

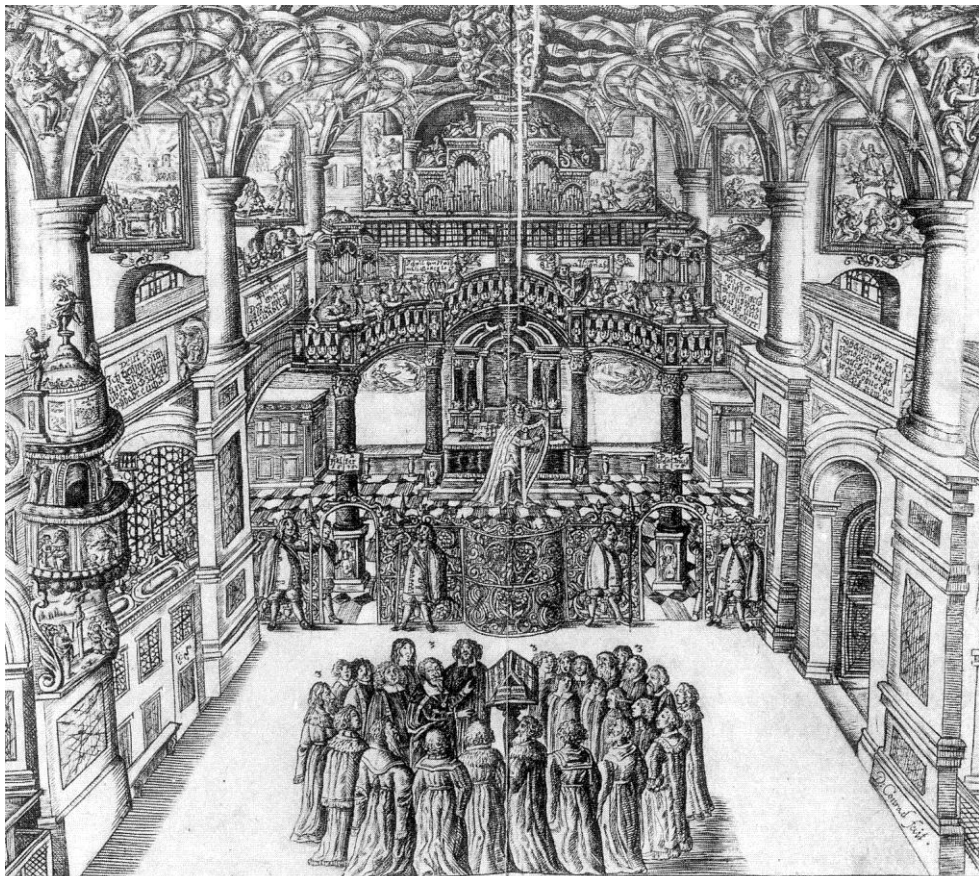
Christmas Mass in Dresden

As it might have been celebrated around 1610

Hans Leo Hassler - Missa Octava

With motets and hymns by Praetorius, Schein, Lasso, Eccard and Giovanni Gabrieli.

Organ music by Sweelinck, Erbach, Merulo and Andrea Gabrieli.



The choir of the Hofkantorei of Dresden



Hans Leo Hassler (c.1564-1612)

PROGRAMME

Organ Processional: <i>Intonazione VII tone</i>	Andrea Gabrieli
Introit: <i>Angelus ad pastores ait</i>	Michael Praetorius
Kyrie: <i>Missa Octava</i>	Hans Leo Hassler
Gloria: <i>Missa Octava</i>	Hans Leo Hassler
Hymn prelude: <i>Vom Himmel hoch</i>	Johann Schein
Gradual Hymn: <i>Vom Himmel hoch</i>	Hans Leo Hassler
Gospel: <i>Verbum caro</i>	Hans Leo Hassler
Credo: <i>Missa Octava</i>	Hans Leo Hassler
Hymn prelude: <i>Puer nobis nascitur</i>	Jan Pieterzoon Sweelinck
Pulpit Hymn: <i>Uns ist geboren ein Kindelein</i>	Michael Praetorius
Motet: <i>Jubilate Deo</i>	Hans Leo Hassler

INTERVAL

Offertory motet: <i>Alma redemptoris</i>	Orlando Lassus
Sanctus & Benedictus: <i>Missa Octava</i>	Hans Leo Hassler
Lord's Prayer: <i>Pater noster</i>	Hans Leo Hassler
Organ (Elevation): <i>Introitus primi toni</i>	Christian Erbach
Agnus Dei: <i>Missa Octava</i>	Hans Leo Hassler
Communion motets: <i>Der Tag der ist so Freudenreich</i>	Johannes Eccard
<i>Laetentur coeli</i>	Hans Leo Hassler
<i>O magnum mysterium</i>	Giovanni Gabrieli
Organ: <i>Toccata seconda</i>	Claudio Merulo
Post-communion Hymn: <i>Ein Kind geboren zu Bethlehem</i>	Michael Praetorius
Recessional: <i>Omnes gentes, plaudite manibus</i>	Hans Leo Hassler

CHRISTMAS MASS IN DRESDEN

As it might have been celebrated around 1610

Music in Dresden

By the early years of the seventeenth century, Dresden was renowned across Europe as a centre of artistic excellence. Successive Electors of Saxony had built up an impressive musical establishment centred around the *Hofkapelle* (Court Chapel) with its own *Kantorei* or singing school. They also set about attracting the best musicians to lead the *Kantorei*, including (at different times) Michael Praetorius, Hans Leo Hassler and Heinrich Schütz. In the first decade of the seventeenth century, under Elector Christian II, the establishment had grown to more than 40 singers and instrumentalists, as well as other 'occasional' singers and players who could be called upon for major events.

However, this golden period was not to last. Christian II became embroiled in a series of religious disputes with other German states, which led eventually to the Thirty Years War. He was also increasingly unwell, and his enthusiasm for music (and, very probably, his ability to fund it) waned. By 1608, the musical establishment had fallen to only 27 singers and an organist. However, although resources were scarce, the court of Dresden was able to rely on the services of one of the foremost composers of the late Renaissance: Hans Leo Hassler.

Hans Leo Hassler was born in Nuremberg in 1564, one of three brothers who received their early musical education from their father, Isaak Hassler. At the age of 20, Hassler left Nuremberg to continue his education in Venice, studying composition and organ-playing with Andrea Gabrieli, soon to be appointed organist at St Mark's. Amongst his fellow students was Andrea's nephew, Giovanni Gabrieli, with whom Hassler formed a strong friendship. His studies completed, in early 1586 Hassler moved to a post in Augsburg, where he stayed for the next 14 years. He was clearly well regarded as both an organist and a composer, and his first publications appeared during this period: a first volume of Latin motets in 1591, a book of madrigals in 1596, and his first book of masses in 1599.

In 1601, Hassler returned to Nuremberg as director of town music and organist of the *Frauenkirche*. After a brief move to Ulm, Hassler was appointed in 1608 to the Dresden court of Elector Christian II of Saxony. He was initially appointed electoral chamber organist, but was quickly promoted to the coveted post of Kapellmeister, with responsibilities for composing and selecting the music to be sung in the Electoral Chapel, conducting the choir and playing the organ. He also continued to publish both sacred and secular music in large quantities, including two further volumes of Latin motets (1601 and 1612), 52 Lutheran Hymns (1607), and the *Kirchengesäng* (1608).

However, by 1610 Hassler had already developed the tuberculosis that would claim his life in June 1612, and his death was preceded by that of the Elector himself, who died in 1611 at the age of only 27.

The Lutheran Mass

It is often supposed that the early Lutheran Church abandoned the Catholic rites in their entirety, and established new services in German. However, Luther (himself a musician) was very much in favour of music in worship, including polyphonic music in Latin, provided it was to the greater glory of God. Although he published a German Mass (*Deutsche Messe*) in 1526 for the use of small congregations, larger churches with trained choirs generally kept much of the Latin liturgy and its music. Individual pieces might well be sung in German, especially those hymns with which the

congregation might join in (a practice we adopt in this evening's concert), but Latin masses and motets continued to be sung at many places well into the eighteenth century.

Christmas Mass in Dresden, around 1610

The reduction in the musical establishment at Dresden by 1610 is reflected in Hassler's output, with most of his works being for voices alone. However, the feast of Christmas would have required something special: this programme attempts to suggest some of the music that might have graced such an occasion.

The selection of Christmas pieces we have chosen surround an eight-voice setting of the mass by Hassler himself. He completed nine settings of the mass, but this is the only one for double choir. Around it we have placed other works by Hassler drawn from all volumes of his published works. (Although the last of these appeared in the year of his death, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the music would have been composed some time previously.)

Hassler was as well known in his day as an organist as a composer, and was often invited to design new instruments or perform for special occasions. We have therefore included several pieces for organ, of the kind which Hassler would have been expected to play in the course of a service. These include Toccatas (fantasia-style pieces designed to show off either the instrument, or the organist, or both) and Preludes on hymn tunes, which served both to decorate and to remind the congregation of the tune.

The other music performed tonight comes from composers connected with Hassler:

Andrea Gabrieli (c.1533-1585), Italian organist and composer, uncle of the more famous Giovanni Gabrieli (see below). Hassler studied with Andrea Gabrieli in Venice, where he absorbed the use of *cori spezzati* (multiple choirs) prevalent at St Mark's and other Venetian churches.

Michael Praetorius (c.1571-1621), who had already published several collections of choral music and who would succeed Hassler at Dresden. We have drawn on his vast nine-volume *Musae Sioniae* (1605–10), the most important collection of Lutheran music before Bach.

Johann Schein (1586-1630), who was a boy in the choir of the *Hofkapelle* in the 1590s and may well have known Hassler later. He went on to become Kantor of the *Thomaskirche* in Leipzig, a post which he occupied until his early death at the age of 44.

Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (1562-1621), Dutch organist and composer. He was the pre-eminent organ teacher of the North European school, whose pupils included Scheidt, Scheidemann and several of the Praetorius family. His own music for keyboard was widely circulated during his lifetime.

Orlando Lassus (1532-1594), who, although a generation older than Hassler, had influenced music in Germany for over 40 years as Kapellmeister at the Bavarian court in Munich (where, for five years, his assistant was Andrea Gabrieli). Like Hassler, Lassus was a Northern European who had studied in Italy, and was instrumental in the perfection of the polyphonic style typified by Lassus himself, Palestrina and Victoria.

Christian Erbach (c.1570-1635). An eminent organist, Erbach succeeded Hassler at the court at Augsburg in 1602. He was appointed organist of the cathedral at Augsburg in 1625, where he remained for the rest of his life.

Johannes Eccard (1553-1611), who sang in the Bavarian *Hofkapelle* in Munich, where he was a pupil of Lassus. He was a predecessor of Hassler at Augsburg, and later became Kapellmeister to the Margrave of Prussia. His settings of Lutheran chorale melodies served as models for the young J.S. Bach.

Giovanni Gabrieli (c.1554-c.1612), fellow student of his uncle Andrea, and friend to Hassler. In 1600 the two collaborated on a wedding motet for a Nuremberg merchant. Gabrieli perfected the *cori spezzati* style (see above), writing for as many as 20 voices or instrumental parts divided into three or four 'choirs', and making maximum use of the galleries of St Mark's Basilica. His pupils included Schütz and Praetorius.

Claudio Merulo (1533-1604), an Italian organist and fellow pupil of Andrea Gabrieli, he was appointed organist at St Mark's at the age of only 24. He transformed keyboard music into a virtuoso form and was also a prolific composer of madrigals, masses and motets.

Tonight's programme is not intended as a liturgical reconstruction, but presents a selection of Christmas pieces in their appropriate places within a mass service. The order approximately follows the Church Order (*Kirchenordnung*) of *Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel* published in 1569, which in turn generally follows the structure of the Roman mass, but allows for additional polyphonic, instrumental or congregational pieces to be interpolated instead of (or alongside) the familiar Latin usage. We have omitted the chanted sections (including the Collect, Epistle and Gospel) and particularly the sermon (which often lasted for over an hour), which we have replaced with an interval, complete with refreshments.

One of the features of the music of Hassler and his contemporaries was the variety of sonorities they employed. We have tried to reflect this by choosing pieces which range in their requirements from three or four parts, through works for eight voices in a variety of dispositions, to the spectacular 10-part finale.

We hope that tonight's programme will demonstrate that Hassler is one of the forgotten figures of musical history, sandwiched between Praetorius and Schütz, and thus overshadowed. His vocal compositions are among the finest German musical works of their time, displaying great expressive subtlety as well as a pervasive concern for sheer beauty of sonority. Like his friend and contemporary Giovanni Gabrieli, Hassler bridges the gap between the sound-worlds of Palestrina and Lassus and the early Baroque, demonstrating aspects of both: his masses and his motets alike blend imitative passages with homophony; frequent cadences punctuate relatively short musical phrases; the text can always be clearly heard; and his works demonstrate a strong sense of key.

In the year before the 400th anniversary of his death, this seems a fitting moment to revisit this most accomplished of early German composers.

David Thomas

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

The texts of the Mass and the *Pater noster* have been omitted.

Angelus ad pastores ait

*Angelus ad pastores ait:
Annuntio vobis gaudium magnum:
quia natus est vobis hodie Salvator
mundi.
Alleluia.*

The angel says to the shepherds:
I bring you tidings of great joy.
For unto you is born today the Saviour
of the world.
Alleluia.

Vom Himmel hoch

*Vom Himmel hoch da komm ich her,
ich bring euch gute neue Mär,
der guten Mär bring ich soviel,
davon ich sing'n und sagen will.*

*Euch ist ein Kindlein heut geborn
von einer Jungfrau auserkorn,
ein Kindelein so zart und fein,
das soll eu'r Freud und Wonne sein.*

*Es ist der Herr Christ, unser Gott,
der will euch führn aus aller Not,
er will eu'r Heiland selber sein,
von allen Sünden machen rein.*

*So merket nun das Zeichen recht:
die Krippen, Windelein so schlecht,
da findet ihr das Kind gelegt,
das alle Welt erhält und trägt.*

*Des laßt uns alle fröhlich sein
und mit den Hirten gehn hinein,
zu sehn, was Gott uns hat beschert,
mit seinem liebsten Sohn verehrt.*

*Lob, Ehr sei Gott im höchsten Thron,
der uns schenkt seinen ein'gen Sohn.
Des freuet sich der Engel Schar
und singen uns solch neues Jahr.*

From heaven above to earth I come
To hear good news to ev'ry home;
Glad tidings of great joy I bring,
Whereof I now will say and sing:

To you this night in born a child
of Mary, chosen mother mild;
This little child, of lowly birth,
Shall be the joy of all your earth.

'Tis Christ, our God, who far on high
Hath heard your sad and bitter cry
Himself will your Salvation be,
Himself from sin will make you free.

There are the tokens ye shall mark,
The swaddling clothes and manger dark;
There shall ye find the young child
laid,
By whom the heavens and earth were
made.

Now let us all with gladsome cheer
Follow the shepherds, and draw near
To see this wondrous gift of God,
Who hath His only Son bestow'd.

Glory to God in highest heaven,
Who unto man His Son hath given!
While angels sing with pious mirth
A glad New Year to all the earth

*Martin Luther, 1539, trans. Catherine
Winkworth, 1865*

Verbum caro

*Verbum caro factum est
Et habitavit in nobis
et vidimus gloriam ejus
gloriam quasi unigeniti a Patre
plenum gratiae et veritatis.*

The word became flesh and
lived among us and we beheld
his glory as of the only son of
the Father, full of grace and truth.

St John, Ch 1 v14

Uns ist geboren ein Kindelein

*Uns ist geboren ein Kinderlein,
Von einer Jungfrau reine,
Marie ist die Mutter sein,
Sein Vater Gott alleine.*

To us is born a child
Of a spotless virgin,
Mary is his mother,
His father God alone.

*In ein Kripp ward er gelegt,
Der all Ding regieret,
Das Ochslein und Eselein
Erkannten Gott den Herren.*

In a manger was he laid,
He who reigns over all things,
The ox and ass know him
To be God the Lord.

*König Herodes das verdroß,
Viel Kindelein ließ er töten,
Er wüt't und tobt ohn all Maß,
Des ist ere nun in Nöten.*

King Herod was afraid,
And had many children killed.
He raged and raved beyond all
measure,
For he was now in great difficulty.

*Der von Maria ward geboren,
An diesem heutgen Tage,
Der wolle sein liebs Himmelreich
Uns nimmermehr versagen.*

He who was born of Mary
On this very day
Will lead us by his grace
To heavenly joy.

*Darum seid fröhlich allermeist,
Lobsingt und jubilieret,
Gott Vater, Sohn und heil'gen Geist,
Dem sei Preis, Dank und Ehre.*

Therefore be exceeding joyful,
Sing praises and exult
To God the Father, Son and Holy
Ghost,
To whom be praise, thanks and glory.

Jubilare Deo

*Jubilare Deo, omnis terra: servite Domino in lætitia. Introite in conspectu ejus, in exultatione.
Scitote quoniam Dominus ipse est Deus: ipse fecit nos, et non ipsi nos. Nos autem populus ejus, et
oves pascuæ ejus.*

*Introite portas ejus in confessione, atria ejus in hymnis: confitemini illi. Laudate nomen ejus,
quoniam suavis est Dominus: in æternum misericordia ejus, et usque in generationem et
generationem veritas ejus.*

O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands: serve the Lord with gladness, and come before his presence with a song.

Be ye sure that the Lord he is God; it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

O go your way into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise; be thankful unto him, and speak good of his Name.

For the Lord is gracious, his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth from generation to generation.

Psalm 100 (Trans 1662 Book of Common Prayer)

Alma redemptoris Mater

*Alma Redemptoris Mater, quae pervia caeli porta manes,
et stella maris, succurre cadenti surgere qui curat populo:*

Tu quae genuisti, natura mirante, tuum sanctum Genitorem:

Virgo prius ac posterius, Gabrielis ab ore sumens illud Ave, peccatorum miserere.

Loving Mother of the Redeemer, who remains the gate by which we mortals enter heaven, and star of the sea, help your fallen people who strive to rise:

You who gave birth, amazing nature, to your sacred Creator:

Virgin prior and following, taking from the mouth of Gabriel that Hail! have mercy on our sins.

Der Tag der ist so Freudenreich

*Der Tag, der ist so freudenreich
Aller Kreature,
Denn Gottes Sohn vom Himmelreich
Über die Nature
Von einer Jungfrau ist geboren,
Maria du bist ausserkorn,
Dass du Mutter wärest.
Was geschah so wunderbar?
Gottes Sohn vom Himmelreich,
Der ist Mensch geboren.*

O hail this brightest day of days,
All good Christian people!
For Christ is come upon our ways,
Ring it from the steeple!
Of maiden pure He is the Son;
For ever shall thy praise be sung,
Christ's fair Mother Mary!
Ever was there news so great?
God's own Son from heaven's high
state
Is born the Son of Mary!

German 13th century, translated C.S. Terry

Laetentur coeli

*Laetentur coeli et exultet terra.
Commoveatur mare, et plenitudo ejus:
gaudebunt campi, et omnia quæ in eis sunt.
Tunc exultabunt omnia ligna sylvarum a facie Domini,
quia venit: Quoniam venit judicare terram.
Judicabit orbem terrae in aequitate,
et populos in veritate sua*

Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad :
let the sea make a noise, and all that therein is.
Let the field be joyful, and all that is in it :
then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord.
For he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth :
and with righteousness to judge the world, and the people with his truth.

Ps 96, vv.11-12 (Trans 1662 Book of Common Prayer)

O magnum mysterium

*O magnum mysterium
et admirabile sacramentum,
ut animalia viderent Dominum natum
jacentem in praesepio.*

*O beata Virgo, cujus viscera
meruerunt
portare Dominum Jesum Christum.*

Alleluia!

O great mystery
and wonderful sacrament,
that animals should see the new-born
Lord
lying in a manger!

O blessed is the Virgin, whose womb
was worthy to bear Christ the Lord.

Alleluia!

Respond at Matins on Christmas Day

Ein Kind geboren zu Bethlehem

*Ein Kind geboren zu Bethlehem
Des freuet sich Jerusalem,
Halleluja!*

*Hie liegt es in dem Krippelein
Ohn' Ende ist die Herrschaft sein.
Halleluja!*

*Die König aus Saba kamen her,
Gold, Weihrauch, Myrrhe brachten sie
dar.
Halleluja!*

*Sie gingen in das Haus herein,
Und grüßten das Kind und die Mutter
sein,
Halleluja!*

A child is born in Bethlehem,
Exult for joy, Jerusalem!
Alleluja!

Here in a manger lies
He whose reign is without end.
Alleluja!

The kings came there from Sheba,
Bringing gold, incense and myrrh.
Alleluja!

They entered into the house
And hailed the Child and his mother.
Alleluja!

*Sie fielen nieder auf ihre Knie,
Und sprachen: 'Gott und Mensch ist hie'.
Halleluja!*

Then to the Child they bent their knees,
And said: 'God and Man is he'.
Alleluja!

*Für solche gnadenreiche Zeit,
Sei Gott gelobt in Ewigkeit.
Halleluja!*

For this most joyful time,
Let God be praised through all eternity.
Alleluja!

Omnes gentes, plaudite manibus

*Omnes gentes, plaudite manibus; jubilate Deo in voce exultationis:
Quoniam Dominus excelsus, terribilis, Rex magnus super omnem terram.
Subiecit populos nobis, et gentes sub pedibus nostris.
Elegit nobis haereditatem suam: speciem Jacob quem dilexit.
Ascendit Deus in júbilo, et Dominus in voce tubae.
Psallite Deo nostro, psallite; psallite Regi nostro, psallite:
quoniam Rex omnis terrae Deus, psallite sapienter.
Regnabit Deus super gentes: Deus sedet super sedem sanctam suam.
Principes populorum congregati sunt cum Deo Abraham, quoniam dii fortes terrae
vehementer elevati sunt.*

O clap your hands together, all ye people : O sing unto God with the voice of melody.
For the Lord is high, and to be feared : he is the great King upon all the earth.
He shall subdue the people under us : and the nations under our feet.
He shall choose out an heritage for us : even the worship of Jacob, whom he loved.
God is gone up with a merry noise : and the Lord with the sound of the trumpet.
O sing praises, sing praises unto our God : O sing praises, sing praises unto our King.
For God is the King of all the earth : sing ye praises with understanding.
God reigneth over the heathen : God sitteth upon his holy seat.
The princes of the people are gathered together, with the God of Abraham: for the strong
gods of the earth are exceedingly exalted.

Vulgate Psalm 46 (Trans 1662 Book of Common Prayer)

Saturday 17 December 2011, 6pm

St John's sub Castro

Carols by Candlelight

Join us in St John's sub Castro for an hour of Carols and other Christmas music complete with mince pies. Admission is free and children are more than welcome.

20th Century French Choral Classics

The Esterhazy Chamber Choir's spring concert will include Duruflé *Requiem* and *Motets*, Langlais *Messe Solennelle*, Messiaen *O Sacrum Convivium*

Saturday 24th March 2012, 7.30pm – St Mary's Church, Ringmer

Saturday 31st March 2012, 7.30pm – St John the Evangelist, Knoyle Road, Brighton

The Esterházy Chamber Choir



Sandy Chenery Director

Nicholas Houghton Organ

Sopranos: Fran du Corbier, Cesca Eaton, Dilys Goggins, Alison Jeffery, Annie Lorys, Judy Mackerras, Lucy Morgan-Jones, Karen Smith, Rachel Taylor, Andrea Thomas, Diana Uprichard

Altos: Maria Birch, Claire Champness, Sarah Jarvis, Denise Jones, Janet Ormerod, Joyce Phillips, Helen Simpson, Grainne Sinclair, Liz Webb

Tenors: Michael Bulman, John Carroll, Nicholas Chisholm, John Crossman, Peter Hanson, Tom Whalley

Basses: John Astbury, Jamie Bulman, Derek Froud, Mike Lodge, James Pittman, Matthew Spencer, David Thomas

About The Esterházy Chamber Choir

The Esterházy Chamber Choir was founded in 1993 and is based in Lewes, East Sussex. Comprising up to 34 singers from a wide variety of backgrounds, the choir aims to perform at the highest standards whilst remaining firmly rooted in the fine English tradition of amateur music-making. The choir's repertoire spans four centuries of sacred and secular music with an emphasis on *a cappella* singing.

New singers are welcomed. Entry is by audition, usually held following one of our regular rehearsals on a Wednesday evening. There are currently vacancies for tenors and basses.

To enquire about an audition or hiring the choir for weddings and other special events, please email choir@esterhazy.org.uk. To prevent your email from being identified as spam, please include the word **choir** in the subject box.

The Esterházy Chamber Choir is grateful for continuing support from:

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