



Come Sunday

Duke Ellington in Worship

*"Every man prays in his own language,
And there is no language that God does not understand."*

DUKE ELLINGTON

Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington (1899–1974)

American composer, pianist, and bandleader whose career spanned more than fifty years. Known primarily for his contributions to jazz, Ellington regarded his Sacred Concerts as "the most important thing I have ever done."

- **1899** | Born in Washington, DC on April 29 as Edward Kennedy Ellington, earned the nickname "Duke" by his childhood friends for his elegant manner and dress
- **1917** | Begins his professional career and forms his first ensemble, "The Duke's Serenaders," also called the "Colored Syncopators."
- **1923** | Moves to New York and establishes the Duke Ellington Orchestra
- **1927-1931** | National recognition through performances at the Cotton Club in Harlem
- **1943** | Premieres *Black, Brown and Beige* at Carnegie Hall
- **Post-WWII** | Faces declining popularity of the big band era as radio and popular tastes change
- **1956** | Career revival after the Newport Jazz Festival performance
- **1959** | Wins three GRAMMY Awards at the 2nd Annual GRAMMY Awards
- **1963-1964** | Serves as a U.S. cultural ambassador, touring internationally
- **1965** | Premieres the **First Sacred Concert** at Grace Cathedral, San Francisco
- **1967** | "In the Beginning God" receives a GRAMMY Award
- **1968** | Premieres the **Second Sacred Concert** at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York
- **1969** | Receives the Presidential Medal of Freedom
- **1973** | Premieres the **Third Sacred Concert** at Westminster Abbey, London
- **1973** | Receives France's Legion of Honor
- **1974** | Dies in New York City on May 24



The Sacred Concerts

Three Expressions of Sacred Jazz (1965–1973)

First Sacred Concert (1965)

Grace Cathedral, San Francisco

- Largest and most expansive
- Sacred jazz in a sacred space
- Combines new and existing works
- Includes:
 - *In the Beginning God*
 - *Come Sunday*
 - *David Danced*



Second Sacred Concert (1968)

Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York

- Vocal and contemplative
- First collaboration with Alice Babs
- Includes:
 - *Heaven*
 - *The Shepherd*
 - *Praise God and Dance*



Third Sacred Concert (1973)

Westminster Abbey, London

- More intimate and reflective
- Themes of love, faith, mortality, and community
- Includes:
 - *Is God a Three Letter Word for Love?*
 - *The Brotherhood*



Featured Works in Today's Presentation

Come Sunday

"Lord, dear Lord above, God Almighty..."
Congregational Song • Prayer • Longing

Heaven

"Heaven, my dream, Heaven divine..."
Contemplation • Communion • Wonder

The Lord's Prayer

Liturgical Prayer • Reflection • Renewal