

E.M. Skinner - 1922

Centennial Organ Concert Series

of First Baptist Church

The Seven Last Words of Christ

by Théodore Dubois

APRIL 10, 2022

5:00 PM



PROGRAM NOTES

The tradition of singing the Passion story began in the early centuries of the Christian church. To add solemnity to Holy Week services, priests would chant the appointed Gospel account rather than simply read it. By the 13th century, these intonations had developed into dramatic narrations with soloists playing the key roles. The earliest polyphonic settings date from the 15th century with extant examples surviving from England, Italy, and Spain. By the mid-17th century, the Reformation had led to a distinctly German oratorio Passion set in the vernacular, employing recitatives, arias, choruses, and instrumental movements. These oratorio Passions ultimately reached their pinnacle in the great *St. Matthew Passion* and *St. John Passion* of Johann Sebastian Bach. Heinrich Schütz, considered the greatest Lutheran composer prior to Bach, composed his *Seven Last Words* in the early 17th century. In order to include all seven sayings Christ spoke during the crucifixion, Schütz created a composite text from all four Gospels. Hadyn composed an instrumental work on *The Seven Last Words* in 1787 and later added choral parts, but no composer is known to have created a major choral setting of this unique version of the Passion story until Théodore Dubois, two centuries after Schütz.

Théodore Dubois (1837 – 1924) was an important organist, composer, and teacher of music on the Paris music scene during the late 1800's. In 1861 he was awarded the prestigious *Prix de Rome* for composition. He studied at Reims and the Paris Conservatory where he later was the director from 1896 to 1905. The composer of four operas, a large-scale ballet, several oratorios, and a Requiem Mass as well as many orchestral works, Dubois remained a composer of the "academic style." He succeeded Camille Saint-Saens as organist at the Madeleine in 1877 and was highly regarded as an excellent music teacher. Much overshadowed by his French contemporaries Charles Gounod, Gabriel Faure, and Camille Saint-Saens in composition, he is best remembered today for his book *Notes et Etudes d'Harmonie* (Notes and Lessons in Harmony), still used as a source for harmonic practice in the Romantic style. Dubois composed *The Seven Last Words of Christ* in 1867 for Saint Clotilde in Paris, where he was the choir director (*Maitre de chapelle*). He scored the work for full orchestra, chorus, and soloists, but later revised his orchestration to include only organ, timpani, and harp, the version most often heard today.

The Seven Last Words of Christ is presented in eight movements: an introduction for soprano followed by a movement for each word of Christ from the cross. Composing for the Catholic church, Dubois used traditional texts from the Roman Catholic Holy Week liturgies to add meditations on the scriptural account. The opening soprano solo is the *O Vos Omnes* traditionally sung at Tenebrae services. In the Third Word, Christ's words to Mary, his mother, are combined with the 13th-century sequence *Stabat Mater Dolorosa*; in the Fourth Word, Christ's anguish at being forsaken by his Father is combined with the liturgical text *Omnes Amici Mei*. At the end of the Seventh Word, Dubois concludes his sacred cantata with a hymn-like setting of the medieval antiphon *Adoramus Te, Christe*. This serene hymn, much like a chorale at the end of an 18th century cantata, provides the listener with a foretaste of the resurrection after the compelling drama of the Passion story. - by Yvonne Grover

PROGRAM

PRELUDE – “Poèmes Évangéliques” by Jean Langlais (1907-1991)

III. Les Rameaux (The Palms)

"Jesus, in all his majesty, returns to Jerusalem, where the enthusiastic crowds welcomed him, crying, 'Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel! Hosanna in the highest!'" - from Langlais' manuscript

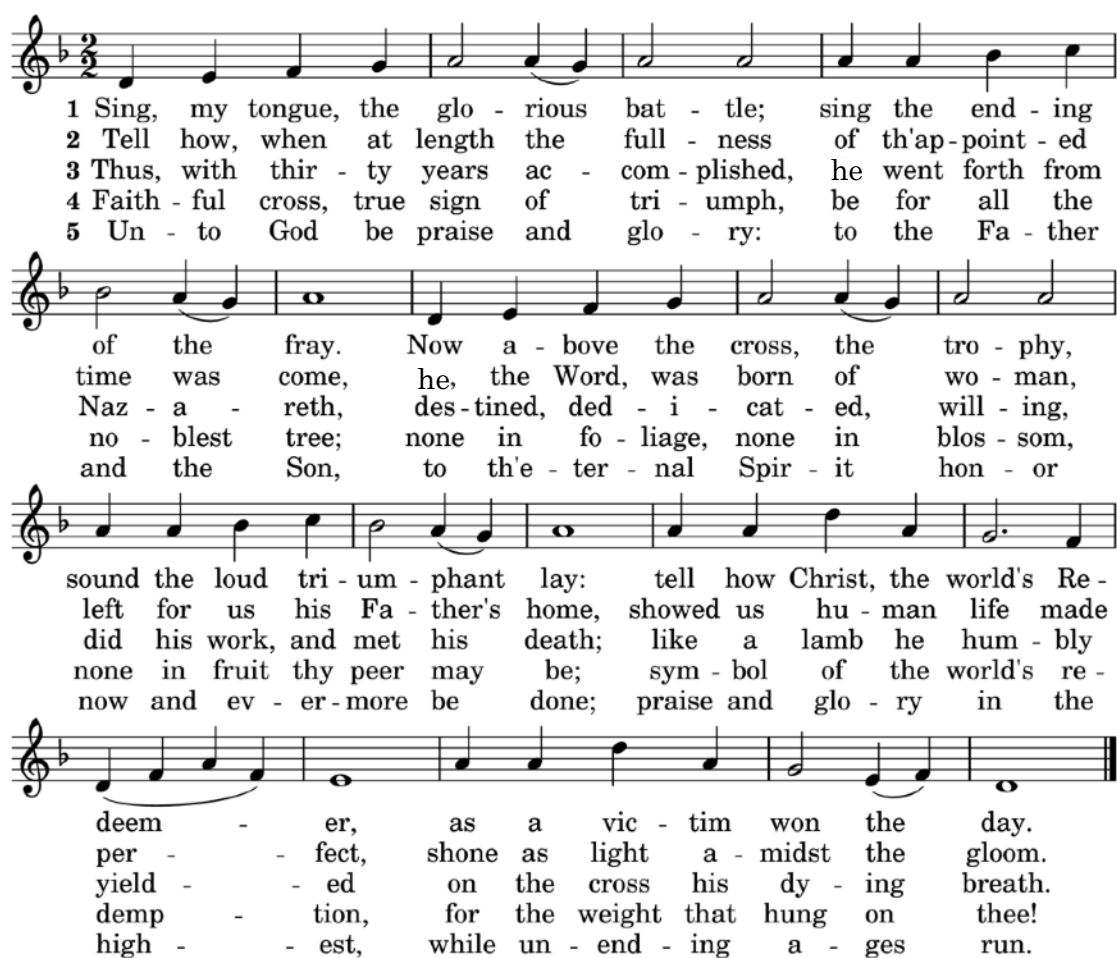
WELCOME & INVOCATION

Rev. James C. Richardson, Organist Emeritus of FBC

HYMN – “Sing, My Tongue, the Glorious Battle”

Tune: PICARDY

(The people are asked to stand at the start of the organ introduction.)



1 Sing, my tongue, the glo - rious bat - tle; sing the end - ing
2 Tell how, when at length the full - ness of th'ap - point - ed
3 Thus, with thir - ty years ac - com - plished, he went forth from
4 Faith - ful cross, true sign of tri - umph, be for all the
5 Un - to God be praise and glo - ry: to the Fa - ther
of the fray. Now a - bove the cross, the tro - phy,
time was come, he, the Word, was born of wo - man,
Naz - a - reth, des - tined, ded - i - cat - ed, will - ing,
no - blest tree; none in fo - liage, none in blos - som,
and the Son, to th'e - ter - nal Spir - it hon - or
sound the loud tri - um - phant lay: tell how Christ, the world's Re -
left for us his Fa - ther's home, showed us hu - man life made
did his work, and met his death; like a lamb he hum - bly
none in fruit thy peer may be; sym - bol of the world's re -
now and ev - er - more be done; praise and glo - ry in the
deem - er, as a vic - tim won the day.
per - - fect, shone as light a - midst the gloom.
yield - - ed on the cross his dy - ing breath.
demp - - tion, for the weight that hung on thee!
high - - est, while un - end - ing a - ges run.

- Text translated by John Mason Neale

(The people are asked to hold all applause until the conclusion of today's program.)

"THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF CHRIST"

by Théodore Dubois



"The Highway"

INTRODUCTION

O all ye who travel upon the highway,
hearken to me, and behold me.
Was e'er sorrow like unto my sorrow?
– *Lamentations 1:12*

For the Lord Almighty hath
dealt bitterly with me.
Call me now no more Naomi,
from today call me Mara.
– *Ruth 1:20*

FIRST WORD

**Father, forgive them,
for they know not what they do.**
– *Luke 23:24*

And the people clamored:
he is death-guilty.
Take him! Take him!
Let us crucify him!
– *Matthew 27:23B*

Be his blood on us,
and on our children.
– *Matthew 17:24B*

Then they did crucify Jesus,
and the two thieves,
one at his right hand,
the other at his left hand.
– *Luke 23:32*



"He Is Guilty"



"In Paradise"

SECOND WORD

**Verily, thou shalt be in
paradise today with me.
Amen, so I tell thee.**

– *Luke 23:43*

Hear, O Lord,
and remember me,
when thou comest
into thy kingdom.

– *Luke 23:42*

THIRD WORD

**See, O woman,
here behold thy Son beloved.**

– *John 19:26*

See yon mother, bowed in anguish,
who beside the cross doth languish,
where on high her son is borne;
Is there mortal, who not feeleth
to behold her where she kneeleth,
so woeful, and all forlorn?

– *Selected verses from the
"Stabat Mater"*



"Thy Son Beloved"



"The Vine"

FOURTH WORD

**God, my Father,
why hast thou forsaken me?**

– *Matthew 27:46*

All those who were my friends,
all have now forsaken me;
and they that hate me
do now prevail against me;
and he whom I have cherished,
he hath betrayed me.

– *Anonymous*

Even the vine that I have chosen,
and that I have planted:
wherefore art thou now
so strangely turned into bitterness,
that I by thee am crucified?

– *A traditional responsory for Good Friday*

FIFTH WORD

I am athirst!

– *John 19:28*

And the Jews then passing by him,
all did rail upon him,
and wagging their heads at him,
they said unto him: Vah!
Thou wouldst fain destroy the temple;
if thou be Jesus,
Son of the Father,
now from the cross descend thou,
that we behold it, and believe on thee,
when we behold it.
If thou art king over Israel,
save thyself, then!
– *Mark 15:29-32*



"The Temple"



"Into Thy Hands"

SIXTH WORD

**Father, into thy hands
I commend my soul.**

– *Luke 23:46*

For thou art my God and Father;
thou art my Savior.

– *John 14:20*

SEVENTH WORD

And with a loud voice Jesus cried,
exclaiming: **It is finished!**

– *John 19:30*

And he did bow his head,
and rendered up his spirit.

– *Matthew 27:50B*

And it was about the sixth hour;
and the sun was darkened,
and darkness covered the earth,
until about the ninth hour;

– *Matthew 27:45*

And the veil of the temple was rent,
and all the earth did quake;
and the rocks were rent,
and all the graves were opened wide.

– *Matthew 27:51,52B*



"The Rocks Were Rent"



"The Holy Cross"

CHORAL PRAYER

Christ, we do all adore thee,
and we do praise thee for ever,
for on the holy cross hast thou
the world from sin redeemed.

– *"Adoramus te, Christe"*

BENEDICTION

Rev. James C. Richardson, Organist Emeritus of FBC

POSTLUDE – "Grand Choeur" by Theodore Dubois

(The people are asked to remain seated for the postlude.)

*First Baptist Church is a welcoming congregation.
We believe Jesus treated everyone with a spirit of love and equality.
Therefore, we accept every individual without regard
to age, gender, race, ethnicity,
sexual orientation, or socio-economic status.
We affirm all persons as created in the image of God.
At First Baptist Church, individuals can find family,
families can find community, the injured can find healing,
and all can seek truth and justice.
We labor together in love for each other,
our community, our world, and our God.
No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcomed, you are accepted, you are loved.*

BIOGRAPHIES



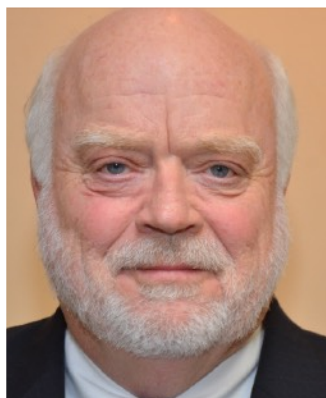
Justin L. Addington (*Conductor*) is the Minister of Music & Organist at First Baptist Church of Savannah, GA. He received a bachelor's degree in Music Education from Limestone College, a master of Church Music degree in choral conducting from Concordia University Wisconsin, and a doctorate of theology in worship studies from the Robert E. Webber Institute. Highlights of his career include the development of a nationally recognized concert series, the release of a professionally recorded organ CD, two substantial pipe organ projects, and choir tours to England, Italy, Austria, and Carnegie Hall. Major conducting credits include Handel's *Messiah*, Vivaldi's *Gloria*, Stainer's *The Crucifixion*, Faure's *Requiem*, and numerous musical theatre productions.



Daniel Cohen (*Baritone Soloist*) has enjoyed sharing his love of vocal music with the Savannah community for over three decades. His diverse repertoire allows him to sing all forms of vocal music from classical repertoire to songs of the Great American Songbook and Broadway. Danny has served many civic organizations in the Savannah area, and his love of the vocal arts is evidenced by his role as past board president of the American Traditions Vocal Collection and his service on the board of the Savannah Voice Festival. He also served on the Board of Trustees at Savannah Country Day School, is a Rotarian, and has served as an Elder and headed numerous committees at First Presbyterian Church of Savannah. Danny is a Senior Neutral at Miles Mediation and has practiced law in Savannah for over 35 years.



Nathan Vaughan Finley (*Photographer*) is a Savannah-based visual artist, photographer, clothing designer, and entrepreneur. The eldest son of Dr. John and Norma Finley, he is a graduate of St. Andrew's School and received a BFA in drawing and printmaking from Guilford College in Greensboro, NC. Nathan has been a member of First Baptist Church Savannah since 1994. He is thrilled to be living amongst family and friends - new and old - these days after relocating from the mountains of Asheville, NC in 2014. For inquiries on artwork or photography for your home or office or to arrange a studio visit you may contact him via email at nathanfinley32@gmail.com.



Bill Gardner (*Tenor Soloist*) came to Savannah in 1972 from Seminary in Louisville, KY to serve as the Minister of Music at Bull Street Baptist Church, a position he held for 37 years. He has been active in the area as a soloist and has sung in several cantatas and oratorios including: *Elijah* and *St. Paul* (Mendelssohn), *Messiah* (Handel), *Mass in C Minor* (Mozart), *Mass in B Minor* (Bach), and *The Seven Last Words* (Dubois). He has been the guest artist with both the Beaufort Symphony and the Savannah Symphony Chorus. His singing experience has included the CenturyMen, an auditioned Grammy-nominated male chorus of church musicians. Bill has been a member of the Exchange Club since 1974, and served as a chaplain of the Savannah Police Department since 1983.



Michelle Jarrell (*Soprano Soloist*) received a Bachelor of Arts in Music and a Master of Music in Voice Performance from the Petrie School of Music at Converse College. Recent engagements include soprano soloist with the Jackson Symphony Orchestra in Tennessee, the Michael O'Neal Singers in Atlanta, Space Coast Symphony Orchestra in Florida, the Georgia Philharmonic Orchestra, a Spivey Hall debut with the Clayton State Chorus and Crescent City Community Orchestra, and guest soloist with the Metropolitan Youth Symphony Orchestra of Atlanta. Major solo credits include Vivaldi's *Gloria*, Dubois' *The Seven Last Words of Christ*, *Requiems* by Mozart, Rutter, and Fauré, Bach's *Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen*, Mozart's *Exsultate, Jubilate*, and RVW's *Dona Nobis Pacem*.



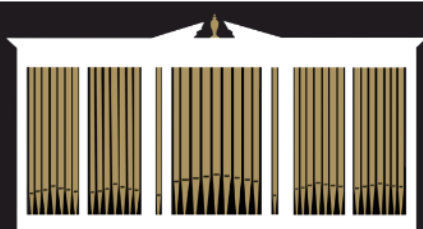
Jeff Lewis (*Organist*) has had a long and successful career as a musician. His degrees were in organ performance and church music. In addition, he has conducted and accompanied community choirs, has served as musical director for theater productions and has been a guest organist as a soloist and as an accompanist for choral concerts. Today marks 55 years of music ministry. The chosen work for this afternoon's program is especially significant to him as the Dubois was the first major work he performed at the age of 13 years old. He is honored to be a part of this afternoon's offering.



Ray McClain (*Timpanist*) serves as timpanist of the Savannah Philharmonic Orchestra and the Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra, and as extra percussionist with the Charleston Symphony Orchestra. He has participated in premieres of works by Mark Hayes and John Rutter. His arrangement of *The Star-Spangled Banner* is currently performed by the Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra and the North Charleston Pops. Ray and his wife Rebecca are the parents of Christopher and Matthew, and are glad to call Chris' wife Lindsay their daughter-in-love.



Catherine Mullins (*Harpist*) studied harp at Covenant College and Florida State University while completing her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in music theory. She has taught music for Bryan College, Covenant College, and Southern Adventist University and has performed for multiple orchestras, including the Savannah Philharmonic, the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra, the Chattanooga Symphony and Opera, and the Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra. Always eager to learn new things, she is currently pursuing a bachelor of science in chemistry at Georgia Southern University's Armstrong campus.



First Baptist Church - www.fbc-sav.org

*Centennial
Organ Concert Series*

Members' Recital

*Featuring the Savannah Chapter of the
American Guild of Organists*

MAY 22, 2022 - 5:00 PM

Free Admission | Masks Optional



COMMUNITY CHOIR

Sopranos

Betsy Davis
Sarah Davis
Jacqueline Dion
Katy Keyes
Beth Logan
Carol Melton
Jeanne Mundy
Liz Palles
Sue Prior
Abbey Terry
Shannon Willhite

Basses

Will Barnes
Charlie Benton
Wayne Drysdale
Dave Fletcher
Dan Huffer
Richard Lewis
Brian Martine
Cary Negley
Jamie Norris
James Richardson
Ken Rimes

Altos

Glenda Anderson
Emily Richardson-Dion
Seekie Drysdale
Jane Elwell
Gretchen Ernest
Leslie Fitzgerald
Dianne Gardner
Cathy Girardeau
Pat Goode
Anne McNair
Renee Portell
Nancy Sutton
Heather Valentine

Tenors

Phyllis Albertson
Suade Anderson
Evan Goetz
Christopher Hendricks
Will Panter
Greg Smith

This afternoon's program features photographs by local artist and FBC member Nathan Finley. It is our hope that the juxtaposition of modern-day images alongside the text of the crucifixion account will allow us to experience and relate to this familiar story in a fresh new way.

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