

Our next concerts are on

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> July

Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> July

Visit our website at [www.thamesvalesingers.org.uk](http://www.thamesvalesingers.org.uk) for further details as they become available.



Thinking of joining us?

New members are very welcome!

If you would like more information please contact Ken on 0118 9432778 or email at [mail@thamesvalesingers.org.uk](mailto:mail@thamesvalesingers.org.uk)

Fauré Requiem

A commemorative concert at St Michael's  
Tilehurst



**31<sup>st</sup> March 2017**

**The Thames Vale Singers**

**Conducted by Max Fane**

**Organist Peter Bernard**

**Treble soloist - Bertie Darke  
Baritone soloist - Jacob Billings**

## Programme

**Cantique de Jean Racine - Gabriel Fauré**

**Requiem – Gabriel Fauré**

**Introit et Kyrie**

**Offertorium**

Anthem for Doomed Youth by Wilfred Owen

Read by a member of the congregation of St. Michael's Church

**Sanctus**

**Pie Jesu**

**Agnus Dei**

Fragment by Rupert Brooke

Read by Jo Day

**Libera me**

The Last Post by Vera Brittain

Read by Sheila Allen

**In Paradisum**

Notes on the requiem - written by Max Fane

***"It has been said that my Requiem does not express the fear of death and someone has called it a lullaby of death. But it is thus that I see death: as a happy deliverance, an aspiration towards happiness above, rather than as a painful experience."*** Fauré

'God grant them eternal rest, and may perpetual light shine upon them', is the opening line of the Requiem Mass for the dead. The work begins in a slow D minor progression that almost whispers the first lines of the text, reaching a climax on 'et lux perpetua' (and lasting light). The *Kyrie* is a unifying cry from all of the voices that asks, 'Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy'.

The *Offertorium* begins in B minor and is a prayer. It asks, 'O Domine, Jesu Christ, rex gloriae' (O Lord, Jesus Christ, King of Glory) to free the souls of the departed from purgatory. The sequence repeats again, this time higher and with more voices that add a sense of urgency and asks, 'ne cadant – in obscurum' (that they may not fall into the darkness).

The baritone enters with 'Hostias et preces', offerings brought with praises, beginning on one repeated note, but asking with more melody "fac eas, Domine, de morte transire ad vitam" (make them, Lord, transcend from death to life). The choir then repeats the first motif, ending with an uplifting 'amen'.

The *Sanctus* (Holy), is a simple movement in E flat major that glorifies His holy name. The treble solo *Pie Jesu* sings the prayer to the 'good Jesus' for everlasting rest. The one line of text is repeated three times, the first two times asking for 'requiem' (rest), and then intensified for 'sempiternam requiem' (everlasting rest). This movement transcends the text to which it is set, giving the listener a true sense of everlasting rest.

The *Agnus Dei* (Lamb of God), like the *Sanctus*, sets a well-known prayer from the standard Mass. Here Fauré gifts us yet more sublime melody, starting with the tenors, which is juxtaposed against outbursts of tension that reflect the darkness to come in the following movement. The sopranos' soft cry of 'Lux aeterna luceat eis'" (Light eternal shine for them) followed by the choir lets that light give a final shimmer. The choir closes with a reprise of the *Intriot*.

The *Libera me* is a strong seething melody, underpinned by a menacing ostinato that asks, 'Free me, Lord, from eternal death on that terrible day when the heavens will move and the earth, when you come to judge the world with fire'. The choir answers, 'Tremens', trembling before unleashing the *Dies irae* (day of wrath), a final cry of resignation to death before ascension into heaven.

'In paradisum deducant angeli' (May angels lead you to paradise) is sung by the angels and is a musical journey to heaven. It ends with the opening word, 'requiem', rest.