



## A New Heaven

April 2019

4:00 p.m. Sunday, April 7, 2019      Episcopal Church of the Apostles

3:00 p.m. Sunday, April 14, 2019      Christ Church United Methodist

**Elliot Jones, Conductor**

**Kevin Seal, Organist**

*Sing joyfully* (Psalm 81).....**William Byrd** (1543-1623)

*And I saw a new heaven*.....**Edgar Bainton** (1880-1956)

*Make Peace*.....**David Lang** (b. 1957)

*The Fruit of Silence*.....**Pēteris Vasks** (b. 1946)

*Like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks*.....**Herbert Howells** (1892-1983)

*Clap your hands*.....**Edwin Fissinger** (1920-1990)

————— INTERMISSION —————

*A new song* (Psalm 81).....**James MacMillan** (b. 1959)

*They that go down to the sea in ships*.....**Herbert Sumsion** (1899-1995)

*I sat down under his shadow*.....**Edward C. Bairstow** (1874-1946)

*Greater love hath no man*.....**John Ireland** (1920-1990)

Soloists: Susan Thibodeaux and Tom Wentzel

Four songs from *Due West*.....**Stephen Chatman** (b. 1950)

*Mountains*

*Train*

*Prairie Lullaby* – Conductor: Joo Yeon Hwang; Soloist: Emily Lyons

*Sunset*

## Program Notes

William Byrd was Catholic, and Elizabeth I herself felt a certain nostalgia for sacred music sung in Latin, so Byrd composed many motets and masses for devotional meetings in private homes. But official music for the church was expected to be sung in English so Byrd provided many anthems like *Sing joyfully*. The text painting is vivid: A melisma on “joyfully,” long notes at the words “sing loud,” bubbly and buoyant music for “the pleasant harp and the viol,” and homophonic declamation of “Blow the trumpet” all contribute to words and music enhancing one another.

Edgar Bainton’s *And I saw a new heaven* ranges from hushed whisper to operatic forte. But the most famous and memorable part is the melodic gesture the composer provides at the words “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.” Herbert Howells’ *Like as the hart* also exploits a wide range of dynamics, but with this composer’s signature French-influenced harmonies.

Pēteris Vasks began his career playing the double bass in orchestras. Orchestral music is an important part of his output, but his home country of Latvia is a hotbed for choral music, and Vasks has provided much of it. *The fruit of silence*, composed in 2013, is a setting of a text by Mother Theresa. David Lang won both a Grammy award and the Pulitzer Prize in 2010 for “The Little Match Girl Passion.” Commissioned by The Crossing (Donald Nally, conductor) in 2016, *Make Peace* is a setting of the end of the Mourner’s Kaddish.

In Gaelic psalm singing the vocalists decorate their melody with ornamental grace notes. In another Scottish style called “*piobariechd*” a bagpiper embellishes a melody several times before playing it in its original version, called “*uriar*.” These elements are evident in James MacMillan’s ***A new song***. The four sections of the choir decorate their melody with ornaments in canon before a final statement of the melody that is a much simpler canon between sopranos and tenors over a bagpipe-like drone in the organ.

Herbert Sumsion employs all of the colors of the organ to great effect in ***They that go down to the sea in ships***. But it is also equally appropriate when he has the organ fall silent during phrases like “When they cry to the Lord in their trouble.” John Ireland combined texts from the Song of Solomon and the Gospel of John in ***Greater love hath no man***. The beloved words “many waters cannot quench love” are set to a memorable melody, and “Out of darkness into his marvelous light” is given the Straussian sunrise treatment with a French augmented sixth chord.

- Elliot Jones

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