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Congregation sing piece for the first time



DEBUT PERFORMANCE: The Rev Christopher Harrison, who wrote the hymn City Built With Skills of Thousands. C030210SR4-2

Nottingham hymn 'could be anthem'

City built with skills of thousands
Set by Trent's majestic flow
Heart of industry and learning
Source whence art and science grow

For its freedom, for our justice,
Praise and thanks we give, O God.

Ancient shire of field and forest
County proud of troop and team
Marbled waters, lofty steeples
Factory and farm aspiring green

For its freedom, for our justice,
Praise and thanks we give, O God.

Changing land with mobile culture
Island power with global aim
Timeless beauty, sharpest wisdom,
Sovereign domain with people's sway

For its freedom, for our justice,
Praise and thanks we give, O God.

World endowed with hope and promise
Formed as God's galactic gem
Scarred by sin's destructive madness
Healed by Christ's redemptive love

For its freedom, for its justice,
For its peace we pray, O God.

A NEW hymn about Nottingham could become the anthem of the county – according to the people who sang it for the first time.

City Built With Skills of Thousands, written by the Rev Christopher Harrison, was sung for the first time on Sunday.

Members of the congregation have praised the song, which was led by the choir at St Mary's Church in the Lace Market at the High Sheriff's Legal Service.

Mr Harrison priest-in-charge of All Saints', St Mary's and St Peter's churches in the city centre, said: "It's a celebration of what is good about the city and the county, and the chorus which comes after each verse is about thanksgiving for freedom and justice."

"There's a slight twist in the last verse which brings in the idea of peace and that in many parts of today's world peace is but a distant dream."

Although he has written pieces of music before, it is Mr Harrison's first hymn. He admits he was given a few technical tips by his organist son Peter.

Christine Doughty, senior partner at Lace Market legal firm Rothera Dowson who was in the congregation, said: "I thought the words were fantastic, very appropriate. It would be a very good hymn to be the symbol of Nottingham – it's patriotic, with pride in the city."

By **DELIA MONK**

"I think it could have a wider application to be used at civic services."

Mr Harrison, who was appointed to the three churches in February, says he does not know if it will become a regular hymn in Nottingham and it will depend on whether people want to sing it.

But he has had positive feedback from members of the congregation.

Pauline Miller, from Arnold, who has been a member of the church for many years, said: "I thought the words were absolutely beautiful. It's got a tremendous sense of history of the city and its character."

"It's very much a picture of the fact that Nottingham grew from this settlement in the middle of Sherwood Forest and the industry that's created it."

And 62 year-old Tom Huggon from Sneinton, said: "I thought it was very good. The first thing is the words are very appropriate about Nottingham. The words give a good impression of the history of the city and the fact that it's changing and the last verse gives us hope for the future."

"The second thing is it's a very good tune – and the third thing was that before we got to the end we were all able to sing it."

● YOU can hear the hymn at our website www.thisisnottingham.co.uk

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Festival to raise funds

AN OUTDOOR music and family festival is being held in Mansfield to raise money for a Notts children's charity.

The event in Market Square between 10am and 2pm tomorrow is in aid of the Parents' Association for Seriously Ill Children (PASIC). It will include a circus skills workshop, face painting, glitter tattoos, tombola and a host of musical acts.

The event is being organised by 38-year-old Maria Tucker from Mansfield, who is aiming to raise £30,000 for PASIC. She is being sponsored by the Vodafone Foundation's 2009 World of Difference UK Programme.

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