

Lent at All Saints // Scott Hayes // February 28, 2024

Lent is a holy season in the church, culminating in the holiest of all days, Easter, on March 31st. Just as Christmas wouldn't be complete without its soundtrack, the same holds true for Easter! Whether you have a favorite Easter hymn or enjoy the harmonies of brass, organ, and choir filling the church, All Saints celebrates Easter with the appropriate festivity and dignity it deserves. Here are some upcoming highlights for the next month:

- This Sunday, March 3, at 5:00 PM: The Parish Choir and Choral Scholars will perform Choral Evensong for Lent. They will sing canticles by early English composer Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625), whose compositions bridged the transition from the Renaissance to the Baroque periods. The anthem, "Be Still, My Soul," is by Percy Whitlock (1903-1946), composed when he was just 26 years old. Daniel and I will offer a short recital, beginning at 5:00 PM, featuring several of Whitlock's organ works.
- Palm Sunday, March 24: Weather permitting, we'll commence the 10:30 AM service outside with a procession around the building, symbolizing Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. During the service, we'll hear a special choral anthem, "The Earth Did Tremble," by Peter Neidmann (b. 1960), which sets a text by English poet Francis Quarles (1592-1644).
- Good Friday, March 29, at 7:00 PM: The Choirs of All Saints will unite to sing Bob Chilcott's poignant setting of the St. John Passion. While we've encountered fragments of this work throughout Lent, we will experience it in its intended setting within the context of our Good Friday liturgy. Joining us for this service is the internationally acclaimed tenor and Richmond native, Will Ferguson, who will sing the role of the "Evangelist." James McClure, who has graced All Saints with his voice multiple times and has also performed with the Richmond Symphony and the Virginia Opera, will sing the role of Jesus.
- Easter Sunday, March 31: Easter Sunday will feature two distinct yet equally festive choral services. At the 8:00 AM Eucharist, the Choral Scholars, accompanied by trumpet and Daniel Stipe at the organ, will perform music by Englishman Harold Darke. The anthem, "Most Glorious Lord of Life," is by Darke's contemporary, William Harris. At 10:30 AM, the combined choirs will lead a rousing service featuring music by William Mathias, Edward Bairstow ("Sing Ye to the Lord"), Andrew Carter ("Joy is Come"), and, of course, Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus." A trio of trumpeters will accompany all of us as we sing the triumphant Easter hymns.

If you'd like to support these musical offerings financially, various sponsorship options are still available – from Easter trumpets to supporting other musicians throughout Holy Week. Please reach out to me at shayes@allsaintsrichmond.org if you have any questions or would like to sponsor a specific musical need. Alternatively, you can make a donation to the Music Education Fund, with "Easter Musicians" in the memo line.

Every service holds significance during this holy season of Lent! Join us as you are able!