



# MISSA AEDIS CHRISTI



Sacred choral music commissioned and performed  
*by* The Cathedral Singers of Christ Church, Oxford  
*with* Hilary Punnett & Simon Hogan

## Tracklist

## Introduction

# MISSA AEDIS CHRISTI

1	<b>A Hymn of George Bell</b> . . . . .	4.24	<b>An Aquinian Sequence</b>		
	<i>David Bednall</i>		<i>Anthony Gray</i>		
	<b>Missa Aedis Christi</b>				
	<i>Grayston Ives</i>				
2	<b>i Kyrie</b> . . . . .	2.22	9 <b>v Lauda Sion</b> . . . . .	8.51	
3	<b>A New Year Carol</b> . . . . .	3.28	10 <b>The God Who Sees Me</b> . . . . .	6.12	
	<i>Ben Rowarth</i>		<i>Sarah Rimkus</i>		
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4	<b>iii Sanctus</b> . . . . .	1.42	11 <b>i Cantate Domino</b> . . . . .	5.21	
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6	<b>v Agnus Dei</b> . . . . .	3.25	13 <b>Regina Caeli</b> . . . . .	4.32	
			<i>Alison Willis</i>		
7	<b>Rise Heart</b> . . . . .	5.03	14 <b>Toccata</b> . . . . .	6.52	
	<i>Bertie Baigent</i>		<i>Cheryl Frances-Hoad</i>		
	<b>Missa Aedis Christi</b>				
8	<b>ii Gloria</b> . . . . .	3.04	<b>Total running time</b> . . . . .	<b>61.14</b>	

### About the Cathedral Singers of Christ Church New Music Project, 2020, the results of which can be found on this disc

This project was conceived to provide the choir with new contemporary music which would be singable, appropriate to various seasons of the church year, and, above all, be highly usable as part of the choir's daily offerings of music in Christ Church Cathedral. Funding was generously provided by the Friends of Christ Church Cathedral, and it was elected to adopt a hybrid approach to commissioning.

Grayston Ives was approached to write a Missa Brevis as the central item of the project. Surrounding this, we were looking for a constellation of new anthems that the choir could use during its various 'sessions,' which consist of daily services (usually Choral Evensong) during times when the Cathedral

Choir is away or otherwise engaged. We employed an 'invitation to tender' model, inviting interested composers to submit a plan for the composition they wished to write, including suggested text, and a suggestion of style or format. This process yielded a large number of interesting and diverse proposals. The result was commissions for Bertie Baigent, Sarah Rimkus, Ben Rowarth, and Alison Willis, who produced work suitable for occasions including New Year and Eastertide, as well as general-use anthems.

*James Potter*  
**Director of the Cathedral Singers**  
2016-2022

## Programme Note

**A Hymn of George Bell** sets text by former Christ Church scholar and Archbishop of Canterbury, George Bell. Bell was a patron of the arts, and an anti-Nazi activist during the Second World War. This rich and sympathetic setting of his text celebrates God's creation in praise, using in a mostly homophonic texture with rhythmic and energized organ accompaniment, which expresses the joy of the text. A slower, unaccompanied middle section tenderly juxtaposes the beauty and stillness of nature, using compound time to evoke the peaks and troughs of the sea and mountains. We then return to the opening texture of the opening, finishing with a triumphant statement, energetically accompanied by a dense texture of rich chords on the organ. The anthem was written for the Cathedral Singers for the occasion of their thirtieth anniversary, under their then Director, John Padley.

The **Missa Aedis Christi** (or, Christ Church Mass) is a simple yet beautifully constructed mass for four voices, which uses flowing, plainchant-like melodies throughout. In the **Kyrie**, we hear this motif from the outset, beginning with the falling minor third, and establishing this interval and melody as a theme throughout the mass. Here, this is initiated by the tenors and basses and accompanied throughout by wistful and warm rolled harmonies in the organ part. In the **Gloria**, we hear this same theme expanded upon in a more rhythmic opening section, and later, in the 'qui tollis', using solo quartet accompanied by choir. After this quieter section, we then regain the rhythmic energy of the opening, finishing with a declamatory yet flowing 'Amen.'

The **Sanctus** and **Benedictus** use this minor third in inversion, opening with a rising, plainchant-esque melody which

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begins with the choir in unison. The organ accompaniment of the Sanctus hearkens back to the slow, lush, rolled chords of the **Kyrie**, and both movements use a mix of unison and part singing to keep the flowing, plainchant feeling throughout. The **Agnus** presents a stark and penitential opening with bare octaves in the organ accompaniment, and a rising semitone movement in the upper voices. The movement returns to this intervallic idea several times throughout and uses the familiar rhetoric of falling pairs in the 'dona nobis pacem' to create a weeping sensation, finishing more warmly and hopefully in the major, representing the desire and promise in the sentiment 'grant us peace'. The overall result of the mass is a successful mix of modern and ancient, which perfectly encapsulates the spirit of Christ Church Cathedral: an ancient site of worship, still alive with song today.

**A New Year Carol** by Ben Rowarth combines the text of Hans Christian Andersen's poignant and deeply spiritual story *The Little Match Girl* with an anonymous carol about New Year, which was also used by Britten in his *Friday Afternoons*. The combination of the two is translucent, with the two texts sliding like panes of glass in front of each other at various times. Andersen's story is the tale of a small girl, who, when she cannot sell her matches on New Year's Eve, freezes to death in the cold, right in front of warm and inviting house and shop windows, all while imagining herself lifted to heaven with her grandmother in bliss.

The story juxtaposes her extreme poverty and struggle, with the warmth, light, and relative wealth of those inside the windows. Rowarth uses a folk-like melody to set the traditional carol against a quasi-recitative melody to set Andersen's text. The combination

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reminds us that while we ‘turn the old year go’ and welcome in the new year, to look outside the window at those in need and lend a helping hand.

Bertie Baigent’s *Rise Heart* is a macaronic anthem juxtaposing the poem *Easter* by George Herbert with the Latin text for the second responsory at matins for Easter Monday. The anthem opens with the repetition of warm and increasingly invigorating statements of ‘Rise Heart; thy Lord is risen,’ changing to pairs of voice parts, which is accompanied by a harp-like texture in the organ, for the words ‘Sing his praise without delays.’ Following a move to a polyphonic crescendo as we are invited to follow the story of the resurrection: ‘that thou likewise with him mayst rise,’ we are gently led into a middle section with an organ solo accompanied by *sotto voce* choir singing the Latin responsory text. The texture of the opening is then

mirrored in reverse as we return to the text of *Easter*, finishing with fading, shimmering statements of ‘Alleluia!’ This anthem expresses the joy and warmth at the Easter message, while inviting the listener to consider the resurrection story as something more personal and intimate than purely triumphant and victorious.

*An Aquinian Sequence* by Anthony Gray is a set of preludes and fantasies based on the plainsong melodies of the devotional texts of St Thomas Aquinas. The pieces are designed to function both as stand-alone entities, performable separately; or, when played together, to explore the full range and depth and colour in the melodies. They respond musically to Aquinas’ texts, in poetic translations by Edward Joyner. Its first performance was given by Simon Hogan at Southwark Cathedral on the feast of Corpus Christi, May 2024. *Lauda Sion* is the fifth movement, and is lively from the

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outset, with joyful rhythms in the manuals dancing over the top of the chant which underpins the texture in the pedals.

*The God Who Sees Me* is an anthem which celebrates identity and the idea of this identity being known and accepted by God. It begins with a chant-like, homophonic texture, evoking an internal and intimate understanding with God. The texture then becomes more polyphonic, opening gradually and climaxing at the words ‘I am that I am,’ an acknowledgement of confidence in self-identity. It finishes with a soprano solo accompanied by the choir, who recede into the background singing a reiteration of the opening text, fading away gradually towards the end. In the book of Genesis, the first person to name God is Hagar, an African slave woman. She calls Him “The God who sees me.” These themes of naming, the name of God, and identity recur throughout the

Bible. Acknowledgement and acceptance of the identities of individuals and groups is also a frequent topic of discussion in public life today. [Sarah] wrote this anthem in celebration of God as an entity that not only knows us thoroughly, but truly accepts and celebrates every single part of ourselves. (*Note with content from Sarah Rimkus, adapted by Hilary Punnett*).

The *Book of Common Prayer* outlines that at Evening Prayer, one may use the psalm *Cantate Domino* in place of the *Magnificat*, and the psalm *Deus misereatur* in place of the *Nunc dimittis*. It is instructed before the Cantate Domino: ‘...Or else this Psalm, except it be on the Nineteenth Day of the Month, when it is read in the ordinary Course of the Psalms.’ Today, we almost exclusively sing the *Magnificat* and *Nunc dimittis* at Evensong, and this alternative option is rarely taken. These modern

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fauxbourdons settings of the two '**Alternative Canticles**' by James Potter use the plainchant tones (VII.2 and Tonus peregrinus) for the psalms in alternation with full choir sections which expand musically and harmonically on the tones. This simple yet effective setting is successful in its use of melody and harmony to create something reflective for Evensong that combines the old with the new.

Alison Willis's **Regina Caeli** sets this ancient hymn for Eastertide using the traditional plainchant hymn melody, first in a bass solo and then in the choir. What begins simply as a solo with organ accompaniment gradually builds as we begin the 'Alleluias.' Here, we have a triplet figuration reminiscent of the plainchant in the organ, juxtaposed with a canon of quavers between the bass and alto section, and increasingly insistent harmonic support from the

other voices, building to an enormous climax, reminding us of the many voices of Christians around the world, who have been singing these same plainchant melodies through the ages. This full texture then stops suddenly, bringing us back to the simplicity of the opening, with a gentle reiteration of the initial plainchant hymn.

Cheryl Frances-Hoad's **Toccata** was composed for Simon Hogan and first performed by him at Christ Church in July 2023. Much of the motivic material is based on the initials S. H. ('es' and H are the German names for the notes E flat and B natural), and some of the longer melodies of this piece spell out 'Simon Hogan' in full, using a variety of ways to allocate musical notes to letters including solfège for letters like 'm'. The piece is designed to be engaging and virtuosic in nature, showing off both performer and instrument to best effect.

## Performers

### Soprano

Karen Benny  
Jill Bentley  
Jane Cuning  
Sarah Davies *i*  
Claire Oakley *ii*  
Maria Scott  
Xanthe Sturt Taylor  
Maria Teresa Maddison *iii*  
Michele Winter  
Hilary Whitehouse

### Tenor

William Anderson  
Tim Ault *iii*  
Mike Barthorpe *iv*  
Matthias Winkel  
Owen Winter

### Alto

Eleanor Baylis  
Susan Beardmore  
Hannah Capstick *iii*  
Lucia Costanzo  
Deborah Kong  
Marcia Northeast  
Sally Prime  
Alexander Turner  
Katharina Winkel  
Gillian Woodley

### Bass

Tom Anstey  
Daniel Couchman *v*  
Gerard Lim  
Mike Montagu  
David Relf  
Peter Read *iii*  
Francis Rumsey *iii*  
Daniel Talbot-Ponsonby

### Soloists

*i* The God Who Sees Me, *ii* Cantate Domino, *iii* Gloria, *iv* Deus Misereatur, *v* Regina Caeli

## Texts

### 1 A Hymn of George Bell

*David Bednall*

God, to whom all creatures bring  
Psalm and praise and thanksgiving,  
Help us from our hearts to say  
Hallowed be Thy name today.

Grant that, as Thy choir on high  
sings in perfect harmony,  
So may we with one accord  
make sweet music to our Lord.

Birds with rich melodious notes  
praise thee from a million throats.  
Mountain, river, valley, sea,  
tree and flow'r in praise agree:  
Beauteous Nature with one voice,  
birds and mankind rejoice.

Teach us Lord to answer then,  
join our songs and cry Amen,  
Till the Universe proclaim  
'Holy, holy, is Thy name.'

### 3 A New Year Carol

*Ben Rowarth*

**Text: Trad. & Hans Christian Anderson  
(selections from *The Little Match Girl*)**

It was so terribly cold. Snow was falling,  
[and] it was almost dark.

[On] the last evening of the year in the  
cold and gloom a poor little girl, bare-  
head and bare-foot, was walking through  
the streets.

[The] snowflakes fell on her long fair hair.  
In all the windows lights were shining...  
for it was New Years Eve.

Here we bring new water  
from the well so clear,  
for to worship God  
with this Happy New Year.

*Sing levy dew, sing levy dew,  
the water and the wine,  
The seven bright gold wires,  
and the bugles that do shine.*

Sing reign of fair maid  
with gold upon her toe,  
open you the west door  
and turn the Old Year go.

*Sing levy dew, sing levy dew,  
the water and the wine,  
The seven bright gold wires,  
and the bugles that do shine.*

Sing reign of fair maid  
with gold upon her chin,  
open you the east door  
and let the New Year in.

*Sing levy dew, sing levy dew,  
the water and the wine,  
The seven bright gold wires,  
and the bugles that do shine.*

## Texts

### 7 Rise Heart

*Bertie Baigent*

**Macaronic Text from Easter by George  
Herbert (1593–1633) and from the  
Second Responsory at Matins on Easter  
Monday, based on John 10:11 and  
1 Corinthians 5:7-8.**

Rise heart; thy Lord is risen.  
Sing his praise  
Without delays,  
Who takes thee by the hand,  
that thou likewise  
With him mayst rise:

*Surrexit pastor  
bonus,  
qui animam suam  
posuit ovibus suis,  
et pro grege suo  
mori dignatus est,  
alleluia.*

The good shep-  
herd has arisen,  
who laid down his  
life for his sheep,  
and for his flock  
deigned to die,  
alleluia.

That, as his death calcined thee to dust,  
His life may make thee gold, and much  
more just. Alleluia!



## Texts

### 10 The God Who Sees Me

*Sarah Rimkus*

O Lord, You have searched me  
and known me.  
You know my sitting down  
and my rising up;  
You understand my thoughts afar off.  
You comprehend my path  
and my lying down,  
And are acquainted with all my ways.  
For there is not a word on my tongue,  
But behold, O Lord,  
You know it altogether.  
Search me, O God, and know my heart:  
try me, and know my thoughts.  
(*Psalms 139*)

Jacob said, "Tell me, I pray thee,  
thy name."  
"Why do you ask after my name?"  
(*Genesis 32:29*)

God said, "I am that I am."  
"This is my name forever,  
the name you shall call me

from generation to generation."  
(*Exodus 3:14-15*)

[Hagar] gave this name to the Lord  
who spoke to her:

"You are the God who sees me,"  
for she said,  
"I have now seen the One who sees me."  
(*Genesis 16:13*)

### 11 Cantate Domino

*James Potter*

#### Psalm 98

O sing unto the Lord a new song:  
for he hath done marvellous things.  
With his own right hand and with his holy  
arm: hath he gotten himself the victory.

The Lord declared his salvation: his  
righteousness hath he openly shewed in  
the sight of the heathen.

He hath remembered his mercy and  
truth toward the house of Israel: and all  
the ends of the world have seen the  
salvation of our God.

## Texts

### 12 Deus Misereatur

*James Potter*

#### Psalm 67

God be merciful unto us and bless us:  
and shew us the light of his  
countenance and be merciful unto us:  
That thy way may be known upon earth:  
thy saving health among all nations.

Let the people praise thee O God:  
yea let all the people praise thee.  
O let the nations rejoice and be glad:  
for thou shalt judge the folk righteously  
and govern the nations upon earth.  
Let the people praise thee O God:  
let all the people praise thee.  
Then shall the earth bring forth her  
increase: and God even our own  
God shall give us his blessing.

God shall bless us: and all the  
ends of the world shall fear him.  
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.

Shew yourselves joyful unto the Lord all  
ye lands: sing, rejoice and give thanks.  
Praise the Lord upon the harp: sing to the  
harp with a psalm of thanksgiving.

With trumpets also and shawms:  
O shew yourselves joyful before  
the Lord the King.

Let the sea make a noise and all that  
therein is: the round world and they that  
dwell therein.

Let the floods clap their hands and let the  
hills be joyful together before the Lord:  
for he cometh to judge the earth.

With righteousness shall he judge the  
world: and the people with equity.

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.

## Texts & Translations

### Missae Aedis Christi Grayston Ives

#### 2 Kyrie

*Kyrie, eleison.  
Christe, eleison.  
Kyrie, eleison.*

Lord, have mercy.  
Christ, have mercy.  
Lord, have mercy.

#### 4 Sanctus

*Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus  
Dominus Deus Sabaoth:  
pleni sunt caeli  
et terra gloria tua.  
Hosanna in excelsis.*

Holy, holy, holy  
Lord God of hosts:  
heaven and earth  
are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.

#### 5 Benedictus

*Benedictus qui venit  
in nomine Domini.  
Hosanna in excelsis.*

Blessed is he who comes  
in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.

#### 6 Agnus Dei

*Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,  
miserere nobis.  
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,  
miserere nobis.  
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,  
dona nobis pacem.*

Lamb of God, who takes away the  
sin of the world, have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, who takes away the  
sin of the world, have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, who takes away the  
sin of the world, grant us peace.

## Texts & Translations

#### 8 Gloria

*Gloria in excelsis Deo.  
Et in terra pax  
hominibus bonae voluntatis.  
Laudamus te, benedicimus te,  
adoramus te, glorificamus te.  
Gratias agimus tibi  
propter magnam gloriam tuam,  
Domine Deus, Rex caelestis,  
Deus Pater omnipotens.  
Domine Fili unigenite,  
Jesu Christe,  
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei,  
Filius Patris,  
qui tollis peccata mundi,  
miserere nobis.  
Qui tollis peccata mundi,  
suscipe deprecationem nostram.  
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,  
miserere nobis.  
Quoniam tu solus Sanctus;  
tu solus Dominus;  
tu solus Altissimus,  
Jesu Christe,  
cum Sancto Spiritu  
in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.*

Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace to  
his people on earth.  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
almighty God and Father,  
we worship you,  
we give you thanks,  
we praise you for your glory.  
Lord Jesus Christ,  
only Son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away  
the sin of the world:  
have mercy on us;  
you are seated at the right  
hand of the Father:  
receive our prayer.  
For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High,  
Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.

## Texts & Translations

### 13 Regina Caeli

*Alison Willis*

**Antiphon for use at  
Compline in Eastertide**

*Regina Caeli, laetare; alleluia.  
Quia quem meruisti portare;  
alleluia.*

*Resurrexit sicut dixit; alleluia.  
Ora pro nobis Deum; alleluia.  
Gaude et laetare, Virgo Maria;  
alleluia.*

*Quia surrexit Dominus vere;  
alleluia.*

Queen of Heaven, rejoice, alleluia.  
For He whom you did merit to bear,  
alleluia.

Has risen, as He said, alleluia.  
Pray for us to God, alleluia.  
Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary,  
alleluia.

For the Lord has truly risen,  
alleluia.

## Biographies

### **The Cathedral Singers of Christ Church**

is the mixed voice voluntary choir of Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, and one of the most active choirs of its type in the country. Its role is to maintain the Cathedral's daily pattern of sung worship at times when the Cathedral Choir is on vacation, amounting to over a hundred sung services a year. The choir comprises talented musicians ranging

from students and young professionals to professorial fellows and retirees. Its repertoire spans Renaissance polyphony to contemporary music.

In addition to its liturgical duties, the choir's activities extend to concerts, tours and workshops. The choir also has an educational role, sponsoring sixth form scholarships for young singers and organists.





The recording at Keble College Chapel, Oxford, August 2024

## Biographies

**Hilary Punnett** is a freelance conductor, organist, and singer with a background working as conductor and organist in numerous cathedrals and churches, having held positions at Chelmsford Cathedral, Lincoln Cathedral, Southwell Minster, All Saints', Northampton, and Christ Church Cathedral, Montreal. She regularly gives solo organ recitals around the UK and has appeared on several CDs, including Southwell's acclaimed recording of the Cavaillé-Coll organs in Sées cathedral, and Northampton Bach Choir's *Be Merry* CD.

Alongside her work as Director of the Cathedral Singers of Christ Church, Oxford, she is Musical Director of the Stondon Singers, RSCM Voices South, and Director of the Girl Choristers of Platinum Choral Foundation. As a conductor, she has become known for her creative programming, her work with amateurs and young people, and has regularly collaborated with the RSCM both as course tutor, and more recently as examiner for the Voice for Life scheme.



Hilary holds an MMus in Organ Performance from McGill University, as well as an FRCO, and finishes her MA in Choral Conducting at the Royal Academy of Music in 2025.

## Biographies

**Simon Hogan** is the Sub-Organist and Assistant Director of Music at Southwark Cathedral, a post which he combines with being Organist to the Cathedral Singers of Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, and a portfolio of freelance work in and around London.

Simon's musical life began as a chorister at St Mary Redcliffe, Bristol. Following organ scholarships at Bristol and Salisbury Cathedrals, he moved to London in 2008 to study organ performance at the Royal College of Music, where he subsequently graduated with first class honours. In his final year he held the Organ Scholarship at St Paul's Cathedral, before becoming Assistant Director of Music at Southwell Minster, a post he held for seven years.

Simon is an active recitalist and as such has given concerts in major venues around the UK and beyond. He is also the principal organist for JAM, an organisation which commissions and performs new music for brass, organ and choir by leading contemporary composers.



## Credits

# MISSA AEDIS CHRISTI

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and in commissioning the music it records.

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### Cover image

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