



Diary Dates 2026

Please do support these events - the more the merrier!

Jan 10 th time TBA	Home-made digital organ – Aeron Preston (venue TBA)
Jan 14 th 7pm	Christmas Dinner at the Alberello (Bexley Village)
Feb 14 th time TBA	Organ Crawl (see details below)
April 25 th 5pm	BDOCA Singers Choral Evensong at St John's church, Sidcup (see details below)
May date/time TBA	Pipe voicing event – further details in next issue
June 20 th time TBA	Treasure Hunt – further details nearer the time
July 24 th 7pm	Celebrity Recital – Francesca Massey, St John's church, Sidcup
Aug 14 th 12 noon	Summer Lunch at the White Cross, North Cray Road.

December 2025

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Subscriptions for 2025-2026

Membership fees are now due to be paid by 15th December. Therefore, if you have not done so already, can I remind you that payment is now due (unless you are a life member). Only around a third of members have paid so far. Those who have not renewed their membership by the deadline will cease to be members (as per the BDOCA Constitution section 6).

Payment can be made in cash, or by cheque or bank transfer. The rates are £23.00 (Ordinary member); £18.00 (Senior); £5.00 (Student).

Our Bank details are:

Bank name: Santander
Sort Code: 09-01-54
Account No: 5637 1087
Name: Bexley District Organists

Alternatively, you can post a cheque to:

49 Pickford Road
Bexleyheath
Kent
DA7 4AG

Doug Snow (BDOCA Treasurer)

Memories of BDOCA over the years.

2028 is the 70th Anniversary of the association and the committee would like to put together an exhibition of your memories of past events. Please contact Reg. or Linden with your contributions.



2026 Events.

Please see the diary on page one for the events that are being planned for 2026. Attendance to events by the membership can, on occasion, be rather low. Events are planned for the whole membership, not just for the enjoyment of the committee members, so please make every effort to attend as much as possible.

Please let the committee know if you have any ideas for events.

Members of other associations are also very welcome to attend events.

Digital Organ Demo

Saturday 10th January

Aeron has built himself a portable digital organ and has offered to demonstrate this to members. Venue and time to be arranged.

Christmas Meal

Wednesday 14th January at 7pm

This year we shall be going to The Alberello Italian restaurant in Bexley Village for our Christmas meal. Please let Linden know by Friday 12th December if you wish to book. Depending on numbers, there may be a booking fee.

Organ Crawl

Saturday 14th February

Aeron has very kindly organized the itinerary stated below. This should be a very exciting and informative event, looking at various Hill organs. The venue for the meal at the end of the day is yet to be decided but this will be a restaurant in Beckenham. Start time to be arranged and travel details will follow. Please let Aeron know by the end of January if you are able to attend, and if you wish to book for the evening meal.

Christ Church, Christ Church Road, Streatham Hill. SW2 3ET

Organ by W. Hill & Son for West Croydon Congregational Church, 1886; installed here by a team of amateurs working weekends led by Michael Buttolph from 1981- 1987; cleaned and overhauled by Michael Buttolph & Co., 1998.

St Peter's Church, Leigham Court Road, Streatham. SW16 2RJ

Wm Hill & Son, 1869; enlarged 1875, 1903, 1913; reassembly by Hill, Norman and Beard, 1947; manual electrification by Bishop, 1972; pedal electrification by David Wells, 1994; restoration and repairs by David Wells, 2000 and 2003.

St Bartholomew's Church, Westwood Hill, Sydenham. SE26 6QR

Wm Hill & Son, 1874, 1898, 1914; enlarged by Hill, Norman & Beard, 1979.

St Paul's Church, Brackley Road, Beckenham. BR3 1RB

William Hill, 1882-90 (serial no. 2067); Rothwell, ca. 1910; Kingsgate Davidson, 1959.



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BDOCA Singers Evensong

This will be (again) at St John's church, Sidcup on Saturday 25th April 2026 (reh. 3pm; tea 4.30pm; service 5pm).

SS Wesley – Blessed be the God
SS Wesley – O Lord my God
Ebdon Preces + Responses
Ps 24 – SS Wesley chant
Mag + Nunc in F – SS Wesley
Hymn – God that madest earth and heaven (Bury)

Rehearsals at All Saints, Foothill 7.45 to 9pm on...

Wed. 18.3.26

Thurs. 26.3.26

Tues. 7.4.26

Wed. 15.4.26

Magda, who kindly helped augment our number for our last evensong, is going to be joining our happy band. BUT we still need more sopranos (although I hear that some from St John's church choir are interested) and altos too. So I am asking that you do all that you can to get new members and to confirm their names and details to me, so that I can add them to the mailing list. URGENT PLEASE.

The service will mark the 150th anniversary of S S Wesley's death (18.4.26, but we're still within the octave!). The lessons and psalm I had chosen are those set for 18.4.26. I shan't change those – and I bet no-one notices. I'll try to advertise the event widely. And I need to sort out a soprano soloist for the "Love one another" part of the anthem.

Reg.

BDOCA Singers Membership

The BDOCA Singers are keen to increase membership. The SATB choir was formed in 2018 and first sang Evensong in March 2019. The proposal at that time was to sing Choral Evensong 2-3 times a year at various churches in the area with 4-5 rehearsals in the preceding months. The pandemic interrupted this somewhat, but the choir resumed in 2022 and the Evensong at St Mary's, Welling, in October was the second such service given in 2023. A further 2 Evensongs were sung in 2024 and 2025. In order to continue to enjoy a varied and interesting repertoire, the choir needs to grow. Rehearsals are held at All Saints' church, Foothill. Singers do not have to be BDOCA members and there is no subscription fee other than a small donation for the church at each rehearsal, so please spread the word.

Reports of past events

BDOCA Singers Evensong October 2025

On Saturday 11th October a mild and pleasant afternoon - saw 14 members and friends lead a service of Choral Evensong under the disciplined direction of Reg. Sadly one or two folk were unwell as the last moment. This took place at the church of St. John the Evangelist, Sidcup and was led by The Reverend Canon Cathy Knight-Scott.



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Our practices had taken place at All Saints', Fooths Cray, which is a much smaller building and with little distance between the two sides of the choir so it makes a difference in the dynamics in listening to each other.

Sydney Nicholson's "Let us with a Gladstone mind" was an appropriate introit to get us started. Richard Sheppard's (1998) Preces and Responses were chosen and seem to go well - if we watched the conductor. Aeron was in fine voice as the cantor.

Psalm 65 was not difficult but the arrangement alternating Full, Men, S/A, harmony and unison kept us on our toes.

Readings were read by members, and The Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (N° 2 in E flat setting) were by Charles Wood with several sections of 7, 8 and 9 note chords for our organist, Peter, to grapple with.

The anthem was Maurice Greene's "Thou visitest the earth" with the initial solo part taken by Aeron.

At the conclusion of the service, Peter treated us to a lovely rendition of Lemmens' – *Fanfare*.

I'm given to understand that the congregation doubled the number attending last year to 6.

Thank you to all those that turned out in the darkening evenings to rehearsals and hope you all enjoyed worshipping in this traditional way.

Melvyn French

"Fun at the Organ Console" Concert

To mark "Play the Organ Year 2025", I suggested to the BDOCA committee that a concert be organised to promote the organ in a hopefully engaging way. Hence the title shown above. My home church, St John's Welling, seemed a good venue as the inside of the organ is fairly accessible, so an opportunity to look inside could be offered. Aeron Preston agreed to partner with me so a number of duets could be played – therefore the concert on Saturday 25th October was born. One hiccup on the way, Aeron had to drop out for family reasons, but he found an excellent replacement, Charlie Warren from St George's Church, Beckenham.

PLAY THE
ORGAN
YEAR
2025

The doors opened at 2.00pm and the audience started arriving, some taking the opportunity to view inside the organ and/or look at trumpet pipes on the vestry roof. By the time the concert started at 2.30pm the audience totalled just over eighty.

I started the concert with a Fanfare and the famous "Trumpet Voluntary" (Clarke). It was then followed by two organ/piano arrangements – the "Bridal Chorus" (Wagner) and "St Anthony Chorale" (Brahms) – the opening section concluded with an organ duet – "A Waltz in A flat" (Brahms), before I gave a short talk on how an organ works, with Charlie demonstrating.



Behind the front of the organ



Inside the Organ Swell Box



To start the second section, Charlie played Dubois' well-known "Toccata" before a further organ duet – five contrasting variations on the hymn "Praise to the Lord the Almighty the King of creation" (the third variation involving just the feet – no hands). As a contrast before the second talk (on organ stops and sounds). I enjoyed playing the "Prelude on the Londonderry Air".

The final section of the concert started with a further organ/piano duet – an arrangement of Chopin's "Fantasie-Impromptu", followed by a fun piano duet arrangement of "Tea for Two". The concert concluded with a lively organ duet arrangement of Sousa's "The Stars and Stripes Forever".

As an encore we played Widor's "Toccata" – Charlie played the first five pages and I then I took over for the last five. Overall (and despite the occasional wrong note from me!), I think a good time was had by all and hopefully eighty people went home more knowledgeable on the workings of a pipe organ. In addition, a retiring collection raised in the region of £300 for The Leprosy Mission.

Finally, my thanks go to my duet partner Charlie Warren.

Doug Snow



Doug Snow and Charlie Warren

The Music for the third variation

Bursary

BDOCA is keen to encourage youngsters to learn the organ and will give sympathetic consideration to requests for financial support. Please write to Linden with your request and supply supporting details.

Website

In conjunction with Alan Hunt (who has kindly run our website for many years), Aeron has updated it. Aeron now invites contributions and also needs to update the "available to deputise" information.

Your contributions will be very welcome.



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