



Music notes

Discovery Gospel Choir Celebrate 10th Anniversary tonight

Ireland's most multicultural choir, **Discovery Gospel Choir**, which is based in St George and St Thomas' Church of Ireland Church on Cathal Brugha Street in Dublin city centre, is launching its 10 year celebrations, with a special concert in **Christ Church Cathedral Dublin**.

'Home' – Saturday 15 March 2014 at 8.00 p.m. in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin

Tickets only €12/10 available here

<https://entertainment.ticketsolve.com/shows/873510281/events>

With special guests Norwegian ensemble Drøbak Gospel and Congolese guitarist Niwel Tsumbu

The poster for the 'Home' concert by the Discovery Gospel Choir. It features a photograph of the choir performing on stage. The text on the poster includes: 'HOME Celebrating 10 Years of DISCOVERY GOSPEL CHOIR with special guests Niwel Tsumbu & Drøbak Gospel'. It also includes two quotes: '"A fantastic choir" Archbishop Desmond Tutu' and '"Exhilarating" Irish Times'. The event details are: '8pm Saturday 15 March 2014 Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin'. At the bottom, it says 'TICKETS €12/10' and 'www.entertainment.ie'. There is a small logo for 'St. Patrick's festival' in the bottom right corner.

'A fantastic choir' – Archbishop Desmond Tutu
'Exhilarating' – Irish Times

'Come And Sing' Stainer's Crucifixion - Limerick & Belfast

On Saturday 5th April there is a 'Come and Sing' Stainer Crucifixion in St Mary's Cathedral, Limerick - registration is at 1.30pm with rehearsal followed by a complete performance at 5pm.



All singers are warmly invited to come and sing in a full rehearsal and performance of the Crucifixion by Sir John Stainer, one of the great works for the Lenten/Passiontide season. Stainer's Crucifixion is a well-known choral work, lasting about an hour, which tells the story of Christ's Passion and Crucifixion through tenor and bass solos and choral pieces.

This event is being jointly promoted by St Mary's Cathedral, the Royal School of Church Music in Ireland and the Association of Irish Choirs as a special choral contribution to Limerick's status this year as the first National City of Culture.

The Ulster Society of Organists and Choirmasters and the Royal School of Church Music would like to invite all choral singers to a massed choir which will rehearse and perform Stainer's Crucifixion on Saturday 5 April in St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast.

The choirs will be directed by Dublin-based Mark Duley who has an international reputation as a choral conductor and was formerly chorus master of the RTE Philharmonic Choir. The organist for the occasion will be Ian Barber, the cathedral's organist, who has recently been awarded an Associateship of the Royal School of Church Music for his contribution to musical life in Northern Ireland. We will also be joined by tenor soloist Alan

Leech, who is a full time tenor with the National Chamber Choir of Ireland, and bass soloist David Robertson who works throughout Northern Ireland as a recitalist and singing teacher.

Singers are asked to register at the cathedral from 1.30 p.m. on, with the rehearsal beginning at 2.00 p.m. There will be a break for tea and coffee at 3.30 p.m. before the performance begins at 4.30 p.m. Singers are asked for a voluntary contribution of £5 to help to defray expenses. For small choirs, in particular, it can be heartening to sing in the sympathetic acoustic of the cathedral with professional musicians. Scores will be available on the day; if you have your own copy, do bring it with you.

The cathedral car park (to the right hand side of the building) will be open for parking from 1.00 p.m. onwards. Please remember that the Cathedral is a large building – so wrap up warm!

To book a place, please contact Emma Gibbins – email emma.gibbins@rscmireland.com/; mobile: 07952514117, or Simon Neil email – usocsecretary@gmail.com, mobile: 07850676245

Tribute to long-serving dedicated Organist and Choirmaster

St. Columba's Parish Church recently bade farewell to its dedicated and hardworking Organist and Choirmaster Mr Gerald Hill after 27 years of faithful service.



Dean Victor Stacey, The Revd John R. Auchmuty (Rector), Mr Gerald Hill, Canon Ken Smyth (Assistant Priest). Photograph (Jim Best).

The Rector, The Revd John Auchmuty paid a warm tribute to Gerald's professionalism and his friendly manner which has provided the parish with an excellent musical standard.

He said, "Gerald has worked extremely hard over a considerable period of time in the life of St. Columba's to develop our musical tradition, with the full support and cooperation of the Choir, my predecessor Archdeacon McCamley and myself. In addition to his organ playing and leading the choir, Gerald also established and developed the Music Group. It has been a great privilege for me to have shared ministry with him since my arrival in the parish in 2007."

Gerald became Organist Emeritus in recognition of his faithful and loyal service to the parish following his retirement. The preacher at the Holy Communion service on his final Sunday as Organist and Choirmaster was The Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, The Very Revd Victor Stacey who is a former curate of St. Columba's and also a personal friend of Gerald's.

The new Organist and Choral Director of St. Columba's, Knock is Dr Joe McKee who commenced his new responsibilities on the 1st March 2014.

X Factor auditions for Cathedral choristers

Do you have the 'X Factor' to be member of the prestigious boys' choir at Armagh's historic Church of Ireland Cathedral?

Auditions for prospective choristers are taking place soon so why not call the Acting Master of the Choristers, Dr Stephen Timpany to find out how to apply.

Portdown Times - The boys' choir has a history going back almost 500 years. In that time generations of boys have enjoyed the unique experience of being a cathedral chorister.

Being a chorister means learning to work as part of a team, developing self-confidence, having fun within a disciplined environment and receiving professional tuition in music.

Through singing wonderful music in a beautiful building, choristers learn to read music, and develop a musical 'ear'. Skills like these are essential for the Sight Reading and Ear Tests sections of music grade exams and for the Listening Papers at GCSE and A level - areas which are often challenging.

Typically boys enter the choir from P4 up, through a simple audition. Dr Timpany is always pleased to meet prospective choristers and their parents.

Boys currently attend one weekly practice, on Friday evening, and sing at two Sunday services. The Cathedral complies fully with 'Safeguarding Trust', the Church of Ireland Code of Good Practice for Ministry with Children.

Supporting Dr Timpany's initiative, The Dean of Armagh, the Very Revd Gregory Dunstan, said:

"Interest in singing has taken off in recent years. Programmes such as 'The Voice', 'Last Choir Standing' and 'The X Factor' all feature on primetime Saturday evening schedules. Parents with a son who would like to be part of it are welcome to contact stephentimpany@yahoo.co.uk for an audition."

Further information about the Cathedral and choir is available on its website, <http://www.stpatricks-cathedral.org>, or from the Administrator on 028 3752 3142.

'Singing together, standing equally, our backgrounds didn't matter'

Aisling McCormick, Musical Director of Discovery Gospel Choir, shares her experiences about how the arts can be used to break down social, racial and educational barriers.



Journl.ie - I've always been passionate about discovering ways in which the arts can be used to break down social, racial and educational barriers often faced by young people from different countries and backgrounds.

As Musical Director of Discovery Gospel Choir, I work with singers and musicians hailing from 17 countries across the world, and from all walks of life, so I'm lucky enough to be able to practice what I preach.

Our choir was formed at a time when Irish society was rapidly changing and becoming more diverse than it had ever been in the past. Throughout the late 1990s and early 2000s, people from all over the world migrated to Ireland, and chose this country as their new home.

At the beginning, the founders of Discovery very deliberately reached out to migrant communities to source singers and musicians for the choir, with the result that we became the most multicultural choir in Ireland. Ten years later, our membership is still really diverse, with some of our members from as far afield as Singapore, Zambia, India and Zimbabwe.

We sang for Archbishop Desmond Tutu

I first became involved with this kind of work when I was in Transition Year back in 2002 (which I suppose gives away my age!). At the time I was invited to attend a retreat which focused on refugees in Ireland and integration, and was facilitated by Philip McKinley. Later that year, Philip invited me to perform at an event aimed at raising money to buy a goat for a Ugandan family along with a group of Nigerian, Ugandan, Irish and Korean musicians. I was intrigued. As a singer with a love of music, learning Nigerian praise songs, and dancing to the djembe drum was very exciting!

Not long after that, Philip invited me to sing with a young Ugandan girl who had recently moved to Ireland to seek asylum, for a televised ecumenical service one Sunday morning. We sang in English and Ugandan, and Justine and I became firm friends. My eyes were opened when I met her in her accommodation on Francis Street, and I couldn't understand how she got by on €19.10 a week. At this stage I had a part-time job and still got some pocket money. Justine and I were the same age and although we were from very different backgrounds, we discovered that we had a lot in common and shared a love of music. Having that opportunity to sing together, standing equally, our backgrounds didn't matter, we were just doing what we loved.

About a year later, Philip founded Discovery Gospel Choir and Justine and I became founding members. On the first anniversary of the choir, we sang for Archbishop Desmond Tutu. I was 18 and didn't realise at the time just how significant it all was. But looking back now, I can see that, in a sense, the choir represented a very positive aspect of a rapidly diversifying Ireland at that time.

A second home

Since then we've performed at the Meteor Awards and Electric Picnic; sung with Kila, the Republic of Loose, Sinéad O'Connor, Celtic Women and the Blind Boys of Alabama; and now, a decade on, we're getting ready to kick off our 10th anniversary celebrations with a concert this weekend.

We've decided to call this concert 'Home' to reflect the fact that Discovery Gospel Choir has served as a home of sorts for many of its members over the past decade. Lots of our singers and musicians were newly arrived migrants when they joined the choir so, for them, being a part of Discovery was about much more than music and singing. It allowed them to forge links in their new home country; meet people and make friends; and develop a sense of belonging and even one of family.

It's not just our international members who value the choir in that way: many of our Irish members would also describe the choir and the sense of

belonging it gives them as a second home. With our anniversary concert taking place during the St Patrick's Festival weekend, we hope the theme will resonate with audiences too, as people return home and many more visit Dublin for the first time to celebrate our national holiday.

The 'Home' anniversary concert will take place at 8pm on Saturday, 15 March at Christ Church Cathedral, Christ Church Place, Dublin, Dublin 8. Tickets be purchased through entertainment.ie for €12 (concession of €10 for OAPs, students and the unwaged). A small number of tickets will also be available on the door on the night, on a 'first come, first served' basis. Doors will open at 7.30pm. For further information, see www.discoverygospelchoir.com

To donate to Discovery Gospel Choir's Fundit campaign to raise money for the choir to record a new album, follow this link: <http://fundit.ie/project/discovery-acapella-album>

<http://www.thejournal.ie/readme/discovery-gospel-choir-dublin-singing-music-multiculturalism-1358744-Mar2014/>

News of music - events and services welcomed at

churchnewsireland@gmail.com