

Bring and Sing Messiah

Rachel Morgan

As everyone gathered there was a general sense of nervous excitement. With these kinds of events is you never quite know how they are going to turn out. I have sung in a few 'bring and sings', (or 'come and sings'), before and there is often a sense of, do I know this well enough? or are we collectively going to pull this off?

We began with a run through of the Hallelujah chorus, and lo and behold we could sing it! Hallelujah indeed! Now we could all relax into it and enjoy ourselves, while working hard obviously. The rehearsal then progressed through the various choruses. Time seemed to fly by and before we knew it, it was time for a short break while we repositioned ourselves in the choir stalls. After a bit of moving people around, we settled down to the second half of the rehearsal and run through the whole piece.



After all that hard work it was time for some much needed refreshments. Nicola and her team were on hand with fresh tea and coffee, and friendly faces. Cakes were also provided, which, while perhaps not 'much needed', (although I'm sure I could find a way to justify them given the amount of energy required for singing), were appreciated.

The break proved an opportunity to look around at everyone taking part in the event and it was wonderful to see people of all ages. Moreover, it was really great to see people chatting away to each other during the break. I had invited a couple of friends from work to come along and I had a chance to talk to them about the event the following day. One of the comments they had, aside from how much fun they had, was how friendly everyone had been, they felt really welcome.

When the time came for us to take our seats for the main event it was heartening to look up and see a good number of people in the congregation. It really makes a difference, especially when they stand, and even sing, in the Hallelujah chorus.

There were a number of solo performances. Two of our choral scholars Ciera and Hazel gave beautiful performances and it made the event extra special to see them do so well. Two adult members of the Choir, Graham and Mary, did us very proud with their solos. With Mary's performance truly articulating the sorrow and rejection of Christ.

We played host to two guest soloists, Natasha Page and Andrew Hamilton, in fact one of the soloists was not so much a visitor to the church as a returning member. Natasha Page used to be a member of All Saints Choir and it must have been particularly delightful for those who knew her then to hear her perform now. It is always good to be a part of an event giving young talent the opportunity to shine.

The whole performance was ably accompanied by Ben on the organ and all in all everything went well - though the down side to being a friendly bunch of people is I'm not entirely sure we managed to emote the required viciousness of "He Trusted in God". All credit goes to Martin for bringing and indeed holding the whole thing together, without too many of us going astray like lost sheep!



Aside from having a fun time, it was also good to be able to reflect on the message behind the music. With Holy Week fast approaching, it provided the opportunity to remind ourselves of the sorrow of the passion of Christ, which precedes his death and joyous resurrection, along with the continued presence of God.

Thank you to everyone who made it a wonderful day, I really enjoyed myself and was proud to be part of a community which had made people feel so welcome and enabled them to have so much fun.

I would encourage you all to come along and be a part of the next come and sing event....I can guarantee there will be cake!