



Information & Membership

To join the Friends, please complete the application form and return it together with your subscription to

**The Membership Secretary
Friends of St Matthew's Music
The Parish Office
27a The Drive
Northampton
NN1 4RY**

If you are a UK taxpayer please also complete the *giftaid* section of the membership application enabling us to reclaim tax on your subscription.

For more information, please email friends@stmatthews-northampton.org.uk or visit www.stmatthews-northampton.org.uk

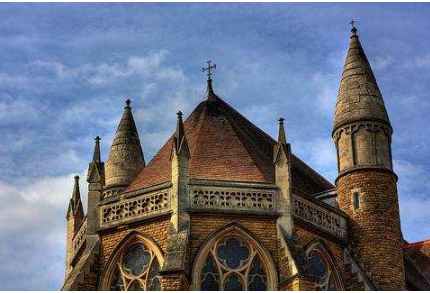


The Friends of St Matthew's Music

Thank you for your interest in the Friends. Within this booklet you will find information about the history of St Matthew's Church and the music here as well as information about who the Friends are and what it is they do. You will also find information regarding membership of the Friends and details about how to join.

Please do take the time to read the information in this booklet. We hope that you are as enthusiastic as we are in supporting the musical life of the Church and hope to be able to welcome you as a Friend of St Matthew's Music.



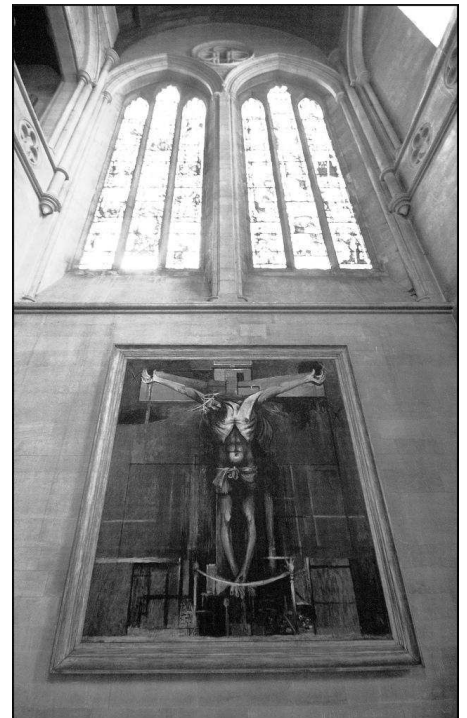


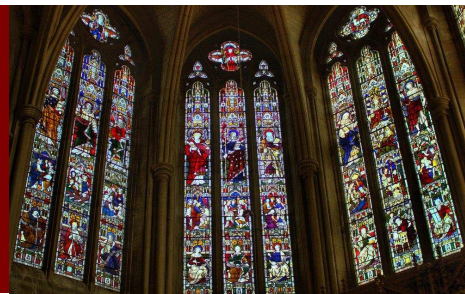
The history

St Matthew's Church, Northampton has been a focus of worship and prayer for over one hundred years. The Church is a particularly fine example of the late Victorian Gothic revival, designed by local architect Matthew Holding and consecrated in 1893. The first Vicar of the Church was Canon John Rowden Hussey and the first Organist was Charles King, composer of the hymn tune *Northampton*; however, it was the second Vicar, Canon Walter Hussey who began the practice of commissioning new works of both art and music for the Church. St Matthew's is perhaps one of the most famous churches in the country because of its distinguished musical history of commissioning new works, and for its long standing choral tradition.

Numerous eminent British composers have written major works for the Church including Leighton, Howells and perhaps most notably Benjamin Britten who wrote *Rejoice in the Lamb* for St Matthew's. In September 2009 the Choir gave the first performance of the most recent commission for the Church – a Mass by David Bednall, written for the feast of St Matthew and to commemorate the centenary of the birth of Walter Hussey.

The Church is also home to many famous works of art including Sir Henry Moore's sculpture *Madonna and Child* and the *Crucifixion* painting by Graham Sutherland (pictured above). The most recent addition to the collection is a sculpture of *St Matthew* by one of today's foremost sculptors, Ian Rank-Broadley.





The Choir of St Matthew's Church consists of mixed boy and girl choristers aged between eleven and eighteen who are supported by a back row of mixed men and women of all ages.



The Choir's repertoire spans over six centuries of choral music and even includes works by composers of the present day. In addition to the regular round of services and rehearsals at St Matthew's, the Choir have been involved in television and radio broadcasts as well as

commercial recordings. The Choir also pay regular visits to Cathedrals up and down the country to sing Evensong as well as performing concerts in St Matthew's and enjoying social events together.

St Matthew's is also home to arguably the finest parish church organ in the country. The fine four manual organ was built in 1895 by the firm J W Walker and Sons and is now of great historical importance. In 2005/6 the organ underwent a major restoration project costing in excess of a quarter of a million pounds and is now a sought after recital instrument and many distinguished organists perform regularly at the Church.

In order for the music at St Matthew's to continue to thrive, enhance our worship, inspire those who hear it, it is vital to maintain the consistent financial support that is necessary. It is our hope that the Friends will play a large part in the nourishment of music at St Matthew's.



Our aim

St Matthew's is a large sought-after venue for music-making and the performing arts, with a distinguished heritage of artistic excellence and patronage which we now wish to advance. St Matthew's has been a significant cultural influence within this country and further afield, renowned for its music making and commissioning of new compositions, literature and art. Through these media it continues to draw large numbers of diverse people to it. The Church is home to the Northampton Bach Choir, and other regular users include the University, schools across Northamptonshire and further afield as well as the County Music ensembles.



The Friends of St Matthew's Music is an association of people who wish to help maintain and enhance music-making here for present and future generations as well as to enjoy one another's company through a programme of social and cultural activities. The main objective of the Friends is to support the Director of Music in the fostering and development of music-making at St Matthew's. This objective may incorporate financial and social support towards the work of the Choir and to music events held at St Matthew's both choral and instrumental as well as contributing to provisions relating to the music. The Friends will also hope to contribute positively to the organisation and administration of scholarships and educational courses in addition to the Choir's cathedral visits and social outings.

In order for the music at St Matthew's to continue to thrive and to ensure the future security of the Choir and tradition which has been built up over a period of more than one hundred years we need your support.

Membership



Support of the music through the Friends is given by members in regular payment of subscriptions and, for some, by joining in the life and worship of the Church community. While many members live locally there are others further afield who simply enjoy receiving information about the music of the Church, its mission, development and role within the community.

Membership is open to anyone, and as a Friend you will:

- help to secure the future of the music and Choir at St Matthew's and uphold its musical tradition
- contribute positively to musical events at St Matthew's especially concerts given by the Choir and recitals on the renowned Walker organ
- receive reductions on ticket prices and priority seating at concerts and other musical events supported by the Friends
- enjoy an annual social gathering and receive an annual report and periodic newsletters keeping you up to date with the life and progress of the music and Choir and of its Friends
- meet others with similar interests and have the opportunity to share in the outings, lectures and other social occasions which are arranged
- if you wish to give practical help, have the reward of working as part of a vibrant team at concerts and events

The annual subscription for a single membership of the Friends is £20. The annual subscription for families (parent(s) with dependant children) is £30 and for under 18s is £12. It is recognised that members may wish to make an additional donation and provision for this is given on the membership form.

If you would like to become a member of the Friends please complete and return the membership form included with this information along with your subscription, or for more information about the Friends, please contact the Secretary or visit the website.



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The Secretary
The Parish Office
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