100 years ago, the First World War came to its end on 11-11-1918. Just over a month before the signing of the armistice, the English composer Sir Charles Hubert Hastings Parry passed away, never seeing the end of the War. Parry is well known for his ceremonial music, most notably his Jerusalem, a setting of William Blake’s “And did those feet in ancient time” inspired by an apocryphal story of Jesus and Joseph of Arimathea visiting England. Blake’s multifaceted text depicts Jerusalem as metaphorical to both England and to Heaven—and envisages the Second Coming of Christ and the New Jerusalem—bringing universal peace and flourishing.

Written in the final years of his life, Parry’s six Songs of Farewell emerge out of the simultaneous failing health of the composer and the First World War. The carnage of the War weighed doubly on Parry, who had studied in Germany and who had a great affinity for German music and culture. Parry also lost many colleagues, students and friends in the conflict, and the composer knew the nation of his youth would be irrevocably lost in the war. The Songs of Farewell reflect on the transience of life and Parry’s uncertain faith, approaching death, and questions of eternity.

The text of the first movement, My soul there is a country, uses contrasting martial and tranquil imagery to depict the peace of Heaven above the noise and danger on the earth. Vaughan’s poetry depicts Christ, who commands the ranks of Heavens, being “born in a manger... in pure love descends to die here, for thy sake.” Parry’s setting grows in strength toward the end, with ascending exclamations to leave foolish wanderings and trust in the security of “One who never changes... thy God, thy life, thy cure.” The next movement, I know my soul hath power, continues in a didactic nature, contrasting the greatness of human potential with the feebleness, foolishness, and vileness of being human—which Parry portrays with disjunct and interrupted phrases. Never weather-beaten sail expands the texture to 5 voices and uses arching vocal lines to portray the longing of the wearied soul for the rest of Heaven. There is an old belief further expands the texture to 6 voices; curiously, Parry sets the rather uncertain text with heavenly serenity, and quotes the plainsong Creed chant at the phrase “That creed I fain would keep, that hope I’ll ne’er forgo.”

The final two movements greatly broaden in scope and texture, with Parry using both dramatic expressive techniques, as well as symphonic voicing and length. Using 7 voices, At the round earth’s imagined corners sets Donne’s fiery imagery of the apocalypse, beginning with a fanfare of angelic trumpets heralding the end of the Earth. The chorus crescendos through a violent list of deaths, certainly bringing to mind the carnage of the War. This leads to a stunned alto entrance “and you whose eyes shall behold God, and never taste death’s woe” and closes with a hushed plea to be taught to repent. The final movement, Lord, let me know mine end expands to a full 8 voiced double choir texture, and grapples with the darkness of the afflicted and sorrowful Psalm 39. Surely Parry’s own failing health and the stark reality of the world around him give poignant context to the disquieted closing prayer: “O spare me a little, that I may recover my strength, before I go hence and be no more seen.”

Parry’s glorious anthem I Was Glad, has appeared at almost every major ceremony for the British Royal family since its composition in 1902. Again, the metaphor of Jerusalem both as England and as Heaven are apparent, and the petition—“pray for the peace of Jerusalem,” intended as a prayer for England herself.
The second half opens with **For all the Saints**, with the tune by Ralph Vaughan Williams. Vaughan Williams’ service in the British army during First World War left a lasting impression on him and his music. The majestic hymn again echoes martial and peaceful language to celebrate not primarily worldly strength, but rather spiritual hope and victory.

James Macmillan’s stark and almost severe harmonies in **O Radiant Dawn** convey the Advent hope for deliverance: “Sun of Justice-come: shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.” Nordqvist’s simple carol **Jul, Jul, Strålande Jul** gently echoes sighs in the hearts of humankind “longing for light and peace,” in the midst of “the battlefields’ blood and cries.”

Next, we move to two settings of the text **While Shepherds Watched their Flocks by Night**, Nahum Tate’s adaptation of the angelic proclamation in the book of Luke: “All glory be to God on high: and to the Earth be peace.” First, the classic English carol was the only Christmas hymn approved by the Church of England in the 18th century. Second, Craig Courtney’s setting uses shimmering piano motifs and expansive tempo and harmonies to transport the listener to hills under the night sky near Bethlehem.

After Nahum Tate’s carol follow two liturgical settings of the Gloria proclamation: “Glory to God on High, and on Earth be Peace.” The first, Rachmaninoff’s **Slava v’Vishnih Bogu**, from his “All Night Vigil”, begins in a simple chanting style, and crescendos with full sound of bells as the word “Slava (praise)” is reiterated. Mendelssohn’s setting of the Gloria in Excelsis from the German Mass, **Ehre sei Gott in der Höhe**, uses double choir to expound the hymn of praise to Christ for His glory and peace; compositionally Mendelssohn’s style can surely be seen as a major influence on Hubert Parry.

2018 also marks the 200th Anniversary of the composition of the beloved **Silent Night**. Within the first months of World War I, the carol was sung together by soldiers on both sides of the front during the Christmas Truce of 1914—a momentary glimpse of peace in the midst of the darkness and carnage of the War. Ryan Brandau’s setting expands the harmonic and melodic choral palette, while preserving the gentle intimacy of Gruber’s original. Finally, the closing carol encapsulates the totality of the human hope: “Peace on earth and mercy mild: God and sinners reconciled.”

Author JRR Tolkien, who was also deeply affected by his service in the British military in the First World War, writes this scene in the final book of his “Lord of the Rings” as the character Samwise wakes up, thinking all is lost, instead finds all his friends around him, and exclaims:

“Gandalf! I thought you were dead! But then I thought I was dead myself. Is everything sad going to come untrue? What’s happened to the world?”

**Hark! the Herald Angels Sing** exults that same hope that Christmas brings, not merely a sort of consolation for the tragedy and horror of this world, but for the hope that every suffering and evil will, in the end, be made untrue.

“Hail the Heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness! Light and life to all He brings, Risen with healing in His wings; Mild He lays His glory by: Born that man no more may die Born to raise the sons of earth: Born to give them second birth”

— Benjamin Bedroske, Conductor
REPERTOIRE

Jerusalem.................................................................Charles Hubert Hastings Parry (1848 – 1918)
   Michael Schaner – organ

Songs of Farewell..................................................Charles Hubert Hastings Parry
   I. My soul, there is a country
   II. I know my soul hath power to know all things
   III. Never weather-beaten sail
   IV. There is an old belief
   V. At the round earth’s imagined corners
   VI. Lord, let me know mine end

I Was Glad .......................................................................Charles Hubert Hastings Parry
   Michael Schaner – organ

   _________ Intermission _________

For all the Saints....................................................Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872 – 1958)
   Audience members are invited to join in singing verses 2 & 7
   arr. Henry Ley (1887 - 1962)
   Michael Schaner – organ

O Radiant Dawn ......................................................James Macmillan (b. 1959)

Jul, Jul, Strålande Jul..............................................Gustaf Nordqvist (1886 - 1949)

While Shepherds Watched their Flocks.................................from Este’s Psalter (1592)
   Michael Schaner – organ

While Shepherds Watched their Flocks..............................Craig Courtney (b. 1948)
   Julie Fraleigh – piano

Slava v’ Vishnih Bogu (All Night Vigil-mvt. VII) ............Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873 – 1943)

Ehre sei Gott in der Höhe..............................................Felix Mendelssohn (1809 – 1847)
   Quartet: Sarah Lemon, Laurel Tippe, Jeff Olson, Matthew Hunt

Silent Night....................................................................Franz Gruber (1787 – 1863)
   arr. Ryan James Brandau

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing ........................................Felix Mendelssohn
   Audience members are invited to join in singing verses 2 & 7
   arr. Sir David Willcocks
   Michael Schaner – organ

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TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

JERUSALEM
And did those feet in ancient time, Bring me my Bow of burning gold;  
Walk upon England’s mountains green; Bring me my Arrows of desire:  
And was the holy Lamb of God, Bring me my Spear: O clouds unfold!  
On England’s pleasant pastures seen! Bring me my Chariot of fire!  
And did the Countenance Divine, I will not cease from Mental Fight,  
Shine forth upon our clouded hills? Nor shall my Sword sleep in my hand:  
And was Jerusalem builded here, Till we have built Jerusalem,  
Among these dark Satanic Mills? In England’s green & pleasant Land.  

William Blake (1757 – 1827)

SONGS OF FAREWELL

I.
My soul, there is a country I know my soul hath power to know all things,  
Far beyond the stars, Yet she is blind and ignorant in all:  
Where stands a winged sentry I know I’m one of Nature’s little kings,  
All skilful in the wars: Yet to the least and vilest things am thrall.  

There, above noise and danger I know my life’s a pain and but a span;  
Sweet Peace sits crowned with smiles I know my sense is mock’d in ev’rything;  
And One, born in a manger And, to conclude, I know myself a Man,  
Commands the beauteous files. Which is a proud and yet a wretched thing.  

He is thy gracious friend John Davies (1569-1626)  
And, O my soul, awake! I know my soul hath power to know all things,  
Did in pure love descend Yet she is blind and ignorant in all:  
To die here for thy sake. I know I’m one of Nature’s little kings,  

If thou canst get but thither, Yet to the least and vilest things am thrall.  
There grows the flow’r of Peace, I know my life’s a pain and but a span;  
The Rose that cannot wither, I know my sense is mock’d in ev’rything;  
Thy fortress and thy ease. And, to conclude, I know myself a Man,  

Leave then thy foolish ranges, Which is a proud and yet a wretched thing.  
For none can thee secure John Davies (1569-1626)  
But One who never changes, I know my soul hath power to know all things,  
Thy God, thy life, thy cure. Yet she is blind and ignorant in all:  

Henry Vaughan (1622-1695)
SONGS OF FAREWELL cont.

III.

Never weather-beaten sail more willing bent to shore.
Never tired pilgrim’s limbs affected slumber more,
Than my wearied spite now longs to fly out of my troubled breast:
O come quickly, sweetest Lord, and take my soul to rest.

Ever blooming are the joys of Heaven’s high Paradise.
Cold age deafs not there our ears nor vapour dims our eyes:
Glory there the sun outshines whose beams the blessed only see:
O come quickly, glorious Lord, and raise my sprite to thee!

Thomas Campion (1567-1620)

IV.

There is an old belief,
That on some solemn shore,
Beyond the sphere of grief
Dear friends shall meet once more.
Beyond the sphere of Time and Sin
And Fate’s control,
Serene in changeless prime
Of body and of soul.

That creed I fain would keep
That hope I’ll ne’er forgo,
Eternal be the sleep,
If not to waken so.

John Gibson Lockhart (1794-1854)

V.

At the round earth’s imagined corners blow
Your trumpets, angels, and arise, arise
From death, you numberless infinities
Of souls and to your scattered bodies go!
All whom the flood did, and fire shall overthrow,
All whom war, dearth, age, agues, tyrannies,
Despair, law, chance, hath slain, and you whose eyes
Shall behold God and never taste death’s woe;
But let them sleep, Lord, and me mourn a space,
For, if above all these my sins abound,
‘Tis late to ask abundance of Thy grace
When we are there. Here on this lowly ground,
Teach me how to repent; for that’s as good
As if Thou’dst sealed my pardon with Thy blood.

John Donne (1572-1631)
VI.

Lord, let me know mine end and the number of my days,
That I may be certified how long I have to live.
Thou hast made my days as it were a span long;
And mine age is as nothing in respect of Thee,
And verily, ev’ry man living is altogether vanity,
For man walketh in a vain shadow
And disquieteth himself in vain,
He heapeth up riches and cannot tell who shall gather them.

And now, Lord, what is my hope?
Truly my hope is even in Thee.
Deliver me from all mine offences
And make me not a rebuke to the foolish.

I became dumb and opened not my mouth
For it was Thy doing.
Take Thy plague away from me,
I am even consumed by means of Thy heavy hand.

When Thou with rebukes dost chasten man for sin
Thou makest his beauty to consume away
Like as it were a moth fretting a garment;
Ev’ry man therefore is but vanity.

Hear my pray’r, O Lord
And with Thine ears consider my calling,
Hold not Thy peace at my tears!
For I am a stranger with Thee and a sojourner
As all my fathers were.

O spare me a little, that I may recover my strength before I go hence
And be no more seen.

Psalm 39:5-15 (1662 Book of Common Prayer)

I WAS GLAD

I was glad when they said unto me : We will go into the house of the Lord.
Our feet shall stand in thy gates : O Jerusalem.
Jerusalem is builded as a city : that is at unity in itself.
O pray for the peace of Jerusalem : they shall prosper that love thee.
Peace be within thy walls : and plenteousness within thy palaces.

— Psalm 122:1–3, 6-7 (1662 Book of Common Prayer)
FOR ALL THE SAINTS *Audience joins on verses 2 & 7

1. For all the saints, who from their labors rest, who thee by faith before the world confessed, thy name, O Jesu, be forever blest. - Alleluia, Alleluia!

2. Thou wast their Rock, their Fortress, and their Might Thy Lord, their Captain in the well-fought fight; Thou in the darkness drear, their one true Light. - Alleluia, Alleluia!

3. O may thy soldiers, faithful, true, and bold, Fight as the Saints who nobly fought of old, And win with them the victor’s crown of gold. - Alleluia, Alleluia!

4. O blest communion, fellowship divine! We feebly struggle, they in glory shine; Yet all are one in Thee, for all are Thine. - Alleluia, Alleluia!

5. And when the strife is fierce, the warfare long, Steals on the ear the distant triumph song, And hearts are brave again, and arms are strong. - Alleluia, Alleluia!

6. The golden evening brightens in the west; Soon, soon, to faithful warriors cometh rest. Sweet is the calm of Paradise the blest. - Alleluia, Alleluia!

7. But, lo, there breaks a yet more glorious day; The saints triumphant rise in bright array; The King of Glory passes on His way. - Alleluia, Alleluia!

8. From earth’s wide bounds, from ocean’s farthest coast, through gates of pearl streams in the countless host, singing to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: - Alleluia, Alleluia! Alleluia - Amen.

William How (1823 – 1897)

O RADIANT DAWN

O Radiant Dawn, Splendor of eternal Light, Sun of Justice: come, shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death. Isaiah had prophesied: “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone.” O Radiant Dawn... Amen.

O oriens, splendor lucis æternæ, (Antiphon for December 21)
JUL, JUL, STRÅLANDE JUL

Jul, jul, strålande jul,
glans över vita skogar,
himmelens kronor med gnistrande ljus,
glimmande bågar i alla Guds hus,
psalm som är sjungen från tid till tid,
eviga längtan till ljus och frid!
Jul, jul, strålande jul,
glans över vita skogar!

Kom, kom, signade jul!
Sänk dina vita vingar
över stridernas blod och larm,
över all suckan ur människobarm,
över de släkten som gå till ro,
över de ungas dagande bo!
Kom, kom, signade jul!
Sänk dina vita vingar!

Edvard Evers (1853 – 1919)

WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED THEIR FLOCKS

While shepherds watched their flocks by night
All seated on the ground,
The angel of the Lord came down,
And glory shone around.

“Fear not,” said he, for mighty dread
Had seized their trouble mind,
“Glad tidings of great joy I bring
To you and all mankind.”

“To you in David’s town this day
Is born of David’s line
A Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;
And this shall be the sign:”

Nahum Tate (1652-1715)

SLAVA V’ VISHNIH BOGU

Slava v’ vishnih Bogu,
i na zemli mir,
v’ chelovetseh blagvoleniye.

Ghospodi, ustne moi otverzeshi,
i usta moya vozvestiat hvalu Tvoyu.

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace,
good will among men.

O Lord, open Thou my lips,
and my mouth shall show forth Thy praise.

Luke 2:14; Psalm 51:15 (opening of the Orthodox office of Matins)
EHRE SEI GOTT IN DER HÖHE

Ehre sei Gott in der Höhe
und Friede auf Erden
und den Menschen ein Wohlgefallen!
Wir loben dich, wir benedienen dich,
werben dich an, wir preisen dich,
wer sagen dir Dank
um deiner großen Herrlichkeit willen.
Herr Gott! Himmlischer König!
Allmächtiger Vater!
Herr, du eingeborner Sohn, Jesu Christe!
Herr, Gott, du Lamm Gottes, Sohn des Vaters!
Der du die Sünde der Welt trägst,
erbarme dich unser!
Der du die Sünde der Welt trägst,
nimm an unser Gebet.
Der du sitzest zur Rechten des Vaters,
erbarme dich unser!
Denn du allein bist heilig,
denn du allein bist der Herr,
du allein bist der Allerhöchste, Jesus Christus
mit dem Heiligen Geiste
in der Herrlichkeit Gottes, des Vaters.
Amen!

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace on earth,
and goodwill to mankind!
We praise You, we bless You,
We worship You, we glorify You.
We give You thanks
for Your great glory.
Lord God, King of Heaven,
Almighty God and Father.
Lord only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ.
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father.
You who take away the sin of the world,
Have mercy on us.
You who take away the sin of the world,
Hear our prayer.
You who sit at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.
For You alone are holy,
You alone are Lord,
You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ.
With the Holy Spirit
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen!

Gloria in Excelsis Deo, from the German Liturgy

SILENT NIGHT

Silent night! Holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and Child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace.
Silent night! Holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight!
Glories stream from heaven afar;

Joseph Mohr (1792 – 1848)

Heav’nly hosts sing Alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Silent night! Holy night!
Son of God, love’s pure light
Radiant beams from thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.
HARK THE HERALD ANGELS SING

* Audience joins on verses 1 & 3

Hark! The herald-angels sing
“Glory to the newborn king;
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled”
Joyful all ye nations rise,
Join the triumph of the skies
With th’angelic host proclaim
“Christ is born in Bethlehem”
Hark! the herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King”

Christ, by highest heaven adored
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold Him come
Offspring of a Virgin’s womb:
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,

Hail the incarnate Deity
Pleased as man with man to dwell
Jesus, our Emmanuel
Hark! the herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King”

Hail the Heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings,
Risen with healing in His wings;
Mild He lays His glory by
Born that man no more may die
Born to raise the sons of earth
Born to give them second birth
Hark! the herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King”

Charles Wesley (1707-1788), adapted George Whitefield (1714-1770)
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Thank you for celebrating the holiday season this evening with Chant Claire. Please continue to join us for upcoming performances and stay up to date with our group!

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