

54th Church Stretton  
and South Shropshire  
Arts Festival



St James' Church,  
Cardington

By kind permission of  
the Rector and PCC

## *Organ recital by Michael Oakley*

*Wednesday August 4th, 2021 at noon*

**Praeludium and Fugue in G minor, BuxWV149**

**Buxtehude 1637 - 1707**

**Partita: *Jesu, meine Freude***

**Walther 1684 - 1748**

**Voluntary in G minor, Op 5 No 9**  
*Largo, Allegro*

**Stanley 1712 - 1786**

**Evocation: *Salve Regina (in memoriam Louis Vierne)***

**Michael Howard 1922 - 2002**

**Theme and Variations**

**Andriessen 1892 - 1981**

**Michael Oakley** began his teaching career in Shropshire in 1981, where he met his wife Kate, who is also a teacher. They have a son and a daughter and a granddaughter who was born in January 2021. Born in Norfolk, Michael trained as a violinist from an early age and has always enjoyed working with orchestras and chamber groups. He came to the piano and then the organ quite a bit later, but enjoyed getting to play in different churches as well as working with different choral groups. He was appointed Assistant director of Music and Head of Strings at Berkhamsted School, where he stayed for nine years, also holding organist posts in Hertfordshire including at the fine Parish Church in Hemel Hempstead.

In 1992 he was appointed Director of Music at Worth School and Worth Abbey in Sussex, where he stayed for 26 years, before retiring in 2018. Worth, with its astonishing Abbey church, offered a wonderful opportunity to make music, involving musicians not only from the school, but also from nearby schools and from the area. Michael conducted the Choral Society in a wide range of medium and large-scale choral works, including a special performance of Mozart's 'Requiem' involving musicians from several Benedictine schools (200+ singers plus orchestra) in Methodist Central Hall in London to an audience of 1500. With the Abbey Choir he toured across Europe, with a couple of trips to the USA and one to Japan in 2000, the highlight being a memorable concert in Suntory Hall. On three occasions the choir sang in the Vatican, on one occasion for a Papal Mass with a congregation of 80,000. His final performance with the Abbey Choir was for a private recital in the Sistine Chapel, concluding with Allegri's astonishing 'Miserere' - a memorable occasion!

Early after moving to Worcestershire in 2018 Michael took up the post of organist at the fine Baroque church at Great Witley - well worth a visit for the fine windows and Bellucci ceiling paintings alone. He was subsequently appointed 53rd organist of St Laurence's church, Ludlow, a post that was established in 1492! Having had a number of fine organists working for him throughout his career, Michael is enjoying spending more time learning new repertoire on the organ and getting to perform in fine churches such as St James's!

**Next recital: Richard Walker: Friday, August 6th at noon**

*St Laurence's Church, Church Stretton*