

Jordan Theis, our new Director of Music, talks to Val Lewis

One Saturday morning in February I had the pleasure of a conversation with Jordan Theis, our new Director of Music. He came for coffee, after his morning run – of seven miles! He loves running and took part in the London Marathon last year, when he and Harriet were still living in London. They have now moved to Frensham, to a cottage near the Marindin Hall, and they are loving the rural life. Harriet is more interested in swimming than running and is looking forward to opportunities for some ‘wild’ swimming. She is currently working on her PhD, so getting out into the country air will provide refreshment.



Rather surprisingly, Jordan does not come from a particularly musical family. His mother is an artist, so there must be some artistic genes in there somewhere. His father, twin brother and younger sister all work in various aspects of finance, journalism and business. Surrey is familiar to him as his parents lived in Haslemere for several years, and he attended Bedales School in Steep. Jordan took a degree in Music at King’s College, London, and was also awarded a master’s degree in Musicology.

He has taught music at all levels, from the Gipsy Hill Federation of Primary Schools to the Junior Choir at St Luke’s Church Battersea, the National Youth Choirs of Great Britain, and now at Guildford High School. As a director, conductor and accompanist, Jordan has led community events for the Barbican Music Library, City Carers, and the Camberwell Arts Festival. At Camberwell he directed a community project based on Robert Browning’s narrative poem *How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix*. Browning had lived in the Camberwell area, so the project had local resonance. It was even possible to include a fragmentary recording of Browning’s voice, made shortly before he died in 1889.

Until December last year Jordan was Musical Director of The Friends’ Musick, a chamber choir which has performed at Shakespeare’s Globe Theatre, St Paul’s Church, Covent Garden, and at venues across London and the South East. He enjoys various forms of music, and during the period of Covid restrictions he encouraged choirs to sing his choral arrangements of karaoke classics via zoom, which must have been fun.

Jordan is also interested in drama. At university he enjoyed directing *All’s Well that Ends Well*. He and Harriet are members of the Stansted Players, an annual theatre group in Petersfield. His literary interests include membership of an online book group, who recently enjoyed Anthony Powell’s *A Dance to the Music of Time*.

Jordan is thrilled to have been appointed Director of Music at St Thomas’s and feels privileged to inherit a choir which has been so well trained by Rob Lewis. He is looking forward to taking the choir forward, and this year to a tour of West Wales, including St David’s Cathedral.