



Clifton Cathedral

Organ Music 16th Sunday to Christmas 2020

Cathedral Dean | Canon Bosco MacDonald
Head of Music Service | Richard Jeffrey-Gray

Choral Director | John Gibbons
Organist & Junior Choir Director | Stephen Bryant

Sunday 19 July 16th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Organ Prelude: Prelude in G minor (BWV 535)
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Communion: Fugue in G minor (BWV 535)
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Sunday 26 July 17th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Organ Prelude: Prelude in C major (BWV 547)
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Communion: Fugue in C major (BWV 547)
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Sunday 2 August 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Organ Prelude: Prelude in G (BWV 541)
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Communion: Fugue in G (BWV 541)
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

This piece is thought to have been composed for Bach's eldest son Wilhelm Friedemann to play at his audition for an organist's post at the Sophienkirche, Dresden, in 1733. The fugue is typical of his style of writing at this time in that it has a mighty architectural breadth together with an emphasis on contrapuntal complexity.

Sunday 9 August 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Organ Prelude: Prelude in D minor (BWV 539)
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Communion: Toccata in F (BWV 540)
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

This toccata is thought to date from after 1713 and is one of Bach's finest works. He was heavily influenced by the works of Vivaldi at this time and as a result his prelude and fugue writing took on a far more mature style. This toccata is a fine example of how he integrated the north German pedal virtuosity into a highly organized and developmental structure.

Sunday 16 August Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Organ Prelude: Extemporisation on Ave Maris Stella

Communion: Extemporisation on Salve Regina

As we look to Our Lady's Assumption this week, we meditate on the ancient chant of the Church. The Star of the Sea prays for us as we navigate these stormy times. Also, we ask the Queen of Heaven to turn her eyes towards us in merciful intercession.

Sunday 23 August 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

Organ Prelude: Meditation on Tu Es Petrus

Communion: Le Père from Trois Méditations sur la Sainte Trinité
Jean Langlais (1907-91)

Today's Gospel gives the foundation of the Church and so we stand on the rock that Peter built, and think on that as a prelude. Langlais wrote his pieces to reflect each of the parts of the Trinity, in this section quoting the plainsong start of the Lord's Prayer and also Bach's trinitarian E flat fugue. This in its turn is called the St Anne fugue since it sounds like "St Anne" - the tune to the Victorian hymn "O God, our help in ages past".

Sunday 30 August 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Organ Prelude: Prelude No. I (Op.37)
Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Communion: Fugue No. I (Op.37)
Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

The three Preludes and Fugues were written between 1833 and 1839 and dedicated to T. Attwood. It is surprising that both these preludes and fugues and the six sonatas were all published in England where there were few organs at the time with a pedal compass long enough to play them. This prelude in C minor opens with, and consequently develops, an arresting idea, whilst the fugue is a classic piece of music, catching us by surprise as he develops the opening theme in ways which we do not expect.

Sunday 6 September 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Organ Prelude: Lobe den Herren
Johann Gottfried Walter (1684-1748)

Communion: Adagio (5eme Symphonie)
Charles-Marie Widor (1844-1937)

Walter, J.S.Bach's cousin, was an organist in Erfurt and later at the court in Weimar. Although overshadowed by the genius of his illustrious cousin he was highly regarded in his own time. This is a short setting of the hymn 'Lobe den Herren,' which translates as: Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation.

Charles-Marie Widor was a proponent of the Bach tradition through direct teaching from Bach-Kittel-Rinck-Hesse-Lemmens-Widor (a line which continues Dupré-Segond-Rogg-Stewart-Bryant). He was Organist of St. Sulpice in Paris, having been appointed on probation for one year in 1870 but was never confirmed in the post so remained as a temporary organist for 64 years! Symphonie No. 5 concludes with the famous Toccata, but this Adagio is the preceding movement and is a very beautiful in its own right.

Sunday 13 September 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Organ Prelude: Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr (BWV 711)
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Communion: Fugue in G minor (BWV 578)
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

This setting of 'Allein Gott in der Höh sei Her' by Bach belongs to the Kirnberger collection of Chorale Preludes which acquired their name by their connection with Bach's pupil J.P.Kirnberger. 'Allein Gott in der Höh sei Her' is a paraphrase of the Latin Gloria from the mass liturgy and translates as: All glory be to God on high.

Bach's Fugue in G minor dates from Bach's time in Arnstadt (1703-1707) and shows the influence of Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713). Bach's 4-voice fugue uses a favourite device of Corelli between entries of the subject when imitative entries between two parts on a quaver upbeat form a sequential progression downwards.

May be subject to change

Sunday 20 September 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Organ Prelude: Toccata in D minor (BWV 565)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Communion: Fugue in D minor (BWV 565)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

This exuberant composition is now not only one of the most instantly recognisable works in the entire organ repertoire but also a favourite source for transcription, two well known examples being Busoni's typically virtuosic piano arrangement and Stokowski's lush 1927 orchestration for full symphony orchestra (the latter made famous through Disney's film *Fantasia*). In 1980 a version made by the Classic/Rock fusion band Sky entered the Top 10. There are various theories as to the origins of this piece including whether it was itself a transcription, but current scholarship points towards this being an original composition written by Bach to test and demonstrate a newly built organ.

Sunday 27 September 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Organ Prelude: Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir

Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706)

Communion: Sonata 6 in G major, 1st movement (BWV 530)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

'Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir' is a Lutheran hymn of 1524, with words written by Martin Luther as a paraphrase of psalm 130. This chorale prelude from the 17th century is one of several such settings by composers at that time. The text translates as: From deep affliction I cry out to you.

Bach composed the trio sonatas around 1730, although it is difficult to be exact as some of the movements are arrangements of earlier compositions. The Trio Sonatas are secular pieces thought to have been written for Bach's son Wilhelm Friedmann as practice material.

Sunday 4 October 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Organ Prelude: Nun danket alle Gott

Georg Friedrich Kaufmann (1679-1735)

Communion: Toccata and Fugue in F major (Bux 157)

Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707)

Kaufmann was a pupil of J. E. Alberti whom he succeeded as organist of Merseburg Cathedral. He commenced a cycle of Chorale Preludes for the church year but died of tuberculosis before this project was finished. The text translates as: Now thank we all our God.

Buxtehude succeeded F. Tunder as organist at St. Mary's in Lübeck on the condition that he married Tunder's daughter! He was organist there for 38 years and is widely regarded as the "father" of the North German school of organ playing. Many of his "free-form" works contain different sections, often with changes in mood and metre. This piece contains several sections including a fugal-like section in the middle.

Sunday 11 October 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Organ Prelude: Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir

Friedrich Wilhelm Zachau (1663-1712)

Communion: Praeludium, Fuga and Ciacona in C (BuxWV 137)

Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707)

'Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir' is a Lutheran hymn of 1524, with words written by Martin Luther as a paraphrase of psalm 130. This chorale prelude from the 17th century is one of several such settings by composers at that time. The text translates as: From deep affliction I cry out to you.

Buxtehude succeeded F. Tunder as organist at St. Mary's in Lübeck on the condition that he married Tunder's daughter! He was organist there for 38 years and is widely regarded as the "father" of the North German school of organ playing. This piece opens with a brilliant pedal solo, which was at the time something quite new and epoch-making, and presupposes a highly developed pedal technique. The fuga follows straight on, as does the ciacona

- which once again opens with a pedal solo (but in 3-time instead of 4-time).

Sunday 18 October 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Organ Prelude: Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr

Johann Gottfried Walther (1684-1748)

Communion: Nun danket alle Gott (BWV 657)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Walther, J.S.Bach's cousin, was an organist in Erfurt and later at the court in Weimar. Although overshadowed by the genius of his illustrious cousin he was highly regarded in his own time. 'Allein Gott in der Höh sei Her' is a paraphrase of the Latin Gloria from the mass liturgy and translates as: All glory be to God on high.

'Nun danket alle Gott' comes from the collection of chorale preludes now known as The Eighteen Chorales. The title of this collection was not Bach's and these chorale preludes were revised in Leipzig having been originally written whilst he was in Weimar. The text translates as: Now thank we all our God.

Sunday 25 October 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Organ Prelude: Praeludium in D major (BuxWV 139)

Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707)

Communion: Fuga in D major (BuxWV 139)

Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707)

Buxtehude succeeded F. Tunder as organist at St. Mary's in Lübeck on the condition that he married Tunder's daughter! He was organist there for 38 years and is widely regarded as the "father" of the North German school of organ playing. In addition to his musical duties, Buxtehude also served as church treasurer. The Praeludium is improvisatory in nature whilst the Fuga opens with a strict fugue before leading into a brief adagio and a final postlude, which concludes with double pedalling.

Sunday 1 November

All Saints

Organ Prelude: Prelude in C minor (BWV 549)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Communion: Fugue in C minor (BWV 549)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

This piece was likely written during Bach's time in Weimar. The prelude opens with a pedal solo followed by the upper three voices entering in an imitative style. The fugue starts as a four part fugue in which there are only ever three parts sounding at a given time. Once we reach the pedal entry, the contrapuntal style is exchanged for a more free and improvisatory section to conclude the work.

Monday 2 November

All Souls' Day

Organ Prelude: Prelude in C minor (BWV 549)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Communion: Fugue in C minor (BWV 549)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

This piece was likely written during Bach's time in Weimar. The prelude opens with a pedal solo followed by the upper three voices entering in an imitative style. The fugue starts as a four part fugue in which there are only ever three parts sounding at a given time. Once we reach the pedal entry, the contrapuntal style is exchanged for a more free and improvisatory section to conclude the work.

Sunday 8 November 32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time / Remembrance Sunday

Organ Prelude: Elegy

George Thalben-Ball (1896-1987)

Communion: Fantasia in C minor (BWV 562)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

George Thalben-Ball was an Australian organist and composer who spent almost all his life in England. This piece originated in an improvisation which Thalben-Ball played at the end of a live

BBC daily religious service during World War II, when the service finished a couple of minutes earlier than expected. So many listeners to the broadcast telephoned the BBC to ask what the composition was, that he decided to write down his improvisation as well as he could remember it.

Initially, Bach composed this fantasia as a lone piece during his time in Weimar (1708-1717). He did, however, start to add a fugue in 1745, although this is unfinished making it one of the few pieces with a considerable period between the composition of its component sections. The fantasia has a very imposing structure and sound, the feel of which is created by the piece's one-measure generative theme. This theme passes between five contrapuntal voices of the organ, with occasional movement into new ideas; even the pedal bass is used for the theme.

Sunday 15 November 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Organ Prelude: Liebster Jesu, wir sind hier (BWV 634)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Communion: Fugue in E flat (BWV 552)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

'Liebster Jesu, wir sind hier' is from the Orgelbüchlein (Little Organ Book) which seems to date from the end of Bach's time in Weimar, 1714-1717. The text of the chorale translates as: Dearest Jesus, we are here.

Johann Sebastian Bach had the Clavier-Übung, part III, published in 1739 (his first published work). It is principally a collection of 21 chorale preludes, but they are followed by four duettos and finally this fugue. It is an unusual fugue in that it has three subjects and three sections. These are elements of the Trinitarian symbolism which pervades the collection as a whole.

Sunday 22 November

Christ the King

Organ Prelude: Toccata in D minor (BWV 538)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Communion: Fugue in D minor (BWV 538)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Undoubtedly, this is one of the finest of Bach's organ works. Influenced by the works of Vivaldi, Bach produced some of his finest music in the prelude and fugue genre – this toccata showing more virtuosity in the pedal writing than preludes from the same period. The fugue is long and complex, and involves a rather archaic-sounding subject which prominently features syncopations and an upward leap of a fourth. The strict contrapuntal development is only broken in the final four bars, when a few massive chords bring the piece to an impressive close.

Sunday 29 November

Advent Sunday

Organ Prelude: Prelude in B minor (BWV 544)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Communion: Fugue in B minor (BWV 544)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Bach composed this Prelude and Fugue somewhere between 1727 and 1731, during his tenure in Leipzig. Tightly woven scales, suspensions, dramatic octave pedal effects, tension-building through repetition, and appoggiatura harmonies characterise the prelude in which the opening theme is followed by contrasting fugal episodes. The 4/4 fugue is more restrained compared to the 6/8 prelude, containing a relatively straight-forward subject that moves in single note steps up and down the B minor scale.



Clifton Cathedral

Organ Music 16 Sunday to Christmas 2020

Cathedral Dean | Canon Bosco MacDonald
Head of Music Service | Richard Jeffrey-Gray

Choral Director | John Gibbons
Organist & Junior Choir Director | Stephen Bryant

Sunday 6 December

Advent 2

Organ Prelude: Freu dich sehr, o meine Seele

Georg Böhm (1661-1733)

Communion: Herr Christ, der ein'ge Gottessohn (BWV 601)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Georg Böhm was organist at the Johanniskirche in Luneburg and counts amongst his pupils one Johann Sebastian Bach. 'Freu dich sehr' is one of only eight chorale preludes that he wrote and the text of the chorale translates as: Rejoice greatly, O my soul.

This chorale prelude is from the Orgelbüchlein (Little Organ Book) which seems to date from the end of Bach's time in Weimar, 1714-1717. The text of the chorale translates as: Christ the Lord, the only Son of God, with the Father in eternity, sprung from his heart, as it is written; he is the morning star, his radiance shines brightly for the other stars afar.

Sunday 13 December

Advent 3

Organ Prelude: Gottes Sohn ist kommen (BWV 600)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Communion: Meine Seele erhebt den Herren (BWV 733)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

'Gottes Sohn ist kommen' is a charming chorale prelude from the Orgelbüchlein (Little Organ Book) which seems to date from the end of Bach's time in Weimar, 1714-1717. The text of the chorale translates as: God's son has come to this earth in humble circumstances to free and to deliver us from sin.

'Meine Seele erhebt den Herren' is an early example of the free chorale fugue and is a fine setting of the tonus peregrinus of the Magnificat. It is largely for manuals only with the pedals coming in with the subject right at the very end of the work.

Sunday 20 December

Advent 4

Organ Prelude: Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland

Andreas Nikolaus Vetter (1666-1734)

Communion: Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland (BWV 599)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland is a chorale derived from a chant. It is amongst the simplest of the Lutheran chorales, being framed by an identical first and last line. Andreas Nikolaus Vetter was a pupil of Pachelbel whom he succeeded as organist to the Predigerkirche in Erfurt. This is one of only eleven chorale preludes that he wrote.

This short setting by Bach of 'Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland' is from the Orgelbüchlein (Little Organ Book) which seems to date from the end of Bach's time in Weimar, 1714-1717. The text of the chorale translates as: Come, Saviour of the world, born of a virgin, the whole world marvels that God chose such a birth.

Thursday 24 December

Midnight Mass

Organ Prelude: Vom Himmel kam der Engel Schar (BWV 607)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Communion: Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland (BWV 661)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

'Vom Himmel kam der Engel Schar' is from the Orgelbüchlein (Little Organ Book) which seems to date from the end of Bach's time in Weimar, 1714-1717. The text of the chorale translates as: From heaven above to earth I come.

This setting of 'Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland' by Bach is from the Eighteen Chorales which was a collection of chorale preludes assembled by Bach during the last decade of his life revising earlier works from his time in Weimar. Beneath a three-part keyboard fugue, typical of Bach's large scale free organ fugues, with an angular quaver theme derived from the melody, the cantus firmus (tune) is heard in the pedal; the fugal theme, its counter-subject and their inversions are combined in numerous ways in the course of the piece.

Friday 25 December

Christmas Day

Organ Prelude: Vom Himmel kam der Engel Schar (BWV 607)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Communion: Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland (BWV 661)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

'Vom Himmel kam der Engel Schar' is from the Orgelbüchlein (Little Organ Book) which seems to date from the end of Bach's time in Weimar, 1714-1717. The text of the chorale translates as: From heaven above to earth I come.

This setting of 'Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland' by Bach is from the Eighteen Chorales which was a collection of chorale preludes assembled by Bach during the last decade of his life revising earlier works from his time in Weimar. Beneath a three-part keyboard fugue, typical of Bach's large scale free organ fugues, with an angular quaver theme derived from the melody, the cantus firmus (tune) is heard in the pedal; the fugal theme, its counter-subject and their inversions are combined in numerous ways in the course of the piece.

Sunday 27 December

Holy Family

Organ Prelude: Jesu, meine Freude (BWV 610)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Communion: In dulci jubilo (BWV 729)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

'Jesu, meine Freude' is from the Orgelbüchlein (Little Organ Book) which seems to date from the end of Bach's time in Weimar, 1714-1717. The text of the chorale translates as: Jesus, my joy.

'In dulci jubilo' is one of several settings of this chorale by Bach. This setting was written by Bach to accompany congregational singing in Arnstadt and is now traditionally performed as the first organ voluntary at the end of the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols at King's College, Cambridge. This voluntary was first introduced to the service in 1938 by organ scholar Douglas Guest. The text of the chorale translates as: In sweet rejoicing.

May be subject to change