

## Music Notes for February 18, 2024

Today is the first Sunday of Lent, and there are significant musical changes in the service. First, the organ will be silent during the season of Lent, only returning on Easter Sunday, March 31<sup>st</sup>. In addition, the service music is quieter and simpler, being accompanied only by bells or the piano. During the month of February, some of the music selections at each service will continue to be reflective of Black History Month.

The service music during Lent includes the Presentation Hymn (“What shall I render unto you, O God”, listen [here](#)), the Sanctus by David Hurd, one of the preeminent Black composers of the Episcopal Church (listen [here](#)), and the Fraction Anthem (“Christ our Passover, listen [here](#)).

The service today opens with the Great Litany, one of the oldest rites in the Anglican Communion. It was the first English language rite prepared by Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, published in 1544. The version we are using today has been updated to use more modern language and has been slightly shortened. The Litany is chanted by four cantors with congregational responses. This year we are using music by Stephan Casarella, the Music Director at Christ Church Cathedral in Cincinnati, the seat of the Diocese of Southern Ohio, where our former Rector, Kristin White, was ordained Bishop on February 17<sup>th</sup>. Listen to an excerpt of the Great Litany [here](#). There is no prelude today, as the service begins in silence.

The Psalms during Lent will be sung using simple congregational antiphons, mostly composed by me, with verses sung by the choir to traditional plainsong chants. The psalms will be sung *a capella*, with a sample bell accompaniment to give the pitches.

Today’s anthem is based on the Gospel lesson portraying the temptation of Jesus in the desert. The words were written by Richard Leach and the music composed by Thomas Pavlechko, Music Director of Christ the King Roman Catholic church, Dallas, Texas. The text emphasizes the “hissing” of the snake, while the music is appropriately eerie.

The music during communion during Lent will be Taizé-style chants. Today’s is a less-familiar but beautiful setting of the text, “Have mercy on me, O God.”