

# KING'S LYNN FESTIVAL CHORUS

[www.kingslynnfestivalchorus.co.uk](http://www.kingslynnfestivalchorus.co.uk)

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## King's Lynn Festival Chorus NEWSLETTER # 10

Autumn term has been so different to usual with no concerts to work towards, and no chances to gather and sing. A year ago, we were looking forward to and busily preparing for our annual Family Christmas concert in the Minster. Life was optimistic, and we took it for granted. Now we come to grips with a pandemic that has affected every continent of the planet except Antarctica.

Research suggests that singing transmits the virus, and we have had to adapt to a new normal until the much heralded vaccine ensures safety for singers AND audience. Ben Horden, our Assistant Music Director, leads us in virtual rehearsals on Zoom with energy and enthusiasm. With his in-depth knowledge of the Baroque era, we are now attempting to sing trills galore in the beautiful Messiah. Other shorter 'lighter' pieces have been included, and much enjoyed. Two of our members have described their Zoom experience below.

These rehearsals with Ben continue the good work that began as an experiment by Mike Walker and Jim McGarrick, our 'Virtual Ops Department' way back in April. Without their technical know-how these rehearsals would not be running smoothly, if at all.

Going forward into the spring term, we will continue with virtual rehearsals and, sadly but sensibly, will not be looking to holding a concert until after Easter.

**With All Good Wishes for the Season  
and a Peaceful New Year**

## Change of Chairperson

We are delighted to welcome Yodah Galloway as our new Chairman. She has stepped up to the challenge after two years as Vice-chairman and will lead us as we plan our move towards a more normal choir with in-person rehearsals during 2021.



Veronica Hutchby will stay on the committee for the time being and is hoping to enjoy a little less pressure, and more time for herself, after four years in the Chairman role.

We also welcome Jessica Owen to the committee and will benefit from her experience of singing with other choirs.

All committee members together with our contact information is on the website.

[www.kingslynnfestivalchorus.co.uk](http://www.kingslynnfestivalchorus.co.uk)

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## 'Zoomers with a View'

**From Andrew Haig** - It began pretty impressively. My laptop presented me with screen after screen of familiar faces. And amazingly they all had names, most of which I had never known in real life. It gave a real sense of a community of people of which I was part, and a real boon in the horror of lockdown.

Sadly, almost at once Zoom produced their latest update, which proved too much for my elderly laptop. I was reduced to joining in on my phone, and each screen consisted of me and three other faces - not quite the real sense of community I had enjoyed before.

The music. Yes. Ben, taking the rehearsal from his home, came over for me as well as for anybody. He could teach me whatever he wanted. The only problem was, that since he could not see me or hear if



I was actually singing, it all depended on my rather inadequate commitment.

Verdict: I'm so pleased that Zoom rehearsals have somehow kept us together. And I shall be for ever grateful to those whose skill and hard work have made the whole exercise possible.

But compared to a real rehearsal. To all coming together. To the joy of actually singing together. I have to say that I just can't wait.

**Andrew pre Covid-19 with a Flamenco dancer whose name he has forgotten!**

**And from Jillian Davis** When Jim and Mike proposed a virtual choir event to sing one of the St Matthew Passion chorales 'separately but together' it was the beginning of a singing and technical journey across the whole summer and beyond. We had to cope with singing on our own in whatever quiet space we could find supported only by a soundtrack which was actually quite scary! My voice didn't sound like what I thought my voice sounded like! We had to learn new technical applications to multitask listening on one device with headphones while recording on another. Turning a page of music amplified into fire crackers on the recording so we had to improvise systems of quietly balancing scores on a stand or even taping sheets to the wall – see photo below.

However, we learned a lot of varied songs from a range of styles and across decades of choral singing. The technical challenges and isolation of solo recording was amply compensated by the end result - hearing the voices blended (by Jim and Mike) into amazingly beautiful choral pieces! Now with our more formal Zoom sessions brilliantly led by Ben, we are gaining in-depth knowledge of Messiah, still singing in our own spaces, helped by well chosen professional recordings.

Verdict: Zoom isn't easy. It doesn't synch sound. You can't sing together online. You can't hear anyone else. However, thank goodness for Zoom which has



enabled us to continue engaging in the activity we love. So, all in all, Zoom has been good but here's looking forward to real choir again.

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