

the  
barnby  
choir

# SINGING DAY

with Keith Orrell

Will Todd

## Mass in Blue



Saturday 15 October 2022

10 am – 4.30 pm

Wilmslow Methodist Church  
Kings Close Wilmslow SK9 5AR

# Programme

**Will Todd** (born 1970)

**Mass in Blue** for soprano, choir and jazz ensemble

- 1 *Kyrie*
- 2 *Gloria*
- 3 *Credo*
- 4 *Sanctus*
- 5 *Benedictus*
- 6 *Agnus Dei*

Will Todd is from County Durham where he sang in a church choir from an early age and became familiar with many settings of the Mass from Palestrina to Howells.

He confesses to having lived something of a double life as a musician. On the one hand he was steeped in classical music and the demanding discipline of singing or playing the notes that are written. But in his leisure time he also loved to improvise on the piano and to play jazz with friends. The suggestion that he write a setting of the Mass in a jazz idiom came from David Temple, conductor of the Hertfordshire Chorus, who had previously commissioned one of Todd's oratorios but knew of his other life as a jazz musician.

The secret of its success lies in its fidelity to two very different musical traditions: that of the sung Mass, one of the oldest forms of European music whose evolution coincides with the development of classical music as we know it; and that of the Blues, a distinct form of African-American music that came into prominence in the nineteenth century and paved the way for jazz.

The Mass in Blue, as it came to be called, was an immediate success with choirs and audiences alike. It has been given more than a hundred performances and is now an established part of the choral repertoire.

Will Todd's Mass keeps to the text and the now traditional six-section division of the sung Catholic Mass. His only significant departure is right at the end, where the words 'Dona nobis pacem' ('Grant us peace') invite a quiet conclusion, more resignation than triumph. He departs from custom by returning to the Credo, where the words affirm belief in the resurrection of the dead and the life everlasting. This provides a satisfying conclusion without making the music go against the meaning of the words.

**Notes by Stuart Brown**

# Timetable

**Registration and coffee** 9.30

**Session 1** 10.00 – 11.15

**Break** 11.15 – 11.30

**Session 2** 11.30 – 12.30

**Lunch** 12.30 – 1.30

**A light lunch of soup and a roll (£5) plus 'tea and cake' (£2) is available (see booking form). Or you can visit one of the many supermarkets or cafés in Wilmslow.**

**Session 3** 1.30 – 2.30

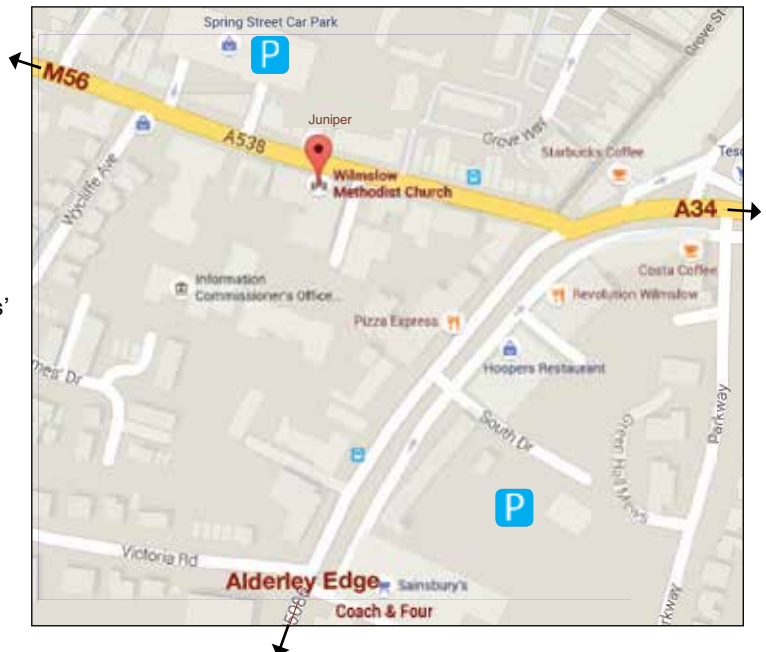
**Break** 2.30 – 2.45

**Session 4** 2.45 – 3.45

**At 4.00 pm family and friends are invited to join us for an informal performance lasting for approximately 30 minutes.**

## Map

There is a multi-storey car-park opposite the Church on Water Lane, and further public car-parking behind Hooper's department store (approx. 5 minutes' walk).



# Keith Orrell



We are delighted to welcome back our great friend Keith Orrell for this Singing Day. Keith is a versatile, vibrant choral and orchestral conductor and music leader based in the north-west of England.

He is currently the Musical Director of the William Byrd Singers of Manchester (since 2009) and the Liverpool Welsh Choral (since 2004). In 2011 he took up the choral directorship of the Pennine Spring Music Festival. Keith recently retired after thirteen years as Vocal Projects Leader of Wigan Music Service, where he made a strong impact on the development of singing in schools in the area. His seventy-six Let's Sing! projects and concerts had

a massive impact on the singing experiences of around fifty thousand children in the area and has left a lasting legacy. He is also a dedicated church musician, organist and pianist, and is the Director of Music at the church of St Agnes and St Pancras in Liverpool.

He was Chorus Master of the Hallé Choir in Manchester for seven years, working with leading international conductors such as Kent Nagano and Mark Elder, and has acted as a guest Chorus Master for other symphony orchestras in the UK, including the BBC Symphony Chorus. When residing in the Midlands in the 1980s, he founded the Shropshire-based chamber choir, the Beaumaris Singers, and directed them until 2004. More recently he also worked briefly as Director of Music at Liverpool's Metropolitan Cathedral. He has also led children's choirs, youth choirs and larger mixed adult choirs such as the Birmingham Singers, Stone Choral Society and Staffordshire Youth choir.

As a choral composer, Keith is developing a growing repertoire of original works, including in recent years, *Exsultet* and *The Sacrifice*, both for choir and instrumental ensembles, which have received acclaimed performances. His most recent large composition for unaccompanied choir, *From Harmony*, from *Heavenly Harmony*, was given its first performance by the William Byrd Singers in November 2021. His list of arrangements for choirs is extensive.

He continues to act as an adjudicator, and leads choral workshops and courses, including conducting courses for ABCD (the Association of British Choral Directors).

# Tomek Pieczora



Tom is a freelance pianist, organist, and musical director based in Manchester. He studied Music at the University of Manchester whilst holding the Pilling Trust Organ Scholarship at St. Ann's Church. Tom works with choirs and orchestras, schools and universities across the region, supporting music-making with professionals and amateurs alike. He is the accompanist for Gatley Choir, the RNCM Chamber Choir and Symphony Chorus, and the National Children's Choir of Great Britain, and we were delighted when he accepted the post of accompanist with The Barnby Choir in March 2022.