

# Music at Douai Abbey 2026



## DOUAI SUMMER ORGAN CELEBRATION SERIES

### Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May, 7.30pm-8.30pm:

Simon Johnson (Master of Music, Westminster Cathedral). Organ music for the Feast of the Ascension, including Messiaen's *L'Ascension*. This concert is jointly promoted by Douai Abbey and the Newbury Spring Festival. Tickets: [www.newburyspringfestival.org.uk](http://www.newburyspringfestival.org.uk).

### Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> May, 7.30pm-9.30pm:

David Briggs (Artist-in-Residence, Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine, NYC and international recitalist). Organ Fireworks! Putting Douai's Tickell organ through its paces. Tickets: [www.douaiabbey.org.uk/concerts](http://www.douaiabbey.org.uk/concerts) or on the door.

### Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> May, 10.30am:

David Briggs will accompany the Douai Abbey Singers for The Feast of the Most Holy Trinity.

### Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June, 10.30am & 6.45pm:

**10.30am:** Christian Alejandro Almada (Titular Organist, Papal Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls, Rome) will accompany the Douai Abbey Singers for Mass in the Abbey Church.

**6.45pm:** Post-Vespers Organ Recital. Preceded by Vespers at 6pm, to which all are welcome. Please be seated in good time. For recital only, please wait outside the Abbey Church until Vespers has concluded. Retiring collection.

### Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> July, 12 noon:

Oliver Walker (Douai's Director of Music) will perform seasonal organ music. Retiring collection.

## Welcome to Music at Douai Abbey

Douai Abbey is proud of the vast array of musical events that take place within its sacred walls, beautifully and dynamically complementing the Benedictine round of Divine Office, prayer, contemplation and silence. Since its existence, the Abbey Church has played host to musical groups, amateur and professional, local and international, and to welcoming their audiences in droves. 2026 promises to be another superb year of music-making, and this brochure serves to celebrate the wide variety on offer. We hope that there is something for everyone here, and look forward to welcoming friends old and new.

**Oliver Walker, Director of Music**

## DOUAI ABBEY SINGERS

The Douai Abbey Singers is the Lay Choir of Douai Abbey, whose primary function is to augment the Abbey's liturgy on regular Sundays and feasts during the year, complementing the monastic singing with polyphony both old and new. The choir's varied repertoire ranges from Renaissance to contemporary motets and mass settings, with an emphasis on *a cappella* singing, often laced with plainchant.

The Douai Abbey Singers are particularly proud of their tradition of commissioning new works from leading composers. In recent years this has included Roxanna Panufnik (*Douai Missa Brevis*), David Bednall (*Missa Lux et Origo, Missa de Angelis, Missa Brevis*), Alex Hodgkinson (*Missa Orbis Factor*), as well as other works by Colin Mawby and John Sanders. The Abbey Singers maintain a very high standard, have made a number of recordings, and have sung

at other venues, including Westminster Cathedral in London and Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris.

The choir's usual routine is to sing at Mass on the third Sunday of each month, and for major feasts throughout the year including the Triduum and Christmas. The Abbey's Director of Music, Oliver Walker, is always delighted to hear from prospective members of the choir: [music@douaiabbey.org.uk](mailto:music@douaiabbey.org.uk)

### Choral Scholarship Scheme

In 2025 the choir launched a Choral Scholarship Scheme for promising singers aged 18-26 who wish to develop their ability to sing within an ambitious choral setting, and to gain experience in contributing to Catholic liturgical practice. Interested candidates should contact the Director of Music at any time of year.

# DOUAI ABBEY

## CONCERT SERIES 2026

Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 4pm

### ***The Little Match Girl Passion***

A Passiontide Reflection, with music by David Lang, Barber, Bach and others. JUBILATE Chamber Choir, Soloists from Douai Abbey Singers. Oliver Walker *Conductor*.

- Tickets: Retiring collection
- More info: [www.jubilateoxford.com](http://www.jubilateoxford.com)

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April, 7.30pm

### ***Berkshire County Choirs***

Presented by the Berkshire Music Trust. Bimbi Shaw-Cotterill and Isobel Whitworth *Conductors*.

- Tickets: [www.ticketsource.co.uk/berksmusictrust](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/berksmusictrust)

Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May, 7.30pm

### ***The Sixteen: Choral Pilgrimage***

Presented by Newbury Spring Festival. Harry Christophers *Conductor*.

- Tickets: [www.newburyspringfestival.org.uk](http://www.newburyspringfestival.org.uk)

Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May, 7.30pm

### ***75th Anniversary Concert***

With music including Magnificat settings by J.S. Bach and Durante/Pergolesi, Alma Dei Creatoris Mozart and a selection of Marian Motets. Goring Chamber Choir, Charivari Agréable, Frances Brewitt-Taylor *Conductor*.

- Tickets: [tickets@goringchamberchoir.org.uk](mailto:tickets@goringchamberchoir.org.uk)

Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> June, 7.30pm

### ***Gloria!***

With music by Vivaldi and Bob Chilcott. Tamesis Chamber Choir, Louise Rapple Moore *Conductor*.

- Tickets: [www.tamesischamberchoir.com](http://www.tamesischamberchoir.com)

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> July, 7.30pm

### ***An American Mass***

With movements by a diversity of American composers. Reading Bach Choir, Daniel Mahoney *Conductor*.

- Tickets: [www.readingbachchoir.org.uk](http://www.readingbachchoir.org.uk)

Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> September, 7.30pm

### ***'Love is as strong as'***

Music inspired by the Song of Songs, from Victoria to MacMillan. Echo Vocal Ensemble, Sarah Latto *Conductor*. "Sublime, spirited... completely assured." (*The Arts Desk*)

- Tickets: [www.echo-choir.com/upcoming](http://www.echo-choir.com/upcoming)

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> November, 7.30pm

### ***Cecilia Consort***

- Tickets: [www.ceciliaconsort.org.uk](http://www.ceciliaconsort.org.uk)

Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> November, 7.30pm

### ***Newbury Chamber Choir***

- Tickets: [www.newburychamberchoir.org](http://www.newburychamberchoir.org)

Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> December, 3.30pm

### ***Contemporary Music for Advent & Christmas***

Commotio, Oxford's leading performers of contemporary choral music. Matthew Berry, *Conductor*.

- Tickets: [www.commotio.org](http://www.commotio.org)

*If you would like to discuss a potential concert in the Abbey, please contact [concerts@douaiabbey.org.uk](mailto:concerts@douaiabbey.org.uk).*



Douai Abbey is a Roman Catholic monastery of monks of the English Benedictine Congregation, founded in Paris in 1615. Uprooted from there by the French Revolution, we settled in Douai in Flanders before finally returning to England in 1903, settling at Woolhampton. Douai monks serve in parishes throughout England and Wales. Throughout the year the Abbey Church hosts concerts of sacred music. The primary work of the monks, however, is the regular celebration of the liturgy in the Abbey Church, which is open to the public.

Douai Abbey, Upper Woolhampton, Reading, Berkshire, RG7 5TQ. Registered Charity No. 236962.