

Message from Andrew

Hello everyone. I hope you are all keeping safe and well. I am continuing to keep well and make good progress. I have a cataract operation tomorrow (1st December), so in a few weeks I expect to see my golf balls soaring into the sky rather better than of late.

It's Advent, so I thought I would share some advent music with you. The pieces are all sung and recorded in 1998 by the Foundation Choir of the King's School in Macclesfield, where I spent almost my whole career as Director of Music. This is the choir which, a few years later, would win the first of the BBC Songs of Praise Senior School Choir of the Year competitions. The choir is conducted by my dear friend and colleague, Jo Beesley, and accompanied by yours truly.

The first three files are arrangements by Ben Parry of songs from the musical 'Godspell' by Stephen Schwartz, a musical I put on at King's: *Prepare Ye* (how appropriate for Advent), *Day By Day*, and *We Beseech Thee*.

The next group of files are an Advent Cantata by Franz Tunder (1614-1667). Look him up in Wikipedia. I came across him because my tutor at Newcastle University was a Baroque scholar and always began his series of lectures with Tunder, so it was appropriate when I took over his lectures during his sabbatical that I should continue the trend.

Tunder worked for a long time as organist of the Marienkirche, Lubeck, His successor was Buxtehude, who seemed to create or follow the tradition of the new incumbent marrying the daughter of the previous director of music. When Bach walked 200 miles to visit Buxtehude, he must have decided he didn't fancy Buxtehude's daughter, so declined the offer to succeed him in Lubeck.

Not much of Tunder's music is known, but I love this Advent Cantata, *Hosianna dem Sohne David*. It is for 5-part choir, 5-part strings and continuo. The soloists in this recording are all pupils in the choir.

I hope you have a wonderful Christmas. Linda and I will be spending it at home, as the regulations (and our concern to stay safe with only a short time until a vaccine is available) won't allow us to be with our son and grandsons. Whatever you are doing, enjoy yourselves and be careful. Here's to the vaccine enabling us to get together very soon.

With much love,

Andrew