

Nantwich setting for 'Songs of Praise'

When television cameras moved into the centuries old St. Mary's Church, Nantwich, to film the "Songs of Praise" programme for March 2. Our photographer was there to record the scene.



A PICTURE the public won't see when the programme is televised on March 2!

Parish Church setting for TV's 'Songs of Praise'

NANTWICH'S 600-years-old Parish Church of St. Mary was ablaze with light on Thursday as a B.B.C. television crew moved in to a record a programme for the popular Sunday evening "Songs of Praise" series.

Powerful arc lights and colour cameras picked out the outstanding features of the building as 700 voices combined to make the evening one of the most outstanding in the Church's long history.

The cameras swung into action for the first time as conductor Mr. Ronald Smith, of Christleton, Chester, took the 20-voice choir and the congregation through a complete dress rehearsal — without a hitch.

Then after a short break it

was the real thing and again the 700 voices responded.

The singing was led by the St. Cecilia Singers of Chester, who were joined by Nantwich and District Choral Society and choirs from Nantwich Church, Acton Operatic Society, Central Methodist, Baptist, United Reform, Worleston Parish and Christleton Churches, Nantwich and Acton Grammar School and Nantwich County Secondary Boys' and Girls' Schools.

They had been in intensive rehearsal for several weeks before the cameras moved in.

Among the congregation were the Mayor and Mayoress of Crewe and Nantwich, Mr. and Mrs. John Bedson, and the Chairman of Nantwich Town Council, Mr. Keith Billing and Mrs. Billing.

Nantwich Church organist Mr. Harold Kirkham accompanied the congregational hymns and other items were

accompanied by Mr. Brian Heald.

The Rector of Nantwich, Canon E. M. B. Southwell, wearing his ceremonial Cope, gave the final prayer and blessing.

The programme, which was produced by the Rev. Stewart Cross, and introduced by Geoffrey Wheeler, is scheduled to be televised on March 2.

For more pictures see page 16.

BBC TV

SONGS OF PRAISE

from
ST. MARY'S PARISH CHURCH
NANTWICH

1975

'Songs of Praise' comes from Nantwich

SUNDAY'S "Song of Praise" (B.B.C.-1 6.50 p.m.) comes from the church which has been described as "the Cathedral of South Cheshire."

It is, of course, the medieval parish church of St. Mary's, Nantwich.

The singing is led by the Chester Saint Cecilia Singers, together with the combined choirs of the district.

Since their formation in 1969, the Singers have given 182 recitals in cathedrals and churches in England, Scotland and Wales. Their director, Ronald Smith, is well-known as an accompanist and festival adjudicator.

The choir sings a setting of the 23rd Psalm, the Spiritual "Were you there," and Bairstow's Compline anthem, "Save us, O Lord, waking, guard us sleeping."

Canon Eric Southwell closes the programme with the prayer and blessing. He retires later this year having spent his entire ministry of 49 years in the Diocese of Chester.





The two organists, Mr. Kirkham and Mr. Heald, at rehearsal.



The Mayor and Mayoress of Crewe and Nantwich, Mr. and Mrs. John Bedson, at the Nantwich Parish Church B.B.C. T.V. recording of "Songs of Praise," a programme featuring local choirs which will be transmitted on Sunday, March 25th.



BBC put South Cheshire's 'cathedral' in view

For the first time television cameras were in action at South Cheshire's "cathedral" — the six-centuries-old Parish Church of St. Mary's, Nantwich. They were there to record Songs of Praise for

transmission on B.B.C. 1 on Sunday, March 2. Chronicle photographer Gordon Davies was there to capture some of the scenes of preparation and rehearsal.



Complimentary Ticket
NOT FOR SALE

BBC tv

ADMIT ONE

You are invited to a recording of
SONGS OF PRAISE

in

NANTWICH PARISH CHURCH

Rehearsal: Wednesday, 12th February, 1975 7.00 - 9.00 p.m.

Final Rehearsal and Recording:
Thursday, 13th February, 1975 7.00 - 9.45 p.m.

Transmission: Sunday, 2nd March, 1975 6.45 p.m.
BBC1 (Colour)

Please be in your seat by 6.45 p.m. on both days

6.45 Colour
Songs of Praise

from Nantwich
THE CHESTER ST CECILIA SINGERS
conductor RONALD SMITH
join local choirs and congrega-
tions in St Mary's Parish Church.
Introduced by GEOFFREY WHEELER

The God of Abraham praise (Leon)
By our Saviour's shady rill (Belmont)
Psalm 22 (C. Hylton Stewart)
Jesus, lover of my soul (Aberystwyth)
Lord Jesus Christ (Living Lord)
O my Saviour lifted (North Cotes)
Were you there?
Lord of the worlds above (Craft's 149th)
Lead kindly light (Alberta)
Save us, O Lord (Bairdston)
Turn back, O man (Old 124th, arr. Holst)

Organists HAROLD KIRKHAM, BRIAN HEALD
Prayer/Blessing CANON ERIC SOUTHWELL
Producer STEWART CROSS
Series producer RICHARD SMYTH





