

## ST. OLAVE'S CHURCH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND RELATED EVENTS

We are now in the midst of our 28th season of special events, directed as usual by St. Olave's Rector, the **Reverend Robert Mitchell**. The calendar year's sequence of events began on Sunday 5th February, as we continued to celebrate Ralph Vaughan Williams' anniversary year into 2023 with *Vaughan Williams 150*, an illustrated music feature on his life and music presented by **Robert Busiakiewicz**, the distinguished former music director at St. James Cathedral.

The Rector's five-part weekly *Lenten Series* took place on all five Wednesdays in March, with his outstanding weekly discussions on *The Faith of Queen Elizabeth* (based on a book by Dudley Delffs), featuring a wide range of video clips with Her Majesty and other members of the Royal family. These illustrated discussions were also recorded for later viewing on demand, with audiences at home ranging from about 50 to over 100, much higher than would be expected in person.

For nearly all of our evening events in 2023, we were delighted to move back to the long-standing pattern from before the pandemic, with delicious snacks from **Addus** in the Ethel Brown Room. We will start offering their wonderful light suppers during Lent 2024.

Our three-part *Eastertide Series* was on Tuesdays, with **Dr. P.J. Carefoote**'s excellent discussions on *John Wycliffe*, each illustrated with extended segments from *Morningstar*, a recent film about the famous philosopher and theologian. We would have liked to present it for viewing at home as well, but that was not allowed for copyright reasons.

The **Coronation Choral Evensong** was on Sunday 7th May (the day after the King's Coronation), followed by *Charles and the Crown*, as **St. Olave's Arts Guild** presented words and music with a Royal connection to celebrate the life of Charles III. It was highly successful and well received by everyone.

The season ended with our popular **Patronal Festival** on Sunday 30th July, with Choral Evensong followed directly by the Patronal Barbecue at about 5 p.m. Our guest speaker was our former Child and Youth Minister, **Rev. Martha Riddell**. This special event was very well attended.

Our new season for 2023/24 began on Sunday 24th September with Choral Evensong for Michaelmas, followed by *William Byrd: His Style and Legacy*, marking the 400th anniversary of his passing in 1623. This illustrated music feature was presented by **Robert Busiakiewicz**, formerly of St. James Cathedral.

On Wednesday 1st November, our All Saints service was followed by a feature talk on *Music and Your Health*, with **Dr. Kevin Komisaruk** (organist, harpsichordist and associate professor at the University of Toronto). He invited audience members to sing examples to illustrate his picture of healing, where music is a vehicle for finding spiritual meaning and restoring physical and mental wholeness.

Our pre-Christmas event was a week earlier than usual, this time celebrating the Sunday before Advent with Choral Evensong, featuring **Diapente**, the vocal quintet led by **Alexander Cappellazzo**. It was followed by our annual *Christmas Lights* with **St. Olave's Arts Guild**, co-ordinated by **Annis Tebbutt**, this year comprising stories, poems and songs on the theme *Christmas Spirits*, including some extracts from *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens.

As always, we cannot overstate our appreciation for the generous help of our leaders and volunteers, without whom there are no events. In particular:

- Our speakers for their feature talks and discussion series throughout the year.
- Rector **Reverend Robert Mitchell** and Music Director **Jeremy Tingle** for leading Choral Evensongs.
- **St. Olave's Arts Guild** and guests, led by **Annis Tebbutt**, for the wonderful words-and-music events.
- **Judy Beal** for advertising and publicity and **Janice Douglas** for website content and video broadcasts.
- **Sheila Tait**, **Margaret Roze** and many others for assisting with the light refreshments.
- The many members of the congregation who read lessons from the Bible.

*William Cowling*  
Religious Education Co-ordinator  
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