



A choir of young singers has been heard by an audience of tens of thousands of people in spite of the lockdown thanks to a new livestreaming service run by the Church of England.



Church of England parishes have downloaded hymns around 30,000 times from music provided by the Choral Scholars of St Martin-in-the-Fields in London over the past month as part of a service provided through the [A Church Near You Resource Hub website](#).

The three most popular hymns downloaded so far are *Great is Thy Faithfulness*, *The Lord is my shepherd* and *We have a Gospel to proclaim*.

A selection of up to five pieces of music recorded by the 10 members of the choir – who form a training programme for aspiring professional singers – has been made available every Thursday evening through the website for use in online services. The music is recorded by each choir member in their own home and then edited together.

The music is chosen in collaboration with the Royal School of Church Music, to suit the church season and the theme of each Sunday's readings.

Clergy and church leaders have been livestreaming services since the start of the lockdown but up until the downloads became available they were limited in their choice of music because of copyright reasons.

Under the scheme, Church of England churches download the music through ACNY rights-free when they hold a [CCLI \(Christian Copyright Licensing International\) licence](#), with the 'streaming' addition.

Dr Matthew Salisbury, National Liturgy and Worship Adviser for the Church of England, said: "I am hugely grateful to the Choral Scholars for all

their work to help the Church of England parishes provide online worship to our communities across the country during the pandemic. The sheer number of downloads is an indication of how much this service is valued.”

Andrew Earis, St Martin’s Director of Music, said: “It is really exciting for all of us at St Martin’s to be able to record and share new hymns and songs remotely each week. Our Choral Scholars are enjoying creating music together even while apart, developing their skills in new ways, which will serve them well for the future”.

Hugh Morris, Director of the Royal School of Church Music, said: “This is a really good example of teams and organisations pulling together in shared endeavour in the current crisis to help the whole church. We have had many supportive comments about this initiative, and by including the hymns in our own digital service output, have further increased the numbers of people who have benefited from the project.”

## Notes to editors

The Resource Hub is free and part of AChurchNearYou.com, the Church’s local church finder, and can be accessed by more than 17,000 editors.

[Read details](#) on how local churches can register and log in to the website.

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**Source URL:** <https://www.churchofengland.org/news-and-media/news-and-statements/churches-download-hymns-30000-times-local-online-services>