

God Given Voices

The Sackville Singers sing for fun and to raise money for charity and usually hold four concerts a year dedicated to local and national causes.



Doug Fisher has found a new lease of life and rewarding friendships through finding a singing voice he never knew he had. He explained, "Before we married, my wife Nancy was in a church music group and I was helping with the sound control. I enjoyed it immensely and wished that I could sing too. I did join the church choir, but like a lot of people, I just kept my head down and mumbled. Eventually, I asked for professional singing lessons with Jozik Kotz for a birthday present."

Jozik needed to hear Doug sing. Doug said, "The expression on Jozik's face changed completely when he appreciated that he had something he could work with! He didn't want to change my voice; but I needed to work on my breathing and it was that which changed the sound. There was a resonance in my head and body that had never been there."

It was so exciting to discover that I had a God-given voice.

Anyone can sing at home and in the car, but don't damage your voice. It's great to have professional training. It's more fun and you won't ruin your voice."

Doug has had some challenging times in his life. His first wife killed herself without warning, which left Doug devastated. He said, "I have tried to be a good person all of my life. When my first wife died, I wasn't really a regular church-goer but I came back to the church then, which was quite hard to do because to have my wife taken from me made me angry. I blamed God and railed against the unfairness of it. I asked Him, 'Why are you doing this to me?' I just hadn't seen it coming."

Rebuilding his life slowly, Doug began to help with the music

in church, and he learned campanology (bell ringing). Doug said, "I was absolutely hopeless when I first started bell ringing - it takes a while to understand it. This was when I met my second wife, Nancy, who was already part of the worshipping church community. With Nancy's help and the help of the church, I began to enjoy life as much as, if not more than, before."

Music and my faith go hand-in-hand.

Music in the life of a church is very important, although it can sometimes be a bit 'all or nothing', which is a pity. It's hard to find the half-way between traditional and modern music but it is very important to work with the younger side of the congregation. If we don't have younger families and people in the choirs, then it's going to be a very sorry state of affairs indeed. All-age worship can be great fun."

Doug's singing has brought new friends into his life and opened up new possibilities that he had never even thought about. He said, "I have just joined the Imperial Male Voice Choir in Kent, which is open to invited singers who have a good standard of sight-singing." He is also a member of the Sackville Singers who are based in Sevenoaks, where he sings bass and baritone.

For more information about the Sackville Singers, please contact: gashilling@tiscali.co.uk