



## News Release from the Royal School of Church Music

### Archbishop presents Fellowship to Director General

The Council of the Royal School of Church Music (RSCM) has awarded a Fellowship (FRSCM) to Professor John Harper, the present Director General. Professor Harper is stepping down from the post in December. The award was made on behalf of the Council at the RSCM's Annual Celebration Day service in Llandaff Cathedral on 12<sup>th</sup> May by the Most Revd Dr Barry Morgan, the Archbishop of Wales. The text of his citation is as follows.

“The Council has asked me to make a final presentation of a Fellowship to the Director General himself. With his typical modesty he did not want it recorded in the Service booklet. During the last decade the RSCM has had to face a series of challenges in order for it to be ready to meet the needs of the churches and church music in the twenty-first century. Some of that work is evident in the RSCM Millennium Youth Choir, in Voice for Life and Music for Common Worship, in the new education programmes, and in the newly established RSCM bodies around the world. But much of the work is not visible, as an organisation is reshaped, refocused and indeed relocated.

The Council wants to express its thanks to John Harper for his leadership, energy, creativity and sheer hard work. I want to add my own tribute. It is rather fitting to do so for I was there when John was considering his appointment because I was then the Bishop of Bangor when he was the Professor of Music at Bangor and here I am in Llandaff as Bishop virtually at the end of his time with the RSCM. He also composed a special anthem for my Installation as Bishop of Bangor. I know how hard it was for John to decide about coming to the RSCM. There were those who told him in Bangor that he was leaving a relatively cushy life for a stormy one. I believe, however, that being Director General of the RSCM is a vocation and a way of life. He knew what he was letting himself in for and he knew that it would cause an upheaval in both his professional and personal life, but he answered the call and in so doing he and his wife Sally have contributed much to church music and also to Welsh music and culture over the last fifteen years. And John has provided the Church in Wales with the first fully bilingual setting of the new Eucharist - simple, adaptable music for a church that worships in Welsh and English. I commended it and told the clergy that if I could sing it anybody could sing it and that the way to practise it was to sing it in the bath. The next thing I knew, a cartoonist had printed in the Music Magazine a picture of a naked Archbishop dressed only in a mitre in the bath singing John's music. A copy of that picture hangs in my study. We shall be glad to have John back in Wales full time next year, and look forward to the growth of the new International Centre for Sacred Music Studies at Bangor under his leadership, and his promise to produce a repertory of bilingual sung texts (hymns and songs) used by small congregations.

I offer my own thanks to the RSCM and so to the presentation. Mae'n bleser gan y Cyngor anrhydeddu John a'i wneud yn Gymrawd o'r Ysgol Frenhinol o Gerddoriaeth Eglwysig.” (*It gives me pleasure to present John with this honorary Fellowship on behalf of the Council of the Royal School of Church Music.*)

#### Notes for Editors

The Annual Celebration Day is held every Spring at a cathedral in the UK. It is at this occasion that honorary awards are conferred. Full details about this year's awards may be found in news releases on our website [www.rscm.com/media](http://www.rscm.com/media), where the full text of the Archbishop of Wales's citation can be found. Photographs of Professor Harper and Archbishop Morgan can also be found here.

The Royal School of Church Music (RSCM) is an educational charity and promotes the best use of music in worship, church life, and the wider community. The RSCM also publishes music and training resources, and organises short courses, workshops and activities. With over 8,500 affiliates, members and friends in over 40 countries it is an international network, supported by over 750 volunteers and small team of staff based throughout the UK. For further information about the RSCM, go to the website [www.rscm.com](http://www.rscm.com)

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