



Start the Week with
The Hampstead
Collective

Bringing live sacred music-making back to Hampstead Parish Church, safely and joyfully every Monday. Seventeen weeks of Bach Cantatas, Handel large-scale works, Sacred Meditations, and Song. Socially-distanced in-person audiences, and live streamed on all social media platforms.

Event Ten: Bach Cantatas

GOTTES ZEIT IST DIE ALLERBESTE ZEIT

2nd November 2020, 7-8pm

BWV 106: Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit
Musikalische Exequien by Heinrich Schütz

Soprano: Marie-Antoinette Stabentheiner

Soprano: Christine Buras

Alto: Jessica Gillingwater

Alto: Amy Lyddon

Tenor: Ruairi Bowen

Tenor: Aidan Coburn

Baritone: Malachy Frame

Bass: Ben McKee

Recorder 1: Miriam Monaghan

Recorder 2: Lydia Gosnell

Viola da Gamba 1: Reiko Ichise

Viola da Gamba 2: Jacob Garside

Organ: Geoffrey Webber



The great *German Requiem* by Johannes Brahms was a bold attempt to provide a monumental musical composition from within Lutheran Germany that would rival the great Latin Requiem Masses of Roman Catholic composers. Perhaps the greatest two antecedents of Brahms's work are performed in today's Start the Week concert: the *Musikalische Exequien* of Heinrich Schütz and the so-called *Actus Tragicus* by Johann Sebastian Bach, BWV 106. But whereas Brahms aimed for a notably agnostic religious element in his Requiem, both Schütz and Bach were both committed and brilliant interpreters of the Lutheran theology surrounding death.

The origins of Bach's work are not certain, and only posthumous sources survive, though most scholars place it around 1707/8, composed when Bach was in his early twenties. A likely point of origin is the death of his uncle Tobias Lämmerhirt, who left a sum of money to his nephew the Organist at Mühlhausen. Concerning Schütz's work there is no doubt, as the person for whom the work was written was a widely loved and respected nobleman who had a significant interest and ability in music, Count Heinrich II of Reuss-Gera, who died in 1636. For a full account of the extraordinary level of planning that went into the design and content of the Requiem, composed by Schütz at the Count's request, see the dissertation by [David Mennicke](#) (digital access available via the U. of Arizona). Amongst a wealth of fascinating information you will see pictures of the actual coffin of the Count, and diagrams of the texts written on it, which form the basis of Schütz's composition.

The *Exequien* comprises three parts: a substantial Concerto (here implying a vocal piece composed in the modern 'concertato' Italian style with solos and multiple texts), a shorter Motet (a piece written in a more traditional style for a Capella (choir) with a single text), and a troped setting of the Nunc dimittis, with three solo voices heard against a Capella. The opening movement is entitled 'Concert in Form ein teudsches Begräbnis – Missa' (*Concerto in the form of a German burial Mass*), thus beginning with the standard Lutheran *Missa brevis* pattern of Kyrie and Gloria, the second movement is a setting of the text that was used for the funeral sermon, and in the last movement the solo voices are marked as Seraphim or 'Blessed Soul' singing the text famously used by Brahms at the conclusion of his *German Requiem*, 'Selig sind die Toten die im dem Herren sterben' (*Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord*). Schütz pays the utmost care to his setting of the complex web of texts chosen for the work, and shows an unsurpassed sensitivity to the German language that perhaps finds its English equivalent in the music of his contemporary Orlando Gibbons. Like Gibbons, Schütz writes in a mostly syllabic style so that the text can clearly be understood, reserving the more extended melismatic writing



Bach may well have known Schütz's work, but many other works by his nearer German contemporaries will have provided inspiration and even musical ideas for his *Actus Tragicus*. Unlike the familiar pattern we find in most of Bach's sacred cantatas (which date from his Leipzig years some twenty years after he composed BWV 106) with distinct arias, recitatives and chorale movements, Bach's composition follows the typical late 17th-century manner perhaps best known in the music of Buxtehude, in which movements often run into one another and follow no particular design. This allows a highly flexible and close setting of the text, as for example when Bach sets 'In ihm sterben wir' (*in him we die*), keeping the faster style of the previous section for 'In ihm' and then changing style and tempo abruptly at the word 'sterben'.

Throughout the work, Bach's musical response to the texts is nothing short of astonishing, and we encounter some of the earliest examples of the sophisticated text-setting that we associate with his great later works such as the Passions. In the multi-layered section that begins 'Es ist der alte Bund', fugal writing for the ATB voices represents the strict 'old law', the Soprano sings in a free melodic manner 'Ja, komm Herr Jesu, komm!' (*Yes, come Lord Jesu, come!*) to represent the new covenant, and the instruments play a chorale for which the (unsung) text begins 'Ich hab mein Sach Gott heimgestellt' (*I have left all that concerns me up to God*), all held together over a walking bass in the continuo part. And then the end of this section is simply breathtaking: the old law can be heard to die with a kind of death throe in the lower voices, and the Soprano is then left suspended in mid-air, with no *continuo* support, for the final 'Herr Jesu!'.

Bach's handling of the specially chosen musical instruments also adds much to the work, especially in the extreme beauty of the opening Sinfonia featuring overlapping recorder parts and rich dissonances from the gambas, but also in other features such as their theological contribution with the chorale already mentioned or the almost comic frantic house-cleaning conjured up by the recorders for 'Bestelle dein Haus!' (*Set your house in order!*), the musical theme of which Bach seems to have lifted from a motet by Christian Boxberg. In the penultimate section the gambas play a purely musical role as an accompaniment to the Alto Nunc dimittis chorale 'Mit Fried' und Freud' ich fahr' dahin' but then suddenly play a melting *piano* phrase when the music almost stops for the words 'sanft und stille' (*gentle and calm*). The obligato instruments have the last word at the conclusion, with a delightful short echo that was typical of the final Alleluia/Amen sections in the music of Buxtehude and his contemporaries, which here seems to be kind of happy farewell (*Tschüss!*) as the deceased vanishes up into heaven, where Bach's perfect musical (7-7) sequences - heard at 'Im Paradies' (*in Paradise*) - wait to greet them.



Elijah ascends to Paradise, from Cranach's illustrations for the first Luther Bible, 1534

Texts and Translations BWV106

1. Sonatina

2a. Chorus

Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit.

In ihm leben, weben und sind wir, solange er will.

In ihm sterben wir zur rechten Zeit, wenn er will.

Acts 17:28

2b. Arioso (Tenor)

Ach, Herr, lehre uns bedenken,

daß wir sterben müssen,

auf daß wir klug werden.

Psalms 90:12

2c. Aria (Bass)

Bestelle dein Haus;

denn du wirst sterben und nicht lebendig bleiben.

Isaiah 38:1

2d. Chorus

Es ist der alte Bund:

Mensch, du mußt sterben!

Ecclesiasticus 14:17

Soprano

Ja, komm, Herr Jesu, komm!

Revelations 22:20

3a. Aria (Alto)

In deine Hände befehl ich meinen Geist;

du hast mich erlöst, Herr, du getreuer Gott

Psalms 31:6

3b. Arioso (Bass) & Chorale (Alto)

Heute wirst du mit mir im Paradies sein.

Luke 23:43

Mit Fried und Freud ich fahr dahin

In Gottes Willen,

Getrost ist mir mein Herz und Sinn,

Sanft und stille.

Wie Gott mir verheißen hat:

Der Tod ist mein Schlaf geworden.

Martin Luther

4. Chorus

Glorie, Lob, Ehr und Herrlichkeit

Sei dir, Gott Vater und Sohn bereit,

Dem heiligen Geist mit Namen!

Die göttlich Kraft

Mach uns sieghaft

Durch Jesum Christum, Amen.

Adam Reusner

1. Sonatina

2a. Chorus

God's time is the very best time.

In him we live, move and are, so long as he wills.

In him we die at the right time, when he wills

2b. Arioso (Tenor)

Ah Lord, teach us to think

that we must die

so that we become wise.

2c. Aria (Bass)

Put your house in order

for you will die and not remain living.

2d. Chorus

It is the old covenant:

Man, you must die!

Soprano

Yes, come, lord Jesus. Come!

3a. Aria (Alto)

Into your hands I commit my spirit;

you have redeemed me, Lord, you faithful God

3b. Arioso (Bass) & Chorale (Alto)

Today you will be with me in paradise.

With peace and joy I travel on

in God's will,

my heart and mind

are confident

As God has promised me:

death has become my sleep

4. Chorus

Glory, praise, honour and majesty

be given to you God father and son,

to the Holy Spirit by name!

God's strength

make us victorious

through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Heinrich Schütz, Musikalische Exequien

Concerto in the shape of a German burial mass

A. [In the place of the Kyrie eleison]

[Job 1:21 / German Kyrie 1]

Naked came I from my mother's body, naked shall I return thither; the Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.

Lord God, Father in heaven, have thou mercy upon us.

[Philippians 1:21, John 1:29 / German Kyrie 2]

Christ is my life, death is my reward. Behold this is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, have thou mercy upon us.

[Romans 14:8 / German Kyrie 3]

Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

Lord God, Holy Spirit, have thou mercy upon us.

B. [In the place of the Glory to God]

[John 3:16]

For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

[Martin Luther, Nun freut euch (1523), v. 5, tune of Es ist gewißlich (15c / Wittenberg, 1529)]

He said to his beloved Son: The time for mercy is at hand, go forth, O worthy crown of my heart, and be the salvation of poor men and save them from the power of sin. Triumph thou over bitter death, and allow them to live with thee.

[1 John 1:7]

The blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, cleanseth us from all sin.

[Ludwig Hembold, Nun lasst uns Gott (1575), v. 6, tune by Nikolaus Selnecker (1587)]

Through him our sin is forgiven and life is granted to us; in heaven we shall have, O God, such precious gifts.

[Philippians 3:20-21]

For our conversation is in heaven; from whence we also look for the Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall cleanse our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.

A. [Als Kyrieleison]

Nakket bin ich von Mutterleibe kommen, nakk et werde ich wiederum dahin fahren. Der Herr hat's gegeben, der Herr hat's genommen, der Name des Herren seid gelobet.

Herr Gott, Vater im Himmel, erbarm dich über uns. Christus ist mein Leben, Sterben is mein Gewinn. Siehe, das ist Gottes Lamm, das der Welt Sünde trägt. Jesu Christe, Gottes Sohn, erbarm dich über uns.

Leben wir so leben wir dem Herren; sterben wir so sterben wir dem Herren. Darum: wir leben oder sterben, so sind wir des Herren. Herr Gott, Heiliger Geist, erbarm dich über uns.

B. [Als Glory sei Gott]

Also hat Gott die Welt geliebt, daß seinen eingebornen Sohn gab, auf das alles die an ihn glauben nicht verloren werden, sondern das ewige Leben haben.

Er sprach zu seinem lieben Sohn: Die Zeit is hie zu erbarmen; fahr hin, meins Herzens werte Kron und sei das Heil der Armen und hilf ihn' aus der Sünden Not, erwürg für sie den bitteren Tod und laß sie mit dir Leben.

Das Blut Jesu Christi, des Sohnes Gottes, machet uns rein von allen Sünden.

Durch ihn ist uns vergeben die Sünd, geschenkt das Leben. Im Himmel solln wir haben, O Gott, wie große Gaben.

Unser Wandel ist im Himmel, von danen wir auch warten des Heilandes Jesu Christi, des Herren, welcher unsern nichtigen Leib verklären wird, daßer ähnlich werde seinem verklärten Leibe.

[Johann Leon, Ich hab mein sach (1582), v. 3, tune: 16c]
Here all is a vale of tears, fear, want, and gloom
everywhere. Our stay here is but a small time, full of
adversity, and who ponders it is always troubled.

[Isaiah, 1:18]
Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as
snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as
wool.

[Ludwig Hembold, Nun lasst uns Gott (1575), v. 5 with
tune by Nikolaus Selnecker (1587)]
His word, his baptism, his last supper, defend us from all
trouble, faith in the Holy Spirit teaches us to trust in
them.

[Isaiah, 26:20]
Come, my people, enter thou into a chamber, and shut
the doors about thee: hide thyself for a little moment,
until the storm is overpast.

[Wisdom 3: 1-3]
The righteous souls are in God's hand, and there no
torment toucheth them. For those of no understanding
they appeared to die (but they are in peace), and their
departure was reckoned as distress, and their going forth
as destruction (but they are in peace).

[Psalm 73: 25-26]
Lord, if I have thee only, I long for none other in heaven
and upon earth.
If my flesh and my soul do fail, yet thou art, O God, the
strength of my heart and my portion forever.

[Martin Luther (text and tune), Mit Fried und Freud
(1524)]
He is the salvation and blessed light of the Gentiles, to
enlighten, to nourish those who know thee not. To his
people of Israel he is the prize, honor, joy, and bliss.

[Psalm 90:10]
Our life endures threescore and ten years, and if we
prosper fourscore years; and at its best it is but work and
sorrow.

[Johannes Heune (text and tune) Ach wie elend (1586),
v. 1] Ah, how unhappy is our time everywhere on this
earth : quite soon man lies below in the earth; all men
must die. Everywhere in this vale of tears there is trouble
and effort, even when thou dost prosper.

Es its allhier ein Jam mortal, Angst, Not und Trübsal
über all; des Bleibens is ein kleine Ze it, voller
Mühselig keit, und wer 's bedenkt, ist immer im
Streit.

Wenn eure Sünde gleich blutrot wäre, soll sie doch
schneeweiß werden, wenn sie gleich ist wie ros in farb,
soll sie doch wie Wölle werden.

Sein Wort, sein Tauf, sein Nachtmahl dient wider
allen Unfall; der Heilige Geist im Glauben lehrt uns
darauf vertrauen.

Gehe hin, mein Volk, in eine Kammer und schließ
die Tür nach dir zu . Verbirge di ch einen klein en
Augenblick , bis der Zorn vorübergehe.

Die Gerechten Seelen sind in Gottes Hand, und
keine Qual rühret sie an. Für den Unvers tändigen
werden sie angesehen als stürben, aber sie sind in
Frieden, und ihr Abschied wird für eine Peine
gerechnet, und ihr Hinfahren für Verderben, aber sie
sind in Frieden.

Herr, wenn ich nur dich habe, so frage ich nichts
nach Himmel und Erden.
Wenn mir gleich Leib und Seele verschmacht', so bist
du, Gott, allzeit meines Herzens Trost und mein
Teil.

Er ist das heil und selig Licht für die Heiden, zu
erleuchten, die dich kennen nicht, und zu weiden. Er
is seines Volks Israel der Preis, Ehr, Freud, und
Wonne.

Unser leben währet siebenzig Jahr, und wenn's hoch
kömmt, so sind achzig Jahr , und wenn es köstlich
gewesen ist, so ist es Müh' und Arbeit gewesen.

Ach, wie elend ist unser Zeit all hier auf dieser Erden,
gar bald der Mensch darniederleit, wir müssen
alle sterben, allhierin diesem Jammertal, ist Müh und
Arbeit überall auch wenn dir 's wohlgelinget.

[Job 19:25-26]

I know that my redeemer liveth, and he will raise me from earth, and at the last I shall be clothed with mine own skin, and in my flesh I shall see God.

[Nikolaus Hermann, Wenn mein Stündlein (1560),
tune by Schütz?]

Since thou are risen from death I shall not remain in the grave. Thy rising up is my highest comfort: thou canst dispel the fear of death, for where thou art, so shall I go, that I may always live and be with you, therefore I go forth in gladness.

[Genesis 32:27]

Lord, I will not let go except thou bless me.

[Martin Luther, Nun freut euch (1523), vv. 7:1 -4 and 8:5-7, tune 15c]

He said to me: Hold fast to me, then shall all good attend thee. I give myself entirely for thee, thus I will defend thee. Death has been swallowed by my life, my innocence carries away thy sin, thus thou dost become blessed.

Motet: Lord, if I have thee only

[Psalm 73: 25-26]

Lord, if I have thee only, I long for none other in heaven and upon earth . If my flesh and my soul do fail, yet thou art, O God, the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

Canticle: Lord, now lettest thou thy servant

[Luke 2:29-32]

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people of Israel.

Blessed Soul and Seraphim: Blessed are the dead

[Revelation 14:3 and Wisdom 3:1]

Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, they rest from their labour and their works follow them. They are in the hand of the Lord and there no torment toucheth them. Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord.

Ich weiß , daß mein Erlöser lebt, und er wird mir hernach aus Erden auferwecken, und werde darnach mit dieser meiner Haut umgeben werden, und werde in meinem Fleisch Gott sehen.

Weil du vom Tod entstanden bist, werd ich im Grab nicht bleiben, mein höchster Trost dein Aufahrt ist, Todsfurch t kannst du v ertreiben, denn wo du bist, da komm ich hin, daß ich stets bei dir leb und bin, drum fahr ich hin mit Freuden.

Herr, ich lasse dich nicht, du segnest mich denn.

Er sprach zu mir: Halt dich and mich, es soll dir itzt gelingen; ich geb mich selber ganz für dich , da will ich fü r dich ring en. Den Tod verschlingt das Leben mein, mein Unschuld Trägt die Sünde dein; da bist du selig worden.

Motette: Herr, wenn ich nur dich habe

Herr, wenn ich nur dich habe, so frage ich nichts nach Himmel und Erden. Wenn mir gleich Leib und Seele ver schmacht', so bist du doch, Gott, allzeit meines Herzens Trost und mein Teil.

Canticum: Herr, nun lässest du deinen Diener

Herr, nun lasses t du deinen Diener in Frieden fahren, wie du gesagt hast; denn meine Augen haben deinen Heiland gesehen, welchem du be reitet h ast vor allen Völkern , en Licht, zu erleuchten die Heiden, und zum Preis deines Volks Israel.

Beata anima cum seraphinis: Selig sind die Toten

Selig sind die Toten die im dem Herren sterben, sie ruhen von ihrer Arbeit. und ihre Werke folgen ihnen nach. Sie sind in der Hand des Herr en, und keine Qual rühr et sie. Selig sind die Toten die im dem Herren sterben.

If you develop any symptoms of Coronavirus within 14 days of attending Hampstead Parish Church, you should refer to www.nhs.uk or call 111 for advice on getting tested. In the event of testing positive, you must inform the NHS Test and Trace service of your attendance at Hampstead Parish Church.

NEXT WEEK

We are reviewing our next steps as a Collective in light of recent Government announcements. We await clarification from the Department for Culture, Media, and Sport, but we are sorry to say that our remaining November events will not be open to in person audiences. We thank you for your full-hearted support thus far, and look forward to welcoming you back in December, safely and joyfully



BECOME A FRIEND OF THE COLLECTIVE

We're a friendly bunch, and we'd love you to share in our Collective endeavours. For just £50, you can gain access to exclusive digital content, as well as our profound Collective gratitude!

<https://www.thehampsteadcollective.com/become-a-friend-of-the-collective>

hampsteadcollective@gmail.com