

Sally Hammel: Good morning and welcome to morning prayers.

Congregation: Good morning.

Sally Hammel: Will you please stand as you are able, and we will read Psalm 54 in the black Appleton Psalter, responsive reading.

Sally Hammel: Save me, O God, by your name and vindicate me by your might.

Congregation: Hear my prayer, O God. Give ear to the words of my mouth.

Sally Hammel: For the insolent have risen against me. The ruthless seek my life. They do not set God before them.

Congregation: But surely God is my helper. The Lord is the upholder of my life.

Sally Hammel: He will repay my enemies for their evil. In your faithfulness, put an end to them.

Congregation: With [inaudible] offering I will sacrifice to you. I will give thanks to your name, O Lord, for it is good.

Sally Hammel: For he has delivered me from every trouble, and my eye has looked in triumph on my enemies.

Choir: (singing)

Edward Jones: This morning's lesson is taken from Psalm 117. "Praise the Lord all nations. Praise him all people. For he has bestowed his mercy upon us and his truth endures forever." As one of the prescribed Psalms for the evening office of vespers, Psalm 117, the shortest of the Psalms, has commanded the attention of composers throughout the last millennium and has received countless exquisite musical renditions. Perhaps there is none more sublime than the setting for soprano solo by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. The centerpiece of his second set of vespers, The Saint's Day, or Confess of Vespers of 1780, which the Harvard University Choir is preparing for performance at the start of November.

Edward Jones: The majority of Mozart's church music was written for Salzburg Cathedral where he served in the musical establishment of the ruling Prince Archbishop, Hieronymus von Colloredo. Colloredo's reformist tendencies included a substantial shortening of church services, which were never to exceed 45 minutes in length.

Edward Jones: Mozart's liturgical settings of this period utilize small orchestral forces and employ simple, immediate declaration of the text with a minimum of repetition. Unlike contemporary Neapolitan church music, which Colloredo felt was essentially opera in very thinly veiled disguise and was infiltrating Austro-

Germanic sacred music, Mozart's two vespers settings conform to these restrictions with the exception, I propose, of the transcendent Laudate Dominum. In a delicious irony, this soprano solo from Mozart's very last piece of sacred music for Salzburg, and therefore Colloredo, is pure opera, and forges a new path that integrates the sacred with the operatic, culminating in the unfinished Viennese masterpiece the Mass in C Minor.

Edward Jones: "Bach is the father, we are the children." A famous but often misused quip by Mozart, for it's worth noting that in the second half of the 18th century the name Bach referred almost exclusively to Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, to whom Mozart's remark is directed. The second son of Johann Sebastian Bach, whom Mozart called old Sebastian, and was at that time remembered as a provincial organist who composed in the old style and served in parochial Leipzig. CPE Bach was the contemporary, fashionable composer presiding over the musical life of cosmopolitan Hamburg. Through his interest in the secular discourse of the day, manifested in his friendship with poets, painters, and philosophers, Bach's musical ideals would become a central part of the next century's German romantic aesthetic, making him truly the father of a very long lineage.

Edward Jones: On Palm Sunday 1786, Bach conducted a concert organized by the musical branch of the Handlungsakademie in Hamburg. This oft referenced program featured selections from his father's B minor mass, Handel's Messiah, and three works by the composer himself: a symphony, the Magnificat, and the double choir Helig. The programming is telling. Bach aligns himself as the heir and culmination of both the German polyphonic school and the European oratorio tradition, in a performance that would be his musical farewell to the Hamburg public. He would die less than two years later.

Edward Jones: That Bach would choose his first major choral work, penned in 1749 Berlin, for such a public display of his worth, is pertinent. The work he held in high esteem, he had programmed it in Hamburg before and had mined its various movements to populate other works, most famously the Passions- Cantate. Stylistically diverse, the work shows the composer's mastery of both old and new styles. Factors which favor the hypothesis that the work was an audition piece for his father's post of Thomaskantor in Leipzig, a position which he failed to obtain. Bach's music is endlessly intriguing. In the Magnificat, hints of a Mozartian elegance and the Haydnesque manipulation of phrased structure abound, while a Beethovenian muscularity pervades the closing fugue.

Edward Jones: Noteworthy are those moments of almost schizophrenia juxtaposition, of unrelated harmonies, emotions, styles, and dynamics, where the musical AFX changes not just within a movement, but sometimes within a measure. This is music that wears his emotions on his sleeves, whose directness is tangible and instantly relatable. And it has surely this sense of shared humanity and empathy that is at the root of all music-making, and in particular, choral singing. Professor Robert Putnam of Harvard's Kennedy School, asserts that choral singing goes beyond music-making, and even beyond the arts, that performing

within a group contributes directly to the social trust and reciprocity that is the basis of civil engagement and interaction.

Edward Jones: As the choir prepares for another retreat in the beautiful grounds of Groton School, I remind us all that the skills which choral singing fosters: individual responsibility, consideration of others around you, and an awareness of the greater whole, are not only valuable musical lessons, but also essential ones for living in a healthy and peaceful society. Let us pray.

Edward Jones: Oh Lord God almighty, whose glory cherubim and seraphim and all the hosts of heaven with ceaseless voice proclaim, hear and accept we humbly pray the praises of your church below, and pour down upon your ministers and choir and sanctuary such a spirit of faith, reverence, and joy. I shall lift both their hymns and their lives to you. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Congregation: Amen.

Sally Hammel: Will you please join me in meeting the Lord's Prayer on the back of your program.

Congregation: Our father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Sally Hammel: Can you please stand as you are able and we will sing the hymn Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah, number 285 in your Princeton Hymnal.

Congregation/Choir: (singing).

Sally Hammel: Now, go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Amen.

Congregation: Amen.