

# Notes on the music for the morning services, January 15, 2023 (Martin Luther King weekend)

St. Stephen's music staff--Brent te Velde, director of music; Diana Chou, associate director of music; and Chris Edwards, director of St. Stephen's Choir--seek to enlarge the repertoire of choral, organ, and other instrumental music used in worship and performed in concerts at St. Stephen's Church to include more works by female composers and composers of color. On Sunday morning, January 15—the birthday of the late Martin Luther King Jr.—the following pieces will be part of our 9 and 11:15 a.m. services.

## **Florence Price** **Adoration**

A native of Arkansas, pianist and organist Florence Price (1887-1953) was a trailblazer in music composition; her Symphony in E minor—premiered by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra—was the first work by a Black woman to be performed by a major orchestra. Price's Epiphany piece "Adoration," while written for use in church, also hints at her background as a silent film organist in its harmonic language and registrational palette.

## **Moses Hogan** **We shall walk through the valley in peace**

Composer and choral conductor Moses Hogan (1957-2003) was particularly renowned as one of the foremost choral arrangers of spirituals. His lush, 8-part setting of "We shall walk through the valley in peace" begins in hushed stillness, gradually growing to an impassioned peak before returning to the quietly heartfelt soundscape of the opening.

## **Hymn 792 from Wonder, Love and Praise\*** **Holy God, you raise up prophets** (*Martin's Song*)

The text for this hymn is drawn from a collection of texts celebrating seven Black saints: Absalom Jones, Augustine of Hippo, Martin Luther King, Jr., Cyprian of Carthage, Monica of Hippo, Simon of Cyrene, and Philip the Evangelist. Carl Haywood's music fits the poem expertly and has been included in recognition of the importance of Martin Luther King Day both in the church and in the world. The church commemorates the faithful departed on the anniversary of the day they entered eternal life while the secular world thinks in terms of birthdays; thus, the civil holiday is celebrated on or near the anniversary of his birth, January 15.

**Adolphus Hailstork**  
**Wade in the Water**

In his setting of the spiritual "Wade in the Water," Virginia-based composer Adolphus Hailstork (b. 1941) incorporates jazz elements and moments of striking harmonic dissonance. The latter perhaps reflect the text's Biblical references—the line "God's a gonna trouble the water" alludes to the John 5:2-9 story of the pool by the Sheep Gate—as well as the song's social and historical context. Harriet Tubman was said to have sung "Wade in the Water" on the Underground Railroad; as civil rights activist and spirituals scholar Howard Thurman explained, "To escaping slaves, the song told them to abandon the path and move into the water. By traveling along the water's edge or across a body of water, the slaves would throw chasing dogs and their keepers off the scent."

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During Compline, the half-hour service held at 8 p.m., Sanctuary, our mixed *a cappella* choir, will sing another setting of "We shall walk through the valley in peace."

**Undine Smith Moore**  
**We shall walk through the valley in peace**

Pianist, music educator, and Pulitzer Prize-nominated composer Undine Smith Moore (1904-1989) is sometimes called the "Dean of Black Women Composers." A Virginia native, Moore served on the faculty of Virginia State College (now Virginia State University) and Virginia Union University, among other institutions. Though a pianist by training, Moore's greatest compositional love was writing vocal and choral music such as her setting of the spiritual "We shall walk through the valley in peace," the text of which is based on Psalm 23.

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\*Wonder Love and Praise is a supplement to The Hymnal 1982, both of which are published by Church Publishing, for use in Episcopal worship.

—Notes by Diana Chou  
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