Who is the Story of the Carol for?

This Workshop is for people who love singing carols who both want to sing something different this mid-winter and hear about the enchanting history of Carols through the Ages. You're sure to be both surprised and amazed in equal measure by these magical carol stories.

Testimonials

"I can honestly say it was one of the highlights of my life."
"Beyond our wildest dreams .... This will live with me forever."
PREVIOUS PARTICIPANTS ON 'SING THE SACRED' AND 'SONG OF THE EARTH'

"What is unique about Michael's work is his knack of opening people's minds to enable them to make music in ways they never thought possible. Whether you are a professional ensemble, an experienced choral society, or a new community group, Michael can take you to new places and give you new experiences in singing which will change your life."
MIKE BREWER - AUTHOR OF 'KICK START YOUR CHOIR' & 'CHORAL WARM-UPS'

Michael Deason-Barrow - Director of Tonalis - is an inspirational choir leader and a master singing teacher. He runs courses all over the world connected to Singing and Sacred Musicing, and leads Trainings in these fields. He has also conducted at the '3 Choirs Festival' - the world's most celebrated choral festival - in Gloucester Cathedral, where he led a choir of 250 singers in a concert of sacred choral music from all around the world, and written books connected to the course theme from 'Joy to the World' to 'Folk Songs of Season and Ceremony'.

Fees: £110 *(for booking by Nov.20th)* £118 *(by Dec. 1st)* £125 *(thereafter)*
Couples £90 each *(by Dec. 1st)* **£95** *(thereafter)*
OAP's & Group Bookings (3+): £95 each *(by Dec. 1st)* **£100** *(thereafter)*
Work Scholarship: £70 *One Work Scholarship is available - please enquire.*
Single day attendance only: £65 *(when booked by Dec. 1st)*

Times: *11am - 6:30pm Saturday, 10am - 5pm Sunday*
A Registration Letter: *incl. Venue details, etc. will be sent on receipt of your application.*

TONALIS, 4 Castle Farm Close, Leighterton, Glos. GL8 8UY

Application Form 'The Story of the Carol'

Please complete & send to the above address with your cheque payable to - 'Tonalis' or pay into the 'Tonalis Music Centre' account: Sort Code 08-92-50, Account #68684633.

Name: _____ **email:** _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ **Tel:** _____ **Mobile:** _____

The STORY of the CAROL

A Christmas Journey through Time & Place



FROM • Ancient Pagan Traditions & Early Music Mysteries
→ • Celtic, English Folk and West Gallery Traditions
→ • Baroque, Dickensian and Modern Carols
→ • Multi-cultural World Carols

Tonalis

Led by Michael Deason-Barrow

19th - 20th December 2026

VENUE - The Wool Barn, nr Nailsworth, GLOS

Enquiries: Tel. 01666-890460 / info@tonalismusic.co.uk

www.tonalismusic.co.uk

The Story of the Carol

This workshop will tell
the STORY of CAROLS through the AGES
in an amazing diversity of
CULTURES and PLACES.

It will take you on
a JOURNEY with a BREATH-TAKING SCOPE
and will conjure forth the Christmas Spirit of each age
from

• Ancient Pagan & Folk Traditions

→ • Medieval Monasteries

→• Renaissance and Baroque glories

→ • the world of Dickens' 'Christmas Carol'

→ • Contemporary Carols which sing of New Mysteries.

Along the way you'll meet:

i) whole genres of carols that have been unjustly neglected
and which are full of different harmonies, intervals, scales and rhythms
(e.g. Village, West Gallery, Multi-cultural and Modern carols).

ii) captivating stories of wassailers, waites, dissenters, gnostics & mystery plays,
and carols with magical names like 'Old Foster'.

iii) how the pagan origins of the carol - with its attendant folk rituals - became
entangled with and assimilated into the church (as well as banned from it!).

iv) fascinating tales of how: 'Good King Wenceslas' was originally a Spring Carol,
the tune of 'O Little Town of Bethlehem' was sung to 'The Ploughboy's
Dream', how 'O, Come All Ye Faithful' contained a coded Jacobite message,
and how a Christmas carol "with roots in the hop fields of Kent
ended up as the unofficial National Anthem of Yorkshire" (Gant)

N.B.
Michael will give illuminating INTROS to each period of the carol's history
accompanied by GUIDED LISTENING to carols from different ages and cultures
(all delivered with expert knowledge, musicality and not a little humour).
Then for each theme we will SING glorious examples of this music.

Carols through the Ages

This workshop will begin by
conjuring forth the spirit of ancient ceremonies from

• ANGLO-SAXON times
when carols were sung in the fields, not indoors sitting on pews.
Here you'll meet and sing
earthy, exuberant and dancing carols full of rollicking rhythms,
from the stomping rhythms of Carmina Burana to dance the snow off our boots,
to a Norse fertility rite. No monasteries or sentimentality here!

We'll then move on to:

• MEDIEVAL Carols

↓

• ENGLISH FOLK & VILLAGE traditions
including • Ritual folk songs with their origins in mythic and Gnostic sources,
(from the Cherry Tree Carol to the ancient ritual of Wassailing)

↓

• the WEST GALLERY voicings so beloved of Thomas Hardy
where you'll have the chance to take the plaster off the ceiling with your voices

↓

•a unique IRISH Carol tradition which was sung in the winter fields of Wexford

↓

• RENAISSANCE & REFORMATION Carols
e.g. Remember O Thou Man, Quem Pastores & the dancing rhythms of Gaudete

↓

• BELOVED WINTER CAROLS (e.g. In the Bleak Midwinter)

↓

• CONTEMPORARY CAROLS
which sing of New Mysteries and New Listening
by composers such as John Taverner, Errolyn Wallen and Dietmar Liebsch.

You'll also have the chance to sing brand new folk song arrangements by
M.D-B. e.g. The Jacobstowe Wassail from Cornwall and I Saw Three Ships.

There'll even be a 'Dancing Carol' to a Medieval French tune - replete with
pipe and tabor - for those folk who fancy a Medieval Christmas knees up.

So come and join in with all these companies of singers
and experience the special mid-winter worlds they each create.