

MUSICAL PRAYER

JOSEPH ADAM

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Partita: Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan

Johann Pachelbel
1653–1706

Johann Pachelbel was one of the most important and prolific keyboard composers of the Southern German baroque school. His works show influences from both Northern German and Italian contemporaries, incorporated into a personal and congenial manner. Pachelbel's first important position was as Organist of the Predigerkirche (Preacher's Church) in Erfurt. It is suspected that Pachelbel might have written these variations on the Pietist hymn *Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan* shortly after his wife and young son fell victim to the plague in Erfurt in 1683.

What God does that is done well!
His will remains just
However he deals with my affairs.
I want calmly to place my whole trust in him
He is my God, who in my troubles
knows well how to support me,
therefore I let him alone rule over me.

Triptyque, op. 58

Matines
Communion
Stèle pour un enfant défunt

Louis Vierne
1870–1937

The three pieces that comprise Vierne's *Triptyque* were composed as single pieces, and only grouped together for publication; they represent Vierne's most personal self in musical form. "Matines" (*Matins* or *Morning Prayer*) is "a mystical impression of monastic simplicity," developing a gentle theme over a simple three note ostinato. "Communion" was written for Vierne's pupil and friend Abbé Henri Doyen, to commemorate the celebration of his first Mass at Notre-Dame Cathedral on April 20, 1930. The "Stèle pour un enfant défunt" (*Memorial to a deceased child*) is dedicated to the memory of a poor child who died at the age of ten, and was written as Vierne's expression of sorrow and condolence to the boy's family. Vierne performed his *Triptyque* at a recital at Notre-Dame on the evening of June 2, 1937; the opening work of the program, it was to be followed by an improvisation. Moments after the final chord of the *Triptyque*, Vierne suffered a massive heart attack, and died within minutes.

Trained from his youth as a chorister and organ student at Gloucester Cathedral, Howells undertook further study at the Royal College of Music with Stanford, Parry, and Harris. Diagnosed in 1915 with Grave's Disease, an autoimmune disease, Howells was unable to serve his country in World War I, but also prevented him from embarking upon an expected career in Cathedral music. He turned to a life as a composer and teacher, and became perhaps the most important composer of English church music in the 20th century, though he composed in nearly every genre with the exception of opera. *Master Tallis' Testament* was composed in 1940, but not published until 1953. It is not as subtle as his compatriot Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis*, but rather emphasises a much wider range of emotion, intensity, and flamboyance.

JOSEPH ADAM was first appointed Cathedral Organist at St. James Cathedral in 1993, and was named Director of Music in 2018. There he leads a program that includes three adult choirs and three youth choirs that provides music for nearly 600 services annually, as well as an extensive concert series that presents a wide range of choral and organ programs.

A dedicated educator, for twenty years he taught organ and harpsichord as a faculty member at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma. Continuing this work, he was named Artist in Residence in Organ at the University of Washington in 2019. As Resident Organist of the Seattle Symphony Orchestra since 2003, he has performed regularly in the keyboard section of the orchestra, undertaking organ, harpsichord, piano and celesta parts, as well as annual solo recitals.

His playing received international attention when he was awarded the First Prize in the St. Albans International Organ Competition in 1991, one of the most prestigious organ competitions in the world. His subsequent performances have included recitals in notable venues throughout Europe and America. During the coming year, he will be a part of a series of recitals at St. James Cathedral that will present performances of the complete organ works of Louis Vierne in celebration of the 150th anniversary of the composer's birth. His performances last season included recitals at St. Mark's Cathedral in Seattle, St. Cecilia Cathedral in Omaha, and Stanford University. He also gave performances of the Poulenc Concerto and Respighi Suite for Organ and Strings with the North Carolina Symphony at the new Cathedral of the Holy Name of Jesus in Raleigh.

Joseph Adam was educated at The University of Iowa, the Eastman School of Music, and the University of Washington, and concertizes as a member of the Windwerk Artists cooperative.