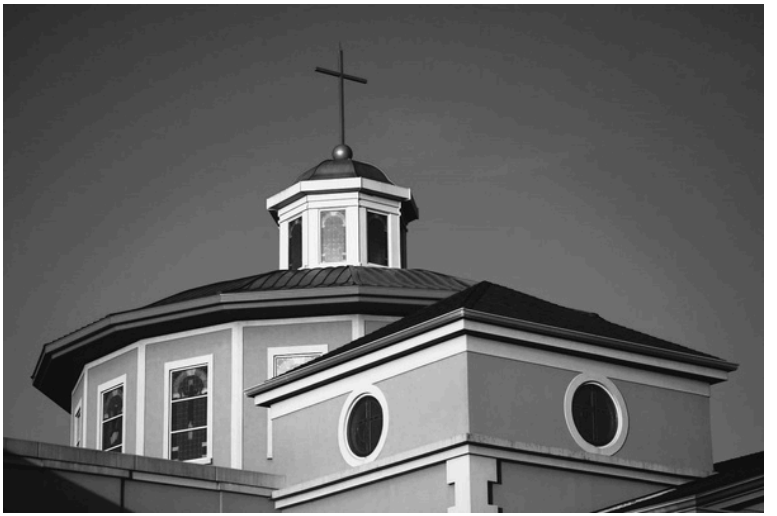
EVENSONG

6th Sunday of Easter



CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

May 25, 2025

Chapel
4:30 PM

PROGRAM NOTES

My inspiration for playing English* organ music came late in life. I attended an evensong and organ recital at St. Thomas Fifth Avenue in NYC, possibly in early 2019, where the entire recital, by a guest organist, comprised English composers. It was a nice departure from the typical French and German fare that fills most of these programs.

St. Patrick's Breastplate was on that program; the composer created it as an improvisation on his eponymous hymn. As a music director and organist in an Episcopal Church from 2004 to 2010, I knew this hymn well, but not this particular setting. (It's not found in the United Methodist Hymnal.)

The Sonata Celtica, composed in 1920, is a late work with the St. Patrick's Breastplate as its third movement. The second movement is a beautiful theme and variations, which I've played several times. It's sadly overlooked by many organists.

I struggled in my decision not to relearn the first movement sonata, which I've teasingly dubbed Death by 1000 Trills. It has a lovely second theme, but it's long and just not my cup of tea.

The Fantasia and Toccata is another famous piece, though I am playing just the opening Fantasia. It's inspired by J.S. Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D minor. The resemblance between the works fades after the opening section. The opening piece is new to me, and comes to you due to research on ChatGPT!

* Stanford is often associated with other English composers because of his education and career in Cambridge, England.

ABOUT THE COMPOSER

Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924) was an Irish composer, music teacher, and conductor. Born to a well-off and highly musical family in Dublin, Stanford was educated at the University of Cambridge before studying music in Leipzig and Berlin. Although he was a prolific composer who wrote seven symphonies, his most loved works were written with the church in mind. These included anthems, choral settings for Anglican services, and the organ.

Stanford wrote in a firmly Romantic style despite living well into the 20th century. He eschewed modernism in all its forms. During the time when he was writing Sonata Celtica, Stravinsky was already several years into his neo-classical style, having abandoned his grandiose style culminating in the Rite of Spring of 1913. Schoenberg was writing in a completely atonal style and just one year from formalizing his 12-tone method of composition.

Although no one would confuse Stanford's success with that of J.S. Bach, he was in good company with the German master in sticking to a compositional style that he embraced. Sometimes it comes down to deciding whether you want to be remembered as innovative, or as someone whose music you want to hear!

Organ Recital

Introduction Ann Morrissey

A Stanford Sampler
Music of Charles V. Stanford (1852-1924)

Postlude in G Major, Op. 105, No. 2

Fantasia (and Toccata) in D minor, Op. 57

Sonata No. 4, Op. 153 (Celtica)
II - Tema con Variazioni
III - St. Patrick's Breastplate

Broc Hite, Interim Organist

Please join us in the Atrium for light refreshments, immediately following the service of Choral Evensong.

EVENSONG

(The Congregation stands as the hymn is introduced. All join in singing).

***Processional Hymn**
No. 428 For the Healing of the Nations

John Hughes (1873-1932)
CWM RHONDDA

***Acclamation**

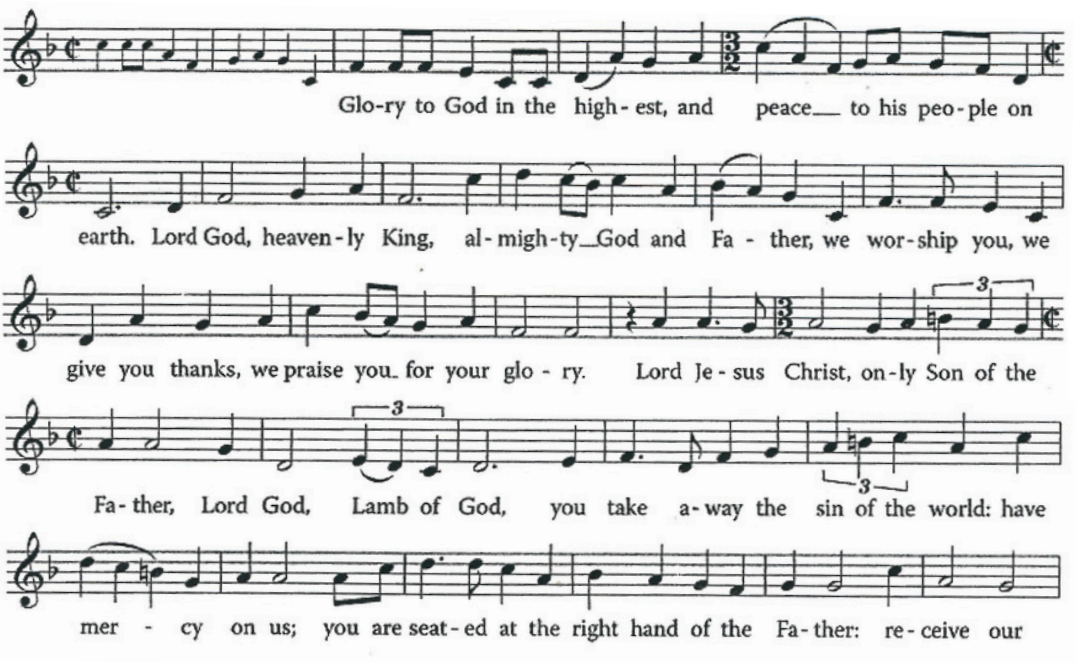
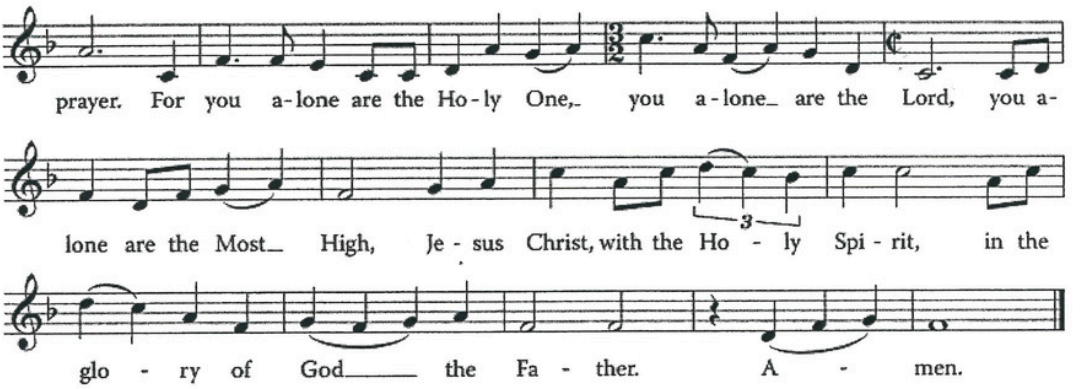
Pastor: O Lord, open thou our lips, and our mouth shall show forth thy praise.
Congregation: **O God, make speed to save us; O Lord, make haste to help us.**
Pastor: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son; and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be; world without end. Amen
Congregation: **Praise ye the Lord!**
Pastor: The Lord's name be praised!

(The Pastor continues.)

Almighty and merciful God, from whom comes all that is good, we praise you for all your mercies: for your goodness that has created us, your grace that has sustained us, your wisdom that has challenged us, your patience that has borne with us, and your love that has redeemed us. Help us to love you and all your creation and to be thankful for all your gifts, by serving you and delighting to do your will. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen**

(Please remain standing as all sing.)

***Gloria**

Robert Powell (b. 1932)



***THE PSALTER** **UMH 814-815**

PSALM 95 -RESPONSE 2

(Congregation may be seated.)

THE FIRST LESSON Psalm 67 NRSV

May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us, (Selah)
that your way may be known upon earth, your saving power among all nations.
Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you.
Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you judge the peoples with equity
and guide the nations upon earth. (Selah)
Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you. The earth has yielded its increase;
God, our God, has blessed us. May God continue to bless us; let all the ends of the earth revere him.

CHORAL ANTHEM

COME, SING UNTO THE LORD — Gabriel Blotor, baritone — Henry Purcell (1659-1695) arr. Mark Schweizer

(Please stand.)

***THE MAGNIFICAT** **UMH 199**

CANTICLE OF MARY

(Please remain standing)

***THE GOSPEL READING** John 14:23-29 — Chris Wages

Jesus replied, "All who love me will do what I say. My Father will love them, and we will come and make our home with each of them. Anyone who doesn't love me will not obey me. And remember, my words are not my own. What I am telling you is from the Father who sent me. I am telling you these things now while I am still with you. But when the Father sends the Advocate as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you.

"I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid. Remember what I told you: I am going away, but I will come back to you again. If you really loved me, you would be happy that I am going to the Father, who is greater than I am. I have told you these things before they happen so that when they do happen, you will believe.

(Sung by the Chancel Choir. The Congregation may be seated.)

THE NUNC DIMITTIS

Benjamin P. Simmons

(Please stand.)

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

The Apostles' Creed **UMH 881**

I believe in God the Father, Almighty, 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 burried; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at 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

(The congregation is seated.)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Pastor: The Lord be with you, and with thy spirit.

Holy Father, the giver of life, we pray for the church universal. Sanctify its life, renew its worship, empower its witness, restore its unity. Remove from your people all pride and every prejudice that dulls their will for unity. Strengthen the work of all who strive to seek the common obedience that binds us together. Heal the divisions that separate your children from one another, that they may keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Congregation: Lord, have mercy upon us.

Pastor: Holy Spirit, you satisfy our longing for a support that earth cannot give and that heaven will not take away. Help us, in recognition of our common dependence on you, to acknowledge our need of one another. Let the oneness of our worship make us one in love and service.

Congregation: Lord, have mercy upon us.

Pastor: O risen Christ, your love for us and for all people is powerful beyond measure. Your love is so vast that nothing will prevail against it. We know this love is trustworthy because of your life of compassion, death on the cross, and resurrection from the dead. Help us, your church, to be more like you, as we extend your hands of grace to all the world, excluding no one.

It is in life and death that we belong to you, holy triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Congregation: Lord, have mercy upon us.

Pastor: Christ, have mercy upon us.

Congregation: Lord, have mercy upon us.

Pastor: Let us pray...

Congregation: Our Father, which 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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever! Amen

Intercessory Prayer

(The Pastor will lift up some specific prayer concerns and will lead us in a time of silent prayer. The altar rails will be open throughout the remainder of the service, for those who would like to come forward for prayer, or a blessing.

(Congregation stands and all join in singing.)

***Hymn 664** Sent Forth by God's Blessing

***Benediction**

***Postlude** Air on the G String THE ASH GROVE
Welsh Folktune

(Once the Pastors and Choir have exited, the congregation may go in peace. Or, if you prefer, you may be seated and enjoy listening to the Postlude.)

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

Please join us in the Atrium for light refreshments, immediately following the service of Choral Evensong.

The Chancel Choir

SOPRANO

Marcia Anderson, Cathy Blackwood, Mary Kay Franklin, Shirley Gannon, Mary Leverett, Jacque Portokalis, Chris Scott, Gail Shanks, Angel Shaw, Sandi Stallings

ALTO

Anna Erixon, Ritchie Hunt, Ann Morrissey, Loretta Mounts, Kathy Pierce, Carolyn Pryor, Liz Smith, Anita Turner, Carolyn Ward

TENOR

Tom Ginn, Joe Hines, Rick Pierce, Rusty Turner

BASS

Tom Blackwood, Gabriel Blotor, Carl Higginbotham, Brad Parker, J.R. Shaw, James Walker

Section Leaders: Angel Shaw, Anna Erixon, Rusty Turner, J.R. Shaw
Choir Care Coordinator: Ritchie Hunt
Music Librarian: Carolyn Ward
Robe Mistress: Loretta Mounts
Choir President: Ann Morrissey
Choir Accompanist: Broc Hite
Choir Director: John W. Beall

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About the Organist

Broc Hite teaches piano privately at the Broc Hite Piano Studio, based at Central United Methodist Church in Rogers, Arkansas. He has also, most recently, accepted the position as Interim Organist for Central United Methodist Church, in Rogers. He was the Organist and Associate Director of Music at First United Methodist Church of Bella Vista from 2012 to 2022. Before relocating to Arkansas in 2010, he had two long-term church jobs in Connecticut. He was Organist and Choir Director at the United Methodist Church of Danbury from 1993 to 2003, and Organist and Music Director at St. Timothy's Episcopal Church in Fairfield from 2004 to 2010. He earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Piano Performance from Purchase College in Purchase, New York, studying piano with German Diez and organ, through independent study, with Robert Fertitta. He earned the Master of Music Degree in Piano Accompanying (Collaborative Piano) at The Juilliard School, studying with Margo Garrett and Marshall Williamson, and classes with Samuel Sanders and Jonathan Feldman. During much of his career, he worked full-time in software development and data analysis. He earned the Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Connecticut.

Serving Tonight

Clergy
Pastors: Rev. Rob Holifield & Rev. Kerry Turnbow

Staff
Dir. of Traditional Music & Worship: John W. Beall
Interim Organist: Broc Hite
Sound Ministry: Sam Gibby

Guest Musicians
Cello: Austin Hinrichs
Baritone: Gabriel Blotor

Lay Volunteers
Scripture Readers: Chris Wages
Crucifer:
Processional Torches:
Acolyte: Brett Wages
Ushers: Steve Erixon, John Mounts, Terry Anderson

Thank You's
Bulletin Printing: Amy Penny
Bulletin Proof-Reading & Folding: Angel Shaw

CENTRAL
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Rogers

Sunday Mornings
8:15 Traditional Communion Service [Chapel]
10:20 Traditional Service [Chapel]
10:30 Contemporary Service [Sanctuary]

For more information, please visit us online
CentralRogers.com