

Music Exploration Series # 1 – 8/30/20

Classical / Pre-19th Century Anglican Music

Join the Zoom Coffee Hour discussion at 10:00 am here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82801190646>

Before looking at pre-19th century music, it is helpful to be familiar with 19th century music. This is arguably the most common style of hymns usually sung from our *Hymnal 1982* [all Hymn ## today are from it]. We probably think of these as the ‘traditional’ hymns. **Victorian music**, from roughly the time of Queen Victoria's reign (1837-1901), saw the influence of the Romantic Age. It had a focus on inner experience, sentimental feelings, and emotionalism. A common theme was the missionary effort that came with the spread of the British empire around the world. Its hymns often use military and royal imagery. The church is often viewed as being under attack by enemies or by sin. There is a common emphasis on death, illness, and sorrow. Here are some typical Victorian hymns: “For all the saints” 287, “Praise my soul the King of Heaven” 410, “Come ye thankful people come” 290, “O come O come Emmanuel” 56, “Now thank we all our God” 397, “Take my life and let it be” 707, “At the name of Jesus” 435, “Abide with me” 662, “Guide me O thou Great Jehovah” 690, “Faith of our fathers” 558, “Onward Christian Soldiers” 562, and “Just as I am” 693.

“The Church’s one foundation” Hymnal 525, 19th c words John Stone, 19th c music Samuel Sebastian Wesley [note theme of Church being under attack]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FHCqXL3mCwU>

Compared to the above, **Classical Anglican music** goes back to even more ‘traditional’ styles than the Victorian. It is contemporary with what is usually called classical and baroque music. It puts an emphasis on the literary quality of the texts and the musical quality of the tunes, as many of its composers were highly trained professionals. There is often more structure and balance, more joy, and more thoughtful texts than those of Victorian music.

“Out of the depths I call” Hymn 666, 17th c words, 18th c music Samuel Howard

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v8Use1rX3gE> tune only, St Bride

“Glory be to God” Hymn S-201, ancient words, 16th c music John Merbecke

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pswx5dqaUxU>

“God moves in a mysterious way” Hymn 677, 18th c words poet William Cowper, 17th c music John Playford <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d04rK-OljW8>

“O gracious light” Hymn 25, 3rd c original words, 16th c music Thomas Tallis https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8UJBnJ_g5K0

“Wilt thou forgive” Hymn 140, 17th c words poet/priest John Donne, 17th c music John Hilton; note play on words with Donne / “done” and More / “more;” his wife was Anne More <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cyFvyRZbsLI>

“A mighty fortress is our God” Hymn 688, is our more familiar version, 16th c words and music by Martin Luther, as harmonized by JS Bach in the 18th c <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xd9uKibIDhc>

“A mighty fortress is our God” Hymn 687, Luther’s original, rhythmic, version <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M27DFH3uIh8> [start after intro 0:37]

Prelude, Communion, and Postlude music from the *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book*, a collection of English keyboard music, by many composers, 16th & 17th c <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OBbyXe6t05Q>

“Joy to the world” Hymn 100, 18th c words Isaac Watts (who wrote 750 hymns), 18th c music G F Handel <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tHS7StIz1S8>

“Rejoice the Lord is king” Hymn 481, 18th c words Charles Wesley (who wrote 6000 hymns), 18th c music G F Handel <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aDFAv0eh-s8>

Handel's Messiah, 18th c words and music <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IUZEtVbJT5c>

Discussion questions:

Can you hear and recognize the difference between Victorian and the older style?
What more can you offer about this style from your experience as a singer,
musician, or listener?

How often do we use this style at GHTC? Recent examples that come to mind?

How well do you like it? Would you like us to use more or less of it?