



Girls' choir fills in 'missing piece of the puzzle' Free 180125

Description



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In more than a century and a half St Peter's Cathedral in west Belfast has seen its fair share of changes.

But 2024 saw it celebrate a historic first.

At the end of June a new choir was formed – the first choir made up entirely of girls.

James McConnell, the Cathedral's director of music admitted the church might be "slightly behind the times" but it was his ambition to give girls the same opportunity afforded to the boys.

Aged between 11 and 18 the newly-formed choir has only been singing together a matter of months and now it is getting ready to perform at one of the most anticipated events – Christmas.

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There has been an adult choir at St Peter's since 1866 and a younger boys' choir has been in place for almost 25 years.

Rebecca Morris said when she joined the cathedral choir several years ago the music was thriving but the she felt there was a "wee something missing".

That missing piece of the puzzle, she said, were the girls.

Since they put the choir together at the end of June she has been the assistant director.

Rebecca said there was something special about a girls' choir.

"It's totally different tonality with a much lighter sound," she said.

Although it comes with different challenges, she said the girls had made everything easier.

"We're working with an amazing bunch of girls which has made it so much more special, and they've just been super from the start," she added.

The choir is made up of girls from different schools around the greater Belfast area and beyond.

Abbie was encouraged to join by her grandparents.

The 12-year-old said she loved singing and the choir had allowed her to make a lot of new friends.

"It's definitely upped my confidence because I wasn't very confident last year before I joined," she said.

Lucy's music teacher had suggested the 17-year-old joined the choir and she has not looked back.

"I was quite shocked whenever I realised it had taken so long to just get a full girls' choir," she said.

Although she did not have a lot of experience of religious music she has enjoyed learning new things,

but more so the community the choir created.

“We get to come in, different ages, different schools and things, it’s just nice to have,” she said.

Christmas at St Peter’s will give them an opportunity to show just how far they have come in six months.

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zQKpQJhRzRY&list=PLtnxlcx-lhIKCgG4pZ4qpFN1A9WrdlxZ>

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