

Music Notes for October 19th

Prelude: William Boyce: Organ Voluntary IV in g minor

Introit: *My Lord, What a Morning* (Spiritual arr. Burleigh)

Anthem: *Down By The Riverside* (Spiritual arr. Rutter)

Offertory: William Boyce: Organ Voluntary VI in C Major

Postlude: William Boyce: Organ Voluntary I in D Major

Harry T. Burleigh was one of the first arrangers of American spirituals for a broad audience, and among his over 100 arrangements are choral works and solo songs with and without piano accompaniment. He worked with Dvorák when he came to America, copying some of the parts for the *New World* symphony and likely introducing the composer to the spiritual style, which he drew upon for the symphony and other "American" pieces. *My Lord, What a Morning* is among the most famous and beloved of his works.

John Rutter comes from quite a different world than Burleigh, an English composer receiving his choral training at Cambridge nearly a century later, and yet throughout his career he has also turned to the American spiritual as a source of inspiration. His arrangement of *Down By The Riverside* evokes the style of the great ragtime pieces by Scott Joplin and others. For the last verse, the chorus turns to shouts of "Glory, Hallelujah" while the congregation sings the verse, which may be found in the insert, and which we will practice briefly before the choir sings the anthem.

Finally, the organ music is by William Boyce, an English composer who served as Master of the King's Musick from 1755 to his death in 1779. In recent years, this position is more or less equivalent to being the United States' Poet Laureate, but at the time it was an appointment that put a composer in the household of the monarch, leading the King's private band and writing music for official occasions. He also was the organist of the Chapel Royal, where he wrote a series of ten "Voluntaries" for organ, published shortly after his death. These pieces are generally in a free style with a slow introduction. I have selected three to play for you today. Each requests a solo on either a reed stop or what is called a *cornet* on the organ. In this case, the term does not refer to the trumpet-like instrument, but rather a combination of stops (for those who like technical terms, an 8' foundation, a 4' octave, and 2 2/3', 2', and 1 3/5' flutes) voiced to have a bright, penetrating sound. To contrast, the other manual of the organ plays with a soft registration, which you will hear in the prelude and postlude.

Thomas Dawkins, organist/choir director