

Music Notes for February 4, 2024

Today is the fifth Sunday after Epiphany. In addition, during the month of February, some of the music selections at each service will be reflective of Black History Month.

The service music during the Epiphany season includes the Presentation Hymn, each week a different stanza of the hymn "Christ, be our light" (listen [here](#)), the Sanctus by Joel Martinson (listen [here](#)), and the Fraction Anthem (my composition, listen [here](#)).

The Psalms during Epiphany will be sung using the Hymntune Psalter. Each week the Psalm Antiphon is set to a tune of a different familiar hymn and the choir sings the verses from the St. Helena Psalter to a coordinating psalm tone. The Antiphon for the fifth Sunday after Epiphany is set to the tune "Birmingham," which appears as hymn 437 in the Hymnal 1982, set to the text, "Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord."

Today's prelude is a composition from a set of two preludes (the one today is the second of the two), written in 1892 by John Knowles Paine. Paine (1839-1906) was born in Portland, Maine, and was the first professor of Music in the US, teaching at Harvard. The anthem is a setting of the traditional Gospel song, "This little light of mine," arranged by George Mabry. Mabry was born in 1945 in Tennessee, and had a long career as professor of music at Austin Peay State University in Clarksville, TN.

The postlude, "Festival March," is a variation that includes themes from the "Battle Hymn of the Republic," and "Lift Every Voice and Sing." The composition by Michael Burkhardt was written in 1996 to commemorate the ongoing quest for liberty that continues as it has through the ages.