



APRIL 2008 / YEAR A

GRAND MUSIC GRACIOUS WORD

Sing For Joy is a production of St. Olaf College.



by Pastor Bruce Benson, host

Easter comes early this year. It comes about as soon after the spring equinox as the lunar calendar (which determines the date of Easter) will permit. In cold climates this can discourage certain styles of Easter finery that people enjoy wearing on lovely, warm, sunny Easter mornings. Having to bundle up against March winds, right over Easter clothes, can be disheartening. But, of course, Easter isn't primarily about clothes or decorations or lilies or any of the other accoutrements of the season that we enjoy seeing on a Resurrection morning. It isn't really about music either; at least not literally.

That is not to say that our bouquets and bonnets and anthems and trumpet fanfares should be banished. The impulse to dress up ourselves, our churches and our worship for Easter is a healthy one. While it can become mere frivolity, for most people it is more than that. It is a sign of the joy and momentousness of the day. Music always plays a significant part in celebrating momentous events, ideas and occasions. You might be able to imagine Easter Sunday without pretty dresses and clean shirts—maybe even without Easter lilies. But as a *Sing For Joy* listener you probably can't imagine an Easter Sunday without music; and if you can imagine it, you don't like it. We have welcomed music into the church's celebration of Easter and it has served us and the Easter message very well.

This past January I was with students in Greece and Turkey, studying the words and world of the Apostle Paul. Along the way we visited several Orthodox churches covered with icons on every surface except the floor, and we

heard again about the iconoclasm controversy that rocked the early church for nearly a century. Is art appropriate or inappropriate? Helpful or unhelpful? Does it point to the Holy One or does it point to itself? Does it attract one to God, or distract one from God? Arguments can be and have been eloquently made on both sides of the debate. In the long run, icons were permitted to remain in the Orthodox Church of Greece, but sculpture was not. Singing—exquisitely beautiful singing—has remained, but the use of instruments has not. The same theological consternation over the role of art in the church resurfaced in the early Reformation period, and once again debates (and sometimes gangs of art vandals) raged. Because art is powerful there is always a risk that it will take our hearts and minds wherever it leads. But its power can also service its causes, including the cause of Easter.

Sing For Joy is not timid about using glorious music during the Easter season. The message deserves such music. We hope that you hear more than notes and chords and phrases; we hope you hear Easter too.

Peace be with you,

April 6, 2008

Scriptures for the Third Sunday of Easter:

- (1R) Acts 2:14a, 36–41
(PS) Psalm 116:1–3, 10–17
(2R) 1 Peter 1:17–23
(G) Luke 24:13–35

“Hallelujah” from *Christ on the Mount of Olives* –

Ludwig Van Beethoven (G)

Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Chorus: Atlanta, Ga. / Robert Shaw

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On Emmaus Journey (HOLY MANNA) –

William Walker, arr. John Ferguson (G)

St. Olaf Cantorei / John Ferguson

(CD) *Hidden in Humbleness* / GIA PUBLICATIONS / CD-594

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7404 South Mason Avenue, Chicago, IL 60638

www.giamusic.com

What Shall I Render – Paul Tiefenbach (PS)

National Lutheran Choir: Minneapolis, Minn. /

Larry L. Fleming

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Shout for Joy Loud and Long (PERSONENT HODIE) – *Piae Cantiones*, arr. Gustav Holst (1R)

Sing For Joy 50th Anniversary Massed Choir and Congregation / Anton Armstrong

(CD) *Through the Church the Song Goes On* /

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Be Known to us in Breaking Bread (BELMONT) –

Gardiner's Sacred Melodies, London (G)

Cantus Choro: Melbourne, Australia / Peter Chapman

(CD) *Sing Out With Joy* / MOVE / MD 3032

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Stay With Us – Egil Hovland (G)

Massed Choirs of St. Olaf College; St. Olaf Orchestra / Sigrd Johnson

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Abendlied, Op. 63, No. 9 – Josef Rheinberger (G)

West Coast Mennonite Chamber Choir: Vancouver, BC / Tony Funk

(CD) *As Evening Shadows Fall* / MCC SCS / IKR 010 CD

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www.mccscs.com

April 13, 2008

Scriptures for the Fourth Sunday of Easter:

- (1R) Acts 2:42–47
(PS) Psalm 23
(2R) 1 Peter 2:19–25
(G) John 10:1–10

Shout On – F.C. Wood, arr. Alice Parker (G)

St. Olaf Cantorei; Kevin Seal, baritone / John Ferguson

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The Lord is My Shepherd – Thomas Matthews (PS)

Kirk Choir, Pasadena Presbyterian Church: Pasadena, Calif. /

Gregory Norton

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The Lord is My Shepherd – Henry Walford Davies (PS)

Choir of St. John's College: Cambridge / Christopher Robinson

(CD) “O God, Thou art my God” / LINDENBERG / LBCD 47

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Rotterdam, The Netherlands

Psalm 23 – Franz Schubert (PS)

Voices of Ascension: New York, N.Y. / Dennis Keene

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He Never Failed Me Yet – Robert Ray (G)

St. Olaf Choir; Deborah Haas, mezzo soprano / Anton Armstrong

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April 20, 2008

Scriptures for the Fifth Sunday in Easter:

- (1R) Acts 7:55–60
(PS) Psalm 31:1–5, 15–16
(2R) 1 Peter 2:2–10
(G) John 14:1–14

Christ is Made the Sure Foundation (WESTMINSTER ABBEY) –

Henry Purcell, arr. Richard Marlow (2R)

Choir of Trinity College: Cambridge / Richard Marlow

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“The Call” from *Five Mystical Songs* –

Ralph Vaughan Williams (G)

Henry Herford, baritone; Philharmonia Orchestra /

Hilary Davan Wetton

(CD) *Vaughan Williams: Five Mystical Songs* /

Five Tudor Portraits / HYPERION / CDA66306

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www.hyperion-records.co.uk

The Stone Which the Builders Rejected – Gail Gillispie (2R)
Schola Cantorum of St. Peter the Apostle: Chicago, Ill. /
J. Michael Thompson
(CD) *Music for Easter II / THE LITURGICAL PRESS / 7918-8*
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www.litpress.org

Greater Love Hath No Man – John Ireland (2R)
Choir of Clare College: Cambridge / Timothy Brown
(CD) *Rejoice! British Choral Music / REGIS / RRC1040*
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Dorchester, Dorset, United Kingdom DT2 7HF
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Bright Canaan – American Folk Hymn,
arr. Robert Shaw and Alice Parker (G)
Robert Shaw Festival Singers / Robert Shaw
(CD) *Amazing Grace: American Hymns and Spirituals /*
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Plenty Good Room – African American spiritual (G)
Chanticleer; Joseph Jennings, solo and piano:
San Francisco, Calif. / Joseph Jennings
(CD) *How Sweet the Sound / TELDEC / 2-60309*
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April 27, 2008

Scriptures for the Sixth Sunday of Easter:

- (1R) Acts 17:22–31
- (PS) Psalm 66:7–18
- (2R) 1 Peter 3:13–22
- (G) John 14:15–21

Praise to the Lord (LOBE DEN HERREN) –
Ernewerten Gesangbuch, arr. John Ferguson (1R)
Combined Lutheran Choirs / Anton Armstrong
(CD) *When In Our Music: A Hymn Festival / ALCM / CS-1*
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PO Box 16575, Worcester, MA 01601
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If Ye Love Me – Thomas Tallis (G)
Theatre of Voices: Davis, Calif. / Paul Hillier
(CD) *Thomas Tallis: Lamentations, Motets, String Music /*
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If Ye Love Me – Philip Wilby (G)
Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral Choir: Liverpool, England /
Mervyn Cousins
(CD) *The British Cathedral Choir Heritage /*
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Nos vos reliquam orphanos (I Will Not Leave You Comfortless) –
William Byrd (G)
Choir of All Saints' Episcopal Church: Beverly Hills, Calif. /
Thomas Foster
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When I with Pleasing Wonder Stand (CREATION) –
William Billings (1R)
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Peace I Leave With You – Walter Pelz (G)
National Lutheran Choir: Minneapolis, Minn. / Larry L. Fleming
(CD) *Jesu, Come /*
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Like the Murmur of the Dove's Song (BRIDEGROOM) –
Peter Cutts, arr. Douglas Starr (G)
Choir of Shadyside Presbyterian Church: Pittsburgh, Penn. /
John Walker
(CD) *How Can I Keep From Singing / PRO ORGANO / CD 7188*
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Hallelujah! Sing To Jesus (HYFRYDOL) – Rowland H. Pritchard (G)
Huddersfield Choral Society / Owain Arwel Hughes
(CD) *Hymns Album / EMI CLASSICS / CDP 7 46202 2*
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www.emiclassics.com

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IDEALS TO ACTION



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Sing For Joy staff:
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