

Great Sacred Music
Sunday, April 17, 2022
Easter Day

Traditional, arr. John Rutter: Jesus Christ is risen today
The Choir of Saint Thomas Church, New York City; Saint Thomas Brass, John Scott
Jeremy Bruns, organ

Randall Thompson: Alleluia
Harvard University Choir, Murray Forbes Somerville

Joseph Noyon, arr. Gerre Hancock: Christus Vincit
The Choir of Saint Thomas Church, New York City; St. Thomas Brass, John Scott
Jeremy Bruns, organ

From Oxford University Press: Christ the Lord Is Risen Today is an arrangement of the Easter hymn tune 'Lyra Davidica' for SATB, optional congregation, and organ or brass choir. Dr. Murray Forbes Somerville was Gund University Organist and Choirmaster from 1990 to 2003, The Memorial Church at Harvard University. This festive Easter anthem by French composer Joseph Noyon (1888-1962) is the only piece in his extensive oeuvre which survives in common usage.

Henry Ley: The strife is o'er
Choir of Liverpool Cathedral, David Poulter
Ian Tracey, organ

Pietro Mascagni: Regina coeli (Easter Hymn) from Cavalleria rusticana
Atlanta Symphony Orchestra & Choruses, Robert Shaw
Christine Brewer, soprano

Diane Bish: Improvisation on the hymn tune "Duke Street"
Diane Bish, organ
Walcker organ in Ulm Cathedral, Austria

Francis Pott translated the 17th century Latin text for "The strife is o'er" in 1861. The musical forces which appear in this morning's performance of Mascagni's Easter Hymn are as rich and lush as the music itself. Kansas native Diane Bish (1941-) has had a dazzling career as a professional organist. Ms. Bish has played recitals on organs worldwide.

Commentary: The Reverend Canon Jean Vail

Sir Charles Villiers Stanford: Ye choirs of new Jerusalem, Op. 123
Worcester Cathedral Choir, Donald Hunt
Paul Trepte, organ

Sir Arthur Sullivan, arr. by Richard Webster: Welcome, happy morning
Choir and Congregation of Christ Church, Georgetown, Richard Webster
Thomas Smith, organ; Brandon Almagro, trumpet; Kevin Businsky, trumpet

Stanford completed Ye choirs of New Jerusalem in 1910. The text comes from the Latin hymn written by Fulbert of Chartres (952-1028). Fortunatus, Venantius Honorius Clementianus (ca. 540-ca. 600) wrote the text for "Welcome, happy morning" as well as for "Vexilla Regis prodeunt" and "Pange lingua, gloriosi praelium certaminis."

Herbert Howells: Te Deum
Choir of St. John's, Elora, Noel Edison
Paul Halley, organ

Maurice Duruflé: Fugue on the Theme of the Carillon of Hours of the Cathedral of Soissons
Todd Wilson, organ
the Schudi organ, Saint Thomas Aquinas, Dallas, Texas

English composer Herbert Howells wrote his Collegium Regale setting of the Morning canticles for King's College, Cambridge in 1941. The Dean of York, Eric Milner-White, had been Dean of King's from 1919-1941 and had challenged Howells with the suggestion "that he might be the man to revitalize English church music composition." Howell's grand setting of the Jubilate and Te Deum was the composer's response to that challenge. About the Duruflé, William McVicker writes: "The Fugue sur le thème du Carillon des Heures de la Cathédrale de Soissons, Op 12, is dedicated to Canon Henri Doyen, organist of the Cathedral at Soissons, and the descending eight-note theme is taken from the carillon there. Duruflé, the contrapuntal craftsman, uses the theme in inversion, augmentation and stretto, by which time the joyful carillon has infused the entire toccata-like texture and the fugue comes to an end in A minor with a series of crashing chords."

J.S. Bach: Easter Oratorio, BWV 249
Taverner Consort & Players, Andrew Parrott
Emily Van Evera, soprano; Caroline Trevor, alto
Charles Daniels, tenor; Peter Kooy, baritone

What we know as the Easter Oratorio began as a cantata for Easter Day 1725. Bach gave it the title Easter Oratorio when he revised the work in 1735. He further revised the oratorio in 1740. This is the version on our playlist.

Alexander Grechaninov: Song of the Cherubim
Chamber Choir "Lege Artis", Boris Abalyan

Russian composer Alexander Grechaninov (1864-1956) bridged the late Romantic and so-called modern music periods. While he wrote instrumental works for the most part, he did compose music for the Russian Orthodox liturgies of which this Song of the Cherubim is a part.

Marcel Dupre: Prelude and Fugue in B, Op. 7 No. 1
Haig Mardirosian, organ
Dobson organ at Sykes Chapel, University of Tampa, Florida

French organist Marcel Dupre (1886-1971) gave over 2,000 recitals worldwide during his lifetime.

Antonín Dvořák: Te Deum, Op. 103
Atlanta Symphony Orchestra & Chorus, Robert Shaw

Christine Brewer, soprano; Roger Roloff, bass

Antonin Dvorák composed his Te Deum in 1892 to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Columbus' voyage to America. It was first performed in New York in October 1892.

George Frideric Handel: Messiah: Part 3

English Concert & Choir, Trevor Pinnock

Arleen Auger, soprano; Anne Sofie von Otter, contralto; Michael Chance, alto

Howard Crook, tenor; John Tomlinson, bass

German-born English composer George Frideric Handel composed his oratorio Messiah in 1741 for modest musical forces. In the 19th and 20th centuries the fashion was to perform it with enormous orchestras and choruses. The version which we shall hear this morning reverts to the kind of early music performance practice which might be more appropriate.

Hector Berlioz: Te Deum, Op. 22

Voices of Ascension Chorus and Orchestra; Young Singers of Pennsylvania, Dennis Keene

John Aler, tenor; Mark Kruczek, organ

Over 900 musicians gave the first performance of Hector Berlioz' Te Deum at St. Eustache, Paris in 1855. He wrote it to honor Napoleon Bonaparte but ended up dedicating it to Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's consort.