



A MESSAGE FROM TIM

As we celebrate Palm Sunday, we look forward to the Procession of Palms as we gather in front of the church building and process around the block singing together the hymn *“Ride On, Ride On in Majesty!”* The organ will sound in triumphant fanfare as the congregation enters the sanctuary, this time singing the majestic hymn *“All Glory, Laud, and Honor”*. One of the oldest known hymns in Christendom is the ancient Greek hymn which was adopted into Christian texts, the *Oxyrhynchus* hymn, and dates to around the end of the 3rd century. The manuscript was discovered in 1918 and is kept in the Sackler Library, Oxford. The lyrics written in Greek invoke silent praise for the Holy Trinity and together with the Phos Hilaron, these texts are among the earliest known to have been used by the first Christians... *together all the eminent ones of God... night nor day, Let it/them be silent. Let the luminous stars not, Let the rushings of winds, the sources of all surging rivers cease. While we hymn, Father and Son and Holy Spirit, let all the powers answer, "Amen, amen, Strength, praise, and glory forever to God, the sole giver of all good things. Amen, amen."*

The scripture for Sunday from Paul’s Letter to the Philippians is a form of this ancient text and it has been set to music by many composers through the centuries. We will hear the Choir of St. Gregory’s sing a setting by Austin Lovelace of this ancient text *“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus...Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, e’en the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord...”* We will also sing the hymn *“At the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow”* to the tune *“King’s Weston”* which is also a paraphrase of this same text.

For Communion, the choir will sing the stirring anthem by Kenneth Leighton, *“Solus ad Victimam”* which is a setting of another ancient text by Peter Abelard (1089-1142). Leighton’s use of dissonant harmonies and effectual crescendo building to the final climax *...to win the laughter of thine Easter Day...* create a musical experience which leaves the listener, and the chorister alike, overwhelmed with emotion. *“Alone to sacrifice thou goest, Lord, giving thyself to Death whom thou has slain. For us thy wretched folk is any word? Who know that for our sins this is thy pain? For they are ours, O Lord, our deeds, why must thou suffer torture for our sin? Let our hearts suffer in thy Passion, Lord, that very suffering may thy mercy win. This is the night of tears, the three days’ space, sorrow abiding of the eventide, until the day break with the risen Christ, and hearts that sorrowed shall be satisfied. So may our hearts share in thine anguish, Lord, that they may sharers of the glory be; Heavy with weeping may the three days pass, to win the laughter, the laughter of thine Easter Day.”*

I want to thank all those who are contributing to our Easter Music fund! If you’d like to make a gift, please use the designated envelopes on Sunday morning or call the church office.

Blessings to all,

Tim