the RSCM and the Royal College of Organists. Both of these organisations work tirelessly to teach and foster skills, thus encouraging organists to improve their skills. This all coincides neatly with the RSCM's latest venture, the *Complete Church Organist* programme, where church organists can work in group sessions on a monthly basis and be taught by an accredited local tutor. To find out more details, I encourage you to look at the RSCM section of the Diocesan website (<http://stdavids.churchinwales.org.uk/rscm-west-wales-area/>) and also the main RSCM website (<https://www.rscm.com/calling-church-and-chapel-organists/>), where you will find a more detailed explanation of our programme by Stuart Robinson, the Wales Co-ordinator.

The 'Improve your Organ Skills' day in Carmarthen will be led by James Parsons, Head of Student Development at the RCO and a visiting tutor at the Birmingham Conservatoire, and by Meirion Wynn Jones, Carmarthen-based freelance organist and composer. Merion has held posts at Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral, the Birmingham Oratory and Brecon Cathedral.

Details of the course are outlined in the newsletter, and I encourage you take advantage of this unique and hopefully developing opportunity.

Simon Pearce
Area Chairman

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Welcome to this edition of the RSCM West Wales Newsletter. We start 2018 with renewed vigour as an organisation, and look forward to welcoming you to as many of our events as possible. You will see from the diary dates that there is an enormous breadth of activities for you to participate in, from a small-scale Lift up your Voice to our large-scale annual Festival Service, from a Meet, Eat and Sing event to a Young Voices Festival to mark the centenary of the end of World War 1.

**IMPROVE YOUR ORGAN SKILLS
SATURDAY 10 FEBRUARY 2018
CARMARTHEN**

Our first event in 2018 is a workshop led by James Parsons and Meirion Wyn Jones at St Peter's Church in Carmarthen on Saturday 10 February 2018. They will work with small groups of participants to help them with all aspects of organ playing. The workshop runs from 2.00pm to 4.30pm and, after a short refreshment break, will conclude with a performance by participants of the pieces that they have brought with them to work on during the day.

The cost for taking part in the workshop is £35.00 for RSCM members, members of churches affiliated to the RSCM, and members of the RCO, and £40.00 for others. Observers can also attend at a cost of £7.00 for RSCM/RCO members and £10.00 for others.

Full details and booking forms have been circulated to all RSCM contacts and are also available through the Diocesan website (<http://stdavids.churchinwales.org.uk/event/improve-your-organ-skills/>), the West Wales section of the main RSCM website (www.rscm.com/area/west-walesdyfed/) and the RSCM West Wales Facebook page (www.facebook.com/rscmwestwalesarea). Both participants and observers should book by **Wednesday 31 January** at the very latest.

**CHORISTER AWARD
EXAMINATIONS 2018**

This year's local examinations for the Bishop's and Dean's Awards will be held at St Peter's Church, Carmarthen on Saturday 3 March 2018. Full details of the award scheme, including the examination syllabus, can be found on the West Wales section of the RSCM website (<http://www.rscm.com/area/west-walesdyfed/>). The closing date for applications for this year's examinations is **Saturday 10 February 2018**.

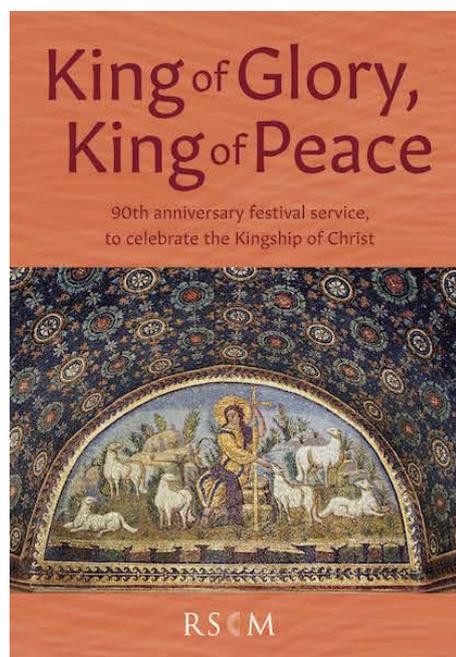
If you are interested in taking one of the examinations or would like further information about them, please contact Nigel Morris (nigel@gdmorris.demon.co.uk; 01570 481336)

who is the local Education & Training Officer and Awards Administrator.

**AREA CHOIRS' FESTIVAL
SATURDAY 12 MAY 2018
ST DAVIDS CATHEDRAL**

We are delighted that David Hill has agreed to come and direct this year's Area Choirs' Festival, which will take place at St Davids Cathedral on Saturday 12 May 2018.

David is widely respected as both a choral and an orchestral conductor. He has been the Musical Director of The Bach Choir since 1998 and was the chief conductor of the BBC Singers from 2007 to 2017. Previous appointments have included Sub-Organist at Durham Cathedral, Master of Music at Westminster Cathedral, Master of Music at Winchester Cathedral, and Director of Music at St John's College, Cambridge. This will be a rare and exciting opportunity to work with such a renowned musician, so we hope that a large number of singers will want to take part in this year's Festival.



We plan to use the RSCM's new Festival Service Book 'King of Glory, King of Peace' and the charge for taking part in the Festival includes a copy of the service book for each singer to keep, an approach that seemed to work well for last year's Festival. The book contains a wide selection of hymns, worship

songs and other choral items suitable for full SATB choirs as well as those with more limited resources, so should be a useful resource for all churches and choirs, regardless of size and style of worship.

Our Festival will take place just two days after Ascension Day, and so the theme 'King of Glory, King of Peace' could not be more appropriate.

The arrangements for the day of the Festival are:

From 1.30pm	Registration
2.00–4.00pm	Rehearsal
5.00pm	Festival Service

The charge for taking part in this event is £8.00 for RSCM members and affiliates and £10.00 for others.

There will be a preliminary rehearsal at Narberth Community Primary School on Saturday 28 April from 10.30am until 12.30pm (registration will be from 10.00am to allow time for everyone to collect their music). Given the geographical spread of the Diocese, we have tried to find a good, reasonably central location and we hope that holding the rehearsal on a Saturday morning will be convenient for most people. A strong attendance at the rehearsal will help us to prepare well for the Festival, and singers will also then have the music to work on between the rehearsal and the Festival if they wish

We will need to know choir numbers in advance so that we can purchase the appropriate number of books from the RSCM. Booking forms will be sent to all local contacts around the end of February and will also be made available at that time through the West Wales section of the RSCM website (www.rscm.com/area/west-walesdyfed/), the RSCM section of the Diocesan website (<http://stdavids.churchinwales.org.uk/rscm-west-wales-area/>) and the RSCM West Wales Facebook page (www.facebook.com/rscmwestwalesarea). We will be asking singers to complete and submit the booking form by **31 March 2018** at the latest to make sure that we can have the music copies available in time for the preliminary rehearsal.

EVENT REPORT: COME AND SING FAURÉ'S 'REQUIEM' SATURDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2017 MILFORD HAVEN

Our final event in 2017 was a 'Come and Sing' performance of Fauré's Requiem at St Katharine's Church, Milford Haven on Saturday 11 November. To mark the fact that the performance took place on Remembrance Day, members of the church led appropriate readings and prayers between the individual movements of the Requiem. Simon Pearce directed the choir, ably assisted by Rupert Jackson on the organ and with Sophie Davies and Ieuan Anthony as the soloists.

A total of 34 singers came to sing in the choir, with all voice parts well represented, and it was clear from the start of the rehearsal that most people were very familiar with the work. This meant that the afternoon rehearsal could focus on the quality of the performance rather just the accuracy of the notes.

We were made very welcome at St Katharine's and were kept very warm and comfortable on what proved to be a cold and wet day outside!

Feedback on the day was extremely positive, with a number of requests for more events like this in the future.

THE COMPLETE CHURCH ORGANIST

Stuart Robinson, RSCM Coordinator for Wales, provides the following update:

For several weeks now the RSCM in Wales has been inviting organists to enrol for group tuition in our *Complete Church Organist / Organydd Gyflawn* programme. There are a good number of people who week-in week-out play the organ for church and chapel services, but who haven't necessarily trained as organists. The chances are it's because they've learned to play the piano, and they've answered a need for someone to accompany the hymns. Yet playing the organ is very different from the piano even though the keyboard looks the same! Apart from the freshening up of keyboard skills, those taking part will also gain encouragement and mutual support from each other. These sessions are

intended for the average player, and will focus primarily on the technical skills to accompany hymn singing, as well as how to deal with stops and where relevant, pedals. The tuition programme is led by an RSCM accredited tutor once a month with participants (a maximum of six) splitting the fee. Obviously the cost per person can be brought down if several people take part.



So far we have had a few applications from the RSCM West Wales Area but there's room for more! Please contact me if you're interested. I need to know where you are based, some information about the church where you play and your playing standard. The course would be an ideal follow-up for some of those attending the organ-playing day being run by the RSCM West Wales committee on 10 February. Please write to me directly srobinson@rscm.com

RSCM INTRODUCTORY OFFER

The RSCM is now continuing its specially discounted membership offer until 31 December 2018. The offer gives a 25% discount on the first year's membership to those who join after attending an RSCM course or event. The offer is available to any new individual or affiliate member, or anyone who has not been a member since 31 December 2013. To qualify for the offer, you need to obtain a discount voucher and application form from the event leader. So please do come and support our local events and invite a friend to join you as well!

THE NEXT NEWSLETTER

If you have any news that you would like us to feature in the next newsletter, please do let us know! We would be very glad to hear of all activities going on in the area, or perhaps you would like us to feature a particular organ or church that you feel is important. If so, please use the contact details at the top of the first page to get in touch with us.

LOCAL MAILING LIST

We e-mail our regular newsletters and booking details for RSCM West Wales events to:

- the registered contacts for all affiliated churches in the Area;
- all individual RSCM members in the Area; and
- others who have expressed interest in receiving this information.

If you do not already receive these details and would like to do so in future, please email Glynis Morris (glynis@gdmorris.demon.co.uk) and ask to be added to our local mailing list.