

Notes on Selected Portions of Today's Music

The Offertory Anthem:

Herbert Howells (1892–1983) is widely regarded as among the most gifted English composers of the generation to succeed Elgar, Vaughan Williams, Holst and Delius. His strong sense of place and unique sound-world set him apart, while his contribution to the renaissance of English choral music during the course of his long life is probably unparalleled.

The son of a local organist, Howells was born in 1892 in deepest Gloucestershire, the beauty of which marked his musical personality as indelibly as the Malvern Hills did with Elgar. Despite a Welsh name and, indeed, an ethnically Celtic background, he always regarded his spiritual home as being very much on the English side of the Welsh border.

As a young man studying organ and composition alongside Ivor Gurney and Ivor Novello at Gloucester Cathedral, Howells experienced the thunderbolt of attending the premiere of Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on a theme of Thomas Tallis*, seated next to the composer himself. Howells used to recount how he and Gurney walked the streets of Gloucester for hours afterwards, inebriated by the new sound-world this radical voice had introduced.

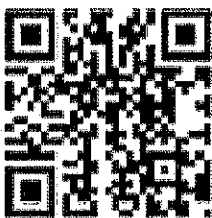
His musical ambitions burgeoned at London's Royal Academy of Music, where he was widely regarded as the most naturally gifted student of his generation and where he soon outgrew the disciplined tutelage of Stanford and Parry. Later, Howells himself became one of the Academy's most distinguished teachers for a remarkable 59 years. He also succeeded Gustav Holst in the prestigious position of Director of Music at St Paul's School. Life-threatening illness prevented his serving in the First World War (and so in effect probably saved his life) and from this point onwards his music gained new maturity, perhaps from the psychological scars of the ruins all about him. It is perhaps no coincidence that his *Fantasy for String Quartet*, widely regarded as his first work of great stature, dates from this period.

In late 1941 Howells was appointed as Acting Organist at St John's College, Cambridge and eighteen months later, spurred on by a sense of mission to revitalise English choral music, he composed his famous morning and evening Canticles for King's College, Cambridge, the *Collegium Regale* [College Royal] service. Its immediate success marked a watershed for cathedral choral music. As the Dean of King's College, Cambridge, later wrote to Howells: "You have opened a wholly new chapter in church music. Of spiritual moment rather than liturgical. It is so much more than music-making; it is experiencing deep things in the only medium that can do it." Over the next forty years Howells was to write no less than twenty settings of the Canticles for cathedrals in both England and the United States.

In 1936 Howells suffered the sudden death of his nine-year-old son Michael through polio [possibly spinal meningitis], a harrowing event which understandably left its mark on the man and his music. From here on, the intense spirituality of Howells' music took on a more profound depth. Earlier speculation assumed that the *Requiem* was composed after Michael's death as a personal tribute to a dearly loved son. However, evidence has since emerged that the work was in fact written three years earlier, in 1933, for Boris Ord and King's College Cambridge. It is true to say that Howells later re-used some of the *Requiem* to create his larger, longer *Hymnus Paradisi*, which was very much dedicated to Michael. Other than that, Howells appears to have kept the shorter masterpiece of the *Requiem* to himself. Perhaps like Mahler and the *Kindertotenlieder*, which predated the loss of a daughter, Howells resented his own ominous prescience in completing a *Requiem* so soon before his son's death.

The *Requiem* is a work of immense depth and a rapt, hushed intensity. The text deserves comment in that only movement two uses the traditional words of the Requiem as Verdi or Mozart employed them. Otherwise it is entirely in English, based around Psalm texts, of which Psalm 23 is heard today.

~ Barry James Holden – © 1999 HNH International Ltd. –
Howells: *Requiem / Take Him Earth, for Cherishing* – Naxos 8.554659
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Giving QR

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St. John's Church

Sunday, April 19, 2026

Ten O'clock in the Morning

THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

(GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY)

The Order for Holy Communion

- A warm welcome to all parishioners, guests, and visitors. Worship at St. John's is according to the 1928 Book of Common Prayer and The Hymnal, 1940. Be sure to ask a neighbor for help if you have any questions about where we are during the service.
- The ☩ symbol indicates a point in the liturgy where making the sign of the cross is appropriate.
- Please turn all cell phones, pagers, and wireless communication devices off or to "vibrate."
- Children are most welcome at St. John's worship services. For those who desire it, during the school year, Sunday School begins at 10:00 AM in the undercroft, where nursery care is also available year-round.
- Information on worship practices, Communion procedure, announcements, prayer requests, the teaching series, a brief history of St. John's, and various aspects of parish life are available in the Parish Chronicle, which is inserted in this bulletin.

Hymnal

Prayer Book

The Prelude: *Aria* (from *Sonata for Worship*) – Alfred V. Fedak

484 The Processional Hymn: *Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates* – TUNE: Truro

The Introit: *Misericordia Domini*, Psalm 33:5–6, 1 – Plainchant

THE loving-kindness of the LORD filleth the whole world, alleluia. By the word of the LORD the heavens were stablished, alleluia, alleluia. Ps. Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous: for it becometh well the just to be thankful. Glory be... The loving-kindness... (etc.)

The Collect for Purity (*the People all kneeling*) p. 67

The Summary of the Law p. 69

710 The Kyrie eleison, ninefold: *Missa de Sancta Maria Magdalena* – Healey Willan p. 70

The Collect of the Day p. 171–2

Hymnal**The Epistle:** 1 St. Peter ii. 19.¶ *After the reading of the Epistle, the People shall remain seated, and the Choir shall chant***The Psalm:** 23. *Dominus regit me.* – ANGLICAN CHANT: C. Hylton Stewart p. 368¶ *Then shall the People stand, and the Choir continue with***The Alleluia:** *Cognoverunt discipuli*, St. Luke 24:35; St. John 10:14 – Plainchant

ALLELUIA. Alleluia. V. The disciples knew the Lord Jesus: in the breaking of the bread.
 ALLELUIA. V. I am the good Shepherd: and know my sheep and am known of mine. Alleluia.

The Gospel: St. John x. 11. p. 172**The Nicene Creed** p. 71

345 **The Sermon Hymn:** *The King of love my shepherd is* – TUNE: St. Columba
 (Please note: *Stanzas 2 and 4 – Men only; Stanzas 3 and 5 – Women only*)

Announcements (if there be any)**The Sermon** – The Rev. Fr. Steven J. Kelly, SSC, Rector**The Offertory:** *Deus, Deus meus*, Psalm 63:1, 5 – Plainchant

O GOD, thou art my God, early will I seek thee: and lift up my hands in thy Name, alleluia.

The Offertory Anthem: *Psalm 23* (from *Requiem*) – Herbert Howells

The Lord is my shepherd: therefore can I lack nothing.
 He shall feed me in a green pasture: and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort.
 He shall convert my soul: and bring me forth in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil:
 thy rod and thy staff comfort me.
 Thou shalt prepare a table before me against them that trouble me:
 thou hast anointed my head with oil, and my cup shall be full.
 But thy loving kindness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:
 and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

The Presentation of the Alms and Oblations139 **The Doxology**

PRAISE God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise him all creatures here below; Praise
 him above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

141 **My country, 'tis of thee** (4th stanza only)

OUR fathers' God, to thee, Author of liberty, To thee we sing; Long may our land be
 bright With freedom's holy light; Protect us by thy might, Great God, our King. Amen.

The Prayer for the Church p. 74–5**The Invitation to Confession** p. 75**The Confession and Absolution** p. 75–6**The Comfortable Words** p. 76**Prayer Book**

p. 172

Hymnal

[The Lord be with you.] And with thy spir - it.

[734] **The Sursum corda:** Plainchant p. 76

[Lift up your hearts.] We lift them up un - to the Lord.

[Let us give thanks un - to our Lord God.] It is meet and right so to do.

797 **The Sanctus:** Missa de Sancta Maria Magdalena p. 77797 ✕ **The Benedictus qui venit:** Missa de Sancta Maria Magdalena**The Prayer of Consecration** p. 80–1**The Lord's Prayer** p. 82**The Prayer of Humble Access** (said by the Congregation with the Minister) p. 82712 **The Agnus Dei:** Missa de Sancta Maria Magdalena (to be sung thus: Men only, Trebles only, Full)**The Invitation:** ✕ Behold the Lamb of God; behold him that takest away the sins of the world.**Response:** *Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my soul shall be healed.***The Administration of Holy Communion** p. 82–3213 **The Communion Hymn:** *Shepherd of souls, refresh and bless* – TUNE: St. Agens**The Communion:** *Ego sum pastor bonus*, St. John 10:14 – Plainchant

I AM the good Shepherd, alleluia: and know my sheep, and am known of mine, alleluia, alleluia.

The Prayer of Thanksgiving (said by the Congregation with the Minister) p. 83713 **The Gloria in excelsis:** Missa de Sancta Maria Magdalena p. 84**The Blessing** (the People all kneeling) p. 84**The Dismissal | Response:** *Thanks be to God: Alleluia, alleluia!*279 **The Recessional Hymn:** *Praise to the Lord, the Almighty...* – TUNE: Praise to the Lord,
DESCANT: Lang**The Postlude:** *Toccata on "Old Hundredth"* - Robert Lau

✕

¶ *We welcome you to St. John's Church. If you are new, please be sure to fill out a visitor card and place it in an offertory plate, and/or sign one of the guest registers in the narthex at the back of the church. We are glad you are here and hope that you will join us for fellowship and refreshments in the undercroft below the nave (general seating area) of the church. If you have questions, please feel free to speak to any parishioner and they will happily provide you with whatever assistance you may require.*