



Tell Out My Soul

The Language of Song is Universal

An Interview By the Very Rev.
Julia McCray Goldsmith

I'm classically trained in opera and in church music, so when I think of "tell out my soul" I am reminded that music is a universal language. I only speak English fluently, but I sing in other languages. I can do this because I've learned to interpret the universal feelings in the music—love or loss or longing—that the composer intended. When I sing, I'm telling out on their behalf.

Last Saturday I was singing Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Pie Jesu." One way to translate these words, in the context of a requiem, is "Lord give them rest." It left me thinking of trans people and immigrants and others whose identity is currently under attack, and I find myself praying for their rest in Jesus.

I was not raised in The Episcopal Church, so I'm relatively new to the hymnody. But I convened our cathedral's young adult ministry and now I am on the vestry. I seem to get called to leadership roles even when I'm not looking for them. Maybe because I stand up for others? I was raised as a girl and taught to be more quiet and passive, but as a non-binary adult I lead out loud and assertively. It's a common understanding in music circles that the skill of your choir is only as good as the worst voice. Everyone is diminished if we don't support each other's voices.

I am especially thankful for the voices and the teachers that have supported me along the way. My first church music director believed in and encouraged me when I was only nine or ten. I had great college music professors and church music directors at St. Bartholomew's in Poway and at Trinity Cathedral in San Jose. These people told me that I have a gift to share, and I believed them. TENs.org



Questions for Reflection:

How do you tell your story while empowering others to tell theirs?



Trinity "Trin" Hall (they/them) is a 24 year old freelance soprano and pastry artist, president of the Trinity Episcopal Cathedral San Jose Young Adult Ministry.



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