



Royal School of Church Music America to honor top musicians in Washington National Cathedral

Six people who have contributed significantly to the church and its music are being honored at Washington National Cathedral this Saturday (2nd February). Over 500 singers from church choirs as far afield as Ohio and Texas are taking part in a major event that day to celebrate the 80th anniversary of the Royal School of Church Music (RSCM).

The recipients of the RSCM honorary awards are as follows:

Fellows of the RSCM (FRSCM) - Joseph Dyer, Robin Leaver, Bruce Neswick

Associate of the RSCM (ARSCM) - Tom Whittemore

Honorary Membership of the RSCM (HonRSCM) - Enid Oberholtzer

RSCM Certificate of Special Service - Steve Lott

Dr Joseph Dyer (Boston, MA) and Dr Robin Leaver (Westminster Choir College, NJ) are scholars of church music who have contributed very significantly to our understanding of the Christian musical inheritance. Bruce Neswick (Canon for Music, Atlanta Cathedral, GA) and Tom Whittemore (Organist and Choirmaster, Trinity Church, Princeton, NJ) are leading practitioners who direct the music of our churches today. Enid Oberholtzer (RSCM America board member) and Steve Lott (formerly head verger at Washington National Cathedral) are two of a large body of people whose non-musical work does so much to enable the music to be made in our worship. Cynthia Hawkins and Michael O'Connor (both from Canada) are also to be honored for their work for the RSCM, but will not be present on Saturday.

Mark Williams, the London-based Chairman of the RSCM Council will be at the cathedral to make the presentations. "I am delighted that the RSCM will be honoring these musicians; these awards demonstrate the international reach of the RSCM, and reflect the growth of our work across the continent of North America," he said.

The 500 singers will take part in a special celebration – *Psallam*, a service based on music and readings from the psalms, with traditional and new music from the United States and Canada. "This is testament to the importance of the work of the RSCM in North America, and to the high regard in which it is held by choir directors and singers alike," said Professor John Harper, Emeritus Director of the RSCM who will be present on Saturday to deliver citations for the awards. "Over 200 of those singers will be young people – boy and girl choristers – who are the future of church music," he said.

Psallam is also being used throughout the world to celebrate the RSCM – and over 150 singers from Australia and New Zealand used it for a celebration in the Roman Catholic Cathedral in Dunedin, New Zealand, in January.

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Notes for Editors

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 courses, short workshops and activities. With over 8,500 affiliates, members and friends in over 40 countries it is an international network covering Europe, North America, Africa and Australasia. For more information about the organisation visit www.rscm.com and www.rscmamerica.org

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