

## CHOIR NEWS: May 2019



Since the last Choir Notes we have been busy. On Mothering Sunday we sang the lovely Rutter anthem 'The Lord Bless You and Keep You' and (alto) Sarah showed one of the many blessings of having twins as she managed to get at least two posies to take home.

Yesterday (April 13<sup>th</sup>) we returned to beautiful Salisbury Cathedral on a sunny spring day to sing Evensong: the Reading preces and responses,

Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis in Eb by Brewer plus the *gloriously* gloomy anthem, *Solus ad Victimam*, by Leighton. Our illustrious leader (aka Jeff) was away giving Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Chengdu the benefit of his brilliant teaching and so, in his absence, we were very ably organized (always the tricky bit) and conducted by bass William Avery, and all passed without a hitch (that I noticed anyway). And it was lovely to again see familiar faces from Bledlow in the congregation so far from home: hopefully we did them proud.

We have now sung in many cathedrals and I have been reflecting on what makes the occasion for me. It is simply the people. Obviously, there is great solidarity and support from the whole choir, Jeff and Cynthia; and it is always an honour to sing in these wonderful, ancient buildings and to represent our tiny rural parish; but the clergy and lay-folk at the cathedral really make such a difference to our visits. At some places (no names) we seem to get very little in the way of welcome and support and much in the way of protocol; but at many others we are made to feel special.

On our visit to Durham over the Christmas break all the cathedral staff were really supportive and sympathetic to the fact that we many of us were 'proper poorly', they helped when we got in a muddle, were interested in where we were from and how we were doing. The same was true at Salisbury; there was a friendly verger to explain the processing procedure which is always tricky as walking in straight lines does not come naturally to Bledlow Choir. While we rehearsed I was a little concerned whether we were 'on song' as the cantor looked po-faced - but that was most definitely not the case. Before the service he made a point of coming to chat to us; it turned out he is a paid-up 'friend' of our Chinnor and Princes Risborough railway and had chuffed along the line through Joy's garden and past Holy Trinity on several occasions. It really is a very small world, and it saved us the usual explanation of where exactly Bledlow was. After we had done, both he and some of the regular congregation were complementary about our singing - which is always great to hear, and sent us all home very happy.

This week we simply need to practice for Good Friday and Easter Sunday in our beautiful Bledlow!

Deb Dobson - soprano