

VESPERS



for choir, soloists, and Renaissance band



KILE SMITH

Even before I was aware of the concept of classical music, I had loved the Lutheran liturgy from childhood. So I was thrilled when, during discussions with Piffaro, the idea was floated of a new composition inspired by the musical flowering of the Lutheran Reformation. That idea became this *Vespers*.

Because so much new music was being produced in the early 1500s for these new liturgies (including excellent music by Martin Luther himself), and since so much of it is still in use, the Renaissance hovers over Lutheran music to this day. Certainly the sounds of the instruments composed for at the time—recorders, shawms, dulcians, sackbuts, plucked strings—are as congenial to the spirit and indicative of the boldness of this music now as then.

For a Lutheran Vespers, any number of Psalms on a seasonal topic might be used. During the weeks of Epiphany (the time of the first performances of this *Vespers*), the Lectionary suggests Psalms emphasizing light, kingship, deliverance, and the appearance of a Savior. “Epiphany” Psalms are also used throughout the year, though, so concert performances of *Vespers* need not be restricted to January. For this is not a Vespers service; an actual liturgy may include many more sections than those used here. My intention was not to compose a liturgy, but to create a concert work infused with the spirit of this liturgical tradition. A “Deo gratias,” for example, would not often be as elaborate as the one here, and in any case would more properly be divided into separate “Benedicamus Domino” and “Deo gratias” sections. A Lutheran Vespers would probably include Luther’s “Komm, Heilger Geist” in place of the “Veni Sancte Spiritus” as often as not. My setting of it, which deletes all the words but the ending “Alleluia” makes this “Veni” more of an extra-liturgical Prelude. And more Psalms would most likely be included in a service.

The chorale, or Lutheran hymn, is the essence of the Lutheran musical gift to the Church. Be it a refashioned or newly composed melody for the new texts being written, the chorale tune is the musical lifeblood of Lutheranism. The hint of even a few notes immediately recalls text (and emotion) to the attentive congregant, even in purely instrumental works such as the Sonatas included here. Lutheran music is always meant to be driven by the text. Typically Lutheran is the emphasis on hymns: “Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern” is used where a processional hymn might take place before the Introit, “Herr Christ, der einig Gotts Sohn” (in a setting for four, then eight, then 16, then back to four voices) is placed before the Magnificat, and Luther’s own “Vater unser,” his versification of the Lord’s Prayer in nine verses, follows the Magnificat.

This Canticle of Mary, which essentially serves as the Gospel reading, along with most non-hymn texts, would be chanted in Latin in urban churches; Luther encouraged the use of Latin where it was known, while promoting the vernacular German for hymns and in areas where Latin would not be understood. While much of the music here is chant-inspired, only two chants are quoted, the “Veni Sancte Spiritus” and the opening of the “Deo gratias.”

Writing for Renaissance instruments presents the same challenges as writing for their “classical” counterparts. Repeated listening to live performances of these instruments, singly and in ensemble, is the only way to lock in the sounds and possibilities. Playing and singing music from this period in an early-music ensemble has proven to be invaluable experience for me. Still, Piffaro has provided me with a wealth of information, such as production issues within the ranges, chromatic possibilities, and so on, which would not be obvious even to the astute listener.

There is one way, though, that writing for a Renaissance band—such as might have been available to the 16th-century composer—is unlike writing for an ensemble of “modern” players. It was common practice for many musicians of the time to be proficient in more than one instrument. It exhilarates and challenges the composer to have the players of Piffaro at one’s disposal, each of whom can play any one of a variety of instruments at a world-class level. The possibilities for using these seven players and the twenty-three instruments we’ve chosen are endless. The masters excelled at varying texture (whether forces were limited, such as during the Thirty Years’ War, or not), and this is something to which I aspired.

The high standards and artistry of the professional singers of The Crossing have greatly influenced the vocal writing. Textures often shift among solo, tutti, and small ensemble singing. Modal harmonies are quite elaborate at times in the hymn settings, while there is much chant-inspired rhythmic flexibility in the Psalms, especially 27 and 113. The voice-leading in general is fairly independent, and there are large swaths of *a capella* writing.

There is adventure when one of the premiere early-music ensembles decides not only to commission brand-new music, but to dedicate an entire evening to it. Then again, there are many people who love both contemporary and early music, who enjoy experiencing that which is beyond the standard repertoire. I commend Piffaro for having this vision, and thank them for allowing me to be enchanted again by the genius of the Lutheran Reformation.

VESPERS

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SATB soloists
 SATB choir of at least 16 singers
 Renaissance band of seven players with the following instruments:
 recorders: 2 soprano, 2 alto, 3 tenor, bass, great bass
 shawms: 2 soprano, alto, tenor
 dulcians: tenor, bass, quartbass, octave bass
 two sackbuts
 harp
 Renaissance guitar, lute, theorbo
 Duration: 52 minutes



1. Veni Sancte Spiritus	page 1
<i>TB, ATTTB recorders, sackbut</i>	
2. Hymn. Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern	4
<i>SATB, SSAT shawms, 2 sackbuts, theorbo</i>	
3. Introit. Psalm 70	21
<i>T solo, SATB, AT shawms, TBQb dulcians, 2 sackbuts</i>	
4. Psalm 27	41
<i>SATB soli, SATB, SS recorders</i>	
5. Sonata a 5: In dir ist Freude	57
<i>SAT recorders, TB dulcians, Renaissance guitar</i>	
6. Psalm 113	64
<i>SATB, 2 sackbuts, harp</i>	
7. Sonata a 7: O süßer Herre Jesu Christ	73
<i>AATTTBgb recorders</i>	
8. Hymn. Herr Christ, der einig Gotts Sohn	76
<i>SATB div. a 16</i>	
9. Magnificat	89
<i>SSS soli, SATB, TBOb dulcians, 2 sackbuts, harp, theorbo</i>	
10. Vater unser	109
<i>SATB soli, SATB, AATB recorders, SA shawms, TB dulcians, 2 sackbuts, lute</i>	
11. Deo gratias	123
<i>B solo, Choir 1 SATB, Choir 2 SATB, SAT shawms, BOB dulcians, 2 sackbuts</i>	

VESPERS

Veni Sancte Spiritus

Alleluia.

Hymn

Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern
voll Gnad und Wahrheit von dem Herrn,
die süße Wurzel Jesse!
Du Sohn David aus Jakobs Stamm,
mein König und mein Bräutigam,
hast mir mein Herz besessen,
lieblich, freundlich,
schön und herrlich, groß und ehrlich, reich an Gaben,
hoch und sehr prächtig erhaben.

Zwingt die Saiten in Cythara
und laßt die süße Musika
ganz freudenreich erschallen,
daß ich möge mit Jesulein,
dem wunderschönen Bräutigam mein,
in steter Liebe wallen.
Singet, springet,
jubiliert, triumphieret, dankt dem Herren;
groß ist der König der Ehren.

Wie bin ich doch so herzlich froh,
daß mein Schatz ist das A und O,
der Anfang und das Ende.
Er wird mich doch zu seinem Preis
aufnehmen in das Paradeis;
des klopf ich in die Hände.
Amen, Amen,
komm, du schöne Freudenkrone, bleib nicht lange;
deiner wart ich mit Verlangen.

Philipp Nicolai (1566–1608)

Introit. Psalm 70 (Vulgate 69)

- 1 Deus in adiutorium meum intende: Domine ad adiuvandam me festina.
- 2 Confundantur, et revereantur, qui quærun animam meam:
- 3 Avertantur retrorsum, et erubescant, qui volunt mihi mala: Avertantur statim erubescences qui dicunt mihi: Va, va.
- 4 Exsultent et lætentur in te omnes qui quærun te, et dicant semper: Magnificetur Dominus: qui diligunt salutare tuum.
- 5 Ego vero egenus, et pauper sum; Deus, adiuva me. Adiutor meus, et liberator meus es tu: Domine ne moreris.

Come, Holy Spirit

Alleluia.

Hymn

How brightly shines the Star of Morn,
all grace and truth the Lord has borne:
the sweetest root of Jesse!
O David's son, of Jacob's line,
you are my bridegroom, King divine,
here, take my heart, possess it:
loving, caring,
glorious, shining, now consigning for my pleasure
splendid gifts beyond all measure.

Now strike the strings on the guitar,
behold sweet music near and far
the joyous kingdom sweeping.
I long to be with Jesus dear—
who is my lovely bridegroom here,
in love forever keeping—
singing, leaping,
celebrating, thanks unfading, always praising
my great King, his greatness raising.

My heartfelt joy can therefore ring,
to Alpha and Omega spring:
the first and last, my fortune.
He will redeem me at great price,
receive me in his Paradise;
my bliss is past proportion.
Amen, amen!
Crown of Joy, all blest, most royal, haste returning.
Yours, I wait with every yearning.

translated K.S.

Psalm 70 (KJV)

- 1 Make haste, O God, to deliver me; make haste to help me, O LORD.
- 2 Let them be ashamed and confounded that seek after my soul:
- 3 let them be turned backward, and put to confusion, that desire my hurt. Let them be turned back for a reward of their shame that say, Aha, aha.
- 4 Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: and let such as love thy salvation say continually, Let God be magnified.
- 5 But I am poor and needy: make haste unto me, O God: thou art my help and my deliverer; O LORD, make no tarrying.

Psalm 27 (Vulgate 26)

- 1 Dominus illuminatio mea, et salus mea, quem timebo? Dominus protector vitæ meæ, a quo trepidabo?
- 2 Dum appropiant super me nocentes, ut edant carnes meas: Qui tribulant me inimici mei, ipsi infirmati sunt et ceciderunt.
- 3 Si consistant adversum me castra, non timebit cor meum. Si exurgat adversum me prælium, in hoc ego sperabo.
- 4 Unam petii a Domino, hanc requiram, ut inhabitem in domo Domini omnibus diebus vitæ meæ: Ut videam voluptatem Domini, et visitem templum eius.
- 5 Quoniam abscondit me in tabernaculo suo: in die malorum protexit me in abscondito tabernaculi sui.
- 6 In petra exaltavit me: et nunc exaltavit caput meum super inimicos meos. Circuivi, et immolavi in tabernaculo eius hostiam vociferationis: cantabo, et psalmum dicam Domino.
- 7 Exaudi Domine vocem meam, qua clamavi ad te: miserere mei, et exaudi me.
- 8 Tibi dixit cor meum, exquisivit te facies mea: faciem tuam Domine requiram.
- 9 Ne avertas faciem tuam a me: ne declines in ira a servo tuo. Adiutor meus esto: ne derelinquas me, neque despicias me Deus salutaris meus.
- 10 Quoniam pater meus, et mater mea dereliquerunt me: Dominus autem assumpsit me.
- 11 Legem pone mihi Domine in via tua: et dirige me in semitam rectam propter inimicos meos.
- 12 Ne tradideris me in animas tribulantium me: quoniam insurrexerunt in me testes iniqui, et mentita est iniquitas sibi.
- 13 Credo videre bona Domini in terra viventium.
- 14 Expecta Dominum, viriliter age: et confortetur cor tuum, et sustine Dominum.

Sonata a 5: In dir ist Freude

*[In dir ist Freude in allem Leide,
o du süßer Jesu Christ!
Durch dich wir haben himmlischen Gaben,
du der wahre Heiland bist;
hilfest von Schanden, rettest von Banden.
Wer dir vertrauet, hat wohl gebauet,
wird ewig bleiben. Hallelujah.
Zu deiner Güte steht unser Gmüte;
an dir wir kleben im Tod und Leben,
nichts kann uns scheiden. Hallelujah.]*
Johann Lindemann (1549–c.1631)

Psalm 27 (KJV)

- 1 The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?
- 2 When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.
- 3 Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.
- 4 One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.
- 5 For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.
- 6 And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD.
- 7 Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me.
- 8 When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.
- 9 Hide not thy face far from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.
- 10 When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up.
- 11 Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies.
- 12 Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty.
- 13 I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.
- 14 Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

Sonata a 5: In dir ist Freude

*[In thee is gladness, amid all sadness,
Jesus, sunshine of my heart.
By thee are given the gifts of heaven,
thou the true Redeemer art.
Our souls thou makest, our bonds thou breakest;
who trusts thee surely hath built securely,
and stands forever. Alleluia!
Our hearts are pining to see thy shining;
dying or living, to thee are cleaving;
naught can us sever. Alleluia!]*
translated Catherine Winkworth (1829–1878)

Psalm 113 (Vulgate 112)

- 1 Alleluia. Laudate pueri Dominum: laudate nomen Domini.
- 2 Sit nomen Domini benedictum, ex hoc nunc, et usque in sæculum.
- 3 A solis ortu usque ad occasum, laudabile nomen Domini.
- 4 Excelsus super omnes gentes Dominus, et super cælos gloria eius.
- 5 Quis sicut Dominus Deus noster, qui in altis habitat,
- 6 et humilia respicit in cælo et in terra?
- 7 Suscitans a terra inopem, et de stercore erigens pauperem:
- 8 Ut colloctet eum cum principibus, cum principibus populi sui.
- 9 Qui habitare facit sterilem in domo, matrem filiorum lætantem.

Sonata a 7: O süßer Herre Jesu Christ

*[O süßer Herre Jesu Christ,
der du unser Erlöser bist,
nimm heut an unsre Danksagung
aus Genaden.*

*Du hast angesehn unsre Not,
da wir waren in Sünden tot,
und bist vom Himmel gestiegen
aus Genaden.]*

*Michael Weisse (c.1488–1534),
after Jesu salvator optime, Jan Hus (1369–1415)*

Hymn

Herr Christ, der einig Gotts Sohn
Vaters in Ewigkeit,
aus seim Herzen entsprossen,
gleichwie geschrieben steht,
er ist der Morgensterne,
sein Glänzen streckt er ferne
vor andern Sternen klar;

für uns ein Mensch geboren
im letzten Teil der Zeit,
daß wir nicht wärn verloren
vor Gott in Ewigkeit;
den Tod für uns zerbrochen,
den Himmel aufgeschlossen,
das Leben wiederbracht.

Laß uns in deiner Liebe
und Kenntnis nehmen zu,
daß wir am Glauben bleiben,
dir dienen im Geist so,
daß wir hie mögen schmecken
dein Süßigkeit im Herzen
und dürsten stets nach dir.

Psalm 113 (KJV)

- 1 Praise ye the LORD. Praise, O ye servants of the LORD, praise the name of the LORD.
- 2 Blessed be the name of the LORD from this time forth and for evermore.
- 3 From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the LORD's name is to be praised.
- 4 The LORD is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens.
- 5 Who is like unto the LORD our God, who dwelleth on high,
- 6 Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth!
- 7 He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill;
- 8 That he may set him with princes, even with the princes of his people.
- 9 He maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the LORD.

Sonata a 7: O süßer Herre Jesu Christ

*[O sweet Lord Jesus Christ,
you who are our Savior,
receive our thanks today
by grace.*

*You regarded our need,
that we were dead in sin,
and from heaven you arose
by grace.]*

translated K.S.

Hymn

God's only Son, from all time
heart of the Father, came.
Yes, Christ our Lord forever
stands on the Word, the same.
He is the Star of Morning,
blazing with bright adorning
far past all other stars.

For unto us, in end time
a little child is born
that, in the sight of sublime
God, we are not forlorn.
Now Death for us is broken,
Heaven is thrown wide open,
life is brought back again.

Your love and truth, increasing,
grow in us every hour.
We, in the faith unceasing,
serve in the Spirit's power.
That we may taste your sweetness,
fill up our hearts' completeness
so that we thirst for you.

Ertöt uns durch dein Güte,
erweck uns durch dein Gnad;
den alten Menschen kränke,
daß der neu' leben mag
und hie auf dieser Erden
den Sinn und alls Begehren
und G'danken hab zu dir.

Elisabeth Kreuziger (1505–1535)

Magnificat (Luke 1:46–55, with Gloria Patri)

- 1 Magnificat anima mea Dominum
- 2 Et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo.
- 3 Quia respexit humilitatem ancillæ suæ:

- 4 ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes
generationes.
- 5 Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est, et sanctum
nomen eius.
- 6 Et misericordia eius a progenie in progenies
timentibus eum.
- 7 Fecit potentiam in brachio suo, dispersit superbos
mente cordis sui.

- 8 Deposuit potentes de sede et exaltavit humiles.
- 9 Esurientes implevit bonis et divites dimisit inanes,

- 10 Suscepit Israel puerum suum recordatus
misericordiæ suæ, Sicut locutus est ad patres
nostros, Abraham et semini eius in sæcula.
[O Jesu Christe, wahres Licht,
erleuchte, die dich kennen nicht,
und bringe sie zu deiner Herd,
daß ihre Seel auch selig werd.
Johann Heermann (1585–1647)]

- 11 Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto:
- 12 Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in
sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

Vater unser

Vater unser im Himmelreich,
der du uns alle heißest gleich
Brüder sein und dich rufen an
und willst das Beten von uns han:
gib, daß nicht bet allein der Mund,
hilf, das es geh von Herzensgrund.

Geheiligt werd der Name dein,
Dein Wort bei uns hilf halten rein,
Daß auch wir leben heiliglich,
Nach deinem Namen würdiglich.
Behüt uns, Herr, für falscher Lehr,
Das arm verführet Volk bekehr.

Come, ravish us and quicken,
rouse us with gifts of grace.
May our old Adam sicken,
new life to take his place.
Then here, our dear contrivings—
all earthly thoughts and strivings—
shall ever rise to you.

translated K.S.

Magnificat (KJV)

- 1 My soul doth magnify the Lord,
- 2 and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
- 3 For he hath regarded the low estate of his
handmaiden:
- 4 for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall
call me blessed.
- 5 For he that is mighty hath done to me great things,
and holy is his name.
- 6 And his mercy is on them that fear him from
generation to generation.
- 7 He hath showed strength with his arm; he hath
scattered the proud in the imagination of their
hearts.
- 8 He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and
exalted them of low degree.
- 9 He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the
rich he hath sent empty away.
- 10 He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance
of his mercy; as he spake to our forefathers, to
Abraham, and to his seed for ever.
[O Jesus Christ, the Light so true,
enlighten those who know not you,
and to your radiant hearth convey
souls ever blessed with you to stay.
translated K.S.]

- 11 Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the
Holy Spirit;
- 12 As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall
be, world without end. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, thou in heaven above,
Who biddest us to dwell in love,
As brethren of one family,
And cry for all we need to thee;
Teach us to mean the words we say,
And from the inmost heart to pray.

All hallowed be thy name, O Lord!
O let us firmly keep thy Word,
And lead, according to thy name,
A holy life, untouched by blame;
Let no false teachings do us hurt,—
All poor deluded souls convert.

Es komm dein Reich zu dieser Zeit
 Und dort hernach in Ewigkeit;
 Der heilig Geist uns wohne bei,
 Mit seinen Gaben mancherlei;
 Des Satans Zorn und groß Gewalt
 Zerbrich, für ihm dein' Kirch' erhalt.

Dein Will gescheh', Herr Gott, zugleich
 Auf Erden wie im Himmelreich,
 Gib uns Geduld in Leidenszeit,
 Gehorsam sein in Lieb und Leid,
 Wehr und steu'r allem Fleisch und Blut,
 Das wider deinen Willen thut.

Gib uns heut unser täglich Brot
 Und was man darf zur Leibes Noth;
 Behüt uns, Herr, für Unfried, Streit,
 Für Seuchen und für theuer Zeit,
 Daß wir in gutem Frieden stehn
 Der Sorg und Geizens müßig geh'n.

All unser Schuld' vergib uns, Herr,
 Daß sie uns nicht betrüben mehr,
 Wie wir auch unsern Schuldigern
 Ihr Schuld und Fehl vergeben gern;
 Zu dienen mach uns all bereit
 In rechter Lieb und Einigkeit.

Führ uns, Herr, in Versuchung nicht,
 Wenn uns der böse Feind ansicht
 Zur linken und zur rechten Hand,
 Hilf uns thun starken Widerstand;
 Im Glauben fest und wohlgerüst't
 Und durch des heil'gen Geistes Trost.

Von allem Uebel uns erlös,
 Es sind die Zeit und Tage böß;
 Erlös uns vom ewigen Tod
 Und tröst uns in der letzten Noth.
 Bescher uns auch ein selig's End,
 Nimm unser Seel in deine Händ'.

Amen, das ist: es werde wahr;
 Stärk unsern Glauben immerdar,
 Auf daß wir ja nicht zweifeln dran,
 Daß wir hiermit gebeten han;
 Auf dein Wort in dem Namen dein,
 So sprechen wir das Amen fein.

Martin Luther (1483–1546)

Deo gratias

Benedicamus Domino. Deo gratias.

Thy kingdom come! Thine let it be
 In time, and through eternity!
 O let thy Holy Spirit dwell
 With us, to rule and guide us well;
 From Satan's mighty power and rage
 Preserve thy Church from age to age.

Thy will be done on earth, O Lord,
 As where in heaven thou art adored!
 Patience in time of grief bestow,
 Thee to obey through weal and woe;
 Our sinful flesh and blood control
 That thwart thy will within the soul.

Give us this day our daily bread,
 Let us be duly clothed and fed,
 And keep thou from our homes afar
 Famine and pestilence and war,
 That we may live in godly peace,
 Unvexed by cares and avarice.

Forgive our sins, O Lord, that they
 No more may vex us, day by day,
 As we forgive their trespasses
 Who unto us have done amiss;
 Thus let us dwell in charity,
 And serve each other willingly.

Into temptation lead us not;
 And when the foe doth war and plot
 Against our souls on every hand,
 Then, armed with faith, O may we stand
 Against him as a valiant host,
 Through comfort of the Holy Ghost.

Deliver us from evil, Lord!
 The days are dark and foes abroad;
 Redeem us from eternal death;
 And when we yield our dying breath,
 Console us, grant us calm release,
 And take our souls to thee in peace.

Amen! that is, So let it be!
 Strengthen our faith and trust in thee,
 That we may doubt not, but believe
 That what we ask we shall receive;
 Thus in thy name and at thy word
 We say Amen, now hear us, Lord!

tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1840

Deo gratias

Let us bless the Lord. Thanks be to God.