

Music Blurb for 4-28-19, Earth Day and Easter 2

News and Notes

This week we'll sing "The day of resurrection," and at 10:30 for Earth Day we'll sing "The blue green hills of earth" from the Missa Gaia. The choir will sing "O sons and daughters," a telling of the Thomas story, accompanied on drums by our own Todd Thomas.

Sunday Bulletins

8:00 a.m.:

The text of today's hymn, "All creatures of our God and King," comes from St. Francis's "The Canticle of brother sun and of all creatures." It is an early example of Italian vernacular religious song. In the thirteenth century popular religious songs that would have been sung outside the context of church services started to flourish. Tradition has it that St. Francis wrote this in the final year of his life when he was in great pain and suffering. Somewhere between 1899 and 1919, William Draper, a Yorkshire rector, adapted the text and put it into the hymn form with which we are familiar. It was intended for a schoolchildren's Pentecost Festival in Leeds. In Italian "per" can mean "for" or "from" and Draper flipped the meaning of praising God "for" the various creatures and natural phenomena to praise to God "from" them. Draper's text was coupled with our present tune LASST UNS ERFREUEN in a 1919 British school hymnal. It afterwards appeared in several hymnals of various denominations. In the Episcopal Church, it wasn't until *Hymns III* in 1981 that it made its first appearance, and then was included in our present hymnal the following year.

The tune LASST UNS ERFREUEN first appeared in a collection of Catholic spiritual church songs in Cologne Germany in 1623. Ralph Vaughn Williams first introduced the tune to English speaking hymnody in his *English Hymnal* of 1906. In that groundbreaking hymnal, he sourced tunes and texts from outside the usual English hymnody to enhance and enrich the repertory. This is the same hymnal that also introduced SINE NOMINE ("For all the saints") and SALVA FESTE DIES ("Hail thee festival day"). English speaking congregations have been singing this German Catholic hymn tune ever since.

10:30 a.m.:

Today's choir anthem is based on the historic Easter hymn "O filii et filiae" (O sons and daughters). This arrangement features *a capella* singers accompanied by drum. The text is a type of narrative carol from the late Middle Ages. The original Latin text first appears in print in an untitled booklet printed somewhere between 1518 and 1536. There is no evidence that it was used in a liturgical context until modern times. The first English translation occurred in 1748 for an Evening Office collection for the

Church of England, followed in 1851 by the well-known translator of Latin to English texts John Mason Neale. In our hymnal the text has been divided in to the portions dealing with Easter and the portions relating the Thomas story (203 and 206 respectively). Today's anthem uses the Thomas portion.

The music is likely a French folk tune or carol probably from the late fourteenth century. It first appeared in print in 1623 in a French collection of hymns and carols. The earliest English version was the music for the 1748 English translation for the Church of England. The text and music even found their way to the US as early as a 1787 Philadelphia publication for use in Roman Catholic churches. It was first introduced in to use in the Episcopal Church in the 1916 hymnal and remains there today. The version used for hymn 203 is in three/four time. Since this was originally a folk tune, this is probably like the original. At some point in the nineteenth century there was the supposition that since this was Medieval, it must therefore be Gregorian chant. So the version with all equal notes a la Gregorian chant is the version used for hymn 206.