

## Week 6: Classical Composers

### Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee

Text: Henry Van Dyke (1852–1933), 1907

- Son of a Presbyterian minister from Brooklyn known post-civil-war for anti-abolitionist writings
- Graduated from Princeton in 1873, then ordained there in 1877, returning to teach as Professor of English Literature on and off from 1899 to 1923
- He was succeeded as pastor of the Brick Presbyterian Church in New York City by Maltbie Babcock, author of “This Is My Father’s World”
- Friends with Woodrow Wilson, a Princeton classmate, who appointed him ambassador to the Netherlands and Luxembourg just before World War I
- Specifically wrote this text (titled “Hymn of Joy”) to accompany Beethoven’s “Ode to Joy” melody

Tune: Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827), 1824

- Born in Bonn, Germany, following two generations of musicians, and demonstrated talent at an early age
  - Hoping to replicate Mozart’s success as a child prodigy, his father pushed him in strict musical study and traveling performances
  - Following the death of his mother at age 17 and his father’s fall into alcoholism, took responsibility of his two younger brothers
  - Arranged to study with Joseph Haydn in Vienna in 1792; the two met when Haydn was en route to London
  - Began to suffer from hearing loss in 1798, causing him to stop all public performing after 1811 until directing the premiere of his Ninth Symphony
  - Best known for his piano sonatas, string quartets, orchestral concertos, and nine symphonies
  - This tune was written to accompany Friedrich Schiller’s poem “Ode to Joy” which he wrote as a “celebration of the brotherhood of man”
  - It was later adopted as the official anthem of the European Union
1. How does the hymn text explore the idea of “joy” without being shallow or naive? What are some of the reasons it gives to be joyful?
  2. How well do the text and tune fit together, and why?

### I Vow To Thee, My Country

Text: Cecil Spring-Rice (1859–1918), 1908

- Born into an aristocratic family with a history of politicians and diplomats, educated at Eton and Oxford
- Worked at embassies in Japan, Germany, Persia, Egypt, and Russia, then ambassador to Sweden and US
- Became close friends with Teddy Roosevelt and was best man when Roosevelt remarried in 1886
- An amateur poet, translated numerous Persian poems into English, with a poetry collection published posthumously in 1922
- Originally wrote this text as a poem “Urbs Dei” (“The City of God”, also subtitled “The Two Fatherlands”), and substantially revised in 1918
- Sent the full text in a letter to William Jennings Bryan shortly before his death

Tune: Gustav Holst (1874–1934), 1914

- Born in England, his father was an organist and church choir director
- Interested in composition from an early age, studied at the Royal College of Music on scholarship, where he met fellow student and friend Ralph Vaughan Williams
- Best known for his large-scale orchestral works and music for wind band, as one of the first composers to write “serious” music for the ensemble
- Originally wrote this tune for his orchestral suite “The Planets”, in the central movement “Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity”
- Adapted as a hymn tune for this text in 1921, suggested by Spring-Rice’s daughter, a student at St Paul’s Girls School where Holst was music director
- First published for voice with orchestra accompaniment, then later as a four-part hymn in *Songs of Praise* edited by Vaughan Williams in 1926
- Given the name THAXTED after the town where Holst and his wife had a cottage

1. Rarely used outside of Great Britain, even there the hymn has fallen out of favor in some circles because of its equivalence between loyalty to nation and loyalty to God. Do you think this criticism is appropriate, and why or why not?
2. How well do the text and tune fit together, and why?

## Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken

Text: John Newton (1725–1807), 1779

- Son of a ship's captain, headed to sea with his father four years after the death of his mother at age 7
- Drafted into service in the Royal Navy at 18, unsuccessfully attempted to desert, then held captive in Africa by a slave trader
- Rescued in 1748 by a sea captain sent searching for him by his father, starting the beginnings of his conversion while returning to England
- Later married, became ordained in the Church of England, began to speak out against the slave trade
- Published *Olney Hymns* in 1779 through collaboration with his friend and poet William Cowper
- This text was included in Book 1 of the collection ("On Select Texts of Scripture") and paired with Isaiah 33:20-21

Tune: Joseph Haydn (1732–1809), 1797

- Born in a small Austrian village near the Hungarian border, son of a wheelwright who was also an amateur musician and served as town mayor
  - Sent at age 6 to live with a relative in a larger city in the hopes of receiving a proper musical education
  - After early struggles to find employment, eventually obtained patronage from a string of Austrian aristocrats
  - Best known for his instrumental music, particularly his symphonies and string quartets
  - The tune was written as an unofficial Austrian national anthem with the lyrics "Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser" ("God Save Emperor Franz") inspired by the popularity of the English anthem "God Save the King"
  - Its name AUSTRIA reflects these roots (sometimes also appears as AUSTRIAN HYMN)
  - Incorporated into the second movement of Haydn's "Emperor" string quartet as a theme and variations
  - Later used for the German nation anthem "Deutschland über alles", notably by the Nazi party during World War II
1. Newton melds together a wide range of scriptural quotes and images to build up a picture of the New Jerusalem (Zion) as a metaphor for Christ's church. What references stick out to you, and what do they teach about the church?
  2. How well do the text and tune fit together, and why?