

“Every Tribe And Tongue”

A Cantata on Communion

Music by Thomas Parks © 2003

Lyrics, Recitative, Source, & Part Assignments

Speaker: “*Every Tribe And Tongue*” is a Cantata on Communion. That’s a concert with a group of songs, connected with a spoken recitative to introduce and explain them, and all about a common theme. Our theme is the series of prayers and songs from different traditions that are commonly associated with Holy Communion.

Since we’re going to sing and talk about Communion, a definition seems to be in order. Known as Holy Communion or the Lord’s Supper by Protestants, and as The Eucharist by Catholics and Orthodox, it is a sacrament and the central act of worship in most Christian churches. It is celebrated as Jesus had instituted it at the Last Supper by the sharing of bread and wine as His body and blood which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

Our hope is to show how much we have in common, and to strengthen the ties that bind us together. Let’s look at how we got to where we are.

Fifty days after Jesus’ Resurrection, God’s Holy Spirit touched the Disciples. They went out and preached to the People, who were of “every tribe and tongue,” and each one heard them speaking in his own language. Their descendants formed the Christian Churches, all seeking God in their own ways and in their own languages...Greek and Old Slavonic often called Church Slavonic for the Orthodox, Latin for the Catholics, and later German and English for the Protestants. Nowadays every language is used, but the prayers, when translated, are very similar. One way or another, we all say “Lord have mercy.”

When we gather to worship we follow a liturgy. That’s a ritual, a procedure, or a way of doing things. Liturgies have long been rich in pageantry with processional entrances, flowing garments, incense, bells, drums, organs, and other instruments of music...and all with singers and choirs chanting and responding in turn.

All of this adds to the *intensity* of our feelings, and thus to the *intensity* of our beliefs. ***We feel the presence of God***...and by the way, it helps us to remember the prayers...in ways that are still valid now that most Christians can read.

These are the ancient prayers, sung in the ancient liturgical order so you can see how they fit, but they are set to new music by Thomas Parks.

We begin the Introduction with a “***Prelude***” and then Psalm 96. “***Shiru L’Adonai***” in Hebrew, or “***Cantate Domino!***” in Latin, the words mean, “O sing to the Lord a new song,” and that’s exactly what we’re doing. Then we have a Fanfare and the processional entrance, Psalm 100: “***Come Sing Unto the Lord.***”

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1. “Prelude”

(Guitar solo:)

2. “Cantate Domino”

Psalm 96 (95) Matthew 21-9

(SATB:)

Cantate Domino canticum novum.

(Sing to God a song that's new.)

Cantate Domino omnis terra.

(Sing to God all the earth.)

Et benedicite nomini ejus.

(Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord.)

Et benedidite nomini.

3. “Come Sing Unto The Lord”

Psalm 100 (99)

(Leader:)

(Choir S.A.T.B.:)

Come, sing unto the Lord, your glad songs of rejoicing!

Make joyful sounds of music to the Lord!

Come, all ye lands and serve the Lord with gladness!

Come, sing unto Him: He will hear your song!

We are His people and the sheep of His pasture!

Know that the Lord is God! He made us, we are His!

Come to His gates with praise and with thanksgiving!

Enter His courts and bless His holy name!

Know that the Lord is good. His love is without ending!

Merciful is the Lord from age to age!

Praise to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit!

In the beginning now and evermore.

World without end! Amen!!!

Speaker: This is known as the "Enarxis" in Greek. It's the very first part of the Byzantine **“Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom.”** Born in 347 AD, he was known as the greatest preacher in Christendom. This opening exclamation is still used by all Orthodox churches. It is chanted unaccompanied by the Priest. Musical instruments are forbidden in the Orthodox Churches.

8. “Blessed is The Kingdom of The Father”

(Byzantine Divine Liturgy of

St. John Chrysostom. 347 AD)

(Chant by Leader. Solemnly...A cappella in the Orthodox manner.)

Blessed is the kingdom of the Father,

and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Now and ever and unto the ages of ages.

Speaker: The Byzantines in Constantinople came right to the point. The first prayer in the **“Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom,”** written about 400 AD, was **“Kyrie Eleison,”** Greek for Lord have mercy. The Psalms are filled with cries to the Lord for mercy. Isn't mercy what we pray for most?

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9. “Kyrie Eleison” (Greek)

Divine Liturgy, Orthodox Church

(SATB: A cappella in the Orthodox manner.)

Kyrie eleison. Kyrie eleison.

Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison.

Lord have mercy. Christ have mercy.

Lord have mercy on me, upon me.

Speaker: You've seen people praying who touch their foreheads, then their eyes, then their mouth, and finally their heart. That comes from "God be in my Head" from the "*Sarum Primer*" of 1558, a Celtic prayerbook from Old England.

10. “God Be In My Head” (*The Sarum Primer*, a prayerbook of 1558)

(SATB:) God be in my head...and in my understanding.

God be in my eyes...and in my looking.

God be in my mouth...and my speaking.

God be in my heart...and in my feeling

God be at my end...*at mine end*...and my departing.

12. “The Lord is my Shepherd”

Psalm 23 Freely adapted from RSV

Romans 16:27 (*The Gloria Patri*)

Speaker: "Psalms" in classical Greek meant the twang of the strings of a musical instrument; its Hebrew equivalent means a poem of trimmed and measured form. The two words show us that a psalm was a poem of set structure to be sung to the accompaniment of stringed instruments. As a reading of God's word, here is Psalm 23, freely adapted from the RSV, and followed by the Doxology or Gloria Patri.

Leader:

All:

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want;

He makes me lie in green pastures,

He leads me beside still waters;

He restores my soul.

He leads me in paths of righteousness,

for His name's sake.

Though I may walk in the valley of darkness,

I fear no evil; for You are with me;

Your mighty rod, and Your staff,

they comfort me.

You have prepared here a table before me,

in the presence of my enemies;

You have anointed my head with oil,

my cup is overflowing.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me,

* Thomas Parks * 2426 Mapleton Lane * Raleigh, NC 27613 * 919-846-7451 * TomParks2@aol.com *

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all the days of my life;
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD,
for ever and ever.

Glory be unto Thee Father,
And to Thy Son and to Thy Holy Spirit.
It was, it is, and ever shall be,
world without end, Amen!

Speaker: This Gospel reading is from Luke 2: 13 & 14: "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." We know this as *the "Angelic Hymn,"* or the "*Gloria in Excelsis Deo*", and we all sing it every Christmas.

18. “Glory to God in the highest” Luke 2:14 *The Angelic Hymn*
(SATB:)

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to His people on Earth!
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God an Father,
We worship You! We give You thanks!
We praise You for all of Your glory!
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,

(Men:) Lord God, Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; Have mercy on us.

(Women:) You are seated at the right hand of the Father, Receive our prayer.

(Men:) You alone are the Holy One. You alone are the Lord. You alone are the most high,

(SATB:) Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen, Amen.

Speaker: The church would be a poorer place without the Offering...After all, it's such a good time for music that fits into no other category. This song begins with the "*Kyrie*" and ends with the "*Gloria Patri*," but the words about redemption are by Thomas Parks. We hear it as we take up the Offering.

21. “My Redeemer Has Stood in The Way” (*The Kyrie, the Gloria, &*
(Duet W/ Guitar:)

Kyrie eleison. Kyrie eleison.
Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison.
Lord have mercy. Christ have mercy.
Lord have mercy on me, upon me.
The Prince of Darkness has turned away from me.
My Redeemer has stood in the way.
All my sins are washed away from me,
And I'm born again today.
Take up the bread and cup. Eat and drink.
Remember how Jesus has suffered for you.

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God has had mercy, Christ has had mercy;
Sending the Spirit to follow them through.
God’s Holy Spirit’s moving amongst us.
Open your hearts. He’ll come into you,
bringing you gifts of hope and joy,
to see you through the tests of life.
Gloria Patri et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto!
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc et semper,
Et in saccula saeculorum.

Praise to the Father and to the Son,
and to the Spirit that dwells in our hearts!
It was. It is, and ever shall be,
World without end, Amen, Amen.
God without end, Amen, Amen.
Christ without end, Amen, Amen.
Spirit within, Amen, Amen.

Speaker: Thomas Ken, was one of several Anglican bishops imprisoned in the Tower of London in the sixteen eighties for refusing to sign King James II's "**Declaration of Indulgence**" which would have restored Catholicism to power in England. The People rioted and he was freed. His "**Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow**", another form of the "**Gloria Patri,**" is still sung as a lesser doxology by many churches at the reception of tithes and offerings.

31. “Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow”

(SATB)

The Lesser Doxology by Thomas Ken, 1674

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!
Praise Him, all creatures here below!
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host!
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!

Speaker: Ancient tradition has it that the Apostle's Creed was written by the Apostles on the day of Pentecost while they were under the influence of God's Holy Spirit, and that it was to be learned by heart, and never to be consigned to writing. Most Christians can still say it from memory. Singing is a way to help remember prayers. Before 600 AD, the Church, under Pope Gregory the Great, settled on a way of singing prayers in unison that bears his name. "Gregorian Chant" is also known as "Plainchant" or "Plainsong."

32. “Apostle’s Creed”

(The Apostle’s Creed)

(All T & B)

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,

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Maker of Heaven and Earth,
And in Jesus Christ His only son our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
The third day He rose again from the dead;
He ascended into heaven,
And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit;
The holy catholic church;
The communion of saints;
The forgiveness of sins;
The resurrection of the body;
And the life everlasting. Amen.

Speaker: The Methodist Church began with John Wesley's spiritual awakening in 1738 at a Moravian meeting in London. Later he said, "My heart was strangely warmed." That same morning in a hymn at St. Paul's, he heard these words from **“Psalm 130,”** "Out of the depths I cry to Thee, Oh Lord. Lord hear my voice." This is known as the **"De Profundis."**

35. “Out of The Depths”

(Leader:)

Out of the depths I cry to Thee, oh Lord.

Psalm 130 (129)

(De Profundis)

(Choir:)

Lord hear my voice!

Speaker: This begins the preface to the group of prayers that make up the Communion Rite in most churches. This responsive song or chant is the **"Sursum Corda,"** Latin for **"Lift up Your Hearts."** Methodists call it **"The Great Thanksgiving."** It is sung as an incitement to thanksgiving and praise.

36. “Lift up Your Hearts”

(Leader:)

The Lord be with you.

Lift up your hearts!

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

(The Sursum Corda)

(Choir:)

And also with you.

We lift them up to the Lord.

It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

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Speaker: The preface to the Communion Rite concludes with "Holy, Holy, Holy," or "Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus" in Latin. These words from Isaiah (6:3) and from Matthew (21:9) are sung as a hymn of adoration and praise. Latin words have different syllables, and thus a different rhythm. You can hear this when the words are sung in both English and Latin as we do here

38. “Holy, Holy, Holy”

Isaiah 6:3, Matthew 21:9

(The Sanctus)

(SATB:)

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty;
Heaven and Earth are filled with Thy glory.
Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna in the highest!
Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus. Dominnus Deus Sabaoth;
Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua.
Hosanna in excelsis! Hosanna in excelsis!
Benedictus Qui venit in nomine Domini.
Hosanna in excelsis! Hosanna in excelsis!
Hosanna in excelsis! In excelsis Deus!

Speaker: Paul tells the Corinthians, "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." This is "***The Mystery of Faith.***"

41. “The Mystery of Faith”

I Corinthians, 11:26

(Leader:)

When we take this bread and cup, we proclaim our faith;

(SATB:)

Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ shall come again.

God's Holy Spirit is here. He shall comfort you.

Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ shall come again.

Lift up your hearts to the Lord. Know that He is good!

Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ shall come again.

Speaker: The principal Christian prayer, taught to the Disciples by Jesus himself, is "***The Lord's Prayer.***" Sometimes it is paraphrased, or said in other ways, as done here. The spoken part is from the Catholic tradition. Most churches have adopted the Doxology "For Thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever."

43. “The Lord's Prayer”

Matthew 6:9-13

*(The spoken text is from the
Catholic Communion Rite.)*

(Duet: W/ Guitar:)

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Our Father who art in heaven hallowed be, hallowed be Thy name, hallowed be Thy name.
Thy Kingdom come. Thy will on earth be done as it is in heaven,
as it is in heaven, as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive our debts, as we forgive.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, but deliver us from evil.

(Spoken by Leader:) Deliver us, Lord, from every evil,
and grant us peace in our day,
In your mercy keep us free from sin,
and protect us from all anxiety,
as we wait in joyful hope
for the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

For Thine is the Kingdom, and Thine is the power,
and Thine is the glory, forever and ever, forever and ever. Amen. Amen.

Speaker: Lamb of God (Latin: Agnus Dei) is one of the titles given to Jesus in the New Testament and consequently in the Christian tradition. It is believed to refer to Jesus' role as a sacrificial lamb atoning for the sins of man in Christian theology, harkening back to ancient Jewish Temple sacrifices in which a lamb was slain during the passover, the blood was sprinkled along the door, and the whole of the lamb was eaten.

John: 1:29: The next day he (John the Baptist) saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world

Matthew: 9:27: And as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed him, crying aloud, "Have mercy on us, Son of David."

46. “Lamb of God”

John 1:29 (The Agnus Dei)

(SATB:)

Oh Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world; have mercy upon us.

Oh Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world; have mercy upon us.

Oh Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world; have mercy and grant us Thy peace.

Speaker: The book of “*Matthew*” takes us to the Passover meal that was to be Jesus' Last Supper. "Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." In the “*Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*” from about 400 A.D. the choir sings "Receive the body of Christ. Taste the fountain of immortality. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!" This is sung repeatedly as all share the bread and wine as His body and blood. The repetition itself adds to the power of these ancient words.

