



# What Does Jesus Mean to Me as a Christian Black Woman?

by Colleen Brydson  
Based on a testimony given at Christ Church Deer Park in February 2025.

In my childhood days, and as far back as I can remember, Jesus meant so much to me. One of the first songs I learnt was “Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so.” I could not read the Bible then, but my parents made us aware of the importance of the Bible and the love Jesus has for us.

Jesus means for me, someone who cares for the weak and marginalized. He is my Comforter and Healer. He is never too busy, and he listens when I take my cares to him.

As a Black Christian woman in a new country, it is difficult not to see or experience the systemic difference in how we are treated, not only in the workplaces, but also in our places of worship. However, I am reminded that the women have always been the “Backbone of the Church.” They were the first to see the risen Lord and to tell the Good News. Remembering this, my strong faith has guided me on my journey to worship, no matter where I am, regardless of the colour of my skin.

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This month, we put aside our differences to celebrate and acknowledge the achievements of our Black brothers and sisters. They were denied formal educational opportunities, yet with fortitude and determination they have made vast contributions to North American life and beyond.

I am reminded that the women have always been the “Backbone of the Church.” They were the first to see the risen Lord and to tell the Good News.

I love this church and I am grateful for the opportunities to worship and to serve. A special thanks to Reverend Stephen, for opening this dialogue where I can share my faith and love for Jesus and the Work; and to Reverend Cathy for always encouraging us to learn from you; to my worshipping community and the beautiful music that lifts my soul Sunday by Sunday.

My prayer is that as we go into the future, we continue to respect our differences and love each other as Jesus loves us.

Thank you.

❖ Colleen Brydson is a member of the Christ Church Deer Park altar guild.

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MORE THAN SUNDAYS

OTHER SERVICES AND PROGRAMS HAPPENING DURING THE WEEK:

COMMUNITY BREAKFAST

SELECT SATURDAYS AT 8:30 AM  
SEE WEBSITE FOR DETAILS.

HOLY EUCHARIST,  
WEDNESDAYS AT 10:30 AM

Scan the code with your phone

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Notes from the Music Library – Easter 2025

# Buxtehude Prelude in C, BuxWV 137

By Emily Chatten

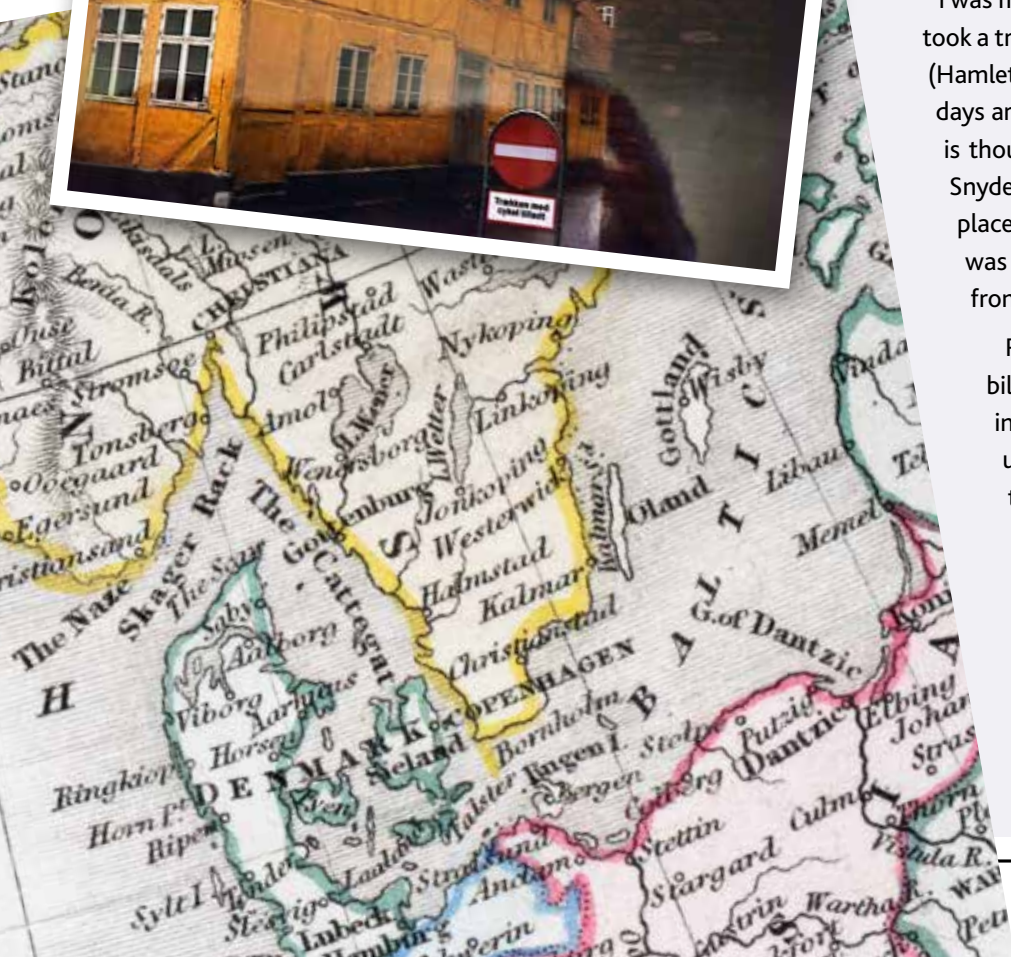
I was filing music in the choir room when I heard the first notes of a piece on the organ that will never leave me. I went upstairs and found Stefani working on the registration for Buxtehude's Prelude in C, BuxWV 137. Over the years I have played this work often, but our Karl Wilhelm organ at Christ Church Deer Park (CCDP) brings me closest to my first days with Buxtehude, at Sct. Peders Kirke, in Næstved, Denmark. As a short aside, I was in Denmark as a Rotary exchange student over the 1996-97 school year. My very generous Rotary club paid for my music lessons. The origins of Sct. Peders Kirke date to 1135. Much like CCDP, Sct. Peders has been through a number of buildings before finally becoming what we see today. However, it was a place I spent many hours. It is, in fact, similar in size to CCDP, with a stunning Crucifix hanging over the altar. The similarities do end there.

As with many Danish churches, most of the inside of Sct. Peders is whitewashed, and ceilings and parts of the walls have chalk frescoes. Much like the "white cliffs of Dover," the south and east of the island of Sjælland have chalk cliffs. For centuries this chalk was used to formulate a paint used to create frescoes or murals, largely in churches in Denmark, but scattered throughout Norway and Sweden as well. Sitting listening to Stefani play Buxtehude, I was returned to Sct. Peders, which I often consider my "happy place": meditating on the chalk frescoes or the Crucifix illuminated by giant windows of tiny diamond panes spilling in Nordic light.

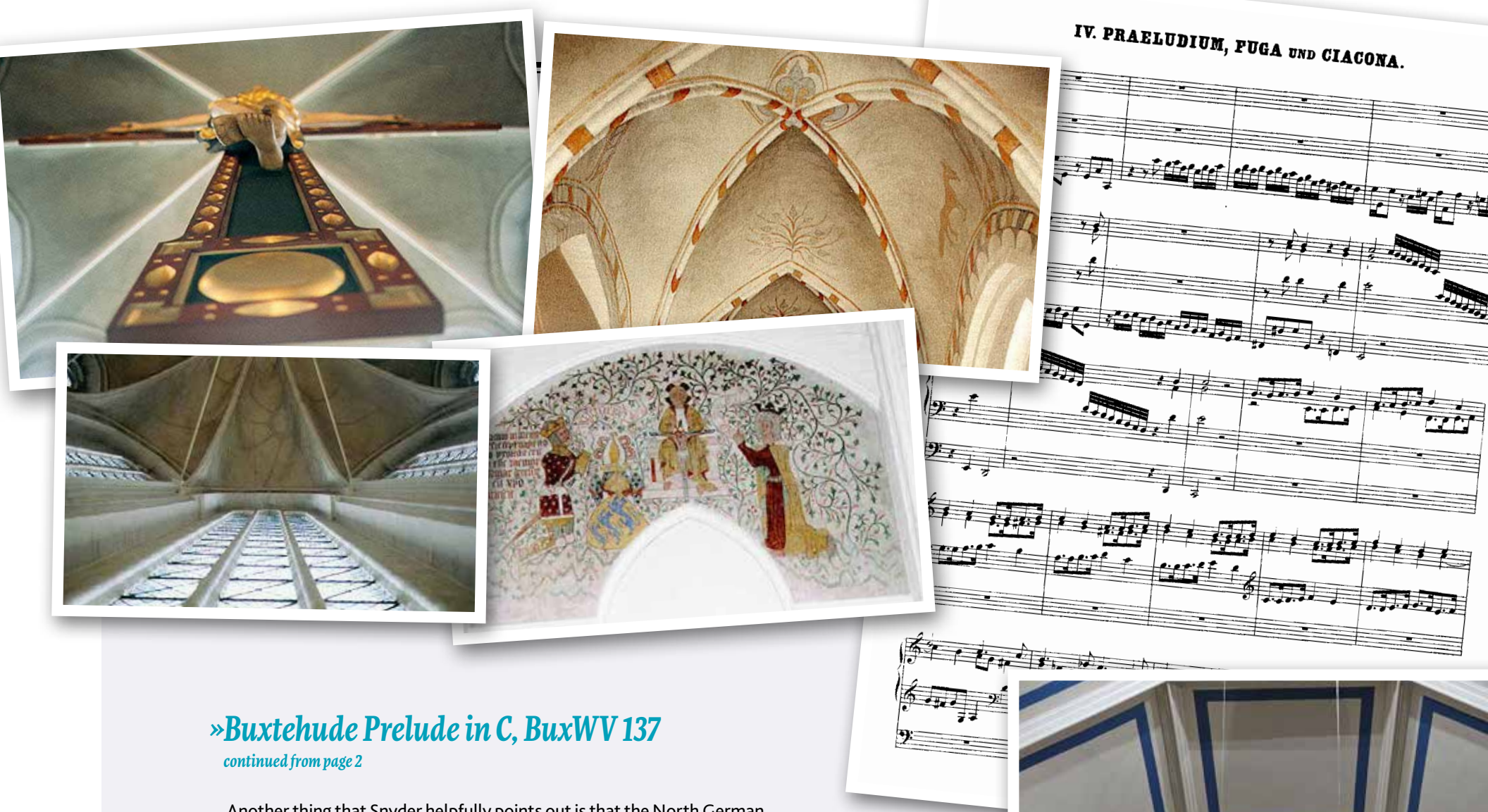
I was first assigned Buxtehude's Prelude in C, BuxWV 137, at Sct. Peders. During those days I took a trip to Helsingør (which you may know as Elsinore). Not far from the gates of Krønborg (Hamlet's Castle) I found a street named for the composer (see picture). Buxtehude's early days are not well known. There is no record of either his date or place of birth, although he is thought to have been born in the year 1637. The renowned Buxtehude scholar, Kerala Snyder, will not go further than to suggest that he may have been born in one of three places: Helsingør, across the Øresund strait in Helsingborg (now Sweden, but at the time it was all ruled by Denmark), or in Oldesloe in Holstein (the northernmost German dutchy, from whence his father originated).

Regardless of where Dieterich Buxtehude was born, he grew up in Helsingør, in a bilingual household, speaking Danish and German. He studied the organ with his father in Helsingør, before pursuing lessons in Copenhagen and potentially (though again unclear) in North Germany. From late 1657 or early 1658 until 1660, Dieterich took on the position his father had held at St. Mary's in Helsingborg, before returning across the Øresund himself and taking up the position of organist at St. Mary's in Helsingør. It was not until 1667 that he went to Lübeck and took up the position of organist, also at St. Mary's, for which he is famous and where he stayed for the rest of his life. It was from Lübeck that Buxtehude wrote the majority of his music, sacred and secular; married and raised his family; and where Bach walked to meet him and spend three months with his family.

[Continues on page 3»](#)







## »Buxtehude Prelude in C, BuxWV 137

*continued from page 2*

Another thing that Snyder helpfully points out is that the North German organs of the time had the most developed pedal divisions of any organs in Europe. Buxtehude's organ works can be divided into those that use pedal and those that do not. However, of those works that do use pedal, the pedals are often prominent, even taking a solo.

This brings me back to Stefani and the BuxWV 137. Over the March Break, the Royal Canadian College of Organists hosted their program "Pipes, Pedals and Pizza" at Yorkminster Park Baptist and CCDP. The morning was held at Yorkminster and geared more toward younger kids (below age 12, or Grade 6). The afternoon was held at CCDP and geared toward older kids (13 and older), with a pizza lunch in between the two sessions. At each session, a welcome is held in which the church's organist explains the organ and plays a few things for attendees to hear the organ, and then participants are split into groups. The groups rotate through (a) viewing the pipes; (b) having an opportunity to view the console and even try playing the organ; and (c) putting together the "Orgelkids" pipe organ kits. The "Orgelkids" kits are miniature pipe organs that can be put together, played, and taken apart in relatively short order. They require some technique to pump for consistent sound, as our intrepid young players learned.

Organists don't come out of boxes. In fact, many don't take up the organ until university, though there are kids like me around who started playing when they could barely reach the pedals. Opportunities like "Pipes, Pedals and Pizza" give curious kids a safe environment to try out an instrument that is new to them. It was really gratifying to see kids and families learning about and enjoying the music of the pipe organ and having a wonderful time with the ingenious "Orgelkids" pipe organ kits.

❖ *Emily Chatten is a volunteer chorister at Christ Church Deer Park who helps to maintain the music library. Emily has joined the group of volunteers editing and producing Spiritus.*

### BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Kerala K. Snyder. 2007 (1987). *Dieterich Buxtehude: Organist in Lübeck*. Rochester: University of Rochester Press.







# Lent and Easter Photos

from Christ Church Deer Park











FEED MY LAMBS.  
**TEND**  
MY SHEEP.

# A Prayer of Unknowing

*by Thomas Merton*

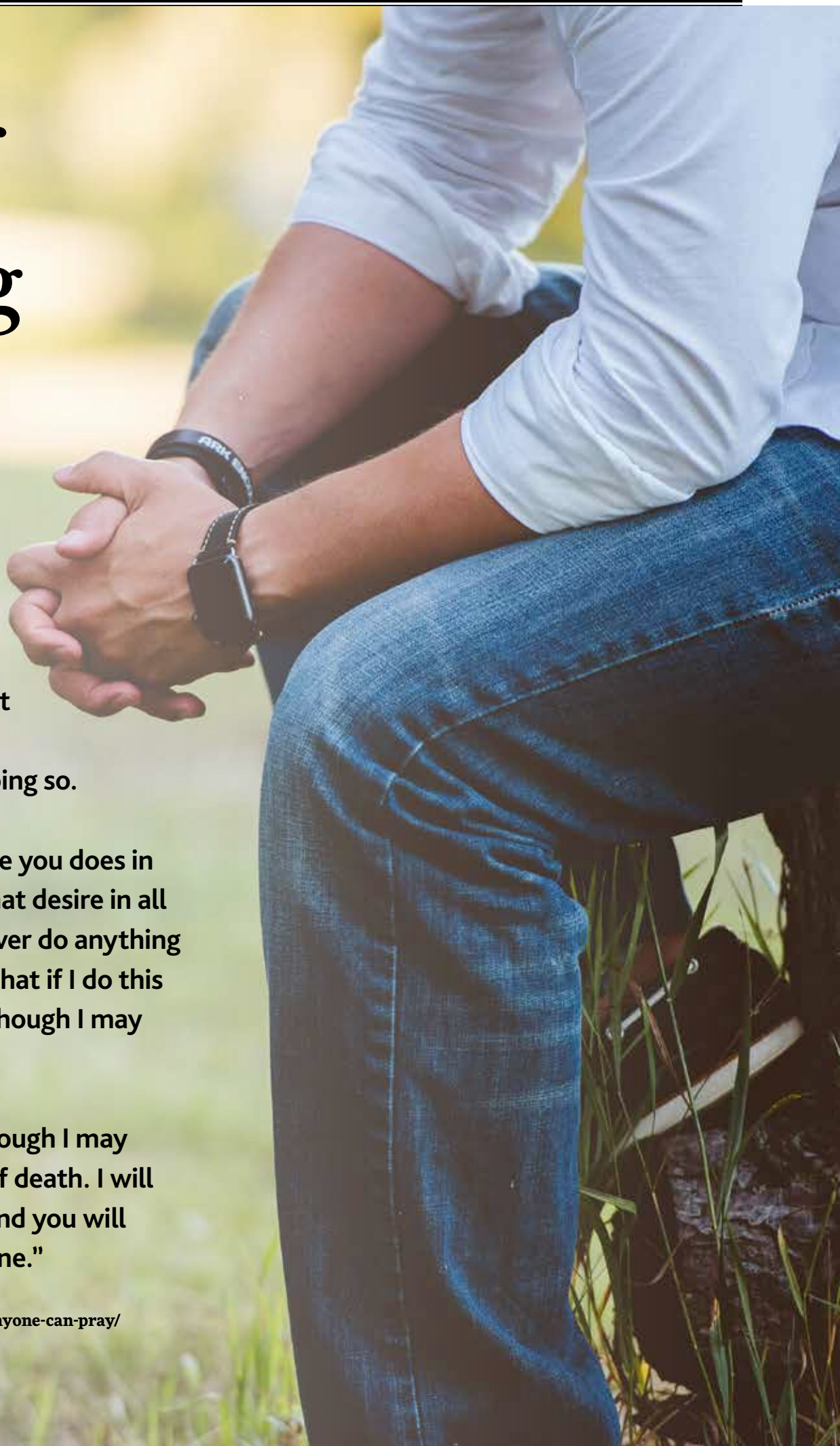
*As quoted in Reverend Stephen's homilies*

"My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think that I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so.

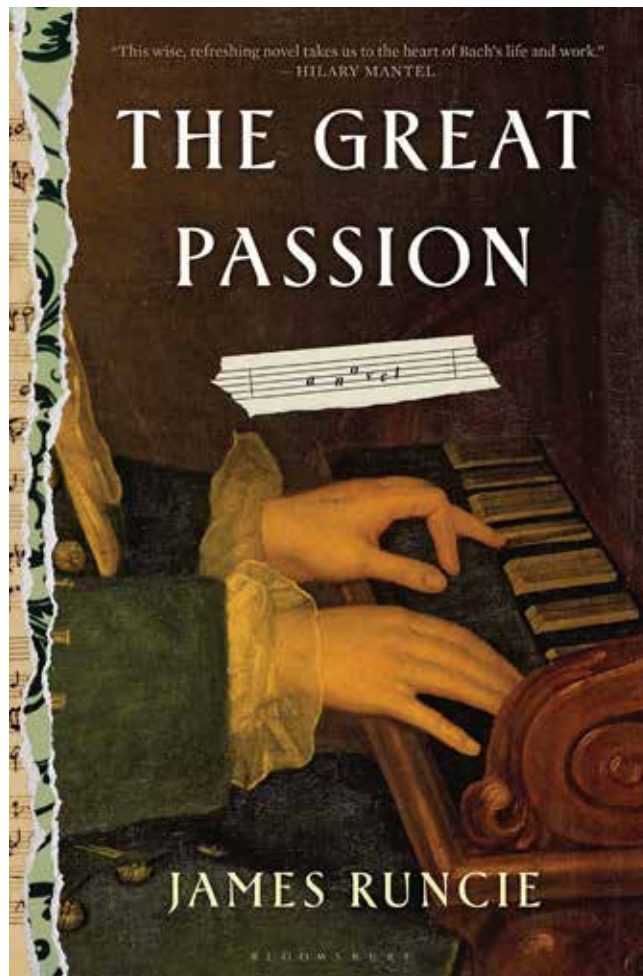
But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road, though I may know nothing about it.

Therefore will I trust you always, though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone."

<https://onbeing.org/blog/thomas-mertons-prayer-that-anyone-can-pray/>







*Review:*

# The Great Passion

*by James Runcie, 2022*



*James Runcie, born 1959*

**W**hen I speak to people about legislation, particularly environmental legislation, I often ask them to consider what the intent of the original framers of the legislation was. Without understanding this intent, the legislation the person seeks to understand may not fully reveal itself decades later.

Similarly, we listen to the music of the classical music greats today, but rarely take the time to consider the context of the music. Though a work of fiction, James Runcie's *The Great Passion* brought me face to face with the "St. Matthew Passion" by J.S. Bach. Today when we hear the St. Matthew Passion, it is rarely the full, near three-hour marathon (with a sermon in the middle). It might be performed during Holy Week or on Good Friday, but it would be at a concert, rather than at a church service.

In *The Great Passion*, Runcie imagines a year for the boys at the choir school associated with St. Thomas's Church, Leipzig. The story is told from the perspective of student Stefan Silbermann, from a family of organ-builders, who has arrived at the school following the death of his mother. Young Silbermann works hard but has difficulty adjusting to boarding school life. Bach is quite pleased with Silbermann and takes him into the family house to help. The first of a number of tragedies happens during this time: one of Bach's young daughters with his wife Anna Magdalena dies of a fever. Some months later the wife of a choir bass also dies (she is also the mother of a chorister). The grief in their community leads Bach to contemplate writing something for Good Friday to help them to heal.

I looked up history about Bach and the time during which he wrote the St. Matthew Passion in Leipzig. It was interesting enough. But Runcie, he brought the whole period vividly alive. As the choir practices became more intense I felt more and more as if I was there, singing along with them.

I laughed at Runcie's Lutherisms, and the tongue-twisters he had the choristers reciting (if you haven't been to choir practice you don't know that we also do this sometimes!). I can't lie, there may have been tears at a few tender moments. While Runcie's choristers at St. Thomas's are fictional, he introduces us to a living, breathing Bach family at the heart of a community. As both a reader and a musician, I find this a tremendous service.

Listen to James Runcie's interview on CBC: <https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/audio/1.7155440>

✧ *Emily Chatten is a Christ Church Deer Park chorister who helps to maintain the parish music library. Emily has recently joined a group of volunteers editing and producing Spiritus.*



Three plastic-free body care products

“Buy Canadian  
and don’t  
buy plastic  
—two wins.

# But I Am Just One Person?

by Mary Bredin

**T**hese are dark times in world politics. Many say they will put their heads in the sand for the next four years, so they do not have to think about any of it. Personally, I did not see the 51st state being such a real threat. While we may have to limit our news to genuinely protect our mental health, I would suggest that action is not only needed, but it can help you feel better—you can do a lot. We are all now keen to buy Canadian, but we can also shop for the planet too.

“I am just one person,” I hear you say? We all know the song, “I’m a little candle.” You can shine in your corner, and I can shine in mine. I believe there are many who want us to feel powerless, but we need to resist. There are even some who say, even if Canada becomes the most environmentally focused country in the world, “it wouldn’t make a difference.” But we know that’s not true—every bit helps, and every light is a beacon of hope for others.

Buy Canadian and don’t buy plastic—two wins.

Three changes you might consider, all in paper containers: Dom’s is from Nelson Naturals and made in BC. It’s my deodorant. Oceanly is heavenly—this moisturizer is applied like some types of sunscreens, as a stick. The company is based in Montreal. My “No Tox life” lip balm is amazing (and it may not be needed, but I do love it). They are a mother (Montreal) and daughter (LA) venture so not fully Canadian, but they operate in a solar-powered facility and it’s all vegan.

With a little research, you can find great products. They are not actually that much more expensive, especially if you shop around. These are just a few examples, but if you look at every product in a plastic container in your home, there is (or very soon will be) an equivalent that is not in a plastic container. It is so exciting to see the shift and the possibility. It gives me a lot of hope.

So many corporations are built on damaging practices—it’s hard to fathom, but there is a lot we can do, from using our purchasing power to protesting and writing letters. We know plastic is in our blood stream now, and we need to reduce our dependence on it fast. Plastic is also all made from oil, which is another reason to reduce its use. There are so many examples where individuals can create miracles—people like Erin Brockovich and the lawyer portrayed in “Dark Waters,” a film about the toxicity of Teflon (which was hidden for years by DuPont, the company that manufactures it). There are so many people who are working hard every day for care of creation. It’s not just a liturgical month of the year—we need an everyday effort to help nature now.

And just think of how much we can support the reuse economy through our rummage sales!

❖ Mary Bredin is a long-time member of Christ Church Deer Park who volunteers with the ReImagining Rummage Team.

**Editor’s Note:**

For more on microplastics in human health check out this open access commentary:  
Hans-Peter Hutter et al., *Microplastics: Omnipresent and an ongoing challenge for medical science*. *Wien Klin Wochenschr* 2024, 137, 3-6. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC11739251/>

And for a more in-depth analysis:  
Yue Lee et al., *Potential Health Impacts of Microplastics: A Review of Environmental Distribution, Human Exposure and Toxic Effects*. *Environment & Health* 2023, 1, 249-257.  
The article has some descriptive diagrams, and both the introduction and conclusion are written in relatively plain language.  
<https://pubs.acs.org/doi/pdf/10.1021/envhealth.3c00052>



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**WANTED  
CONTRIBUTORS AND  
PHOTOGRAPHERS  
OF ALL AGES AND STAGES.**

**Would you be willing to  
take on a specific assignment or  
take pictures?** Is there something  
you would like to research and  
write about? Do you have a  
constructive comment? Or, is  
there an activity or initiative  
that you would like others to  
join? If so, please contact us at  
[spiritus@christchurchdeerpark.org](mailto:spiritus@christchurchdeerpark.org)

Submissions should be 250 to 500 words in length and in Word format, and all submissions will be subject to edit.

Watch the Sunday Bulletins for calls to submit to our next issue. Please send your submissions directly to Emily at [elwchatt@gmail.com](mailto:elwchatt@gmail.com).

A big thanks to all of the contributors for this issue of *Spiritus*.

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