

The choir sings compline at Horsenden Church on 12 March. The service contains many references to God protecting us in the night. There would have been much danger in the mediaeval night: when the sun went down, it would have been as black as pitch when moonless: naked flames carry risks, so those who could afford candles, or burning brands still had risk. We are still vulnerable in sleep and asking for night-time protection remains a wise precaution.

Horsenden is our most intimate singing location and easy to fill with sound, and I hope we were not too loud. The singing is easy, but different from other services, but we get immersed in it quickly. Jennifer led the service, and it was very beautiful. What a lovely spot for a church. The clocks had not changed for the summer, so it was dusk during the service, and dark as we came out.

Since that we have been practising for the concert on 22 April. Even the Geographical Fugue is being licked into shape.

We sing at Mothering Sunday Eucharist in Bledlow, with the theme from the Vicar of Dibley as the anthem, and the Thorne Mass. The Dibley theme sets part of Psalm 23, and was perfect introduction to the TV programme, as the music is warm and cuddly, a bit like Dawn French. It will be sad when Jennifer leaves us, as she is as lovely as the Dibley vicar, but I hope has a more sensible congregation and helpers.

On 30 March Jeff cannot make the practice and neither can Cynthia, so Greg Moore kindly invites the basses to his house to practice. We can really concentrate there on our own parts, and sing straight through without pausing for other parts to practice their difficult bits. It is fun making just loud deep bass music, though Gregg's house is quite old, and the vibrations might make his pointing loosen and fall out of the walls. His family is also kind to have us in their house: a bit like being moved next to the M40 for the evening, with our rumbling low vibrations. I hope it wasn't too bad for them.

Then on 6 April, it's Jeff's birthday. He is presented with a card with pictures of the choir signed by them, and Joy Mackman has made the best cake I have ever seen, white with edible models of the choir in blue robes standing on top, and Cynthia for some reason prone on the ground at the base of the cake, perhaps having fainted in horror at us missing a note for the hundredth time, or perhaps the model has just fallen over, and will be righted soon. Jeff tells the basses off for not opening their mouths wide enough, as he cannot get a biscuit between our teeth. I wonder what sort of biscuit he has in mind, as he might manage a Garibaldi, even if a fig roll would be a challenge. The cake is eaten after practice in the Lions, a shame for such a work of art, but the inevitable fate of cakes.

See you at the concert on 22nd April, I hope.

Rob Hill