



"Preserving Traditions with Imagination"

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When in Rome



Recently, I've been stewing about segregated lifestyles and tribalism. I'm writing to share, and ultimately to ask your thoughts, your feedback, and even to ask if anything written here gives you a notion to try something with me. I'm using the pronoun *I* here, but feel free to read it as *we* if what follows resonates.

In any given instant, I can read about an event on another continent or in a nearby town. Yet, I still can lead a segregated life. I can live in a familiar, comfortable environment. I can find news with an aperture that focuses most sharply on my concerns and values, shop where I want, read writers with whom I agree. I can affiliate with people of my native-born region, age group, socioeconomic level, or apparent ethnic origin. I can attend church with like-minded folk. In fact, I can choose from a number of churches in my denomination where I live; if one doesn't do liturgy in a way to which I'm accustomed or embody Christ's love in a way I consider essential, I can keep looking. And, what about the internet and social media's reinforcement of all of the above?

Ahmad Islam is co-founder and managing partner of *common ground marketing*, a full-service communications and digital strategy firm in Chicago. He says, "People tend to use the web in the way they live...Makes sense given that America is still very segregated -- blacks, whites, Asians, Latinos and other groups are primarily living, worshiping and socializing with each other. And now... this practice has transferred to the web."¹

To be sure, there are gifts in the plethora of choices. Affinity has positive aspects! But does being in a familiar or like-minded environment all or most of the time free me? As a Christian, when I sing Rusty Edwards' text "We all are one in mission, we all are one in call"² how can I mean it to be about all Christians when I don't know (or try to know) others outside of my familiar Christian community (and form of worship)? How do I sing "...cuando 'hermano' le llamamos al extraño: when each stranger that we meet is called a neighbor,"³ when I don't meet a stranger? How do I relate to the psalmist's question, "How can we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land" when I don't leave home?⁴

I think I'm called to move out of my comfort zones even as I maintain a home. Belonging to, living with, and working with a tribe helps give me identity and meaning. With my tribe I share narrative and can work in collaboration, cooperating with gifts and labor. But I need to learn of other tribes. As I'll share later, even early Church leaders grappled with and offered wisdom about ways Christians can learn to commune with strangers, including Christian communities that function very differently from what we're used to. Ruminating on this is

¹ (<http://adage.com/article/the-big-tent/digital-divide-segregation-alive-social-media/148596/>)

² Rusty Edwards, "We all are one in mission" ©1986 Hope Publishing Company, permission to cite granted by Hope Publishing.

³ J.A. Oliver, Miguel Manzano, "Cuando el pobre nada tiene: When the poor one who has nothing" © 1971, English translation George Lockwood.

⁴Psalm 137:4

pertinent to my role as church musician and editor of Church Music Forward because, as Don Saliers notes in *A Song to Sing, a Life to Live*, “At some basic level, musical taste is *tribal*. By this we mean that most people experience special bonding with others who prefer the same songs and music.”⁵ In our parochial lives, we worship and operate as church communities in ways tribal. Continuing with Saliers, “...the music of the tribe can be a positive force. It becomes destructive only when one tribe says to another, ‘Your songs are inferior.’ When this happens, it is possible that the stereotyping and generalizing about whole groups of people and their music are masking conflicts that are really based not on music but deeper human prejudices. In such cases music becomes the bearer of ideologies, fracturing community rather than enhancing it.”⁶

Below are two personal confessions inspired by Saliers’ words. While I still rely heavily on the pronoun *I* because these are my stories, I continue to invite you to consider if or how you can relate. Remember, too, I began by saying I hope for your feedback and for you to consider trying something with me. I’ll issue that invitation at the end of this piece.

Confession 1: I had never attended a Roman Catholic Mass until this fall. I can’t recall any overt anti-Roman sentiments in my Episcopal upbringing or from mainline Protestant extended family members. But I will confess to prejudices I’ve harbored over the years. My dad was an Episcopal priest; I have a mom and two sisters. The idea that Roman priests don’t marry and have families weirded me out until recently; well, it probably still weirds me out a little. I don’t like their restricted roles for women.⁷ I can’t countenance their official stance on birth control. Somewhere along the way, I did acquire a feeling that Roman Catholics feel superior to other denominations. And, last but not least, I have been part of and party to plenty of discussions about the sad state of music in the Roman Catholic Church. I’m embarrassed to acknowledge my participation in such conversations given my total lack of firsthand experience, my main opinions derived from reading Thomas Day’s *Why Catholics Can’t Sing* and riding along with snarky Facebook group comments.⁸ All of this has marinated in me for years, without much conscious thought. Why, even a couple of my close friends are Roman Catholic. Then, this fall I landed in a Roman Catholic parish and found myself living in the thick of “when in Rome...”

I don’t know why I said “How about me?” when my Episcopal turned Roman Catholic friend called me to say her parish needed a musician for a new Saturday Mass they were starting. I knew nothing about the parish, had no experience of their space, people, instruments, priest, or liturgy; I only had my dimwitted, unthoughtful set of prejudices accompanying me. But something opened in me enough to become curious and to imagine I could at least for a short time be helpful. Whatever the reason, (Ms. Holy Spirit?) the upshot was that I have been playing for them for six months now. Amongst the gifts I’ve received from and witnessed in this community are the following:

- The assembly that gathers is full of warm Christ-bearers; they don’t glare at me when I don’t take communion, and they thank me frequently for worshipping with them.

⁵Don Saliers, *A Song to Sing, a Life to Live: Reflections on Music as Spiritual Practice* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005), 98.

⁶Saliers, *Song to Sing*, 102.

⁷In fairness, the Anglicans took their time on this and haven’t been perfect. For instance, why did the female priest Li Tim-Oi, ordained to minister to Anglican refugees in occupied Hong Kong, feel the need to give up her license as priest at the end of WWII? And why do some Episcopalians I know gloat that a woman will never officiate at their funeral?

⁸ This is fuel for a whole discussion in itself. Where does the Jesus who says “Love your neighbor as yourself,” and who invites us into God’s glorious vision of “Who is my neighbor?” reside in exclusive, self-congratulatory, dismissive or snarky social media and internet exchanges that shut down the possibilities for dialogue and understanding?

- Differences such as wording in the Nicene Creed, the extending of hands during the Lord's Prayer, and the inclusion of the embolism in the Lord's Prayer have made me curious, resulting in some research and, oddly enough, additions to my morning meditations.
- The sermons are always informative and inclusive, always about Christ's love and encouraging of our response to that love, and always so well crafted that they are succinct.
- My attention to the Eucharistic prayer has a newly found acuity because I have to **listen** to all of it. As much as I treasure the Book of Common Prayer, in this setting, relying on the oral narration, I find myself somehow drinking in the concepts of Words of Institution, Anamnesis and Oblation, and Epiclesis more alertly than I am used to. In turn, this has heightened my sensibilities in my home Episcopal Eucharistic environment.
- The music is **not** bad, not all "contemporary" (for lack of better word) though some is, and the people **do** sing, even during communion; in this particular parish, the priest and parish are investing in the restoration of the historical pipe organ in the gallery, and their expressed desire is that the organ support their singing.
- I never get the sense that they feel superior to other denominations. In fact, they even are open to singing Martin Luther's "A Mighty Fortress is our God." I hesitated to assign it one week and asked the priest if we could sing it; he looked at me and said, "Why not? It's fine theology."
- The downside of tribalism described by Saliers exists in many places, including amongst my Episcopal tribe members. To one I recently shared that I am continually surprised by joy in my participation with this community of Roman Catholics; he responded, "Glad you're enjoying it, but remember, those guys in Rome are evil."
- The upsides of tribalism including commitment to things outside the self and working with others for a greater good, exists in many places and is palpable to me in the Saturday Mass and in my beloved home Episcopal parish and denomination.⁹
- In their gathering, something happens. It is something James Farwell calls instinctual to Christians in the Eucharist: "God is thanked and praised, and the church joins in God's own activity to do something on behalf of the world."¹⁰ Each week, with these people, I experience what Marion Hatchett describes as "the glorification of God and the sanctification of man [sic]."¹¹
- The experience of being part of their worship is sacramental, even though I cannot receive the bread and wine. Within the body assembled, I am part of and part with the dynamic celebration and consequently transformed. To quote Farwell again, "...Christians do not do [liturgy] perfectly, or immediately, or easily, and there are moments in the liturgy when we acknowledge our own failure to enter fully into the one liturgy of God who is Jesus Christ."¹² The fact that I cannot receive the elements is a different sign of our imperfection and brokenness, but it does not keep me from actively experiencing the joy of the liturgy and experiencing it as real and true sign. In moving in the liturgy with them, in God's presence, I remember that I am marked as Christ's own.

So, *when in Rome, I do as the Romans do*. It broadens my ability to love. I see riches in the worship of others; and I feel renewed in my participation at home. The phrase I have co-opted as the title of this piece comes to us

⁹Though much of my trajectory throughout this article is about journeying beyond our home bases and assumptions, I resonate with the soft utterances of Frank Oz's Dorothy, "There's no place like home."

¹⁰ James W. Farwell, *The Liturgy Explained* (New York: Morehouse Publishing, 2013), 8.

¹¹ Marion J. Hatchett, *Sanctifying Life, Time, and Space: An Introduction to Liturgical Study* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1976), 4.

¹² Farwell, *Liturgy Explained*, 8.

via two Church fathers, St. Ambrose and St. Augustine, in their interactions as Christians sharing between different cultures.

So writes St. Augustine: When my mother followed me to Milan, she found the Church there not fasting on Saturday. She began to be troubled, and to hesitate as to what she should do; upon which I, though not taking a personal interest then in such things, applied on her behalf to Ambrose, of most blessed memory, for his advice. He answered that he could not teach me anything but what he himself practised, because if he knew any better rule, he would observe it himself. When I supposed that he intended, on the ground of his authority alone, and without supporting it by any argument, to recommend us to give up fasting on Saturday, he followed me, and said: When I visit Rome, I fast on Saturday; when I am here, I do not fast... When I reported this to my mother, she accepted it gladly; and for myself, after frequently reconsidering his decision, I have always esteemed it as if I had received it by an oracle from heaven. For often have I perceived, with extreme sorrow, many disquietudes caused to weak brethren by the contentious pertinacity or superstitious vacillation of some who, in matters of this kind, which do not admit of final decision by the authority of Holy Scripture, or by the tradition of the universal Church or by their manifest good influence on manners raise questions, it may be, from some crotchet of their own, or from attachment to the custom followed in one's own country, or from preference for that which one has seen abroad, supposing that wisdom is increased in proportion to the distance to which men travel from home, and agitate these questions with such keenness, that they think all is wrong except what they do themselves.^{13, 14}

So, here's Confession 2, spurred by Augustine's words: "...that they think all is wrong except what they do themselves" and by a conversation I recently had with John Westley. One of the interesting things about collaborating with John Westley is that, though we both serve Episcopal churches, our music programs are very different. We have had several conversations in which one or the other of us has shared something we are doing musically within the liturgy and the other has responded, "That sounds great for your situation; I wouldn't do it at my parish." We grew up in related but different tribes. In a conversation recently, I blurted out that I can't stand the hymn "Blessed Assurance," and I gave John Westley my reason: "Jesus is not MINE. And, it's not all about me, me, me..." Later that day, I did feel remorse; I've always told my students, "Don't yuck someone else's yum." Even later in the day, I had a video message from John Westley: yep, he recorded and sent me his heartfelt rendition of "Blessed Assurance." I had yucked a yum. I can't say that I want to choose the hymn for a liturgy anytime soon, but I can say, given all my stewing, I stepped back. What are my bigger, broader, and possibly just visceral reactions to that hymn? Wouldn't I do well to consider that lots of people sing this hymn poring forth their hearts with love for God? What does it cost me to step back and acknowledge that Fanny Crosby's expression of faith moves people's hearts? Maybe my dislike for the hymn has to do more with some crotchet of my own.

Here's my request for your feedback. When have you been surprised by joy to encounter active sanctification of life, time, and space in a community that's not familiar or "home" for you? What have you learned? What did you bring from it? In what ways did your life as a Christian become richer or larger? Did you find that the experience honed your heart's love for your home or tribe? Email us at editor@churchmusicforward.com or mab@churchmusicforward.com.

¹³ <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1102054.html>

¹⁴ *Classical Christianity: Eastern Orthodoxy for Today*. [www.http://classicalchristianity.com/2011/04/26/st-augustine-when-in-rome-do-as-the-romans-do/](http://classicalchristianity.com/2011/04/26/st-augustine-when-in-rome-do-as-the-romans-do/)

And, I invite you to try something with me. Between now and the CMF's next publication in June, I promise to attend a different denomination's liturgy. My intent is to continue to have firsthand experience of other communities engaged in praising God and to participate with them in their liturgy and music, not just through printed materials, but in the flesh. I promise to do so with William Bradley Roberts' words in mind: "At our worst, congregations reflect the rank consumerism of American society, demanding what suits our tastes and satisfies our particular appetites. At our best, we delight in the joy of being together in the rich, varied, and nourishing presence of God's Spirit."¹⁵ I promise to move outside my comfort zone, not in the spirit of consumerism, but to participate and listen with respect for others' rich, varied experiences of God's Spirit amidst musical and liturgical differences. If I am open, I will continue to be transformed. I'll report back, and I would be so delighted if some of you joined in a similar endeavor and shared it with the CMF community.¹⁶

Yours in Christ,

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¹⁵ William Bradley Roberts, *Music and Vital Congregations: A Practical Guide for Clergy*, (New York: Church Publishing, 2009), 63.

¹⁶ My heartfelt gratitude to Mary Anne Bruner, Karen Donegan Salter, and Michael Monnikendam, for their reading and editorial suggestions. And to Jessica Nelson for reading the first draft of a different article that, despite her encouragement, wound up in the trash.



How to Choose the Right Continuing Education

Continuing education has been an amazing part of my career. I was very lucky that the first Episcopal Church I served sent me to an amazing conference that fed my soul more than I have ever experienced. I realize that most of my colleagues are grounded in their continuing education choices, but I know for some picking a conference can be intimidating and frustrating. You will find below a guide to help you along your path of picking the right continuing education.

Why is continuing education important?

1. Community

As a professional church musician we must often remind ourselves of the greater vision of our faith and commitment to the Lord. We are all one body in Christ; although we may have different views on music and liturgy, we are all focused on spreading the love of the Trinity. Attending a conference focusing on church music or professional development within church work allows us to interact with other professionals in the same field as ourselves. This allows conversations that aid the growth of our faith, knowledge, and direction of our music programs within our churches.

2. Restoration

Often times we allow ourselves to get into routines and patterns within our music programs in our churches. The old saying goes “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” I believe this quote, if you have a great program and the congregation is responding to the worship experience they are receiving; then you should not change it, right? Change is a harsh word; I would say there is always room to enhance what is already working for you and your church. Attending a conference where you get to hear colleagues talk about what is working for them in their churches and new ideas that they are bringing to worship often allows our wheels to start turning. Some of my greatest techniques and stylistic expressions come for ideas from colleagues at conferences I have attended.

3. Worship

Most church musicians get about 4 Sundays off per year. So, for at least 48 Sundays a year we are leading, accompanying, planning, organizing, and so much more for our church. Attending a conference allows us to worship with colleagues and allow someone else to be responsible for the other aspects that go into planning a worship service. I would compare my worship experiences at conferences to a “mountain top” experience. Mountain top experiences are similar to what children feel when they attend Summer Youth Camp. As a disciple of Christ, we must understand what it is to worship in order to help lead worship.

4. Challenge

As professional musicians within the church we are often working on music for our groups and programs within our church. Being part of a conference that allows us to sing in a choir filled with other directors and seasoned musicians and allows us the chance to challenge our musical skills. Often we will be able to learn and perfect pieces that are very challenging that we would not do in

our normal everyday life. Challenge is a very important part of our careers. If we do not challenge ourselves we will become stagnant in our crafts.

How to pick the right conference?

1. Goals

The first question you must ask yourself is, “What do I want to achieve from continuing education”? There are many elements that make continuing education important and people attend continuing education for different reasons. Some go to learn new music to bring back to their churches while others go to interact with colleagues. Both of these are great reasons, but make sure you know exactly what you want before you decide where you want to attend.

2. Colleagues

For the past 8 years I have attended the same conference every year. The main reason I keep going back is because I love the people. I have built some amazing professional and personal friendships over the years and love going back each year. I find that most people like to find a conference or workshop they love and stick to the same one each year. No matter if you are going to the same conference or workshop each year or not, the biggest plus is you will be able to interact with other professional church musicians. This allows you to talk about what you are doing within your church and gain ideas from others!

3. History

The history of the conference is very important but shouldn't completely influence you one way or another. I would encourage you to talk to people that have attended the event in the past and evaluate their experiences. I would encourage you to listen to their experiences but know that things do change from year to year. Clinicians change, people change, and themes change; be open to past participants' opinions, but don't let that be your only reason for not attending.

4. Budget

This is a big one! How much can you spend? Your own money and/or your churches budgeted money for continuing education. Factor in travel, time away from work, and the cost of the conference. If you don't have a lot of money to work with you should try to find something close to your home where you don't have to travel so far. Most churches will help you go to one continuing education event per year. If you are not taking advantage of this, you should, and if your church doesn't have it in their budget you should campaign for it to be added.

Continuing education is vital in restoring our charge and passion for our craft. We are never done learning; we should all strive to learn more about our crafts every day that we work. We are called as musicians within the church to love, serve, and teach, but we should also allow ourselves to receive from time to time. Being fed by others can only improve the way we offer the food we call music.

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How Sweet the Sound

Allow me to share a true story from a fellow Priest who, like me, served on the gulf coast of Mississippi before, during, and after Hurricane Katrina. One of his parishioners was trapped in her home during the storm. As floodwaters from the storm surge were rising inside her house, she climbed into the attic, terrified for her life. In her fear and desperation, she made a call to my friend, leaving a message on his voice mail when he didn't answer. To paraphrase her message, she told him, "It's possible I won't survive. I had to call and leave this message to tell you PLEASE DON'T LET THEM SING AMAZING GRACE at my funeral! I am so sick of that hymn!"

Thanks be to God, she did survive this traumatic event, free to avoid "Amazing Grace" whenever she wants.

We like the familiar. We find comfort in the "classics" in times of stress and struggle. Much like reciting the Lord's Prayer with a seriously ill or even dying parishioner often brings a moment of clarity and recognition, the hymns we grew up with can trigger wonderful emotions, remind us of the presence of God and the community of those we have worshipped and prayed with over the course of our lives, and transport us back in time to occasions of warmth, joy, and spirit filled worship.

According to Karen Aderer, LMSW, a Clinical Instructor of Social Work at the University of Southern Mississippi, elderly dementia patients respond dramatically to hymns from their particular religious tradition. Aderer and her students will interview family members or staff, and ascertain what hymns the client grew up with and then listen to those songs along with the nursing home residents. In almost every case, the use of the familiar hymns has brought comfort and contentment to the client and has even helped them to remember stories from their past at times.

Music is such an important component of our worship. This plays out in an amazing variety of ways, depending on the particular church's style. I recently participated in a service at an African American AME church where the band provided back beat and guitar accompaniment during the sermon, timing the music perfectly with the highs and lows of the message, providing a background which connected the listener to the message in subconscious yet powerful ways. For others, percussion instruments in church just won't do, only organs allowed thank you very much.

In my ordained ministry life I have been blessed to work alongside some very talented musicians and choir directors. Each has been very different in their own style and each has contributed greatly to the worship experience of the congregations they serve. In addition, each has been open to the occasional "play my favorite" request from the Rector. "How sweet the sound" of our favorite and familiar songs which unite us with the holy in ways nothing else can. It truly is an amazing grace, this gift of music, food for the soul and comfort for the heart.

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Christmas in July!



Ok, so before you roll your eyes (like my Pastor did six year ago!), hear me out. Sometimes you just need to do something to shake your congregation up a bit.

I am the Director of Music & Liturgy for a Lutheran (ELCA) congregation on a barrier island on Florida's west coast. A small congregation of 110 members, we swell to nearly 300+ during "the season": January, February & March. In the quiet months I like to get them stirred into action, hence my idea for Christmas in July.

While I was very anxious to create a full Christmas Eve Liturgy during the latter part of July, I also thought of a service project to get the entire worshipping body involved; my idea was to adopt a family and give them a Christmas in July. Those in need are in need ALL year long, not just during the holidays when we are feeling warm and fuzzy and so giving.

We worked with a social worker in our local school and found the perfect family! A single father, with two autistic sons, 8 & 11, that is quite a handful! The kids were kept in the dark about our plans; dad did a great job of finding things they might like, but never spilled the beans! So on the Sunday closest to the 24th of July, we would celebrate. In the meantime, in the narthex of the church, I put up the Giving Tree with tags showing all of the gifts we wanted to have for the family, from school clothes and school supplies, to a couple of fun things, as well as gift cards for gas, the grocery store, and pharmacy. All in all, we gave them about a \$1,400 Christmas in July.

As the congregation gathered for our July, Christmas Eve worship, the sanctuary was alive with the spirit of Christ and the spirit of giving! It was a wonderful worship experience for all of us! About 2 weeks later, the Pastor had a thank you note from the father. It was so touching and so beautiful; he listed nearly every gift we sent, and communicated his realization of how desperate he was at the time and how much we made life better for the whole family. As the Pastor shared this with us, there was not a dry eye in the sanctuary, and then the Pastor turned to me at the organ console and in front of God and the congregation, admitted that she did indeed roll her eyes at me at first. She went on to acknowledge that as things progressed and she saw how much the members of the congregation were enjoying themselves, she embraced the idea. Her final words on the topic at the end of that wonderful thank you note: "This is probably the best idea you have ever and will ever have. We are so doing this each year!"

Well, six years later, by the beginning of May, my congregation starts asking about Christmas in July! So don't be afraid to be creative and think outside your comfort zone once in a while. You just may have a great idea for a wonderful ministry for your congregation. And, yes, feel free to steal my idea! YOU'LL HAVE A BLAST!

David L. Stasney, Director of Music & Liturgy
Gloria Dei Lutheran Church (ELCA)
Anna Maria Island, Florida



Organ Voluntaries: Most Excellent Harmonies

1. Prelude (A transcription of *The Planets* by Gustav Holst)

Consider the organ voluntaries, if you will.

Perhaps the one before the service is called the Prelude; the one after the service, the Postlude. Perhaps one or both bear the name “Voluntary”.

Perhaps the people of the church talk loudly over both. Perhaps the congregation observes strict silence beforehand

and sits to listen attentively to the music after the service.

Perhaps there is even one within the service proper. Perhaps at the Offertory? After the Psalms at Morning and Evening Prayer (a 19th century practice)? “A long voluntary after the first lesson” (Long, Kenneth R. *The Music of the English Church*, p. 326)?

Perhaps they are, in fact, not played on the organ at all! Perhaps one is played on steel drums at the conclusion of a two hour ordination of a diocesan bishop.

All of this variety is evident. But where do organ voluntaries come from, and why do we have them? Are they worth playing? Does anyone listen? Does it matter?

In *A Guide to the Practice of Church Music*, Marion Hatchett makes clear that the 1979 Book of Common Prayer is the first to explicitly recognize the contribution of purely instrumental music in the liturgy. But the tradition of organs and their music in churches dates back to medieval times.

The Blockwerk organ was that impressive medieval instrument that was simply built to make a grand noise. There was no “pulling out all the stops” on the Blockwerk because the instrument had no stops -- it was simply all or nothing. An instrument of this type could only speak of the utter grandeur and power of God. Furthermore, the sonic presence of such an instrument of such power would have surely extended beyond the doorway of the church. And here we begin to encounter the organ on the threshold and its sound as liminal.

Hans Davidson’s depiction of the modified Blockwerk organ of St. Jacobi, Hamburg in *The Organ As a Mirror of Its Time* (ed. Karela Snyder) helps us to gain an understanding of what this music meant to churchgoers 400 years ago. The playing of the organ was a “musical port” into a sacred space at a time when there was no comparable man-made sound (let alone any kind of access to recorded music). The organ was heard in an immense building, the only large-scale architecture of this time.

A brief tangent: it's no mistake that the organ is to be found in modern baseball stadiums and hockey arenas. Their presence in these places is meant to co-opt their original religious function, albeit for capitalist gain and within a context of culturally accepted ritualized scapegoating. But I digress.

The organ not only marked physical space, Davidson writes, but time itself. "When the organ started to play the prelude, normal time stopped, and the sacred time of the High Mass began."

The organ was itself associated with time; the only other machine that rivaled its complexity was that literal time-keeper the clock. And more than time, the organ was associated with the very fabric of creation. Many astronomer-philosophers conceived of the universe much like a clock, and its motions to be harmonious (the harmony of the spheres). It wasn't much of a leap then to travel full circle and consider the many octaves of the organ to be an allegorical model for the stuff of creation (*The Organ As a Mirror of Its Time*, p. 78-84).

And while I find all of this thinking compelling, and I would suggest these cultural orbits laid a firm foundation for the continued practice of organ music surrounding and permeating the Divine Liturgy, do modern organists share in any of this thinking? Do they need to?

2. Offertory (A musical one by Bach, of course)

I can't conceive of an organist who doesn't play some Bach. Perhaps there is one, but I doubt it.

We play the music of Johann Sebastian Bach on the organ because that's as good as it gets. The word "genius" shouldn't be bandied about as carelessly as it is, but if anyone in history qualifies as a genius, surely it is Bach.

In my own playing, Bach takes a star role at some key times during the liturgical year.

The Trumpet on the Great annually intones the melody of the chorale "Wachet auf" after the service on Advent Sunday (the 1979 Prayer Book uses this succinct term for the First Sunday of Advent on page 884). Having just been sung by the congregation, I play the famous Schübler Chorale setting by Bach (and I've done so since 2004).

On Pentecost Sunday (or an ordination), I find that I crack open the first pages of the Leipzig Chorales to make my annual attempt at the first number, an invocation of the Holy Spirit.

But the Bach that we use for voluntaries certainly need not be chorale-based. On All Saints' Day (observed on Sunday), his Pièce d'Orgue in G Major is the prelude to the liturgy at the parish where I serve. During the end of the final section, a Solemn Procession forms. As the piece concludes, the Celebrant proclaims a versicle, the congregation responds, and then the organ introduces the obligatory hymn (287: "For all the saints"), also in G Major, as the procession departs. (It is my contention that on the seven Principal Feasts of the church, the music before the liturgy need not be soft-spoken!)

We know from contemporary accounts that Bach himself played "free works" before the liturgy. His *Klavierübung III*, if taken as a model of Bach's musical thinking of the service would suggest a fugue after. As the summation of all that came before it, and the pinnacle of human intellect and physical ability, this final fugue is logically fulfilling and emotionally satisfying.

3. Postlude (Variations on various themes)

I certainly don't want to stop at Bach. But because I can safely say that he is a genius, and he himself left so much music for the organ, I do think that organists can safely employ this repertoire before, during, and after our liturgies.

But, of course, there's so much more than this. And I'm a little reticent to suggest what that would be for any of us, given differing abilities, wildly different organs, and different liturgical situations.

In the parish I serve, it's not uncommon to hear the organ play Frescobaldi or French Classic music one week, and Persichetti or Pärt the next; Mendelssohn one week, MacMillan or Messiaen the next; Guilman one week, Glass the next. We don't need to limit ourselves to composers with immediately recognizable names. What about Paul Creston or Felix Borowski? What about improvisation?!

Hymn-tune preludes are useful, but I might be so bold as to suggest that the comments of Hatchett and others on the 1979 Prayer Book and *Hymnal* 1982 revisions placed slightly too much emphasis on the "didactic" prelude meant to "teach" a hymn tune to the congregation. Sure, to some degree this can be useful, but I think constantly matching organ repertoire to hymnody can be limiting, tiresome, and unnecessary. And just because one plays Vaughan Williams's near-perfect "Rhosymedre" prelude doesn't mean that the hymn tune must follow in the course of the Mass. For that matter, how many of the German chorale tunes in the organ repertoire are still sung by modern congregations?

Voluntaries need not always be serious. It sounds incredibly strange, but the correct choice before a "regular" voluntary at a standing-room-only funeral was to honor the request to play "Take me out to the ball game." A priest who resigned to sail around the world got Noel Rawsthorne's "Hornpipe Humoresque" as a celebratory farewell. And who can ever forget that penultimate variation on "Silent night" for full organ. If you can't crack a smile on Christmas Eve, you're doin' it wrong!

In some circumstances the organ music can inform the liturgy itself. For a number of years St. Thomas Church, Fifth Ave., in New York, would conduct a Pentecost Procession that utilized all of the Duruflé "Choral varié sur la thème du 'Veni creator'". (I used to refer to this service as the "Veneration of the Duruflé," but I actually really like the idea.) And here, we must notice, is an example of that rare beast, an item of the organ repertory that lends itself perfectly to performance during the liturgy. In this case, it is because the chorale variations of Duruflé are rooted in that historic practice of *alternatim* organ verses with choral singing.

As I come to a final cadence, I notice that my good friends Erik Routley and the Apostle Paul have been noisily chatting in the pews while I've diligently trying to manage to work in main themes one last time. So does this all matter? Does the congregation need to listen for this all to be worthwhile? Well, they *hear* to some degree, whether or not they listen. Our music meets those on the threshold. And if we are bringing and seeking the best, then it really is for the good of the glory of God and for harmonies huger than those we hear.

In choral and organ music, the trained musician knows where to find authenticity whether it is English Anglican, German baroque, verse-anthem, Howells, Britten, or the fine clear stream that is flowing through modern American music. The musician must not yield to pressure and set aside his knowledge and the conscience and discernment he or she has developed. Blessed, remember, are not the peace lovers, but the peacemakers. (Erik Routley, *Church Music and the Christian Faith*)

Summing it all up, friends, I'd say you'll do best by filling your minds and meditating on things true, noble, reputable, authentic, compelling, gracious—the best, not the worst; the beautiful, not the ugly; things to praise, not things to curse. Put into practice what you learned from me, what you heard and saw and realized. Do that, and God, who makes everything work together, will work you into his most excellent harmonies. Philippians 4:8-9 (*The Message*)

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Psalm 104:25-35, 37

Setting by: John-Westley Hodges

Accompanist is encouraged to be free and improvise throughout.

Refrain:

Hal - le - lu - jah! O my soul, bless the Lord.

Verses:

A. 25. O LORD, how manifold are your \ works! *in wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your \ creatures.

B. 26. Yonder is the great and wide sea with its living things too many to \ number, * creatures both small and \ great.

A. 25. O LORD, how manifold are your \ works! *in wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your \ creatures.

A. 31. You send forth your Spirit, and they are \ created; *and so you renew the face of the \ earth.

B. 26. Yonder is the great and wide sea with its living things too many to \ number, * creatures both small and \ great.

A. 32. May the glory of the LORD endure for \ ever; *may the LORD rejoice in all his \ works.

Refrain

A. 27. There move the ships, and there is that \ Leviathan, * which you have made for the \ sport of it.

B. 33. He looks at the earth and it \ trembles; *he touches the mountains and they \ smoke.

Refrain

B. 28. All of them look \ to you * to give them their food in due \ season.

A. 34. I will sing to the LORD as long as I \ live; *I will praise my God while I have my \ being.

Refrain

A. 29. You give it to them; they \ gather it; * you open your hand, and they are filled with \ good things.

B. 35. May these words of mine \ please him; *I will rejoice in the \ LORD.

Refrain

B. 30. You hide your face, and they are \ terrified; *you take away their breath, and they die and return to their \ dust.

**Verse 37 is the refrain*

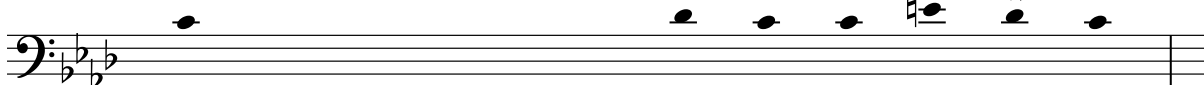
Psalm 84 choir verses

Psalmist

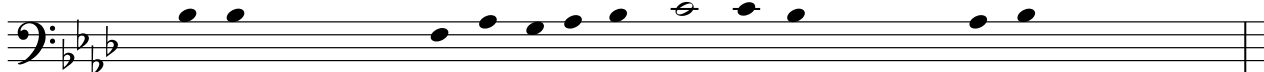
Martha Jones Burford

cantor 1. How dear to me is your dwell - ling, O God of hosts!

Choir/cantor



My soul has a desire and long ing for your courts; my heart and my flesh re joice in



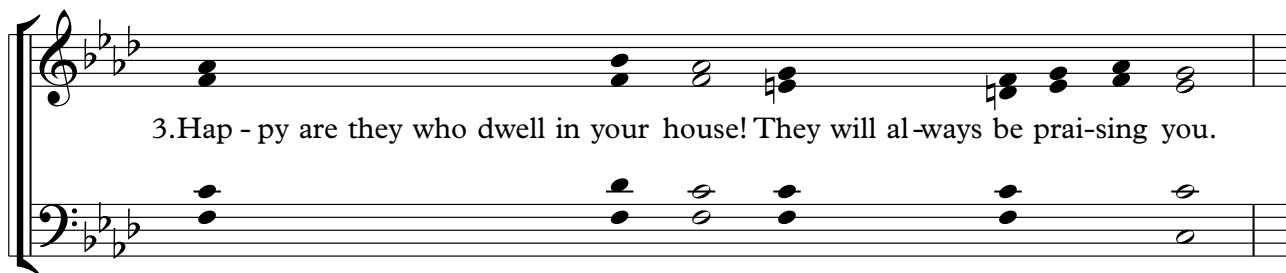
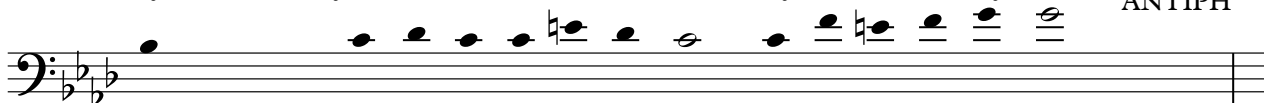
the li - ving God.



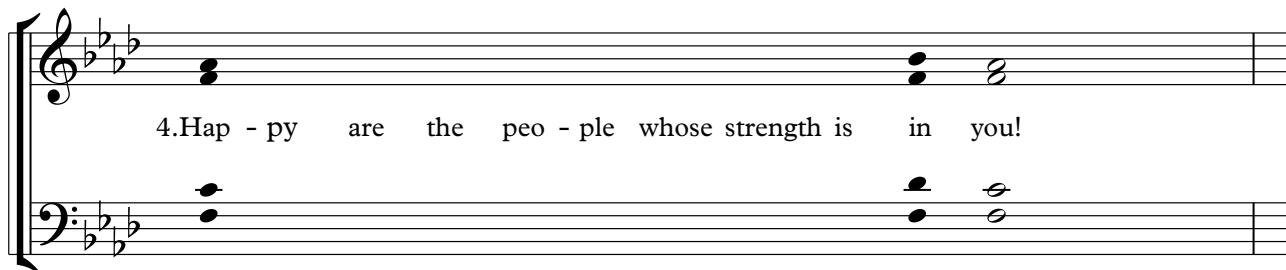
2. The spar-row has found her a house and the swal low a nest where she may lay her young.



by the side of your alt-ars, O God of hosts, my Ru-ler and my God. ANTIPH



3. Hap - py are they who dwell in your house! They will al-ways be prai-sing you.



4. Hap - py are the peo - ple whose strength is in you!

Whose hearts are set on the pil - grims' way ANTIPH

5. Those who go through a des-o-late val-ley will find it a place of springs

for the ear-ly rains have co-vered it with pools of wa-ter. 6. They will climb from

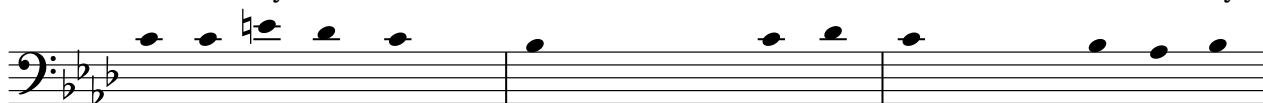
height to height, and the God of gods will be re-vealed in Zi-on. ANTIPH

cantor 7. O God of Hosts, Hear my prayer. Hear-ken, O God of Ja - cob!

8. Be - hold our de - fen - der, O God, and look u - pon the face of

your a - noin - ted. ANTIPH 9. For one day in your courts is bet ter than a thou

sand- in my own room and to stand at the thres-hold of the house of my ³



God than to dwell in the tents of the wic-ked. ANTIPH



10.For God is both sun and shield; God will give grace and glo-ry.

11.No good thing will God with-hold from those who walk with int-e-gri-ty.

12.O God of hosts, hap-py are they who put their trust in you! ANTIPH

Psalm 84

Happy are they

Psalmist

Hebrew verse אֲשֶׁר יוֹשְׁבֵי בֵיתְךָ, עוֹד יְהַלְלוּךָ סֵלָה

also known as the opening of the Ashrei

Selah is recited in the Ashrei

Martha Jones Burford

$\text{♩} = 52$

descant after 9 and 12

Treble

Ash rei___ yosh-

$\text{♩} = 52$

Ash - rei yosh-vei vei- tech-a,___

Keyboard

5

Tr.

- vei_ vei - tech-a od y' ha - le - lu - cha, od y'

od y' ha-le-lu - cha, se - lah! Hap-py are they whodwell with-in your house!

Kbd.

9

Tr.

ha le - lu - cha

Ash-rei yosh-vei

They will al-ways be prai-sing you.

Ash-rei yosh-vei

Kbd.

repeat last time only

12

Tr.

vei - tech - a, Se - - - lah!

vei - tech - a, od y' ha-le-lu-cha, se - lah!

Kbd.

Psalm 84

Happy are they

Psalmist

Hebrew verse אֲשֶׁרֵי יוֹשְׁבֵי בֵיתְךָ, עוֹד יְהַלְלוּךָ סֵלָה
the opening verse of the Ashrei
the selah is articulated in the Ashrei

Martha Jones Burford

$\text{♩} = 56$

Ash - rei yosh-vei vei- tech - a, od y' ha-le-lu - cha,
6
se - lah! Hap-py are they who dwell with-in your house! They will al-ways be
10
Repeat last time only rit. last time
prai-sing you. Ash-rei yosh-vei vei- tech- a, od y' ha-le-lu -cha, se - lah!

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Fraction: As You Break Bread Among Us

Text and music by Josh Hosler,
VTS Class of 2014

REFRAIN

*1st time cantor;
subsequent times, congregation*

♩ = 92

Chord symbols: D, A

As you break bread a-mong us,— burn

mp

♩ = 92

The first time of the Refrain is for the cantor. It features a vocal melody in treble clef and piano accompaniment in grand staff. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The tempo is marked as quarter note = 92. The lyrics are "As you break bread a-mong us,— burn". Chord symbols D and A are placed above the vocal line. The piano part includes a mezzo-piano (mp) dynamic marking.

VERSE 1

Cantor

Chord symbols: C, G, G, D

— in our hearts, Lord Je- sus.— As you Je- sus.— I was

1. 2. pp

The first time of Verse 1 is for the cantor. It features a vocal melody in treble clef and piano accompaniment in grand staff. The key signature has two sharps. The lyrics are "— in our hearts, Lord Je- sus.— As you Je- sus.— I was". Chord symbols C, G, G, and D are placed above the vocal line. The piano part includes first and second endings, with a piano (pp) dynamic marking at the end.

Chord symbols: D, C, G, D

glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord." Now our

The subsequent times of Verse 1 are for the congregation. It features a vocal melody in treble clef and piano accompaniment in grand staff. The key signature has two sharps. The lyrics are "glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord.' Now our". Chord symbols D, C, G, and D are placed above the vocal line. The piano part consists of block chords.

TO REFRAIN
All

D A C G
 feet are stand-ing-with-in the gates. Let us go in with glad-ness. As you

VERSE 2
Cantor

D D C G D
 Now we are a-live in Christ and dwell with the Lord. The

TO REFRAIN
All

D A C G
 Lord has spread a feast for us. Let us go in and eat. As you

VERSE 3

Cantor

3

D D C G D

Now your joy is with - in us, - that our joy may be - com - plete. Now

TO REFRAIN

All

D A C G D

we may a-bide in - you, as you a-bide in us. As you

Sanctus and Benedictus

Music by Josh Hosler,
VTS Class of 2014

$\text{♩} = 44$

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of three systems of music. Each system has a vocal line on a single staff and a piano accompaniment on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 44. The lyrics are: 'Ho-ly, ho-ly, ho - ly', 'Lord, God of pow-er and might, Heav-en and earth are', and 'full of your glo-ry Ho-san-na in - the high- est!'. The piano accompaniment features chords, arpeggios, and a steady bass line. The vocal line is simple and melodic, following the rhythm of the lyrics.

Ho-ly, ho-ly, ho - ly

Lord, God of pow-er and might, Heav-en and earth are

full of your glo-ry Ho-san-na in - the high- est!

Bles-sed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord_____ Ho-san-na

in_____ the high-est!_____