

GMCHORALE

Presents

G.F. Handel *Dettingen Te Deum*

J.S. Bach *Gloria in Excelsis Deo*

GMChorale, Joseph D'Eugenio, Conductor and Artistic Director
The Elm City Girls' Choir, Tom Brand and Rebecca Rosenbaum, Music Directors
Orchestra New England, James Sinclair, Music Director

Sunday | November 10, 2024 | 4:00pm

Santo Fragilio Performing Arts Center at Middletown High School, Middletown, CT

Kindly hold applause until the end of each work.

Please silence all devices and refrain from texting or taking photos during the concert.

Sinfonia
(from BWV 42)

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

Gloria in Excelsis Deo
(Cantata BWV 191)

J.S. Bach

Soloists

Michael O'Herron, Tenor

Louise Fauteux, Soprano

Brief Pause

Dettingen Te Deum
(HWV 283)

G.F. Handel (1685-1759)

Soloist

Gregory Rizzo-Flower, Bass-Baritone

Dona Nobis Pacem
(from *Mass in B Minor*)

J.S. Bach

GMChorale is generously funded by

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Texts & Translations

Gloria in Excelsis Deo

1. Coro
Gloria in excelsis Deo
et in terra pax hominibus
bonae voluntatis.

2. Duetto
Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui sancto.

3. Coro
Sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper
et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

1. Chorus
Glory to God on high
And peace on earth to men
of good will.

2. Duet
Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

3. Chorus
As it was in the beginning and is now and ever shall be
world without end. Amen.

Dettingen Te Deum

1. Chorus
We praise Thee O God,
We acknowledge Thee to be the Lord.

2. Chorus
All the earth doth worship Thee the Father
everlasting.

3. Chorus
To Thee all angels cry aloud,
The heavens and all the powers therein.

4. Chorus
To Thee Cherubin and Seraphim continually do cry,
Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth.
Heaven and earth are full of the majesty of Thy glory.

5. Chorus
The glorious company of the apostles praise Thee,
The goodly fellowship of the prophets praise Thee,
The noble army of martyrs praise Thee,
The holy church throughout all the world doth
acknowledge Thee.
The Father of an infinite majesty,

Thine honourable, true and only Son,
Also the Holy Ghost the comforter.

6. Aria & Chorus
Thou art the King of glory O Christ.
Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father.

7. Aria
When Thou tookest upon Thee to deliver man,
Thou didst not abhor the Virgin's womb.

8. Chorus
When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death,

Thou didst open the kingdom of Heaven to all believers.

9. Chorus
Thou sittest at the right hand of God in the glory of the
Father.

We believe that Thou shalt come to be our Judge.

10. Fanfare & Chorus
We therefore pray Thee: help Thy servants, whom Thou
Hast redeemed with Thy precious blood.

11. Chorus
Make them to be number'd with Thy Saints in glory
everlasting.
O Lord, save Thy people, and bless Thine heritage.
Govern them, and lift them up for ever.

12. Chorus
Day by day we magnify Thee

And we worship Thy name ever world without end.

13. Arioso
Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin.
O Lord, have mercy upon us.
O Lord, let Thy mercy lighten upon us, as our trust is in
Thee.

14. Chorus
O Lord, in Thee have I trusted, let me never be
confounded.

Dona Nobis Pacem

Dona nobis pacem.

Grant us peace.

Program Notes

Welcome to today's performance! We're pleased you are with us to share a thrilling program of celebratory music by composers from the late Baroque period, George Frideric Handel and Johann Sebastian Bach.

Sinfonia, BWV 42 ~ J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

Am Abend aber desselbigen Sabbats (On the Evening of the Same Sabbath), BWV 42, is a church cantata by Johann Sebastian Bach. He performed it in Leipzig on the first Sunday after Easter on April 8, 1725. The cantata begins with an extended Sinfonia, possibly taken from an earlier concerto. Rather than highlighting a particular solo instrument, it is a type of concerto grosso with the strings interacting with a concertino of the woodwinds, oboes, and bassoon. The festive music echoes the joy of Easter celebrated a week before its premiere.

Gloria in Excelsis Deo, Cantata BWV 191

Johann Sebastian Bach was known to borrow frequently from his own compositions, reworking themes and sometimes transferring entire movements from one piece to re-use in others. Tasked with providing a new cantata every week during one lengthy period in his career, he can hardly be blamed! The musical text of Bach's Gloria in Excelsis Deo, Cantata BWV 191, was most certainly lifted from his 1733 Kyrie-Gloria Mass (later incorporated into his B Minor Mass). When did Bach conceive it as a Christmas cantata? Scholars believe it might have been as early as 1743, although there is considerable agreement that it was composed in 1745 for a service of thanksgiving on Christmas Day, the day of the signing of the Peace of Dresden, which ended the second Silesian War (a theater of the wider War of Austrian Succession.)

BWV 191, the only one of Bach's church cantatas in Latin, comprises three movements, festively scored for SSATB choir, soprano and tenor soloists, and orchestra. The text of the 14-minute piece consists of a mere two sentences, expressed in an ever-evolving interplay of counterpoint and expressive harmony.

Audiences will immediately recognize the orchestral opening of Movement 1, an exuberant collaboration of brass, strings, woodwinds, timpani, and continuo, leading seamlessly to the choir's joyful announcement of "Gloria in excelsis Deo" (Glory to God on high). Barely two minutes into the movement, the meter and tempo change abruptly as Bach weaves, among the five vocal parts, myriad variations of "et in terra pax, hominibus bonae voluntatis" (and peace on earth to men of good will).

Movement 2, for soprano and tenor soloists, proclaims "Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto" (Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit). This vocal duet is bookended with spritely orchestral passages featuring flutes, and it could be argued that flutes provide a third "voice" throughout this delightful movement.

The unrelenting breakneck pace of Movement 3 begins as soprano I's, altos, and basses attack on the downbeat of the very first measure to continue the thought laid down in the previous movement, by declaring "Sicut erat in principio" (as it was in the beginning). Soprano II's and tenors interject with "et nunc, et semper" (is now and ever shall be), with soprano I's, altos, and basses re-entering to complete the phrase, "et in saecula saeculorum" (world without end). The ensuing 130 measures, bursting with sixteenth notes, repeatedly proclaim this message in a brilliant display of intricate counterpoint, before all forces reunite with a final "Amen" on a crisp, decisive D major chord.

Dettingen Te Deum, HWV 283 ~ G.F. Handel (1685-1759)

Handel and Bach were born in Germany just a month apart in 1685, barely 80 miles from each other, and were swept up in musical circles at young ages. They watched the same world events unfold for 65 years before Bach's death in 1750. Nevertheless, these geniuses of the late Baroque never met. While Bach remained in Germany, Handel resided for a time in Italy and, by his late 30's, was living permanently in England. It was in his role as composer at the English court that Handel wrote Dettingen Te Deum to celebrate a pivotal 1743 victory at Dettingen-am-Main during the Austrian War of Succession, during which British King George II personally led the army into battle. George II was not popular with his subjects, but the huge success of Dettingen Te Deum helped rehabilitate his reputation for posterity.

Program Notes (cont.)

Completing the piece in less than a month, Handel drew upon several other settings of the Te Deum text, including one of his own and, more significantly, Henry Purcell's. Handel's 14-part masterwork includes SSATB choruses, solo passages for bass voice, a trio for alto, tenor and bass soloists (performed today by the full choir), and orchestral preludes and interludes. Benedikt Poensgen, in a Foreword to the Carus 55.283/03 score, notably asserts that "the extended prelude to the first entry of the choir is among the most brilliant movements for three trumpets, timpani, wind, strings and basso continuo in the whole of Baroque music."

This work is at many times majestic and energetic, accentuated by trumpet fanfares that precede four of the choruses. One cannot help thinking "jaunty" while listening to Movement 5. Still, there are movements in which pomp steps aside for decidedly restrained and gentle passages, as in the bass solo "When Thou tookest upon Thee." Elegance characterizes Movement 9, as the voice parts separately declare, "Thou sittest at the right hand of God," with the music building and billowing until all voices meet to complete the phrase "in the glory of the Father." Although starting with a trumpet fanfare, the tone of Movement 10 quickly becomes plaintive, as the choir humbly asks, "Help Thy servants, help." In the final movement, "Lord, in Thee have I trusted," the choir enters with a subdued reverence that gradually builds to the triumphant conclusion of this powerful proclamation of praise and thanksgiving.

Dona Nobis Pacem (from B Minor Mass) ~ J.S. Bach

We end the program with the beloved Dona Nobis Pacem, the final movement of Bach's B Minor Mass. Written in fugal form, it is nevertheless unrushed. Over the course of four short minutes, there is a gradual increase in dynamic intensity, driven by the orchestration, all in service of the message that we leave you with today: "Grant us peace."

GMChorale would like to sincerely thank Professor Neely Bruce for generously offering his wisdom and insights during today's pre-concert lecture as well as all the dedicated staff at Middletown High School who make us feel welcome for every concert.



Bethany Lutheran Church

GMChorale would like to thank Bethany Lutheran Church in Cromwell for providing their space as our musical home. We join with the entire Bethany Lutheran community in expressing our deepest condolences for the unexpected passing of Pastor Paul Krampitz. We value the welcome and support we have received over the years from Pastor Paul and everyone at Bethany Lutheran Church. He will remain in our thoughts and hearts forever.

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