



The Parish Church of the Holy Nativity Blackheath

MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Director of Music: Dr. A.B. Petersen Secretary: Mr. H. Petersen Treasurer: Mrs. B. Petersen

The Choir of Holy Nativity Blackheath



Currently in the 27th year of its founding, the choir of Holy Nativity has been strong proponents of the Anglican Choral Tradition. Established on 12 September 1992 by Hilton Petersen (then with a membership of 46) the choir has developed into a wonderful example of how musically unqualified persons with willing and receptive hearts can move people by their natural gift of music making in the context of church music. Dr. Ashley Petersen was appointed Director of Music in July 2011 by the, then, rector, Fr. Wilfred Meyer. Ashley (one of the founder choristers) accompanied the choir on the organ since 1998 as assistant organist, and was appointed parish organist at the beginning of the choir year in 2005. On 20 August he celebrated 21 years as organist within this parish. His appointment as Director of Music has seen the music landscape of Blackheath change quite exponentially. The choir repertoire has grown, as has the sense of musicality amongst choristers. The choir undertakes an annual (self-funded) tour to a designated part of the country, and to date they are the only local parish choir that has travelled to all parts of the country and sung in most of the cathedrals. Gavin Julius has accompanied the choir for the majority of these tours and has since been appointed the Tour Organist. They sing Nine Choral masses during the year spanning music from various periods, and this includes an orchestral Mass at Christmas, which is the Parish's Feast of Title. (The first orchestral Mass was held in 2012). They are also the only choir in the Diocese of False Bay that sings monthly Choral Evensong (Evening Prayer) and will as of 2020 sing two services of Choral Matins (Morning Prayer) during the year. Other annual services include A Palm Sunday devotion, Advent Carols and A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols. The choir has recently recorded a CD within the parish (June 2018). On 1 March 2019, Stephen Lewis Furches was appointed as Assistant Organist of the Parish. He brings a wonderful dynamic to the music of the parish, and we are blessed by his talent at the organ. The choir has a current membership of 16 (SATB), and rehearses up to twice weekly, especially ahead of major feasts.