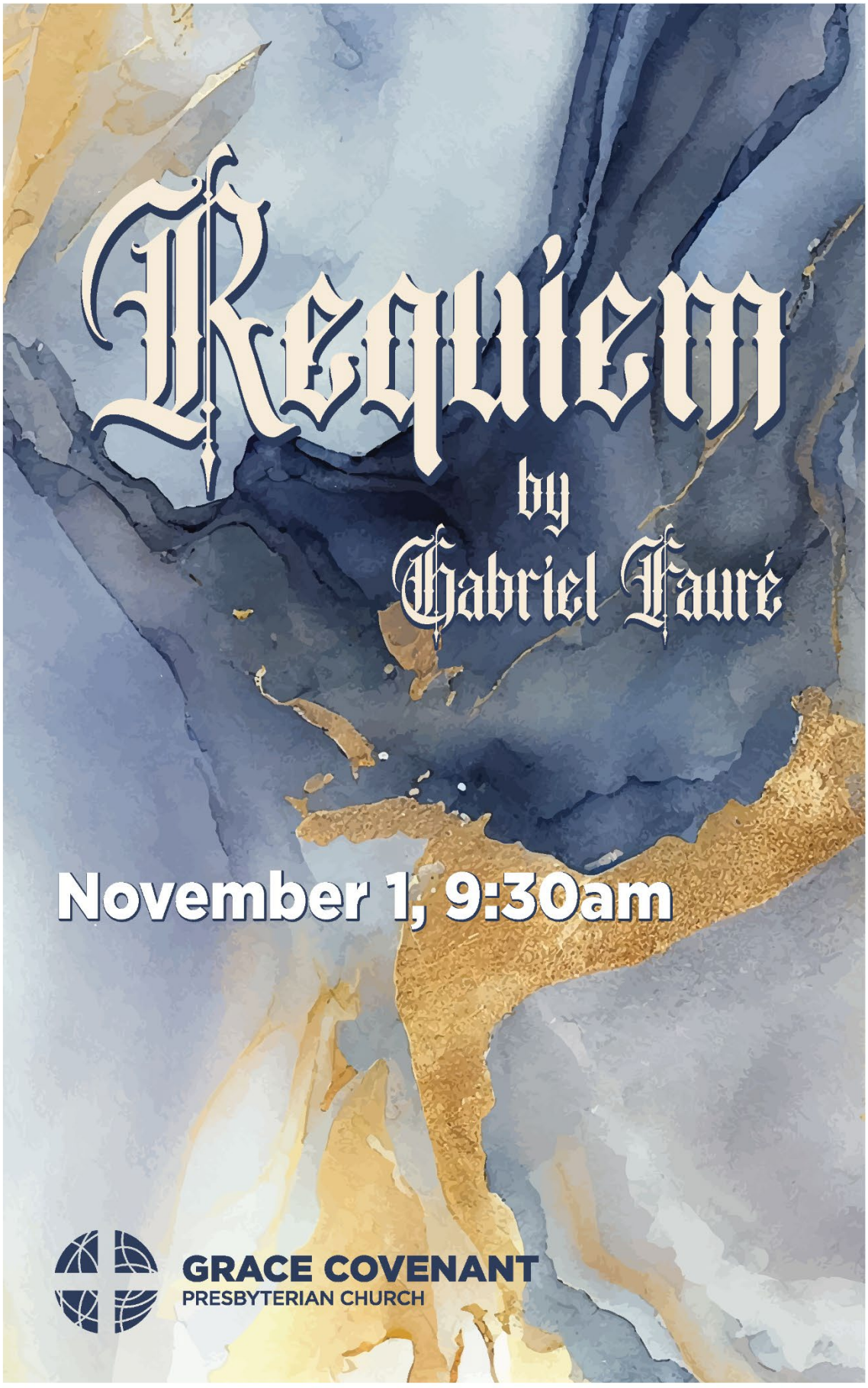

Requiem
by
Gabriel Fauré
November 1, 9:30am
GRACE COVENANT
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Fauré's *Requiem*

Reflections for All Saints Sunday

For centuries, composers have written **Requiem**s, musical settings of the traditional Roman Catholic Mass for the Dead. These ancient prayers speak to questions still very much with us. What happens when we leave this earth? How do we live with losing someone we love? And how do we find peace with things we simply cannot understand or control?

Fauré's *Requiem* is an especially intimate setting of these prayers. He once recalled hearing his work described as a "lullaby of death." It's a lovely description, though perhaps a surprising one when you hear some of the more intense passages. There's tenderness, longing, joy, uncertainty, and yes, genuine fear. And much like life itself, these emotions don't always arrive in any particular order.

Grief certainly doesn't follow a neat or predictable path. A memory brings a smile, maybe even a good laugh, and five minutes later the same memory brings tears. There are days when accepting God's will comes naturally, and others when it's a real struggle. That's part of being human, I suppose.

Perhaps that's part of why these ancient prayers still resonate. A little background may help us hear them. The *Ordinary* of the traditional Mass includes prayers such as the *Kyrie* (Lord, have mercy), *Sanctus* (Holy, holy, holy), and *Agnus Dei* (Lamb of God). The Requiem also includes prayers for eternal rest and deliverance.

The *Dies irae* (Day of Wrath) describes the terror of the Last Judgment. Mozart and Verdi gave it famously dramatic settings. If you've seen *Mad Max: Fury Road* or *Django Unchained*, you've experienced just how dramatic Verdi's can be! Fauré, however, omits nearly the entire sequence, retaining only its closing *Pie Jesu*, a tender prayer for mercy and rest. Perhaps that choice tells us something about Fauré's outlook, one that seems more interested in mercy and the hope of eternal rest than in the terrors of judgment.

Fauré also draws on prayers from funeral rites outside the Mass. *Libera me* was traditionally sung afterward, while *In Paradisum* accompanied the procession from the church. This morning's English translations take a few liberties with the Latin to capture the spirit of these prayers.

It's not only the words that give this Requiem its character. Our chamber ensemble reflects the work's early instrumentation, with a wonderful warmth that allows the quieter moments to shine. And there are plenty of contrasts. There's genuine joy in the soaring “Hosannas” of the *Sanctus*. The *Pie Jesu* is almost disarmingly tender, while the *Agnus Dei* offers a quieter kind of prayer. Later, *Libera me* brings sudden urgency and moments of real terror. Faced with death and uncertainty, the prayer becomes a deeply human plea for God's mercy.

And through all of this, I think there's something especially important to remember: **fear does not get the final word.** *In Paradisum* transports us to a world that feels almost weightless. The urgency drifts away, leaving an extraordinary sense of rest. It reminds me of those moments when we feel especially close to God, when we can stop wrestling with everything and simply trust that we're in good hands. So much of life is spent trying to change or hold on to things that were never really ours to control. There's something wonderfully freeing about the possibility of letting go, even when getting there is difficult.

We've lost people we love in our Grace Covenant family this year. Their absence is real, and so is the gratitude for having known them. A familiar voice, a shared laugh, a kindness we might not have thought much about at the time. It's often those little things that stay with us. And sometimes, they're the things we miss the most.

My hope is that this music gives us a little room for all of it. We don’t need to have all the answers this morning. Perhaps it's enough simply to listen, remember, and trust that those we love are at peace in God's care.

—Patrick O’Halloran, Director of Music Ministries

Translation

I. INTROIT – KYRIE

Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine	Grant them eternal rest, O Lord,
et lux perpetua luceat eis.	and let perpetual light shine upon them.
Te decet hymnus, Deus in Sion	A hymn of praise is fitting for you, O God, in Zion,
et tibi reddetur votum in Jerusalem.	and to you a vow will be fulfilled in Jerusalem.
Exaudi orationem meam, ad te omnis caro veniet.	Hear my prayer; to you all flesh will come.
Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison.	Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

II. OFFERTORIUM

O Domine, Jesu Christe, Rex Gloriae	O Lord Jesus Christ, King of glory,
libera animas defunctorum	deliver the souls of the departed
de poenis inferni et de profundo lacu.	from the pains of hell and from the deep pit.
O Domine, Jesu Christe, Rex Gloriae	O Lord Jesus Christ, King of glory,
libera animas defunctorum de ore leonis	deliver the souls of the departed from the lion's mouth,
ne absorbeat eus Tartarus ne cadant in obscurum.	lest hell swallow them up, lest they fall into darkness.
Hostias et preces tibi Domine, laudis offerimus	To you, O Lord, we offer sacrifices and prayers of praise;
tu suscipe pro animabus illis	receive them on behalf of those souls
quarum hodie memoriam facimus	whose memory we keep today.
Fac eas, Domine, de morte transire ad vitam	Let them pass, O Lord, from death into life,
Quam olim Abrahae promisisti et semini eus.	which you once promised to Abraham and to his offspring.

III. SANCTUS

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth	Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts;
pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua	heaven and earth are full of your glory.
hosanna in excelsis.	Hosanna in the highest.

IV. PIE JESU

Pie Jesu, Domine, dona eis requiem	Merciful Lord Jesus, grant them rest,
sempiternam requiem	everlasting rest.

V. AGNUS DEI

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi	Lamb of God, you who take away the sins of the world,
dona eis requiem.	grant them rest.
Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine	Let eternal light shine upon them, O Lord,
Cum sanctis tuis in aeternum,	with your saints forever,
quia pius es	for you are merciful.
Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine,	Grant them eternal rest, O Lord,
et lux perpetua luceat eis	and let perpetual light shine upon them.

VI. LIBERA ME

Libera me, Domine, de morte aeterna	Deliver me, O Lord, from eternal death
in die illa tremenda	on that dreadful day,
quando coeli movendi sunt et terra	when heaven and earth will be shaken,
dum veneris judicare saeculum per ignem	when you come to judge the world by fire.
Tremens factus sum ego et timeo	I have been made to tremble, and I fear
dum discussio venerit atque ventura ira	as judgment and the coming wrath draw near.
Dies illa, dies irae, calamitatis et miseriae	That day, a day of wrath, of calamity and misery;
dies illa, dies magna et amara valde.	that day, great and bitter beyond measure.
Requiem aeternam …	Eternal rest …

VII. IN PARADISUM

In Paradisum deducant Angeli	May the angels lead you into paradise;
in tuo adventu suscipiant te Martyres	at your coming, may the martyrs receive you
et perducant te in civitatem sanctam Jerusalem	and lead you into the holy city, Jerusalem.
Chorus Angelorum te suscipiat	May the choir of angels receive you,
et cum Lazaro quondam paupere	and with Lazarus, once poor,
aeternam habeas requiem	may you have eternal rest.