

MUSICAL PRAYER

WYATT SMITH

*Associate Director of Music & Director of the Epiphany Music Academy, Epiphany Parish Seattle
Affiliate Artist for Organ & Harpsichord, University of Puget Sound*

Toccata in D minor, BuxWV 155

Dietrich Buxtehude
1637–1707

Program notes by Wyatt Smith

Dietrich Buxtehude was a famous organist during tenure at the Marienkirche in Lubeck, Germany, even so that J. S. Bach travelled to absorb what he could from the great master in the winter of 1705. Buxtehude was also renowned for the *Abendmusik* concerts that he led throughout the season of Advent each year. He was a master of organ works in the *stylus fantasticus*, featuring the juxtaposition of flourishes and improvisational sections with those of more strict counterpoint.

Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland, BWV 659

Johann Sebastian Bach
1685–1750

Among his boundless compositions, J. S. Bach is noted for the many ways that he treated well-known Lutheran chorale melodies. Here, for the season of Advent, is the first of his three settings of the hymn commonly known as “Savior of the Nations, Come,” contained in the Leipzig Autograph. This setting features an ornamented chorale, the original melody often obscured. Underneath the soaring lyrical line is contrapuntal writing in the left hand, and bass line in the pedals that is reminiscent of works that might be played by the viol da gamba.

Benedictus

Alec Rowley
1892–1958

Alec Rowley was a twentieth-century English organist and composer who produced a large number of compositions including works for organ, piano, orchestra, and various chamber ensembles. His *Benedictus* takes inspiration from a large poem by Christina Rossetti entitled “All Thy Works Praise Thee, O God: A Processional of Creation.” Rowley specifically quotes two lines: “I bring refreshment, / I bring ease and calm.” This work explores the vast colors and dynamic range of the Cathedral organs.

Trumpet Voluntary in D

John Bennett
1735–1784

Very little is known about the life of John Bennett, who was an eighteenth-century organist and church musician in London. His *10 Voluntaries for Organ or Harpsichord* are the only works of his to survive. This *Trumpet Voluntary* is like many other works (generically called “Voluntary”) written in Britain during this period, featuring two sections: a slower, introductory section (here, a Larghetto) followed by a lively Allegro that features the Trumpet stop of the organ. Works like this would often serve as a prelude or postlude to a worship service.

Pièces de fantaisie, Op. 53, No. 6
Carillon de Westminster

Louis Vierne
1870–1937

Born 150 years ago, Louis Victor Jules Vierne was one of the most prominent organists of his day at the turn of twentieth-century Paris, noted for his long tenure as organist of Notre-Dame de Paris from 1900 until his death in 1937. In 1926-27, Vierne composed *24 Pièces de fantaisie*, published in four sets of six works. The *Carillon de Westminster* closes out the third set of works, Op. 53, using the familiar Westminster chimes as its theme, honoring its dedicatee, London-based organ builder Henry Willis.



WYATT SMITH, DMA is a native of Rapid City, South Dakota. He concertizes extensively, keeping an active concert schedule throughout the United States and Europe, which has included solo performances in 28 states throughout the US in the last decade. Select performances have been featured on several episodes of American Public Media’s *Pipedreams*. His achievements in performance were recognized by *The Diapason*’s program “20-under-30” as a member of the “Class of 2016,” which recognizes young leaders in the fields of organ, harpsichord, carillon, and church music.

Here in the Pacific Northwest, Wyatt serves as the Associate Director of Music at Epiphany Parish of Seattle and Director of the Epiphany Music Academy. Additionally, he is the Affiliate Artist for Organ & Harpsichord at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma. Wyatt is a graduate of the University of Washington in Seattle, where he received the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in organ performance, under the guidance of Dr. Carole Terry. Wyatt received his Master of Music degree from the Yale Institute of Sacred Music and the Yale School of Music, and his Bachelor of Music degree in organ performance from the University of South Dakota in Vermillion.

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