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**CHORAL MUSIC IN CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL 1873-1988:  
THE ROLE OF SERVICE SETTINGS AND ANTHEMS IN THE  
REGENERATION, PRESERVATION AND SUSTENANCE  
OF CATHEDRAL WORSHIP**

by

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## ABSTRACT

Choral music in Cathedrals was in an impoverished state nationally by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and Tractarians and Ecclesiologists, who valued antiquity in music and words, challenged ecclesiastical authorities to improve their worship and musical repertoire.

The practice of worship at Canterbury Cathedral was not in the dire state found in many Cathedrals. Nonetheless, the frequency of sung Communion services was increased, and, as encouraged by S. S. Wesley, the compositional quality of their existing repertoire, including additional early music, was improved. During 1873-1988 the Matins and Evensong repertoire was enlarged to include the best of existing, rediscovered and newly composed music. Communion services gradually included new settings, together with those originally set in Latin, but sung in English, and eventually in their original Latin. Much of the liturgy contained in the First Edward VI prayer book was to be reinstated, as the Alternative Ordinary of the Service, in the 1960s, permitting the inclusion and therefore the singing, of parts of the service formerly excluded in the Book of Common Prayer.

The anthem repertoire expanded from four, to over seven, centuries, including music from other nations, eventually sung in the original languages. This change of practice was not without its opponents with a challenge articulated to remain faithful to the more popular English text and Victorian music.

Two World Wars, financial difficulties and changing attitudes towards choral music have not hindered progress in Canterbury Cathedral in its continuance as a place of worship. The revival of early music, the maintenance of the central heart of Anglican Church music and the innovation of contemporary compositions has been pursued courageously and the worship in Canterbury Cathedral has been regenerated, preserved and sustained by the daily offerings of words and music to God.

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