

# SERVICE OF CHORAL EVENSONG

*Evensong for a New Century*



MARCH 19, 2023

4 PM

THE REV. LUCY E. TURNER, *OFFICIANT*  
DR. JEFF R. McLELLAND, *ORGANIST/DIRECTOR*  
NICK MATHES, *CANTOR*  
THE IPC CAMERATA

THE REV. KEVIN J. LONG, *PASTOR*  
INDEPENDENT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA



## PROCESSION

*The people stand.*

## GREETING

*Cantor* Light and peace, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

*Choir* Thanks be to God.

*The people sit.*

INTROIT – "The Avowal" .....Howard Keever  
(b. 1954)

As swimmers dare to lie face to the sky and water bears them, as hawks rest upon air and air sustains them, so would I learn to attain free fall, and float into Creator Spirit's deep embrace, knowing no effort earns that all surrounding grace.

*Denise Levertov*

## PRECES

*Cantor* O God, make speed to save us.

*Choir* O Lord, make haste to help us. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

PHOS HILARON - "O Gracious Light" .....Howard Keever

O gracious Light, Pure brightness of the everliving Father in heaven, O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed! Now as we come to the setting of the sun, And our eyes behold the vesper light, We sing your praises O God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. You are worthy to be praised with happy voices, O Son of God, Giver of life, and to be glorified through all the worlds.

PSALM ANTHEM - "I Will Bless the Lord at all Times" .....Howard Keever

I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul makes it boast in the Lord. Let the humble hear and be glad. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together. I sought the Lord and he answered me, and delivered me from all my fears. Look to him and be radiant; so your faces shall never be ashamed. This poor soul cried, and was heard by the Lord, and was saved from every trouble. The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and delivers them. O taste and see that the Lord is good; happy are those who take refuge in him. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

*Psalms 34:1-8*

THE FIRST LESSON – Isaiah 44:1-8

MAGNIFICAT - "My Soul Proclaims the Greatness of the Lord" ..... Howard Keever  
MY SOUL proclaims the greatness of the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; For he has looked with favor on his lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed; The Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name. He has mercy on those that fear him. He has shown the strength of his arm, he has scattered the proud in their conceit. He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, And has lifted up the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, And the rich he has sent away empty. He has come to the help of his servant Israel, For he has remembered his promise of mercy, The promise he made to our fathers, to Abraham and his children forever. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen. *Luke 1:46-55*

## THE SECOND LESSON – Ephesians 3:14-20

NUNC DIMITTIS - "Lord, You Now Have Set Your Servant Free" ..... Howard Keever  
Lord, you now have set your servant free to go in peace as you have promised; For these eyes of mine have seen the Savior whom you have prepared for all the world to see: a light to enlighten the nations, and the glory of your people Israel. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen. *Luke 2:29-32*

*The people stand.*

## THE APOSTLES' CREED

*Sung by All, monotone*

*Cantor* I BELIEVE in God

***All* the father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary: Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried: He descended into hell; 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 Ghost: the holy Catholic Church: The Communion of Saints: The Forgiveness of sins: The Resurrection of the Body: and the Life everlasting. Amen.**

*The people sit.*

## SALUTATION AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

*Cantor* The Lord be with you.

*Choir* And also with you.

*Cantor* Let us pray: Our Father

***All* who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done; On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts; As we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.**

ANTHEM - "Candlemas" ..... Howard Keever  
With certitude Simeon opened ancient arms to infant light. Decades before the cross, before the tomb, and the new life, he knew new life. What depth of faith he drew on, turning illumined towards deep night. *Denise Levertov*

## THE SUFFRAGES

- Cantor* That this evening may be holy, good, and peaceful,  
*Choir* We entreat you, O Lord.  
*Cantor* That your holy angels may lead us in paths of peace and goodwill...  
*Choir* We entreat you, O Lord.  
*Cantor* That we may be pardoned and forgiven for our sins and offenses...  
*Choir* We entreat you, O Lord.  
*Cantor* That there may be peace to your Church and to the whole world...  
*Choir* We entreat you, O Lord.  
*Cantor* That we may depart this life in your faith and fear, and not be condemned before the great judgment seat of Christ...  
*Choir* We entreat you, O Lord.  
*Cantor* That we may be bound together by your Holy Spirit in the communion of all your saints, entrusting one another and all our life to Christ...  
*Choir* We entreat you, O Lord.

## COLLECTS

Keep, O Lord, your household the Church in your steadfast faith and love, that through your grace we may proclaim your truth with boldness, and minister your justice with compassion; for the sake of our Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. *Amen.*

O Lord, make us have perpetual love and reverence for your holy Name, for you never fail to help and govern those whom you have set upon the sure foundation of your loving-kindness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. *Amen.*

Grant, O Lord, that the course of this world may be peaceably governed by your providence; and that your Church may joyfully serve you in confidence and serenity; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. *Amen.*

*The people stand.*

HYMN – "There's a wideness in God's mercy" ..... Calvin Hampton  
(1938-1984)



1 There's a wide-ness in God's mer - cy like the wide-ness of the sea;  
2 There is no place where earth's sor - rows are more felt than up in heaven;  
3 For the love of God is broad - er than the mea - sure of the mind;



there's a kind ness in his jus - tice, which is more than lib - er - ty.  
there is no place where earth's fail - ings have such kind - ly judge - ment given.  
and the heart of the E - ter - nal is most won - der - ful - ly kind.



There is wel - come for the sin - ner, and more gra - ces for the good;  
There is plen - ti - ful re - demp - tion in the blood that has been shed;  
If our love were but more faith - ful, we should take him at his word;



there is mer - cy with the Sa - vior; there is heal - ing in his blood.  
there is joy for all the mem - bers in the sor - rows of the Head.  
and our life would be thanks - giv - ing for the good - ness of the Lord.

**THE BLESSING**

*Cantor* Let us bless the Lord.

**All** Thanks be to God.

**CLOSING VOLUNTARY**

*Concerto for Organ and Strings* ..... Francis Poulenc  
(1899-1963)

**Orchestra**

***Evensong for a New Century***

Daniel Szasz, *Violin I*  
Serghei Tanas, *Violin II*  
Zak Enikeev, *Viola*  
Warren Samples, *Cello*

***Concerto for Organ and Strings***

Dr. Jeff R. McLelland, *Organ*  
Daniel Szasz, *Violin I*  
Mayumi Masri, *Violin I*  
Viktor Dulguerov, *Violin I*  
Serghei Tanas, *Violin II*

Yuriko Yasuda, *Violin II*  
Bram Margoles, *Violin II*  
Zak Enikeev, *Viola*  
Rene Reder, *Viola*  
Meredith Treaster, *Viola*

Warren Samples, *Cello*  
Xi Yang, *Cello*  
Alex Horton, *Bass*  
Greg Gumina, *Timpani*

## Program Notes

### *Evensong for a New Century*

**THIS EVENSONG SERVICE** was commissioned in honor of Dr. Jeff R. McLelland, the IPC Choir, and the IPC Camerata as an expression of deep gratitude for the music they make, the joy they express, and the love of God they proclaim. In this, as in all we do together, may God be glorified!

**FROM THE COMPOSER:** *"Evensong for a New Century* was first composed for chamber choir and organ. For this evening's service, Dr. McLelland suggested that I rearrange the organ accompaniment for string quartet, and the music lent itself quite well to the transformation. Through this music I have sought a unified, intimate, and reflective expression of the texts. In addition to the traditional musical elements of the evensong service, I very much enjoyed setting the two beautiful poems of Denise Levertov, 'The Avowal'—a lovely image of trust and grace, and 'Candlemas'—a reflection on the story of Simeon from Luke's Gospel."

*Howard T. Keever*

**HOWARD T. KEEVER** is retired professor of music theory and composition at William Carey University in Hattiesburg, Mississippi where he served from 1985 to 2021. Dr. Keever holds the bachelor of music in music theory from the Eastman School of Music and the master of music in composition and the Ph.D. in music theory from Florida State University where he studied composition under Harold Schiffman. Keever's first commission by IPC was the anthem, "O Come Let Us Sing unto the Lord," composed for the dedication of the Schreiber Memorial Organ in 2012, and the music for this evening's service was commissioned in 2015 as part of the "Evensong for a New Century," celebrating IPC's centennial. Keever has fulfilled numerous commissions for compositions and arrangements of sacred music in addition to chamber works, art songs, and music for stage. He is a member of Westminster Presbyterian Church in Hattiesburg and has been a close friend and colleague of Jeff and Amy McLelland since their early days at William Carey.

### *Francis Poulenc: Organ Concerto in G Minor*

*"This is not the funny Poulenc we know from his Concertos for Two Pianos, it is rather a Poulenc on his way to the monastery, if you want to put it this way, a Poulenc of the 15th century."* –Francis Poulenc

The work was written at a time when Poulenc was rediscovering the Catholic belief of his childhood days. His music has a complex, episode-like effect. It is reminiscent of the 18th century: the Romantic, Impressionism and the Modern permeate each other playing a game of charades. The emotional expression is often ambivalent; seriousness and exhilaration are side by side. The critic Claude Rostand commented on this: *"Poulenc has two souls, one belongs to a monk, the other to a little rascal."*

"Few composers before Poulenc had risked writing for organ and orchestra. It is well-known how difficult it is to combine and reconcile the two entities due to their very different character – their almost incompatible sonorities." It borders on irony that the best-known organ concerto of the 20th century is by a composer who did not have an academic education and had only a passing admiration of the great French organ tradition. But there was the secular organ culture of the salons in Paris frequented by Poulenc. His organ concerto was a commission piece for a lady, who had effectively supported the artistic scene, La Princesse Edmond de Polignac. On December 16, 1938 the concerto was first performed in her salon in front of invited guests. Maurice Duruflé played the organ and Nadia Boulanger conducted.

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“The first public performance of the Concerto was a notable musical event in Paris. It took place at the Salle Gaveau in Paris on June 21st, 1939 played by the Orchestre Symphonique de Paris with Roger Désormière as conductor. The composer was acclaimed by a full house. Unfortunately, I (*Duruflé*) presided at a rather poor instrument, certainly one unworthy of such a work. The music critics were unanimous in declaring it one of the most successful of the composer’s compositions.”

Poulenc treats the organ more as an obligatory orchestral instrument and less as a concertizing solo-partner. Predominantly, the organ takes on the function of the brass, which was left vacant in the score. The form of the concerto is reminiscent of an early Baroque prelude in the style of Dietrich Buxtehude: A one-movement structure is divided into seven sections.

The concerto was once again performed by Maurice Duruflé, who had also been responsible for the instructions on how to register the organ voice in the printed score. Regarding Poulenc, Duruflé said “He loved the organ and spoke of Louis Vierne, Charles Tournemire, Marcel Dupré, André Marchal and Joseph Bonnet; he had often gone to hear them. Why so great a musician, who essayed all genres of musical writing such mastery, with such happiness and success...in orchestral and chamber music, never write for organ solo? I asked him that question several times. He told me that he was considering it and that a suite of organ pieces was in the works. The considerable activity which monopolized the composer’s life, together with his premature death, prevented the realization of this project.”

*Quoted sections were taken from an article in The AGO-RCCO Magazine July 1974,  
a translation of the letter by Maurice Duruflé from the French by Rollin Smith.*

### ***Other Notes***

**THE ART ON THE COVER** was designed by Andrew Hicks for a stained glass panel to commemorate the Centennial Celebration of Independent Presbyterian Church. The imagery incorporates many themes and details of the church. Clockwise from the top right, corner medallions illustrate: the Labyrinth, centerpiece of the Prayer Garden completed in 2014; the front portico of 3116 Highland Avenue, an adjacent church property acquired in 2012; the logo for Kirkwood-by-the-River, a retirement community developed by the congregation in 1980; and the logo for the Children’s Fresh Air Farm, a camping facility on Shades Mountain serving underprivileged children since 1923. The lattice work surrounding the center circle can be found in woodwork throughout the Sanctuary. Framing the circle is the Roman numeral C, or 100 in common numerals, which denotes the Centennial of IPC and includes the quatrefoils seen in many of the Sanctuary windows. The central focus of the design is the beautiful Sanctuary which was completed in 1925.



**I N D E P E N D E N T**  
**P R E S B Y T E R I A N C H U R C H**  
**B I R M I N G H A M , A L A B A M A 3 5 2 0 5**  
**I P C - U S A . O R G**