

The Parish Church of Saint George



PARISH MAGAZINE

An open door in the heart of the City



SEPTEMBER 2024

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Editorial Team: William Odling-Smee, Selby Nesbitt, Tony Merrick.

From the Rector's Desk



Dear Friends in Christ,

The summer months have been rather disappointing weather wise. Nevertheless, I hope that you have managed some sort of holiday or break to relax and refresh yourselves. The months of July and August in St Georges have a character of their own because the choir is on their summer break. Despite that, attendances have been very good at the 11:00 AM Sunday Eucharist, usually in the mid-sixties and on several occasions well over eighty people were present.

I would like to place on record my sincere appreciation and gratitude to all those who helped arrange the luncheon to mark my 30th anniversary in St George's on Sunday 28th July. I was very touched by all the kind words, cards and the wonderful gift the parish present me with. It was all most kind and I am truly thankful to everyone involved. I could not have come to a better parish nor spent the last 30 years amongst better parishioners and friends.

Sadly in early August we heard the dreadful news of Ian Keatley's sudden death on holiday in Austria at the age 42. Ian was a 12 year old chorister when I arrived in St Georges in 1994. He discovered a love of the organ and Anglican choral music whilst he was a member of our choir. That love of music took him to the Royal School of Music, Southwark, Westminster Abbey, Croydon, Christchurch Cathedral, Dublin and finally back to Southwark Cathedral as director of music. He was a wonderful talent and enriched the lives of so many people through his playing and his skill as a choral conductor. Our deepest sympathies go to his parents James and Vivien, to his brothers Simon and Niall, as well as to his many friends and colleagues. The Anglican choral tradition has lost one of its greatest advocates and someone who had a rare talent. His Requiem was celebrated in St George's on Friday 23rd August. May he rest in peace and rise in glory. The annual parish pilgrimage to Walsingham will take place this year from 17th to 25th September, led by Fr Graham Pollock and myself. It is the first time I have been able to go to Walsingham since before COVID-19. If you have any prayer requests, please give them to Fr Graeme or myself before Sunday, 22nd September.

Sunday, 22nd September is also the date of yet another Half Marathon. No doubt it will affect the routes we may have to take to get to church in the morning, but I have been assured we will be able to get to Saint Georges. We will publish details of road diversions in the Sunday Service Sheets on the previous Sundays.

Harvest Thanksgiving will be celebrated this year on Sunday 6th October. The preacher will be the Archdeacon of Belfast, the Venerable Barry Forde who is also Rector of St Mary Magdalene, St Simon and St Aidan's, in Belfast. As usual please keep me informed of any illnesses or pastoral needs that you feel need the attention of a priest on 079-0279-2080 or bstewart1662@gmail.com.
Yours sincerely in Christ

Brian Stewart

**THE RECTOR'S ADDRESS AT THE 11:00AM EUCHARIST
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS
INSTITUTION AS RECTOR OF ST GEORGE'S.**



Yesterday, 27th July, as many of you are aware, marked the 30th anniversary of my Institution as Rector of St George's by the late Dr Samuel Poyntz, Bishop of Connor, who had also ordained me dacon and then as a priest some years before.

A few of you here this morning were present at the Institution service. Fr William has served in this parish longer than I have and I was extremely grateful in my early days here for his guidance, council, and support. In terms of St George's he is an institution himself and long may he continue to inspire us.

I preached my first sermon as Rector on the following Sunday, 31st of July 1994. I still have it so I took it out and reread it to see how bad it might have been and to try and understand what I was thinking and hoping as I began my incumbency here. I suppose, in a way, I was setting out my stall and trying to give a vision of my hopes for St George's. A rather arrogant approach you might say, but in my defence, I would say I was acutely aware of the long tradition of worship, music and liturgy in this parish and particularly of the influence of previous Rectors, especially my two immediate predecessors, Fr Peter Barrett and Canon Edgar Turner. This was a powerful inheritance to enter into and quite a daunting challenge to take up.

In my address on that first Sunday I expressed my hopes for a tolerant, broad based Anglicanism in St George's where we would continue to worship God with good liturgy, quality music and thoughtful preaching and to develop, improve and grow those things. It is not for me to judge how well I may have kept to that vision, but I can at least quote the words of Wesley McCann, the only surviving parochial nominator of the four who appointed me. I asked Wesley a couple of years ago if he had any regrets about appointing me 28 years previously. "None" he said, "So far." A timely reminder that no matter how long a Rector stays in post he or she is a bird of passage and will eventually move on. What is much more permanent is the parish itself, its worship, its life, its witness. In the providence of God and under the Holy Spirit, it is the parish and its life that is the vital thing. I still hold to that vision for Saint George's that I first set out very inadequately 30 years ago.

There have been a great many developments and changes to parishes, their boundaries, groupings, mission areas, closures and new initiatives, but I remain utterly convinced that the parish system with a parish church at the core is the best, most mission minded,

and most effective way of ministering to the people of God in the 21st century. And, I do not regret for one second coming to St George's in 1994 - at least so far!

Our Gospel this morning recalls the feeding of the five thousand by Jesus because he had compassion on them and saw their needs. It is no accident that this miracle occurs at the beginning of Chapter 6 of Saint John where Christ speaks of himself as the Bread of Life and refers to his body as food indeed and His blood as drink indeed. This is a key chapter to an understanding of the Eucharist or Holy Communion as the Body and Blood of Christ. I told Bishop Poyntz that the only thing I wanted to change on arrival as your Rector was to make the Eucharist the main Sunday service each week. Thankfully, he agreed wholeheartedly with me and gave me his full support for that change.

The celebration of the presence of the risen Christ amongst us as a people and as a parish, lay at the core of my vision for worship in Saint George's. Thankfully in the Providence of God that change has endured and if the only legacy I am remembered for 50 years from now is the introduction of the Eucharist as the main parish service every Sunday, then I will be content. As for everything else, I ask you and the Good Lord to forgive my many mistakes and failings.

Whatever good things have occurred in the last 30 years, are chiefly due to God's great love and mercy and the blessing of having some of the best, most able and faithful parishioners of any parish in the country, including many lovely and faithful people who now 'rejoice upon another shore' but with whom we are forever one in the Communion of Saints. It has been the greatest privilege of my life and priesthood to be Rector of this wonderful place and congregation. There is much yet to be done in our work and witness, but I am confident that moving forward together in faith, hope and love, then that vision I set out 30 years ago can still be our guide, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and full of faith in Christ, the best days of Saint George's are still ahead of us.

PARISH NOTICES

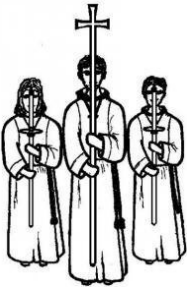
EHOD: EUROPEAN HERITAGE DAYS

St George's will be opening its doors and joining in this annual event, celebrating local architecture, history, and culture on **Saturday, 14th & Sunday, 15th September 2024**. But we will need help! We usually break the Saturday into 2-hour slots for volunteer assistance and serve tea and coffee in the narthex. We also open on the Sunday from 2:00pm to 4:00pm. The event brings many visitors from near and far into the church and is a very rewarding experience. Please speak to the Churchwardens or Judith Fawcett if you can spare some time to help. Thank you.



AN APPEAL FOR MORE ALTAR SERVERS.

The Servers' Guild would welcome new members to the serving team. The duties involved are simple and very enjoyable. The team at a service, which is usually a sung Eucharist on Sunday morning, consists of a crucifer and two taperers (candle bearers). Very occasionally, a serving team is required at an evening service such as Maundy Thursday and the All Souls Eucharist.



Individual members are not required to serve every Sunday, and it is usual to be asked to serve no more than two or three times a month.

Anyone who would be interested in joining the team, please contact Tony Merrick

PARISH NOTICES

ALZHEIMERS SOCIETY - CHARITY BREAKFAST



The Rotary Club of Belfast East

President: Centenarian, Billy Geary

c/o Stormont Hotel
587 Upper Newtownards Road
Belfast BT4 3LP

GRAND CHARITY BREAKFAST STORMONT HOTEL

(In the Ballroom)

Saturday 14th September 2024 at 9.30 am prompt

In aid of **THE ALZHEIMER'S SOCIETY** in NORTHERN IRELAND

£20 full breakfast ticket price

Dress code: Casual or Sports Gear, all ages welcome

Our charity initiative is spearheaded jointly by Billy Geary our 101 year old President – unique to us and surely in Rotary worldwide! - and Rotarian Alan Crawford, husband of the late Beryl. Our Billy, a remarkable man, still in full flight, has over many years service, with enthusiasm and doggedness, personally raised many thousands of pounds for Rotary Charities. Beryl Crawford an inspirational lady, sadly missed and remembered with great affection. Beryl was a mainstay in Inner Wheel for so long and consummate Fundraiser for so many Charities.

SPEAKER: ROISIN McAULEY, Journalist, Broadcaster and Author.

The Alzheimer's Society will have a Representative on hand at the Breakfast for advice and information.

For bookings and more information please contact Scott Harte on 028 90291389 or matthewscottharte@hotmail.com.

Should you be unable to attend and wish to make a donation to the Alzheimers Society, please place your donation in a St George's yellow envelope and give it to Scott Harte. If you wish to Gift Aid your donation, please include your name and address on the envelope. Thank you.

PARISH NOTICES

BELFAST CITY HALF MARATHON

FROM THE MARATHON ORGANISERS

We have been working on arrangements for the **Belfast City Half Marathon on Sunday, 22nd September** and have a proposal for access to St George's Church.

Please advise your parishioners to make access via the May Street/ Victoria Street junction where they will come to a 'Road Closed' sign. However we will have a steward there **who will permit access** along Victoria Street, only for your parishioners displaying the access pass. When they reach the Victoria Street/High Street junction they will be able to make a left turn into the church.

I've attached the access pass (*See below*). Please distribute this to parishioners to place on their dashboard on the day of the event. I will advise stewards to look for these passes.

Eimear Degan
Operations Manager



MEMORIES OF MEDALS

by Paul McLaughlin



I met my old pal Tommy for the first time in nearly three years while we paid for our morning newspapers. His cheeky smile and 'joke with a jag' were as ready as ever. We exchanged Belfast banter as only Belfast men can. With the blackest of dark Ulster humour. A real slagging match before we had to go our separate ways. Our wives were waiting!

My last words to him were that I hoped the miraculous medal he wore on a gold chain around his neck lived up to its name..... because it would have to. But that medal got me thinking.

On the walk home, I thought of my late father, also called Tommy, and the part that medals, holy and not so holy, had played in his life.

My own experience of the miraculous medal had been at the hands of the Irish Christian Brothers who encouraged all the ten-year-olds in our class to wear one all those years ago. They were given to us free for spiritual protection and to inspire in us a love and devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. I'm ashamed to say that their history was totally unknown to me until I read about them in a religious magazine.

A French nun, Sr Catherine Laboure, after apparitions from Our Lady, developed the design of the devotional medal and battled for more than two years to convince the church authorities to sanction it. Sr Catherine had been instructed to have the image of the Blessed Virgin 'put on medallions,' hearing the words, 'All who wear them will receive great grace.'

She said that the Virgin Mary visited her during evening meditations. She displayed herself inside an oval frame, standing upon a globe. She wore many rings set with gems that shone rays of light over the globe. Around the margin of the frame appeared the words *Ô Marie, conçue sans péché, priez pour nous qui avons recours à vous* ("O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee"). This was the basis for the now familiar design that I first wore on a piece of cord and that my father cherished all his life.

His World War Two medals, by contrast, including the Burma and Atlantic Stars for operations in the Far East and convoys to Russia, lay in a drawer for years until I took an interest in them as a teenager. Around that time he gave me his Navy, woollen 'blouse' in the late sixties. I had worn it with a white tee shirt a few times. Most of his kit has been handed back when he had been demobbed after the war, but one dress blouse, known as a square rig, had been transformed into a Belfast version of Christian Dior's 'New Look' as a

jacket for my late mother.

Those medals were 'just bits of metal' according to my father. "It's the memories of friends and comrades that mean everything," he told me, "And they remain precious no matter how many years roll by."

I spoke to the undertaker, Sean, just a few hours after my father had died, doing the funeral 'business' that helps to assuage grief.

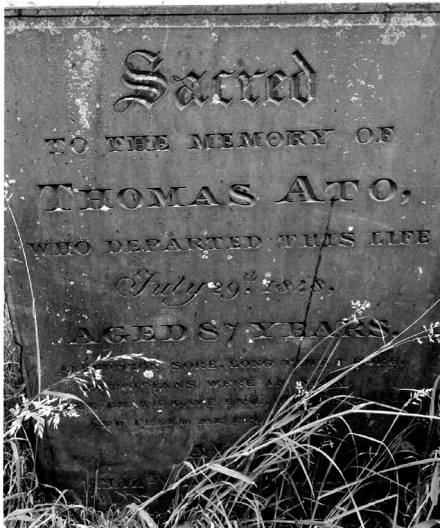
I had picked out Dad's suit, shirt, and a tie of mine that he had fancied and when asked if there was anything else that was needed, I replied, "Oh yes, his medals. He'll haunt me if I forget those."

Not the campaign honours of long ago, but rather the two holy medals that he had worn throughout his adult life. Two humble base-metal miraculous medals, given him by his mother before he left to work in England in the late 1930s, on a cheap chain that had been replaced more times than Trigger's brush head in television's 'Only Fools and Horses'.

Those medals had carried him, his words, through the war and a tough working life that followed, and he firmly believed that it had been their 'great grace' that had followed him through both.

"I've worn them since I was 15 years old", he told me over a glass of Jamison whiskey, "And I'll take them with me when I go. Slainte!"

I remember his toast as if it were yesterday and treasure the memory of all the medals.



A TOMBSTONE AT SEMPRINGHAM, LINCONSHIRE.

What do you think might have been his nickname?

MUSIC LIST September 2024

Sunday 1st September

11:00am Choral Eucharist

Processional Hymn	420
Setting	Mass in C - <i>Ireland</i>
Psalm	45: 1-2, 6-9
Gradual Hymn	342
Offertory Hymn	285
Communion Hymn	328
Motet	Cantate Domino - <i>Pitoni</i>
Recessional Hymn	346

Trinity 14
Parish Choir

5:00pm Choral Evensong

Hymn	364
Responses	Rose
Psalm	119: 1-16
Canticles	Stanford in C
Motet	Beati quorum via - <i>Stanford</i>
Hymn	242

Parish Choir

Sunday 8th September

11:00am Choral Eucharist

Processional Hymn	334
Setting	Sumsion in F
Psalm	125
Gradual Hymn	473
Offertory Hymn	378
Communion Hymn	308
Anthem	God be in my head - <i>Rutter</i>
Recessional Hymn	466

Trinity 15
Parish Choir

5:00pm Choral Evensong

Hymn	415
Responses	Hunter
Psalm	119: 41-56
Canticles	Dyson in C minor
Motet	In pace - <i>Lassus</i>
Hymn	296

Men's Voices

Sunday 15th September

11:00am Choral Eucharist

Processional Hymn	Christ triumphant ever reigning (separate sheet)
Setting	Mass in E minor - <i>Darke</i>
Psalm	19
Gradual Hymn	234
Offertory Hymn	375
Communion Hymn	272
Anthem	Lord, for thy tender mercy's sake - <i>Farrant</i>
Hymn	439

Trinity 16
Parish Choir

MUSIC LIST September 2024

Sunday 15th September

5:00pm Choral Evensong

Hymn **366**
Responses Sanders
Psalm 119: 73-88
Canticles Noble in B minor
Motet O nata lux - *Tallis*
Hymn **463**

Trinity 16

Chamber Choir

Sunday 22nd September

11:00am Choral Eucharist

Processional Hymn **333**
Setting Jackson in G
Psalm 1
Gradual Hymn **431**
Offertory Hymn **377**
Communion Hymn 305
Motet Jubilate Deo - *Britten*
Recessional Hymn **332**

Trinity 17

Parish Choir

5:00pm Choral Eucharist

Hymn **234**
Setting Merbecke
Hymn **296**
Hymn **252**

Parish Men

Sunday 29th September

11:00am Choral Eucharist

Processional Hymn **488**
Setting Little Organ Mass - *Haydn*
Psalm 124
Gradual Hymn **358**
Offertory Hymn **239**
Communion Hymn 275
Motet Factum est silencium - *Dering*
Recessional Hymn **366**

Trinity 18

Parish Choir

5:00pm Compline

Parish Men

CALENDAR September 2024

September 1

13th Sunday after Trinity

9:30am

Eucharist: The Rector

11:00am

Choral Eucharist: Fr Brian Crowe

Preacher: Fr Brian Crowe

Readings: Song of Solomon 2: 8-13; James 1: 17-27; Mark 7: 1-8, 14-15, 21-23

Reader: *Warden*

Intercessor: *Anne McBride*

Servers: *Mark Claney, Tony Merrick, Jonny Calder*

Tea and Coffee: *Keith Suckling, Steven McQuitty*

5:00pm

Evening Prayer: Fr Terence Dunlop

Lessons: Exodus 12: 21-27; Matthew 4: 23-5: 20 (*Fr Graeme Pollock*)

September 4

10:30am

Eucharist: The Rector

September 8

14th Sunday after Trinity

9:30am

Eucharist: The Rector

11:00am

Choral Eucharist: The Rector

Preacher: The Rector

Readings: Proverbs 22: 1-2, 8-9; James 2: 1-10, 14-17; Mark 7: 24-37

Reader: *Brenda Claney*

Intercessor: *George Woodman*

Servers: *Banji Akinyele, Steven McQuitty, Tony Merrick*

Tea and Coffee: *Betty Flynn, Dot Lutton*

5:00pm

Evening Prayer: The Rector

Lessons: Exodus 14: 5-31; Matthew 6: 1-18 (*Fr Tom Layden*)

September 11

10:30am

Eucharist: The Rector

September 15

15th Sunday after Trinity

9:30am

Eucharist: The Rector

11:00am

Choral Eucharist: The Rector

Preacher: The Rector

Readings: Proverbs 1: 20-33; James 3: 1-12; Mark 8: 27-38

Reader: *Paul McLaughlin*

Intercessor: *Pam Tilson*

Servers: *Jonny Calder, Tony Merrick, Mark Claney*

Tea and Coffee: *Eleanor Maynard, Fatemeh, Mohammad*

5:00pm

Evening Prayer: The Rector

Lessons: Exodus 18: 13-26; Matthew 7: 1-14 (*Janet Sandikli*)

CALENDAR September 2024

September 18

10:30am Eucharist: The Rector

September 22

16th Sunday after Trinity

9:30am Eucharist: The Rector

11:00am Choral Eucharist: The Rector

Preacher: The Rector

Readings: Proverbs 31: 10-31; James 3: 13 – 4: 3, 7-8a; Mark 9: 30 -37

Reader: *Fr Tom Layden*

Intercessor: *Fr Tom Layden*

Servers: *Omelewa Akinyele, Steven McQuitty, Mark Claney*

Tea and Coffee: *Mina Kelly, Richard Oldfield*

5:00pm Eucharist – Order 1: The Rector

Readings: Ephesians 3: 13-21; Luke 7: 11-17 (*Geoffrey May*)

September 25

10:30am Eucharist: The Rector

September 26

Eucharist: The Rector & Fr Graeme Pollock

The Walsingham Group meets at this Eucharist – all welcome

September 29

16th Sunday after Trinity

9:30am Eucharist: The Rector

11:00am Choral Eucharist: The Rector

Preacher: The Rector

Readings: Esther 7: 1-6, 9-10; James 5: 13-20; Mark 9: 38-50

Reader: *Pam Tilson*

Intercessor: *Janet Sandikli*

Servers: *Jonny Calder, Mark Claney, Tony Merrick*

Tea and Coffee: *Valerie Roberts, Holly Ferres, Linda McConnell*

5:00pm Compline: The Rector

SKINNY MALINK

A Belfast skipping song re-imagined by Paul McLaughlin.

A skinny malink melodeon legs
She lived down our street
A splash of freckles on her face
Made her ugliness complete
Her voice was sharp
And angular
Her tongue a cutting tool
I gave her jip
And a widening berth
If we ever met at school

A skinny malink melodeon legs
Through all the many years
Her lazy eye that wandered
Proved a recipe for tears
The hair was dull
And pudding bowled
The frock was hand-me-down
Why would I give her a second look
When no-one was around

A skinny malink melodeon legs
Big banana shoes
I took her to the pictures
For a bet I hoped to lose
The dark was warm and comforting
The secrecy complete
I left her when the 'Queen' came on
And galloped in retreat

A skinny malink melodeon legs
How fast the years have flown
And rags have changed to riches
Like a pinny to a gown
The endless legs are now insured
For a million as we speak
And the voice that clipped a hedgerow
Sings a melody so sweet

A skinny malink melodeon legs
The catwalk dwarfs her feet
And Jimmy Choo the cobbler
Has made them look so neat
I recall an ugly duckling
But the swan is now replete
With love, success and laughter
And the world is at her feet

THE BIRTH OF A NEW KING

And on the night
When Uther in Tintagil past away
Moaning and wailing for an heir, the two
Left the still King, and passing forth to breathe,
Then from the castle gateway by the chasm
Descending through the dismal night—a night
In which the bounds of heaven and earth were lost—
Beheld, so high upon the dreary deeps
It seemed in heaven, a ship, the shape thereof
A dragon winged, and all from stern to stern
Bright with a shining people on the decks,
And gone as soon as seen. And then the two
Dropt to the cove, and watched the great sea fall,
Wave after wave, each mightier than the last,
Till last, a ninth one, gathering half the deep
And full of voices, slowly rose and plunged
Roaring, and all the wave was in a flame:
And down the wave and in the flame was borne
A naked babe, and rode to Merlin's feet,
Who stooped and caught the babe, and cried "The King!
Here is an heir for Uther!" And the fringe
Of that great breaker, sweeping up the strand,
Lashed at the wizard as he spake the word,
And all at once all round him rose in fire,
So that the child and he were clothed in fire.

(From: *The Coming of Arthur* by Tennyson)

Submitted by Geoffrey May

ENDPIECE by Francis FitzGibbon

SOME THOUGHTS ON BEETHOVEN'S NINTH SYMPHONY BICENTENARY 1824-2024

Two hundred years ago on 7 May 1824 the longest and greatest symphony ever composed to date (and for that matter in our time) received its first performance at a concert at the Kärntnertortheater Vienna, Symphonie 9 in d minor op. 125, by Ludwig van Beethoven. The symphony was dedicated to King Friedrich Wilhelm III of Prussia and was commissioned by the Philharmonic society of London. Beethoven himself, selected and arranged verses from an *die Freude* (ode to Joy) poem by Friedrich von Schiller to be incorporated into the choral finale.

The soloists in the first performance, in the choral finale were Henriette Sontag soprano, Caroline Unger contralto, Anton Haizinger, tenor and Joseph Seipelt bass. Due to his deafness, the performance was conducted in the presence of Beethoven, by Michael Umlauf.

In 1824, Beethoven's ninth symphony was a compositional milestone, it was the first symphony to combine both instrumental and choral elements, influencing future composers for example Wagner, Bruckner, Mahler. Significantly it was composed over many years from around 1815 when first sketches were written in the post-Napoleonic war period.

However its conception began much earlier during Beethoven's period in Bonn, in the 1790s inspired by *Aufklärung*, an enlightenment movement in Germany during the 18th century influenced by the writings of philosophers such as Immanuel Kant. On 26 January 1793, Bartholomäus Ludwig Fischnich, wrote a letter to Charlotte Schiller the poet's wife informing her that a young man whose talents are universally praised and whom the Elector has sent to Haydn in Vienna, proposes to compose Schiller's *An die Freude*. I expect something perfect for as far as I know the young man is devoted to the great and to the sublime.

Why is Beethoven's ninth symphony of particular relevance to us today in 2024? Because like Beethoven who lived through the highly disruptive and turbulent Napoleonic war period, we too are also living in a very turbulent, politically and economically uncertain world. There is much conflict around the world, rapid technological changes are occurring, AI, Russian nerve gas attacks in Salisbury, Brexit, terrorist attacks, threats from war, the Sars-cov-2 pandemic, famine,

civil unrest and climate change.

The conductor-composer Gustav Mahler once said that to compose a symphony was to create a world. Significantly, the text used by Beethoven in the choral finale of the ninth symphony is a setting of An die Freude (Ode to Joy) by Friedrich von Schiller, a poem which advocates universal brotherly love and humanitarian ideals. For example the Schiller text in the opening and closing stanzas of An die Freude, selected by Beethoven for the choral setting in the finale translated are:

Joy, bright spark of divinity,
Daughter of Elysium
Fire inspired we tread thy sanctuary,
Thy magic power re-unites,
All that custom has divided,
All men become brothers,
Under the sway of thy gentle wings.

Your millions, I embrace you,
This kiss is for all the world!
Brothers above the starry canopy
There must dwell a loving Father.
Do you fall in worship, you millions?
World, do you know your Creator?
Seek him in the heavens!
Above the stars he must dwell.

It was Richard Wagner as Court Kapellmeister in Dresden in 1846 who instigated annual performances of Beethoven's ninth symphony on Palm Sunday. Subsequently it has been performed annually at the opening of important events and music festivals, for example United Nations day, the re-opening of the Vienna State Opera house in 1955, the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, Bayreuth and Salzburg Festivals, BBC proms and the Edinburgh festival.

Since the establishment of the United Nations after the second world war, Beethoven's ninth symphony has been frequently performed on UN day 24 October in the General Assembly Hall of the United Nations in New York. In 2001, Beethoven's original, hand-written manuscript of the score, held by the Berlin State Library, was added to the Memory of the World Programme Heritage list established by the United Nations, becoming the first musical score so designated.

In 1972, the Council of Europe adopted Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" theme as its anthem. In 1985, it was adopted by European Union

leaders as the official anthem of the European Union. There are no words to the anthem; it consists of music only. In the universal language of music, this anthem expresses the European ideals of freedom, peace and solidarity. The European anthem is not intended to replace the national anthems of the EU countries but rather to celebrate the values they share. The anthem is played at official ceremonies involving the European Union and generally at all sorts of events with a European character.

In popular culture, Beethoven's ninth symphony has featured significantly in several films. For example Stanley Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), *Die Hard* (1988) and *Dead Poets Society* (1989).

The ninth symphony comprises four distinct movements. The first movement in a sense could be seen as summarising the creation, the immensity of the universe, man's struggle for survival, his hopes and fears, his challenges and achievements. The movement is marked *Allegro ma non troppo, un poco maestoso*. The mysterious opening with its bare fifths represents primordial chaos before creation. In a sense it illustrates an evolving world emerging from chaos. The tempo indication is moderated, with the addition of *maestoso*, in contrast to the rather fast tempo marking in the fifth symphony.

The second movement is a demonic scherzo marked *Molto vivace*, very lively. It features amongst other things solo passages for kettledrums, which later inspired Anton Bruckner in his eighth symphony. This whole movement seems to represent a portrait of the Olympian man at a Dionysian or bacchic celebration during the games.

The third movement, marked *Adagio molto e cantabile* very slow and in a singing manner, has religious overtones, of love, beauty and aesthetics, inspired by the Elysian fields. At the end of the third movement, Beethoven introduces the final "Joy" movement with a novel dramatic instrumental recitative which reminisces the main themes from each of three preceding movements, before the baritone solo enters leading into the choral setting with four soloists of Friedrich von Schiller's *An die Freude* poem.

The erroneous metronome markings for the symphony have led to much debate and confusion ever since 1824. Firstly because of his deafness, Beethoven never rehearsed the ninth symphony himself to assess firsthand how his suggested metronome numbers would fit

each movement. Secondly, the metronome developed by Imperial & Royal Court Mechanic Johann Nepomuk Mälzel, was only recently invented and was not in common usage by conductors. Thirdly some recent research has suggested that the metronome markings may have been incorrectly recorded for the movements when Beethoven and his nephew Karl were finalising them for the printer, Schott of Mainz. Finally, there is also new research suggesting that his metronome may in fact have been broken or incorrectly calibrated.

Typical performances of Beethoven's ninth symphony take between 62-68 minutes (about the same length of time as Anton Bruckner's fourth symphony). However there are outliers, notably performances conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler, 74-76 minutes, but he is an exception. I once heard a performance by the Ulster Orchestra, at St. Anne's Cathedral Belfast which took a mere 56 minutes, the conductor claiming to use the original tempo markings. I found it far too fast, the phrasing terribly clipped and rushed, the choir could not keep up with the orchestra in the finale. It is quite impossible to perform it well in under an hour.

As the celebrated music critic Hans Keller remarked, tempo in itself is nothing, it is a function of structure, performance is a function of phrasing and hence you cannot decide on the tempo unless you have experienced the whole structure and experienced as a listener the phrasing of the interpreter in question.

There have been many celebrated performances recorded last century. The earliest being Felix Weingartner Vienna Philharmonic, 1935; Wilhelm Furtwängler, Berlin 1942, Bayreuth 1951, Vienna 1953; Bruno Walter Vienna 1955; Herbert von Karajan Berlin Philharmonic 1962; Hans Schimdt-Isserstedt Vienna Philharmonic 1965. Karl Bohm Vienna Philharmonic 1969.

Of all the many celebrated performances of Beethoven's ninth symphony, it is the ones conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler which need special discussion. Furtwängler always regarded it as a quasi-religious work and his performances were special occasions. He wrote about it at some length and in 1948 gave a talk on the BBC when he was conducting a complete cycle of the symphonies in London. There he speaks about the ninth symphony in almost metaphysical terms. This is borne out by the historic live recording by Austrian Radio Rot-Weiss-Rot of the performance in the Grösser Saal, Musikverein on 30 May 1953. Wilhelm Furtwängler conducts the Vienna Philharmonic with the Wiener Singakademie. The soloists are Irmgard Seefried soprano, Rosette Anday Mezzo-soprano, Anton

Dermota tenor and Paul Schöffler, bass-baritone.

The choral symphony could be aptly described as a “Creation” symphony, a majestic hymn of triumph, fight and desperation, victory and resignation are united in a unique apotheosis which for the last time in the history of the symphony reconciles God and the world, art, and life. As Beethoven remarked to the London harp maker Johann Andreas Stumpff during his visit to Vienna in 1824, “When I gaze in wonder at the evening sky and at the host of bright stars, suns or planets eternally following their appointed course, then my spirit soars beyond those celestial bodies, so many million miles away, to the source from which all creation flowed and from which new creations will forever flow”.

Further Reading:

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Beethoven: Anguish and Triumph, Jan Swafford: Faber & Faber (2014)

The Ninth Beethoven and the World in 1824, Harvey Sachs: Faber & Faber (2010)

Memories of Beethoven, Gerhard von Breuning, ed Maynard Solomon: Cambridge University Press (1995).

Furtwängler, Hans Hubert Schönzeler: Gerald Duckworth & Co. (1990)

Selected Recordings:

Felix Weingartner, Vienna Philharmoniker, Vienna Staatsoperchor (1935). Pearl Gemm CD 9407. (Also on Naxos.)

Wilhelm Furtwängler, Chorus & Orchestra Bayreuther Festspiele (1951) Orfeo C 754081B.

Wilhelm Furtwängler, Vienna Philharmoniker, Wiener Singakademie (1953) ICA ICAC 5034

Bruno Walter, Vienna Philharmoniker, Vienna Staatsoperchor, (1955) Orfeo C 669051B.

Herbert von Karajan, Berliner Philharmoniker, Vienna Singverein (1962) DG 463088-2

Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt Vienna Philharmoniker, Vienna Staatsoperchor (1965) Decca Eloquence 484 3981

