

Dear CMS Friends

## December 2021 Newsletter

It is an extremely happy first duty to wish each and every one of you all very best for the Seasons of Advent and Christmas at the close of a very eventful year and to send special wishes for the year 2022 ahead of us all before too long.

To say that the present year has been a busy one for the Society would be to under-state the case!

At the outset of this letter, I do take the chance to express warmest possible thanks to all members for their assiduous attention to so many aspects preceding, during and since our second "virtual" Annual General and Special General Meetings held on Thursday 14 October 2021. You will recall, I'm sure, that our first virtual AGM was held last year, 2020 – for reasons obvious to all.

### *New President and Patrons*

At this year's meeting was announced the joyful news of our incoming President, The Most Reverend Bernard Longley, Archbishop of Birmingham, to whom is extended a very warm welcome – as, indeed is wholly appropriate for others who have very positively responded to our Chairman's personal invitation to enter into a close relationship with the Society. Thus, the CMS also welcomes as Honorary Patrons: The Right Reverend Guli Francis-Dehqani, Bishop of Chelmsford, The Lord Glenarthur and Sir James MacMillan CBE.

### *Vice-Presidents*

Chairman Patrick Russill also announced that three distinguished musicians are now joining the ranks of the Society's Vice-Presidents: Carl Jackson MVO, Dr Cecilia McDowall and Dr Philip Moore.

All the new appointments were approved unanimously by those present

### *Music downloads*

The innovative provision of music downloadable from the Society's website continues apace, with the Year C comprehensive provision of a complete cycle of Responsorial Psalmody now included. This most useful facility first emanated from the fertile pen of trustee and member Robert Gower, Organist at Holy Trinity, Berwick upon Tweed and formerly of St Barnabas Cathedral, Nottingham.

Robert has kindly provided the background to this enterprise:

The psalms were written in my garden room in Grantham over the course of a three year liturgical cycle experienced during my time as Organist at Nottingham Cathedral. Some were natural births, others were fiddly and Caesarean in delivery, whilst a few arrived almost as twins, if the muse was strong. Refrains were first to kickstart the compositional pen, written with the memory of hearty chapel singing I had experienced in my teaching career and aiming to add a bit more colour and contrast in comparison to material used previously. Verses were usually sung by a solo cantor. The Bachian discipline of writing weekly was good for me!

### *On-going work*

It is, indeed, quite remarkable how very little disruption to the Society's activities in general, and to our ongoing programme of new publications in particular, has taken place since that memorable first lock-down back in 2020.

For this we have to thank most gratefully our Chairman, Patrick Russill, Treasurer and Membership Secretary John Roch, all CMS Trustees and, perhaps very particularly this



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year, General Editor Geoffrey Webber – whose zeal and assiduity have each been ongoing, remarkable and inspirational. Geoffrey might well be the first to offer great credit to our wonderful typographer, Jackie Leigh, his expert colleague editors of individual issues by Oxford University Press, and to OUP staff as well as our specialist printers of long standing, Halstans. Many of us would certainly wish to be associated with such gratitude and acclaim accorded to one and all.

A similar vote of thanks goes also to Trustees responsible for the successful conclusion of a number of major projects – most notable of which is the registration of the process of the Society's change of status with the Charity Commission from that of a Registered Charity to becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation – CIO for short. This was the process unanimously voted on at the SGM and we are most grateful to Trustee Trevor Ford for his chairmanship of the Working Party responsible for steering this all through. The completion of the process is currently ongoing.

Further progress has been made recently with regard to the Society's Investment policy and to the imminently forthcoming Equality and Diversity policy.

The Minutes of the AGM and SGM will be posted on the Society's Website shortly, and I will happily provide a hard copy upon request in the New Year.

#### *New publications*

Early next month we will send out to members the first two of a number of publications programmed for the last weeks of this year and the first few upcoming months of next. These are the *Evening Canticles* of Nicholas Storgers edited by Dr Webber and *How are the mighty fallen* from Richard Ramsey edited by Joshua Strutter. Both these are distinguished settings of sacred texts from significant, yet strangely little-known, English composers of yesteryear.

It is hoped to be able to get those in the post to you all during the course of the week beginning Sunday 9 January.

#### *Commemoration and celebration*

The summer of 2021 saw the centenary commemoration of a highly regarded former CMS President, Professor Gordon Reynolds LVO. Gordon, a Yorkshireman by birth, entered this world on 30 June 1921 in the City and County of Kingston-upon-Hull, then in the East Riding. His early career was as Assistant Organist of Bradford Cathedral immediately after the Second World War. Known and respected widely as Organist and Choirmaster of St Bride's Fleet Street from 1952-57, Gordon was Organist and Choirmaster at HM Chapel Royal, Hampton Court Palace, from 1966 until his death in Petersham, Surrey in 1995, serving in addition as CMS Chairman from 1987 until 1995. His many other activities included musical services to the BBC and a Professorship at the Royal Military School of Music at Kneller Hall.

His humorous books *Organo Pleno*, *Full Swell*, and *The Cassock Pocket-Book (of Divers Diversions for the Church Musician and Sundry Solaces for the Sabbath Sojourner)* were enthusiastically received by generations of church music lovers.

Gordon was succeeded at Hampton Court by CMS Vice-President, Carl Jackson LVO who this year, 2021, marked his own Silver Jubilee in post there, and to whom we extend hearty congratulations on this noteworthy professional anniversary!

With every good wish and blessing to you all  
Very sincerely

Simon Lindley