

Music Blurbs for 2-10-19

News and Notes:

This Sunday's music will include for a prelude one of the many fabulous Bach settings of "All Glory Be to God on High." We will also sing "Here I am," "Jesus calls us o'er the tumult," and "Will you come and follow me." The choir will sing "You have come down to the lakeshore."

Sunday Bulletins:

Today's prelude comes from a Bach collection of chorale (hymn) preludes called the Leipzig Chorales or sometimes, The Great Eighteen. The primary source that we have is a manuscript entitled P271. The bulk of it was compiled around 1740 but additions were made later as well. The chorale preludes all have earlier versions and it is thought those versions were composed when Bach was court organist for the Duke of Weimar (1710-1714). At that time his duties actually included compositions for the organ. Unlike other collections, there was no organizing principle. Bach seemed to be taking his own earlier works and improving on them and what the collection seems to represent is a variety of compositional techniques that Bach inherited from his predecessors to which he added his own new elements. Bach is often attributed with fusing characteristics of other national styles on to German music.

Today's chorale prelude is based on the Lutheran "Allein Gott in der Höh sei Her" The text is an adaptation of the "Gloria in excelsis" from the Latin Mass. This hymn was sung every Sunday in Leipzig which may account for the fact that Bach wrote more settings of it than any other hymn. The setting combines North German chorale fantasy with Italian ritornello (a phrase that keeps 'returning') with the accompaniment constantly alluding to the melody of the chorale. Towards the end, in an unusual move for the style, the melody breaks into a cadenza before returning to North German technique with a ten measure closing section floating over the sustained final 'G' of the melody.