

Director of Music Report 2026.

I shall make this year's report a little more brief than usual and see if anyone notices!

The key message is, as ever I think, gratefulness. Gratefulness for the many good and faithful servants we are blessed with here at St Michael's. I am particularly grateful to our singers and accompanists; choir helpers and supporters; parents and children; cake bakers and bottle washers; clergy and laity; Father, Son and Holy Spirit; without whom all of this would be impossible.

Looking back, we have had a fulsome year of music making to the Lord. One highlight was the Palm Sunday reflective service based on Pergolesi's Stabat Mater, not sung here for many decades. Our worship was elevated by a truly moving rendition of this beautiful piece, incorporating vocal soloists from amongst our ranks and a fine selection of local string players.

Looking ahead, future endeavours include further engagement with primary schools, especially our church school by incorporating pupils into our worship through collaboration with headteacher, Rachel Griffiths and school choir coordinator, Emily Robshaw.

Sunday afternoon recitals continue in earnest with our next gig in July including a live organ soundtrack to Buster Keaton's silent movie, Sherlock Jr, performed by our good friend Jonathan Eyre.

As ever, we continue to welcome new choir members of all ages. We are also keen to hear from anyone who might like to learn organ (usually, but not necessarily a young person with skills on piano already) and are happy to consider students at all stages of learning to receive an Organ Scholarship, all training provided. For more information please see our website or come and chat with me. Furthermore, we are delighted to offer Choral Scholarships to singers in all voice parts. These are usually available to young people between 16 and 18 years of age, but this is negotiable.

Earlier this year we were pleased to make James Head Chorister. As well as singing in the choir, James studies piano and trumpet. He is also a keen member of the local Air Training Corps and a mean archer, so watch out! In other choir news, last month Bohuslava obtained her dark blue ribbon award. Well done to both James and Bohuslava.

Our 'new' organ is now 10 years old and like all machines, needs regular care and maintenance. Our last organ refurbishment was carried out robustly, but nonetheless parts do need to be repaired or replaced from time to time. If you would like to help by making a donation towards the ongoing care and maintenance of our superb instrument then please contact me or Peter Rixon, Chair of Finance without delay. All offerings are gratefully received. Many thanks.

Finally, please do come and speak to me if you would like to discuss anything music related or know of anyone who might like to play a part in honouring God through music here at St Michael's.

With grateful thanks for your continued support and encouragement.

Kind regards,

Nathan Collins
Director of Music