

NOTES TO ACCOMPANY EVENSONG St Michael's : 24TH September 2011

ORGAN PRELUDE Prelude in C minor J.S.Bach (1685-1750)

"Bach at his ripest ... no movement of Bach shows a happier blend of variety and unity ... The harmony is rich and bold, and the whole is full of irresistible vigour and fling" (Harvey Grace 1922 : p.147) One of the six great preludes and fugues of which Bach was most fond towards the end of his life.

INTROIT Jerusalem on high Sir Frederick Ouseley (1825-1889)

The Founder of St Michael's composed over 70 anthems. This evocative piece comes from his oratorio *Hagar*, first performed at Hereford in 1873. Samuel Crossman wrote the words in 1664.

PRECES/RESPONSES Stainer arranged by Barclay

The conductor of the choir today, David Barclay, has adapted some of Stainer's themes from *The Crucifixion* for these Responses.

PSALM 91 : Qui habitat Sir John Stainer (1840-1901)

In the early 1870s Stainer assisted with the pointing in the production of the Cathedral Psalter which included several of his chants.

This song of hope associated with St Michael and all angels includes (v.9) *There shall no evil happen unto thee;* (v.11) *for he shall give his angels charge over thee;* (v.13) *the dragon shalt thou tread under thy feet.*

LESSON Revelation 12 : 7 – 12

The Epistle for the day in the Book of Common Prayer commemorates St Michael and all angels. The symbolic dragons painted on the organ pipes were part of the original 1856 organ by Flight and Robson, facing the Cantor's north side of the choir.

OFFICE HYMN When all thy mercies, O my God Sir Frederick Ouseley (1825-1889)

Sir Frederick called this fine tune "Contemplation". The joyful words were written by Joseph Addison (1672-1719).

MAGNIFICAT in B flat Sir John Stainer

Stainer composed this for the fifth annual festival of the London Choir Association in St Paul's on 8th November 1877. The fanfare-like organ introduction leads into a strong first section, followed by a key change to D major for the quieter "and holy is his name" before returning to B flat for the triumphant "He hath showed strength with his arm". Almost 40% of the Magnificat is devoted to the Gloria, including a pause before the organ recapitulates the theme tune leading to the final Amen.

LESSON Matthew 18 : 1 – 10

This was the Gospel for the day commemorating St Michael and all angels in the Book of Common Prayer. It is an appropriate reading to recall the college as a place where, from 1856 to 1985, children developed their personalities, skills and understanding. Such aims continue in a different form with older youngsters in the adjacent college.

NUNC DIMITTIS in B flat Sir John Stainer

The Nunc Dimittis begins quietly "Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace" and builds gradually. The Gloria is less than half the length of that of the Magnificat, adapting the same theme.

CREED

It was widely believed by the end of the fourth century that this statement of faith had been composed by the Apostles. In the 1662 Book of Common Prayer it was prescribed for use at Mattins and Evensong. It is included in the currently authorised services in *Common Worship* published in 2000.

VERSICLES and RESPONSES Stainer arranged by Barclay

COLLECTS, ending with Sevenfold Amen Sir John Stainer

Stainer composed the Sevenfold Amen for St Paul's Cathedral in October 1873, 18 months after taking up the post of organist there.

ANTHEM I saw the Lord Sir John Stainer

Stainer was only 18 when he composed this at St Michael's for Trinity Sunday in 1858. He uses an eight-part choir in a "vivid exposition of Isaiah's visionary text (Isaiah 6 : 1-4), followed by a tranquil fugue and chorale." Professor Dibble (2007 p.62) acclaimed this anthem as "an exceptional, bold and original essay exhibiting a rare confidence ... and impressive technical assurance... Stainer integrated accepted ideas within the boundaries of new stylistic developments."

PRAYERS

OFFERTORY HYMN O praise ye the Lord Sir Hubert Parry (1848-1918)

Sir Hubert Parry was at the height of his popularity when he composed the tune 'Laudate dominum' to accompany Sir Henry Baker's adaptation of Psalm 150 for the Salisbury Festival in 1894. Baker (1821-1877) was Vicar of Monkland Priory Church near Leominster and Editor-in-chief of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. Parry's father built a church on the family estate at Highnam near Gloucester in memory of Parry's mother, who did not survive his birth. Five years later the same architect, Henry Woodyer (1816-96), designed St Michael's.

BLESSING

ORGAN VOLUNTARY Crown Imperial Sir William Walton (1902-1983)

This was first performed at the coronation of King George VI in 1937, and substantially revised in 1953 for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. It was performed again as a recessional piece to the wedding of Prince William and Catherine Middleton on 29th April 2011.