North East
Early Music Forum
Registered Charity No: 326282

Saturday 6 December 2025

Christmas with the Shepherds

Singers (all voices), players of soft wind (recorders, flutes, sackbut and curtal) and strings are all welcome.
Pitch: A=440Hz

led by Andrew Fowler

North Road Methodist Church, Durham DH1 4SG
Time 10 for 10.30 - 16.30



If you've ever wanted to spend Christmas with some renaissance shepherds, here is your opportunity! The starting point for this programme is the 4-part motet *Quaeramus cum pastoribus* by Jean Mouton, first published in Venice in 1521, but circulating in manuscript sources from c1505. One of the earliest sources is the 'Anne Boleyn Music Book', compiled in Paris in the early years of the 16th century. Mouton's motet was so popular that it appears in around forty 16th century sources, from Paris to the Sistine Chapel in Rome, and everywhere in between. The text is attractive too, and it is easy to see its musical possibilities: "*Let us seek with the shepherds the word incarnate; let us sing with mankind to the King of the ages, noël, noël*. *What do you see in the stable? Jesus, born of the Virgin. What do you hear in the manger? Angels with a song, and shepherds saying: noël, noël.*" Mouton's music provided the starting point for several of our other pieces: a parody mass in five parts by Cristobal de Morales (1543), and two motets for double choir, by Annibale Stabile (1585) and Giovanni Croce (1603). And because no-one does Christmas like the Germans, we call in for a glass of imaginary glühwein with Michael Praetorius and his motet *Quem pastores laudavere*, scored for an extravagant 11 parts, before rounding off with a cheeky encounter with the Italian shepherdess *Pastorella Gratiosella*, courtesy of Orazio Vecchi (1589).

Andrew Fowler began his musical education at Hereford Cathedral School and read Music at Exeter University. He came to Durham as a postgraduate to study early music with Jerome Roche. He has sung, recorded and broadcast with many cathedral choirs including Exeter, Durham and Canterbury. He is a multi-instrumentalist, performing and teaching on woodwinds and strings. Andrew is Musical Director of NORVIS and Chair of NEEMF.

£18; concessions £9 (people aged ≤26 or on a very low income e.g. solely dependent on state benefits). STUDENTS FREE. Refreshments at breaks included. Bring a packed lunch or use local facilities.

Please complete the booking form below and send it to 'North East Early Music Forum' to:
Alice Brunton, 13 Lily Crescent, Newcastle NE2 2SP (or book online www.neemf.org.uk). ***Closing date: 22/11/25***
If you cannot use your booked place, please inform us asap. For more info: please email alicesbrunton@gmail.com

✂ .....

Shepherds with Andrew Fowler (*closing date 22 November 2025)* **Application Form**
Completed form and cheque to: Alice Brunton 13 Lily Crescent, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 2SP

Name and address (with postcode please).....
..... Postcode .....

Email _____Tel: _____

I wish to play:_____ (*indicate instrument(s*) approx level *(eg starter, pro, student)* .....

or I wish to sing:_____ *(voice)* ***I prefer to Play / Sing*** I would be able to sing solo (if required) ☐

Please also tell us if you have any special requirements (eg large print, transpositions or clefs preferred, etc):

Only 6 Car parking spaces are available at the church. Please say if you need one and why ....

Do you belong to NEEMF? Yes / No
Is this your first workshop? If so, we will try to arrange a welcomer to meet you. Yes / No
For non-members of NEEMF: May we email you occasionally? Your email will not be shared with anyone. Yes / No

Cheque enclosed for £ _____Signed_____ Date _____

Directions Although the real life of a renaissance shepherd must have been hard, cold and smelly work, we shall have a better time of it in Durham. Our new venue, **North Road Methodist Church,** has a supportive acoustic, good facilities, and is very conveniently placed for both Durham railway station and the bus station. There is limited parking at the church, but plenty of public parking is available at the railway station.



BY TRAIN - 5 minutes walk

BY CAR If you are bringing heavy boxes or a large/heavy instrument or cannot walk any distance, please let me know as there are a very few spaces at the church. For everyone else parking is possible at the train station car park on Framwellgate Peth. Cost all day Saturday £8. Walk is 13 minutes from the long stay car park. Free parking is possible at the Durham Park & Ride car parks. Buses cost £2.20 (free after 9.30am with bus pass) and run from the Park & Ride car parks every 15 minutes. PR1 (Belmont to Snipperley) and PR2 (Howlands Farm) both go to Leazes Road, Milburngate Bridge/ Leazes Road Underpass Stand A which is a 7 minute (east) or 10 minutes (west) walk from the North Road Methodist church.

BY BUS The bus station is a 1 minute walk.

COVID precautions: to help to protect everyone, we ask you to:

-read and abide by our Covid policy. This can be found on our website https://neemf.weebly.com/covid-policy.html
-whether vaccinated or not, take a lateral flow test the day before the workshop
-do not attend if you feel at all unwell

Please note: The NEEMF half-price pensioner concession is only for pensioners whose SOLE source of income is the state pension. Pensioners who live on a combination of occupational and state pensions pay the full workshop rate.