

Theresa Lungu:

Good morning.

Congregation:

Good morning.

Theresa Lungu:

And welcome to morning prayers. Today's service will begin with the responsive reading from the black Appleton Psalter book, psalm number 112. It's found on page 56. Please remain masked and stand as you're able to read responsibly by whole verse.

Theresa Lungu:

All praise the Lord. Happy is the man who fears the Lord and finds great joy in his commandments.

Congregation:

His descendants shall be the mightiest in the land, a blessed generation of good men.

Theresa Lungu:

His house shall be full of wealth and riches. Righteousness shall be his forever.

Congregation:

He is gracious, compassionate, good, a beacon in darkness.

Theresa Lungu:

It is right for a man to be gracious in his lending, to order his affairs with judgment.

Congregation:

Nothing shall ever shake him. His goodness shall be remembered for all time.

Theresa Lungu:

Bad news shall have no terrors for him because his heart is steadfast.

Congregation:

His confidence is strongly based. He will have no fear. And in the end he will gloat over his enemies.

Theresa Lungu:

He gives freely to the poor. Righteousness shall be his forever. In honor he carries his head high.

Congregation:

The wicked man shall see it with rising anger and grind his teeth in despair. The hopes of wicked men shall come to nothing.

Choir:

(singing)

Edward Jones:

This morning's lesson comes from Ecclesiasticus. Let us now praise famous men and our fathers that begat us, such as found out musical tunes and recited verses in writing. Rich men furnished with ability, living peaceably in their habitations. All these were honored in their generations and were the glory of their times. The composer of today's anthem, Henry Purcell, or is it Purcell, was born into a family of musicians. Both his father and uncle were gentleman of the Chapel Royal, and he was raised amid the explosion of culture that greeted the restoration of the monarchy in 1660. London was abuzz with a sense of expectation and hope, which ushered in a new golden age for the arts in England. Theaters were reopened, and the royal chapels were reestablished with the music therein regaining its former spender thanks to the tireless efforts of the disciplinary choir master, Captain Henry Cooke. An odor of cosmopolitanism wafted from the continent, catalyzed by Charles II's exile in the court of Louis the 14th. And many of the capital's artistic innovations took their inspiration from continental models.

The leading artists of the day, Sir [Peter Lainey 00:08:44] and Sir Godfrey Kneller were Dutch and German-born respectively. And Sir Christopher Wren's monumental rebuilding campaign following the great fire of 1666 is clearly indebted to the Italian architecture that he so admired. Italian and French musicians were much in vogue in restoration London, such as the violin virtuoso Nicola Matteis, who achieved near celebrity status. Purcell was a Londoner through and through, living all his life in that city, and experiencing firsthand the full gamut of its polarized society, from abject poverty to extravagant wealth. Hugely prolific, he wrote with equal skill and imagination in a variety of genres for a variety of institutions, churches, the royal chapels, theaters, homes and taverns. And is indeed astonishing that the same composer could pen the profoundly devout Hear My Prayer O Lord as the bawdy pub song Sir Walter Enjoying His Damsel One Night, the young person learned his trade as a boy chorister at the Chapel Royal.

And when his voice broke, he was apprenticed to the keeper of the royal instruments. His extraordinary talents must have been readily apparent as he was appointed court composer for the violins on the death of Matthew Locke, and shortly afterwards, as organist of the Chapel Royal. It is an oft repeated story that Purcell was held in such high esteem by his older contemporary and teacher John Blow, that Blow ceded the position of organist of Westminster Abbey to the talents of the 19 year old Purcell, only to reoccupy the position upon the younger composer's untimely death.

Purcell served in the extravagant and colorful courts of Charles II, writing and performing vast amounts for his royal employer. He also witnessed the court's licentious, lascivious behavior that provided such ample fodder for the contemporary diarists Pepys and [Evin 00:10:41]. The distinctly English genre that flourished after the Restoration was the Court's Ode, celebrating the new year, royal birthdays or welcome songs performed when the monarch returned to London. Though, the texts of these works are of a mixed quality, frequently or more than sycophantic literary excursion, they do provide ample opportunity for musical illustration, and Purcell relishes these opportunities.

Following the death of Charles II, Purcell contributed the magnificent five part anthem, I Was Glad, for the coronation of King James II in 1685. But the reign of the dour new brought substantial changes to the courts and to the church. The Chapel Royal was virtually sidelined when James established his own

Catholic chapel served almost exclusively by foreign musicians, and the whole musical establishment at court was reduced in size. The glorious revolution and the accession of William III in 1689 marked further waning of opportunities for court musicians. And Purcell the entrepreneur turned his attention to the world of theater. A consummate craftsman in the arts of setting the English language, Purcell produced the first masterpiece of English opera, *Dido and Aeneas*, as well as four other semi-operas, *Dioclesian*, *King Arthur*, *The Fairy Queen*, and *The Indian Queen*, as well as a host of other theatrical pieces.

The variety, originality, craftsmanship and invention found in these works is astonishing. In spite of King William's seeming indifference to music, musicians continued to serve the arts-loving Queen Mary, who was frequently governing the realm while her husband was away at war with France. And Purcell wrote some fine birthday odes for her, including today's *Come Ye Sons of Art* in 1694. That same year Purcell provided the music for Queen Mary's funeral, including the simple and direct *Thou Knowest the Lord*, which was repeated eight months later at the composer's own funeral, following his untimely death at the age of 36.

Buried next to the organ in Westminster Abbey, his epitaph reads, "Here lies Henry Purcell, Esquire, who left this life and has gone to that blessed place where only his harmony can be exceeded." Purcell's ordinary music belongs at the very pinnacle, not only for Baroque era, but of the whole of music history. And it is not without some justification that one of his contemporaries, the composer Thomas Tudway, asserted that Purcell was the greatest genius we ever had. Let us pray.

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, as shall lift both their hymns and their lives to you to. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Theresa Lungu:

Please stand as you're able and together let us recite the Lord's Prayer, saying: 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. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever and ever. amen.

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. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever and ever.

Theresa Lungu:

And then now let us sing the hymn *Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah*, hymn number 285 in the crimson Harvard Hymnal.

Congregation:

(singing)

Theresa Lungu:

As we go forth into this day, may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.

Congregation:

Amen.