

Vicar's Blog

December 2016

The Parable of the singer and the listener

When I attended the Philomusica Concert in Holy Trinity on Saturday 12 November, the day before Remembrance Sunday, I was particularly struck by the challenge the choir faced, the variety and difficulty of the various pieces they were to sing. The music was challenging, not only to sing, but also, at times to listen to and understand, even if only in part.

Choir members spoke of it being a real challenge. Yet they rose to the challenge. Men, women, older and younger, soprano, alto, tenor bass, conductor, new accompanist, soloists – they all came together in a time of shared commitment and focus. Perhaps some were more confident than the others, yet they all listened to the music, held their score, focused on the conductor and produced a performance that proclaimed commitment and trust in each other.

As a member of the audience there were some of the pieces I enjoyed more than others, yet throughout I could recognise commitment, common purpose and a worthy aim.

This performance was held at a time of the year when we look back and remember those who gave their lives so that we could have life and live in peace. This performance was held at a time when the citizens of the USA and countries around the world are coming to terms with and trying to understand the implications of a presidential election which defied assumptions, and at a time when the citizens of the UK and Europe are trying to understand the implications of taking forward the result of our referendum and Brexit, how we disconnect from the European Union yet still live and work in harmony with Europe and the world.

I hope we can learn some lessons from what it means to be a good singer in a choir and an appreciative and enriched member of the audience. Some words from one of the pieces the choir sang speak strongly of the value of singing and living in harmony:

Ring in the love of truth and right,

Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out the old shapes of foul disease;

Ring out the narrowing lust of gold,

Ring out the thousand wars of old,

Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,

The larger heart, the kindlier hand

Ring out the darkness of the land,

Ring in the Christ that is to be.

(from Awake! Awake! The World is Young, Ian Venables)

May we find and live the peace of Christ afresh this Christmas and beyond.

Gwyneth