



Abendmusik

DIR MICHAEL MURRAY

ADVENT VESPERS

Saturday, December 9, 2023, 7:30 p.m., Emmanuel Free Reformed Church, Abbotsford
Sunday, December 10, 2023, 7:30 p.m., St. Philip's Anglican Church, Vancouver

Thank you for leaving your offering in a basket at the back of the church.

If you wish to have a **receipt for your donation** for tax purposes, please ensure that either your cheque or offering envelope has your full name and address with postal code.

If you wish to receive your **receipt by e-mail**, please include your email address on your envelope (your home address is also required).

Offering cheques can be made payable to

Menno Hall

To receive the choir's mailings or emails, please visit: <http://pcda.bc.ca/avc-choir/contact/>

Letter from our President

As it is written in Isaiah 30:18 (NIV), “Blessed are all those who wait for him!” On October 18th, we received rezoning approval from the Minister of Municipal Affairs for our Menno Hall site in the University Endowment Lands (UEL). CD-3 (Comprehensive District Three) is the new zoning designation of “Institutional Neighbourhood” for our corner property across University Boulevard from Regent College and across Wesbrook Mall from UBC’s (under construction) Gateway Building and the bus loop.

We continue to work with HyLand Properties (formerly known as MCC Legacy Trust) to collaboratively develop Menno Hall as our new student residence, institutional space—including a new Centre for Peace Studies—and their rental apartments which will meet BC Housing’s Middle-Income affordability guidelines. You can browse the MennoHall.com website and watch the fly-through video from our architects, but our floorplans are still being refined as we work through the Development Permit process with the UEL in anticipation of starting construction early next year, by the grace of God!

We are continually grateful for your generosity in support of the choir and our student ministry programs. In addition to the usual ways to donate, we are also able to accept INTERAC e-Transfers to info@pcda.bc.ca for which you can receive a charitable donation receipt by e-mail if we have your e-mail and postal address on file or if you send us an e-mail with those details. If you are not already on our mailing list, please visit pcda.bc.ca/subscribe to sign up for future news!

– Kevin Hiebert, President, on behalf of the PCDA Board of Directors



Choir’s Preparatory Prayer

Director In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. **AMEN.**

O God, whose saints and angels delight to worship in heaven, be ever present with your servants who seek, through art and music to perfect the praises offered by your people on earth, and grant to them even now, a glimpse of your beauty, and make them worthy to behold Thee forevermore. **AMEN.**

Byzantine Rite, prayer said before singing

Advent Choral Vespers

Livestreaming and a recording of the Advent Vespers at St Philip's are available at:

<https://pcda.bc.ca/video/choir.htm>

Advent Matins Responsory

Cantor I look from afar:
1st soloist and lo, I see the power of God coming, and a cloud covering the whole earth.
Cantor Go ye out to meet him and say:
Choir Tell us, art thou he that should come to reign over thy people Israel?
2nd soloist High and low, rich and poor, one with another,
Choir go ye out to meet him and say:
3rd soloist Hear, O thou Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a sheep,
Choir tell us, art thou he that should come?
Women Stir up thy strength, O Lord, and come
Choir to reign over thy people Israel.
Cantor Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.
Choir I look from afar: and lo, I see the power of God coming, and a cloud cov'ring
the whole earth.
Men Go ye out to meet him and say:
Choir Tell us, art thou he that should come to reign over thy people Israel?

First Responsory in Matins for Advent Sunday, early mediæval Roman Rite;
music adapted from a Magnificat by Palestrina (1525-1594), arr. Stephen Cleobury (1948-2019)

Advent Bidding Prayer

One In the name of God, who has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and made a place for us in the kingdom of his beloved Son, we welcome you: grace to you and peace.

As we meet to celebrate anew the coming of God's kingdom, we hear revealed the mystery of God's loving purpose for us – how that when we were far off, he met us in his Son and brought us home; how he humbled himself to take our human nature, that we might share his divine glory.

**All Let us then so celebrate this coming with our carols and hymns of praise,
that our lives may be charged with his life;
that we may bear witness to his glory
and so bring light to those who sit in darkness.
So first we pray for those among whom the Christ was born:
the poor and helpless, the aged and young children;
the cold, the hungry and the homeless;
the victims of poverty, injustice and oppression,
the sick and those who mourn,
the lonely and the unloved;
those in despair or in the shadow of death.**

One Then, as we hear again the message of peace on earth and goodwill among all people, we pray for the leaders of the nations, that all may be inspired to work together for the establishment of justice, freedom, and peace the world over.

**All And that we may bear true witness to this hope in a divided world,
we pray for the peace and unity of Christ's Body, the Church universal,
that the whole earth may live to praise his name.**

One Finally, as we rejoice with the saints in heaven and on earth, we remember all who have gone before us with the sign of faith, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we offer up our prayers for the coming of his kingdom. **AMEN.**

<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/churchs-year/times-and-seasons/advent#mmm15>

One Behold, I stand at the door and knock:
**All If any of you hear my voice, and open the door,
I will come in, and will sup with you, and you with me.**

Revelation 3:20

Advent Hymn

(Please stand for the hymn and then be seated)

1 "Your king - dom come"— on bend - ed knee the
2 But the slow watch - es of the night not
3 And lo, al - rea - dy on the hills the
4 the day in whose clear shin - ing light all
5 when knowl - edge, hand in hand with peace, shall

pass - ing a - ges pray; and faith - ful souls have
less to God be - long, and for the ev - er -
flags of dawn ap - pear. Gird up your loins, you
wrong shall stand re - vealed, when jus - tice shall be
walk the earth a - broad— the day of per - fect

yearned to see on earth that king - dom's day.
last - ing right the si - lent stars are strong.
proph - et souls; pro - claim the day is near:
throned in might, and ev - ery hurt be healed;
right - eous - ness, the prom - ised day of God.

Come, thou Redeemer of the Earth

This text, commonly attributed to St Ambrose, stresses equally the divinity and the humanity of Jesus, addressing one of the questions (or beliefs) which haunted and absolutely perplexed the minds of many Christians in the early centuries. The virgin birth is the theme of the first three verses. Verses 3 and 4 are built around the metaphor of a runner going through life, from birth to death and back to God. Verse 5, "O equal to thy Father, thou! / Gird on thy fleshly mantle now" highlights in but a few words the dual nature of Christ.

Come, thou Redeemer of the earth,
And manifest thy virgin-birth:
Let ev'ry age adoring fall,
Such birth befits the God of all.

Begotten of no human will,
But of the Spirit, thou art still
The Word of God, in flesh arrayed,
The Saviour, now to man displayed.

Forth from that chamber goeth he,
That royal home of purity,
A giant in two-fold substance one,
Rejoicing now his course to run.

From God the Father he proceeds,
To God the Father back he speeds,
Runs out his course to death and hell,
Returns on God's high throne to dwell.

O equal to thy Father, thou!
Gird on thy fleshly mantle now,
The weakness of our mortal state
With deathless might invigorate.

Thy cradle here shall glitter bright,
And darkness glow with newborn light,
No more shall night extinguish day,
Where love's bright beams their power
display.

O Jesu, Virgin-born, to thee
Eternal praise and glory be,
Whom with the Father we adore
And Holy Spirit, evermore. Amen.

St. Ambrose (c. 340-397), trans. J. M. Neale (1818-1866);
music by Michael Praetorius (1571-1621), arr. Stephen Cleobury (1948-2019)

Advent Prose

The music for this hymn's refrain from Isaiah 45:8 has its origins in the Middle Ages, when it was sung daily as a Response during Advent Vespers. By the 18th-c., verses were added to the refrain, creating a hymn which is often sung on the Fourth Sunday of Advent.

*Pour down, O heavens, from above,
And let the skies rain down righteousness.* [Isaiah 45:8]

Turn your fierce anger from us, O Lord,
And remember not our sins for ever.
Your holy cities have become a desert,
Zion a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation;
Our holy and beautiful house, where our fathers praised you.

*Pour down, O heavens, from above,
And let the skies rain down righteousness.*

We have sinned and become like one who is unclean;
We have all withered like a leaf,
And our iniquities like the wind have swept us away,
You have hidden your face from us,
And abandoned us to our iniquities.

*Pour down, O heavens, from above,
And let the skies rain down righteousness.*

You are my witnesses, says the Lord,
And my servant whom I have chosen,
That you may know me and believe me.
I myself am the Lord, and none but I can deliver;
What my hand holds, none can snatch away.

*Pour down, O heavens, from above,
And let the skies rain down righteousness.*

Comfort my people, comfort them;
My salvation shall not be delayed.
I have swept your offences away like a cloud;

Fear not, for I will save you.

I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Redeemer.

*Pour down, O heavens, from above,
And let the skies rain down righteousness.*

Advent Prose from the Church of England; music ed. by Stephen Cleobury

Magnificat in B flat

Gerald Harder, *organist and former member of Abendmusik*

Before retiring in 2008, Philip Moore served as organist at Eton College, Canterbury Cathedral, Guildford Cathedral, and York Minster. His setting of Mary's *Magnificat* alternates verses sung in unison chant with those sung in four-part harmony.

My soul doth magnify the Lord,

and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

For he hath regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden.

For behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

For he that is mighty hath magnified me; and holy is his Name.

And his mercy is on them that fear him, throughout all generations.

He hath shewed strength with his arm;

he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

He hath put down the mighty from their seat,

and hath exalted the humble and meek.

He hath filled the hungry with good things,

and the rich he hath sent empty away.

He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel,

as he promis'd to our forefathers Abraham and his seed, for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;

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

Luke 1:46-55; music by Philip Moore (b. 1943)

Benedictus in C

The text for the canticle (song) of Zachariah comes from the concluding verses of Luke 1, the first words he could speak after being mute for about nine months, his punishment for doubting Gabriel's prophecy that his elderly wife would have a son (John the Baptizer). Zachariah's canticle opens with praise for "the Lord God of Israel" and for the prophets' promises that someone would eventually redeem God's people. Zachariah concluded his canticle by prophesying that his son, John, would be the one to prepare the way and become known as "the Prophet of the Highest."

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel:
For he hath visited and redeemed his people;
And hath raised up a mighty salvation for us
In the house of his servant David;

[Men]

As he spake by the mouth of his holy Prophets:
Which have been since the world began;
That we should be savèd from our enemies:
And from the hand of all that hate us.

[Choir]

To perform the mercy promised to our forefathers:
And to remember his holy Covenant.
To perform the oath which he sware to our forefather Abraham:
That he would give us;
That we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies
Might serve him without fear,
In holiness and righteousness before him
All the days of our life.

[Sopranos]

And thou, Child [= John the Baptizer], shalt be called the Prophet of the Highest:
For thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways;
To give knowledge of salvation unto his people

[Choir]

For the remission of their sins,
Thro' the tender mercy of our God:
Whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us;
To give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death,
And to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son:
And to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be:
World without end. Amen.

Song of Simeon, Luke 1:68-79; music by C.V. Stanford (1852-1924)

Ecce concipies

Luke is the only writer to relate the story of the angel Gabriel's announcement to Mary foretelling the birth of Jesus. These words have been repeatedly set to music over the centuries, celebrating the confluence of that which is divine and that which is human. Though he lived for only about 40 years, Jacob Handl was revered throughout Renaissance Germany for his masterful church choral compositions.

*Ecce concipies,
Et paries filium,
Et vocabis nomen eius Jesum.
Hic erit magnus,
Et Filius Altissimi vocabitur.
Super solium David,
Et super regnum eius sedebit,
Et regnabit in domo Jacob in aeternum:
Et regni eius non erit finis.*

Behold, you will conceive,
And bear a son,
And you will call his name 'Jesus'.
He will be great,
And will be called Son of the Most High.
The Lord God will give him the throne of
His ancestor David,
And he will reign in the house of Jacob
forever:
And his reign will have no end.

Luke 1:31-33; music by Jacob Handl (1550-91)

This is the Truth Sent from Above

The folklorist Ella Mary Leather wrote down the tune for this traditional Herefordshire Advent folk carol in 1909. The melody was then arranged by Ralph Vaughan Williams. The carol's text takes us from the celestial presence of God (verse 1) to the story of Creation (verse 2). However, after only a few hundred words, sin made its appearance in the story in Genesis (verse 3). Thankfully (verse 4) "our blest Redeemer did appear", finding new ways to teach about God and Godly living. But the folk carol reminds us that we can only benefit from his words (verse 5) if we give them the attention they deserve.

This is the truth sent from above,
The truth of God, the God of love;
Therefore don't turn me from the door
But hearken all, both rich and poor.

The first thing that I will relate,
That God at first did man create;
The next thing which to you I tell—
Woman was made with him to dwell.

Thus we were heirs to endless woes
Till God the Lord did interpose;
And so a promise soon did run:
That he'd redeem us by his Son.

And at this season of the year
Our blest Redeemer did appear,
And here did live, and here did preach,
And many thousands he did teach.

Thus he in love to us behaved,
To show us how we must be saved;
And if you want to know the way,
Be pleased to hear what he did say.

Trad. English; music arr. R. Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

This is the Record of John

Before Grayston Ives taught and conducted at Magdalen College, Oxford, he was with the King's Singers. The majority of his works have been composed for the services at Magdalen College. "This is the Record of John" sets four dramatic verses from the first chapter of John's gospel. People were so impressed by John the Baptizer that they asked whether he might in fact be the promised Messiah. Each time the people ask John questions, the choir sings with increasing urgency. When John finally reveals how he viewed his role, the choir sings in a more stately style in four-part harmony.

[Men]

This is the record of John,
When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him:

[Choir]

Who art thou?

[Men]

And he confessed and denied not, and said plainly:

[Choir]

I am not the Christ.

And they asked him: What art thou then?

Art thou Elias? And he said, I am not.

Art thou the prophet? And he answered, No.

Then said they unto him: What art thou?

That we may give an answer unto them that sent us.

What say'st thou of thyself?

And he said, I am the voice of him that crieth in the wilderness,

Make straight the way of the Lord.

St John 1:19-22; music by Grayston Ives (b. 1948)

Responsive Reading from Revelation 22

- One The Angel said to me, "These are dependable and accurate words, every one. The God and Master of the spirits of the prophets sent his Angel to show his servants what must take place, and soon. And tell them, 'Yes, I'm on my way!' Blessed be the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."
- All "Yes, I'm on my way! I'll be there soon! I'm bringing my payroll with me. I'll pay all people in full for their life's work. I'm A to Z, the First and the Final, Beginning and Conclusion.**
- One "Come!" say the Spirit and the Bride.
Whoever hears, echo, "Come!"
Is anyone thirsty? Come!
All who will, come and drink,
Drink freely of the Water of Life!
He who testifies to all these things says it again:
"I'm on my way! I'll be there soon!"
- All Yes! Come, Lord Jesus!**

E'en so Lord Jesus, Quickly Come

This text has brief phrases Ruth Manz (the composer's wife) compiled from the Book of Revelation. One of the book's themes is that Christ is coming a second time. Although scripture makes it clear that nobody knows when, where, or how this might happen, this belief has been widely held since the earliest days of the church. Christ's second coming is also an important Advent theme.

Not long after turning 90, as the composer lay dying, he was surrounded by his family as they sang this, his most famous song.

Peace be to you, and grace from Him,
Who freed us from our sins,
Who loved us all, and shed his blood,
That we might saved be.

Sing holy, holy to our Lord,
The Lord, Almighty God!
Who was and is, and is to come,
Sing holy, holy Lord.

Rejoice in Heaven, all ye that dwell therein,
Rejoice on earth, ye saints below,
For Christ is coming, is coming soon,
For Christ is coming soon.

E'en so, Lord Jesus, quickly come,
And night shall be no more;
They need no light, nor lamp, nor sun,
For Christ will be their All!

Revelation 22, adapted by Ruth Manz; music by Paul Manz (1919-2009; 1953)

Jacob's Ladder

This traditional 18th-c. English carol is rich in metaphors. Jacob's ladder symbolizes our eventual ability to attain heaven, just as millions before us have done. "And remember, each step that by faith we pass o'er, / Some prophet or martyr hath trod it before." This echoes another of Advent's themes: The time is coming when we will leave earth and will be, somehow, with our Creator God.

As Jacob with travel was weary one day,
At night on a stone for a pillow he lay;
He saw in a vision a ladder so high
That its foot was on earth and its top in the sky:

*Alleluia to Jesus, whose birth sets us free,
And hath raised up a ladder of mercy for me,
And hath raised up a ladder of mercy for me.*

This ladder is long, it is strong and well made,
Has stood hundreds of years and is not yet decayed;

Many millions have climbed it and reach'd Sion's hill,
And thousands by faith are climbing it still. [*Refrain*]

Come, let us ascend! All may climb it who will;
For the angels of Jacob are guarding it still:
And remember, each step that by faith we pass o'er,
Some prophet or martyr hath trod it before: [*Refrain*]

And when we arrive at the haven of rest,
We shall hear the glad words, "Come up hither, ye blest,
Here are regions of light, here are mansions of bliss."
Oh, who would not climb such a ladder as this? [*Refrain*]

Traditional 18th c. English carol; arr. Stephen Darlington (b. 1952)

O Thou, the Central Orb

Charles Wood was born in Ireland and became a leading music teacher and composer of works for the Church of England. The text by Bramley focuses on light, another important Advent theme, particularly as nights become increasingly longer. Phrases such as "pure beam of the Most High", "thy radiance bright", "let thy glory shine", "as stars about thy throne", "let thy bright beams disperse the gloom of sin" invite us to find light both within ourselves and in God's universe.

O thou, the central orb of righteous love,
Pure beam of the Most High, eternal light
Of this our wintry world, thy radiance bright
Awakes new joy in faith, hope soars above.

Come, quickly come, and let thy glory shine,
Gilding our darksome heaven with rays divine.

Thy saints with holy lustre round thee move,
As stars about thy throne, set in the height
Of God's ordaining counsel, as thy sight
Gives measured grace to each, thy power to prove.

Let thy bright beams disperse the gloom of sin,
 Our nature all shall feel eternal day,
 In fellowship with thee, transforming clay
 To souls, erewhile unclean, now pure within. Amen.

Henry Ramsden Bramley (1833-1917); music by Charles Wood (1866-1926)

Prayers and Sung Refrain

Isaiah 40.1

Thomas A. Walmisley;
 arr. J. Evan Kreider

Com- fort, com- fort, O my peo - ple, speak of peace, now says our
 God. Com - fort those who sit in dark - ness,
 mourn - ing 'neath their sorr - rows' load.

[Sung refrain: Comfort, comfort . . .]

“Comfort, oh comfort my people,” says your God. “Speak softly and tenderly to Jerusalem, but also make it very clear that she has served her sentence, that her sin is taken care of—forgiven! She’s been punished enough and more than enough, and now it’s over and done with.”

Isaiah 40:1-2 (*The Message*)

[Sung refrain: Comfort, comfort . . .]

O God of all, of Abraham, Sarah, Hagar, Isaac, and Ishmael: Our hearts are broken in pieces at the suffering and murder of your people. Our voices cry for peace and for justice.

Comfort those who grieve. Console and heal the injured. Be close to those in fear. Restrain with

your mighty hand those who perpetrate violence. Send us your wisdom in all that we say and do, that our voice may always seek justice, peace and security for all.

Rev. Peter Colwell, UK

[Sung refrain: Comfort, comfort . . .]

You have promised that those who follow Jesus will be persecuted. We pray for your children around the world who are suffering mistreatment, imprisonment, loss of possessions, and threats of death for their allegiance to you. By your mighty power keep them faithful to you. Be their shield and defense, their refuge and their stronghold.

Shelter them under the shadow of your wings, that they may not fear their enemies, and help us to uphold them in prayer, that together we may walk in the light of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and not be ashamed to confess him as Lord, to the glory of your name.

<https://anglicanaid.org.au/praying-for-the-persecuted-church/>

[Sung refrain: Comfort, comfort . . .]

Grant, O Lord of life, that we may savour every season of our lives as a gift filled with promise for the future. Grant that we may lovingly accept your will, and place ourselves each day in your merciful hands. And when the moment of our definitive “passage” comes, grant that we may face it with serenity, without regret for what we shall leave behind. For in meeting you, after having sought you for so long, we shall find once more every authentic good which we have known here on earth, in the company of all who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith and hope.

Pope John Paul II (1920-2005)

[Sung refrain: Comfort, comfort . . .]

And now unto him who is able to keep us from falling and lift us from the dark valley of despair to the mountains of hope, from the midnight of desperation to the daybreak of joy, to him be power and authority, for ever and ever. Amen.

Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968)

[Sung refrain: Comfort, comfort . . .]

Vesper Responsory

Chant Judah and Jerusalem, fear not, nor be dismayed;
Choir Tomorrow go ye forth, and the Lord, he will be with you.
Chant Stand ye still, and ye shall see the salvation of the Lord.
Choir Tomorrow go ye forth, and the Lord, he will be with you.
Chant Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.
Choir Tomorrow go ye forth, and the Lord, he will be with you.

2 Chronicles 20:17 (KJV), Responsory of Advent Sunday for the Office of Matins, early mediaeval Roman Rite;
music by Giovanni Palestrina (1525-1594), adapt. Philip Ledger (1937-2012)

We invite you to remain for silent meditation as the choir recesses.

Choir's Private Closing Prayer (in atrium)

Director Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit this night,
for you have redeemed me. Psalm 31:5

Choir: O God of goodness and truth, keep me as the apple of your eye;
hide me under the shadow of your wings.

Choir: Amen. Psalm 17:8

Book of Common Prayer (1928)
music by Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625)

Abendmusik Choir, Advent MXXXIII

Michael Murray, *Director*

Ruth Enns, *Chair Abendmusik Committee, publicity, piano*

Gerald Harder, *organist, St James Anglican Church*

Karen Thiessen, *Manager*

J. Evan Kreider, *Prayers, programme notes, photography, librarian*

Andrea Siemens, *Postcard design*

Catherine Cooper, *Calligraphy*

Greta Bartsch
Rosemary Bell
Maureen Bennington
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Cynthia Friesen
Josephine Friesen
Stephen Hall
Priska Helm
Zena Helm
Martha Kendall
Brooke Kinniburgh
Steve Krehbiel
J. Evan Kreider

John Kroeker
Allan Larson
Katherine Lumsdon
Michael McKenzie
Jane Pulkingham
Christoph Schwarzbach
Karen Thiessen
David Wallace
Jenny Wallace



Founded in 1991 by Eric Hannan, the *Abendmusik Choir's* Vespers offer classical sacred music appropriate to the Liturgical Year (Advent and Lent) and prayers written across the centuries. The offerings support both the choir and construction of the proposed Menno Hall across the street from UBC and Regent College. Like the Christian students we support, our singers are drawn from many denominations.

Anyone interested in auditioning to sing with *Abendmusik* should contact Michael Murray at 236-889-5974.

MENNO HALL

PO Box 74782 Connaught PO ▪ Vancouver, B.C. ▪ V6K 0E4
<http://pcda.bc.ca/>

INTERAC e-Transfers can be sent to info@pcda.bc.ca

Lenten Vespers *MMXXIV*

ABBOTSFORD

Sat., March 9, 2024, 7:30 p.m.
Emmanuel Free Reformed Church
3386 Mount Lehman Road

VANCOUVER

Sun., March 10, 2024, 7:30 p.m.
St. Philip's Anglican Church
3737 West 27th Avenue