*MUSIC AT WESLEY*

SATURDAY LUNCHTIME ORGAN RECITAL

WESLEY CHURCH CENTRE, ST JOHN STREET, CHESTER CH1 1DA

January 18th 2025, 12.45pm

**PHILIP RUSHFORTH (CHESTER CATHEDRAL)**

**Fantasia in G minor York Bowen (1884 - 1961)**

**Wie schön leuchtet uns der Morgenstern Samuel Scheidt (1587 - 1654)**

*(‘How beautifully the morning star shines')*

**Pastorella (BWV 590) J S Bach (1685 - 1750)**

**Christmas Cradle Song Alfred Hollins (1865 - 1942)**

**Fantasia in F minor (K. 608) W A Mozart (1756 - 91)**

***FUTURE ‘MUSIC AT WESLEY’ CONCERTS***

 **Tuesday Lunchtime Concerts Series**, 12.45pm. Retiring collection.

January 21st: Kell Wind Trio

January 28th: Hanna Csermely (piano)

February 4th: Chetham’s School of Music Instrumentalists

**Saturday Organ Lunchtime Recitals**, 12.45pm. Retiring collection.

 February 15th: John Hosking (Blackburn Cathedral)

 March 15th: Brian Heald (Wesley)

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| **Sunday 2nd February, 7.30pm: St John’s Festival Orchestra Concert Conductor: Philip Sharp** |
| ***Haydn’s Scena di Berenice****, with Jess Conway (soprano)****Mozart’s Piano Concerto No. 27 in B flat major****, with Brian Heald (piano)****Beethoven’s Symphony No.2 in D major****Tickets at the door £12 (students £6)* |

*Thank you for supporting this recital. The retiring collection (suggested minimum donation £4 per person) covers performer, performing rights and other direct expenses, with the balance in aid of Wesley Church funds. If you are a taxpayer it would be much appreciated if you would donate using a Gift Aid envelope (just add your name, address & post code).*

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**Philip Rushforth** has had a life-long association with Chester Cathedral as chorister, Organ Scholar, Assistant Director of Music and, ultimately, Director of Music. He began learning the organ with Cathedral Organist, Roger Fisher, and in 1991 went up to Trinity College, Cambridge, as Organ Scholar working under the direction of Dr Richard Marlow. At Trinity he broadcast and recorded frequently with the world-famous college choir, and toured with them extensively in Europe, Canada and the USA. His organ studies continued with David Sanger.

Upon Graduation in 1994, he took up the post of Assistant Organist at Southwell Minster and co-founded the Southwell Minster Chorale. For eight years he directed the Chorale in Southwell and further afield. Active as a recitalist, he has performed throughout the United Kingdom, in many cathedrals and concert halls, including Westminster Cathedral, St Paul’s Cathedral, and King’s College, Cambridge. In September 2000 he was a finalist in the prestigious Royal College of Organists’ *Performer of the Year* award, performing with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra and Rumon Gamba. He won many recital awards, including performances at St John’s, Smith Square and at the Dublin International Organ and Choral Festival.

His playing is well-known in the continent of Europe and invitations have seen him perform in several International Organ Festivals in Berlin, Rome, Milan, Como and in Sens, France. In September 2002 he returned to Chester Cathedral as Assistant Director of Music and was appointed Director of Music and Organist in December 2007. Under his direction the Cathedral Choirs have reached a very high standard of excellence, and in addition to the daily worship of the Cathedral, he has directed them in UK concerts, on CD and in tours of Florida, Belgium, France and Ireland; they are also heard regularly on BBC Radio and Television. He has commissioned choral works for the Choir from Howard Skempton, Francis Pott, Matthew Martin, Charlotte Bray and Philip Moore. In December 2012, a reviewer in Gramophone magazine said of the choir’s CD recording of Christmas music *Glory to the New-Born King—*Priory PRCD 1076*—*that it was “*the most appealing of any cathedral recording I’ve heard this year”*.

He organises the prestigious and long running weekly organ recital series at the Cathedral, performing regularly as a recitalist. He is in constant demand as an accompanist and soloist and in October 2013 he performed Poulenc’s *Organ Concerto* with the City of London Sinfonia conducted by Stephen Layton and had the privilege of conducting the orchestra when they returned to Chester Cathedral in October 2016.

His recordings of organ music have received excellent reviews in music journals and on BBC Radio 3. Two discs of organ music from Southwell Minster and Chester Cathedral were awarded five stars by Graeme Kay in the magazine *Choir and Organ* in 2009. Other noteworthy releases of organ music from Chester Cathedral include *French Organ Music* by Louis Vierne and Marcel Dupré; Percy Whitlock’s *Organ Sonata* on the Priorylabel and, also on Priory, a DVD of *The Grand Organ of Chester Cathedral* was released in 2012, again receiving first-rate reviews in a number of international music journals*.*

In 2018, two more Priory CDs from Chester Cathedral have also been acclaimed: *J S Bach from Chester* and, with the Cathedral Choir, *Choral Classics from Chester*. Marc Rochester said of this CD that “With such excellent singing, Philip Rushforth’s superlative direction, some fabulous organ playing and a splendid recorded sound, this is a highly recommended release……an absolute must-have for any lover of English cathedral music”. In 2020 he was awarded an honorary **Associateship of the Royal School of Church Music (ARSCM)** for achievements in church music of national significance and for important musical work within the RSCM.

***Publicity for this recital by*** [***www.organrecitals.uk***](http://www.organrecitals.uk) ***is gratefully acknowledged***