



President: Patricia Parkes
Conductor: Michael Cayton

SONGS OF LIGHT

Saturday June 28
Sarratt Village Hall



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Registered charity #284064

A Welcome from the Chair

It is lovely to see you here this evening; thank you for joining us for this concert. This is the Choir's last concert of the season though we have one more event, which is our weekend tour to Stoke Gabriel in July.

It has been a busy couple of months, with a successful concert at St John's Wood, London where we joined the St John's Wood Church Choir to sing Michael's recent composition *The Way Through the Woods*.

Please join us after this concert for some refreshments and we hope to see you next season.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which reads "Lyndsay". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the 'y'.

Lyndsay Ward
Chair

This Evening's Singers

Sopranos

Sam Beard
Hilary Broadbent
Mary Bungard
Anni Facer
Gabrielle Fisher
Jenny Gorsuch
Christine Guy
Jill Haslam
Jo Hayter
Katherine Hyde
Barbara Johnson
Sue Kesteven
Charlotte Kohnhorst
Sarah Moreton
Gillian Proctor
Sonya Raymond
Stefanie Robinson
Lyndsay Ward
Gill Watson

Altos

Cathy Amos
Sue Canderton
Marian Davies
Ana de'Ath
Rita Fryer
Philippa Goss
Clare Hearnshaw
Helen Heenan
Maggie Shrive
Marian Wax

Tenors

Philip Brown
Gijs Crone
Andy Etchells
Anju Sharda
Isabel Walker

Basses

Paul Davies
John Haslam
Martin Robinson
Richard Watson
Tim Wynne-Jones

Programme:

Tallis	<i>O Nata Lux</i>
Bach	<i>O Jesu Christ, meins Lebens Licht</i>
Elgar	<i>Light of the World</i>
Rheinberger	<i>Abendlied</i>
Gardiner	<i>Evening Hymn (Te Lucis Ante terminum)</i>
Brahms	<i>Geistliches Lied</i>
Holst	<i>Nunc Dimittis</i>
Chilcott	<i>Canticles of Light:</i> I. <i>Te lucis ante terminum</i> III. <i>O nata lux de lumine</i>
Whitacre	<i>Lux Aurumque</i>

Notes

This evening we examine the subject of ‘music and light’ in a series of short pieces. Music and light can each produce an infinite variety of shades of colour, and many composers create a sense of heavenly light when setting the text *In Paradisum* to a Requiem Mass; notable examples of this are from Requiem settings by Fauré, Howells, and Duruflé.

Choral composers are especially good at creating a wide variety of textures to suggest light, and this evening’s programme explores different composers’ use of light and shade over the centuries.

We begin with Thomas Tallis' *O Nata Lux* ('O Light of Light'). This is a luminous piece reflecting Tallis' mastery of polyphonic choral writing. It was written to celebrate the feast of the transfiguration, a moment in the gospels when Jesus is seen bathed in light.

We then have J.S. Bach's *O Jesu Christ, meins Lebens Licht* ('O Jesus Christ, my life's true light'). This is an unusual piece for Bach, as it does not belong to a larger work and stands alone as a motet. The serene chorale melody wafts above the harmony, transporting the listener upwards to heaven.

Elgar's *Light of the World* is an anthem taken from the much larger oratorio of the same name, inspired by William Holman Hunt's famous painting. It reflects Elgar's deep religious convictions, exploring spiritual awakening and redemption.

Rheinberger's *Abendlied* is our first piece to explore the subject of 'light at evening'. The text is from Luke's Gospel, where the downcast disciples meet the risen Christ on the road to Emmaus and invite him to "Stay with us for it is almost evening and the day is nearly over".

H. Balfour Gardiner's Evening Hymn, *Te lucis ante terminum* ('Thee, Lord before the close of day'), takes its text from the evening service of compline. The middle section prays for protection during the night and the final 'amens' describe the setting Sun.

Brahm's *Geistliches Lied* ('Sacred Song') reminds us not to fear, to be calm, and to try to not worry about tomorrow. Although it doesn't contain any text about light, as in Balfour Gardiner's *Te Lucis* the final amen creates the serenity and calm of a beautiful sunset.

We then have Holst's setting of the *Nunc Dimittis*. The *Nunc Dimittis*, or 'Song of Simeon', is the moment when the elderly Simeon takes the infant Christ in his hands and declares that he can now die as he has seen the Salvation and Light of the world.

Our main work is Bob Chilcott's *Canticles of Light*. It was written in three movements, of which two are performed this evening: *Te Lucis ante terminum* ('Before the ending of the day') and *O Nata Lux* ('O Light of light'). The first movement is dark in character, entreating God for protection through the night. The last movement lightens to meet the dawn of a new day, expressing the belief that, with God's help, the light of day will encourage new strength and hope.

We finish our programme with Eric Whitacre's *Lux Aurumque*: light, warm and heavy as pure gold.

Michael Cayton

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- Complimentary concert tickets during the season
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- Recognition in concert programmes

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The following have been made honorary members, in recognition of extended service to the Choir:

Mrs Patricia Parkes – President

Dame Gillian Pugh – Vice-President

Mrs K. Darby	Mr M. Gaudie	Prof. I.D. Howarth
Mr D. Lloyd	Mr D. Treanor	



The Chiltern Singers, a small group drawn from the Chiltern Choir, is available to sing at events – weddings, funerals, social functions, etc.

Please direct enquiries to John Haslam by email (preferred):

chilternsingers@chilternchoir.org.uk

or by 'phone, 01494 724125

The Chiltern Choir – dates for your diary:

2025 July 19: Stoke Gabriel, Devon

An 'awayday' concert in the parish church.

2025 November 15: Nelson Mass

Amersham Free Church

2025 December 13: Christmas Cheer

Carols and more; Chorleywood Memorial Hall

Look out for details at chilternchoir.org.uk or on [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/chilternchoir).

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