Mackay Choral Society Inc. presents

Majesty – Can you Handel it?

with special guests

Holy Spirit College Music Ministry

Sat 08 Aug 2026 2:00 pm
Sun 09 Aug 2026 2:00 pm

A majestic concert using the themes of Handel's Messiah complemented by a variety of related classical and contemporary works.

St Joseph's Catholic Church
21 Grendon St, North Mackay

PROGRAM

President:
Bernie Camilleri-Cheng

On behalf of the Mackay Choral Society, it's my pleasure to welcome you to *Majesty – Can You Handel It?* This concert brings together choral highlights from Handel's *Messiah*, woven with classical and contemporary works that touch on hope, joy, reflection, and the resilience of the human spirit.

Having not been able to take an active role in this project, I want to express my sincere thanks to our Management Committee especially to our Producers, Jeanette Oberg, and Ken Martin, for steering this concert with such care and commitment. Their work keeps the standard of our Society exactly where it should be.

My gratitude also goes to our Musical Director, Nicole Thomson, Accompanist, Professor Judith Brown AM, the Holy Spirit College Music Ministry, and every member of the choir. Your dedication is what makes days like this possible.

We are deeply thankful to Father Andrew and St Joseph's Catholic Church for welcoming us into their beautiful space and supporting this performance so generously.

Thank you, too, for being here and for continuing to support live choral music in our community. We hope this afternoon's performance brings you joy and a moment of stillness in this busy world.

Musical Director:
Nicole Thomson

The word majesty often brings to mind grandeur and splendour, but for me it also speaks of something quieter. I find majesty in the moments that lift us beyond ourselves - in music that comforts, inspires, celebrates, and reminds us of our shared humanity.

As we began shaping this program, it became clear that Handel's Messiah could provide more than a musical centrepiece; it could become a thread woven through works spanning centuries and styles. Alongside Handel's timeless choruses are pieces that reflect wonder, loss, hope, gratitude, and joy. Together, they remind us that great music continues to speak across generations because it expresses something deeply human.

I am especially delighted to be joined by the HSC Music Ministry. Their contribution reflects one of the things I value most about music-making: bringing different generations together in a shared experience of beauty and community. A special thanks to Judith, for leading the rehearsals when I have been away from Mackay, and to Chantal Brown for conducting some rehearsals in my absence.

Whether this music is familiar to you or heard for the first time today, I hope you find a moment that resonates with your own story. Thank you for spending this afternoon with us. We hope the music stays with you long after the final note has faded.

Holy Spirit College Music Ministry

Back row from left to right:

Cecilia Hyde, Krystal Hyde, Belinda Rooney, Janet Oliver, Tania Harvison, Liam Hyde, Lesley Fraser, Angela Wright, Jeanette Refalo

Front row from left to right:

Alana Hyde, Ashley Grech, Shane McIntyre, Henry Miller, Elsie Buschmann, Katie Prince

Absent from photo:

Michelle Ridley, Claire Marshall, Amaya Shearn

He who sings prays twice St Augustine

Holy Spirit College Music Ministry

Holy Spirit College Music Ministry is one of the most uplifting ways our students and staff let their light shine. What began as a small group of enthusiastic singers has grown into a vibrant, intergenerational ensemble where former students, current students, and staff come together each week to share their musical gifts. They lead our community in prayer and worship through song, helping shape the spiritual life of the College.

Every Thursday, members rehearse under the direction of **Mrs Cecilia Hyde**, accompanied by **Mrs Jan Whelan OAM**, preparing music that enriches College Masses and liturgical celebrations throughout the year. Their dedication helps create meaningful, vibrant worship experiences that draw others into deeper participation.

The Music Ministry's commitment extends beyond the College gates. Members support the parish at **St Joseph's Church** on the third Saturday of each month, strengthening the connection between the school and the wider faith community. Their presence brings youthful energy, reverence, and joy to parish worship, and their service is deeply appreciated by parishioners.

This year, members are honoured to join the **Mackay Choral Society** in *Majesty – Can You Handel It?* celebrating the beauty and tradition of choral music. Their involvement reflects not only their musical skill but their willingness to share their gifts generously with the broader community.

Accompanist:
Professor Judith Brown AM

Professor Judith Brown AM has served as the accompanist for the Mackay Choral Society since 2008 and was honoured with Life Membership in 2015.

Judith is the Acting Dean of the School of Education and the Arts and the Director of the Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music at CQUniversity, Australia. She also serves as Vice-President of the Academic Board, providing leadership across a wide spectrum of academic activity including university governance, the scholarship of learning and teaching, and research within the arts and education.

Mackay Choral Society is deeply grateful to Judith for leading rehearsals for this concert despite her considerable professional commitments. Her willingness to attend every rehearsal, share her extensive knowledge, and guide the choir with patience, clarity, and good humour has been invaluable. We are extraordinarily fortunate to have a pianist of this calibre as part of the Mackay Choral Society family.

Judith's presence elevates every rehearsal and every performance. Judith's artistry, and dedication have made this concert not only possible, but truly special.

Holy Spirit College Music Ministry Leader:
Cecilia Hyde

Cecilia's love of music blossomed early; she first performed on stage at four, and by six had already won her first grand trophy. A devoted church musician throughout her youth, she served as a cantor in her local parish in the Philippines and soon earned national recognition in prestigious solo voice competitions.

In 2000, Cecilia became a six-time television singing champion, captivating audiences across the Philippines. Her musical path then led her to Japan, where she performed for Club Med — an adventure that broadened her artistry and introduced her to her husband.

A long-time member of the Mackay Choral Society, Cecilia treasures the joy, community, and lifelong friendships she has found within the choir. She is also deeply committed to mentoring young musicians through Holy Spirit College's Music Ministry, a role she has lovingly fulfilled for more than a decade.

Holy Spirit College Music Ministry Accompanist: Janice Whelan OAM

Jan was the accompanist for Mackay Choral Society 1994 – 2008. Despite her *retirement* Jan has continued to be involved with the choir as ensemble accompanist and guest accompanist on several projects.

Her musical influence reaches far beyond the choir. The Music Ministry is just one of the many groups in the Mackay region that flourish thanks to Jan's passion, skill, and tireless support of community music-making.

Assistant Conductor: Chantal Brown

Chantal joined Mackay Choral Society in 2007. In 2025 she was honoured as the Society's youngest Life Member at our 80th Anniversary Dinner, a testament to her dedication and talent.

Chantal has filled-in numerous times over the years, either on the piano or conducting. We are grateful for her assistance with this concert.

PROGRAM

Mackay Choral Society

And the Glory of the Lord - Messiah	Handel
Zadok the Priest	Handel
May it Be - Enya (Ladies)	Bhraonain, Ryan, Ryan Arr. Brymer
For Unto Us a Child is Born - Messiah	Handel
Tears in Heaven	Clapton, Jennings Arr. Emerson

Holy Spirit College Music Ministry

As the Deer	Nystrom Arr. Hayes
Shepherd me O God	Haugen Arr. Hayes

Mackay Choral Society

Cantique de Jean Racine	Fauré
All we like sheep - Messiah	Handel
The Awakening (Men)	Martin

Holy Spirit College Music Ministry

Be Thou My Vision	Slane Trad Arr. Hayes
Lead Me, Lord	Becker

Mackay Choral Society

All Things Bright and Beautiful	Rutter
Hallelujah	Cohen Arr. Emerson
Cantate Domino	Brunner
Hallelujah Chorus - Messiah	Handel

MACKAY CHORAL SOCIETY CHORISTERS

SOPRANOS	ALTOS	TENORS
Amanda Sehl	Denise Schmid	Clive Goodson
Anne Atkinson	Gwyneth Rupnik	Ken Martin
Bernadette Buckley	Helen Yesberg	
Caryll Schofield	Jeanna Imhoff	
Cecilia Hyde	Jill MacDonald	**BASSES**
Chantal Brown	Karen Brett	Aaxle Carpenter
Eilysh Evans	Katrina Hansen	Bruce Menzies
Elsa English	Krystal Hyde	Greg Webb
Fum Walters	Lara Marshall	Ken Brown
Jeany Elliott	Lauren Menzies	Ron Williams
Kerry Brannan	Natalie Winterton	Ross MacDonald
Lynn Gallant	Rachel Richards	
Sue Coates	Sarah Jane Scott	
	Shona Rosser	
	Sue Weatherhead	
	Tabitha Tyrrell	

Thinking about joining a choir?

Singing with others is a wonderful boost for your wellbeing, and it creates a sense of belonging. You'll make friends, build confidence, and share the joy of making music together.

A choir is a welcoming place to rediscover your voice and enjoy a fun, uplifting hobby.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

In the spirit of reconciliation, the Mackay Choral Society acknowledges the Yuwibara and Yuwi people as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we meet and their connections to land, sea, and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mackay Choral Society would like to give thanks and credit to those who have given many hours of their time and talents to bring this performance to you.

Producers:	Jeanette Oberg / Ken Martin
Publicity:	Sarah Jane Scott
Seamstress:	Shona Rosser

Management Committee:
Pres. Bernie Camilleri Cheng, V.P. Ken Martin OAM
Sec. Rachel Richards, Tres. Jeanette Oberg, M.D. Nicole Thomson
Gwyneth Rupnik, Katrina Hansen, Sarah Jane Scott, Chantal Kay

Mackay Choral Society acknowledges the support and generosity of the **Catholic Parish of North Mackay & Farleigh** for allowing us to use this beautiful venue.

And finally, to our friends and families; Your support, encouragement and love make every note possible.

OUR NEXT PERFORMANCE

A Glorious Christmas 2026

Sat 05 & Sun 06 December 2026, Conservatorium of Music, Ooralea.

A Glorious Christmas returns once again, continuing the Mackay Choral Society's cherished annual tradition of festive music and community celebration. Filled with uplifting carols and seasonal favourites, this concert brings together the joy, warmth, and spirit that make Christmas in Mackay truly special.

Enquiries

✉ MackayChoralSociety@gmail.com

📞 0422 264 397

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MACKAY CHORAL SOCIETY