

Great River
Chorale



Always Something Sings

A celebration of song, love and hope

Sunday, April 30, 2023 | 4:00 p.m.
Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Saint Cloud, Minnesota

Mary Kay Geston, *Conductor*
Barbara Brooks, *Collaborative Pianist*
Anne Rhodes, *ASL Interpreter*

"There always, always something sings" ~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

The Program

For the Love of Singing

The Gift to Sing

Music: Reginal Wright
Words: James Weldon Johnson

Sometimes the mist overhangs my path,
And blackening clouds about me cling;
But, oh, I have a magic way
To turn the gloom to cheerful day—
I softly sing.

And if the way grows darker still,
Shadowed by Sorrow's somber wing,
With glad defiance in my throat,
I pierce the darkness with a note,
And sing, and sing.

I brood not over the broken past,
Nor dread whatever time may bring;
No nights are dark, no days are long,
While in my heart there swells a song,
And I can sing.

Something Sings

Music: Robert Convery
Words: Ralph Waldo Emerson, adapt. R. Convery

Let me go where'er I will,
I hear a sky-born music still:
It sounds in every rose,
And where the rainbow glows,
And even in the meanest things
There always, always something sings.

It sounds not only in the bird,
Nor in the song of woman heard,
But even in the meanest things
There always, always something sings.

For this Joy

Music: Lobe den Herren, arr. Susan LaBarr
Words: Charles Anthony Silvestri

Bruce Thornton, *clarinet*

Praise for the sun, who by day gives us warmth and enlightens;
Praise for the moon, who the darkest night cheerfully brightens;
Each glitt'ring star shining from ages afar,
Driving away all that frightens.

Praise for the sky under heaven that widely contains us;
Our fertile earth, and her harvest that gently sustains us;
Birds on the wing, lifting their voices to sing,
Free us from all that restrains us.

Our tender hearts, which so wondrously in chambers deeping,
(Can) cherish the joys of new love and, at death's call, the weeping.
Sorrow and pain turn to rejoicing again;
Love now in memory keeping.

Praise for this joy in our hearts as we sing of creation!
Wondrous are all things from firmament down to foundation!
Joyful our praise as all our voices we raise,
Singing in glad celebration!

How Can I Keep from Singing?

Music & words: Robert Lowry, arr. Matt Podd & Adam Podd

Marion Judish, *violin* | Jennifer Wildeson, *viola* | Thea Stockinger, *cello*
Patrick Dinndorf, *double bass* | Terry Vermillion, *percussion*

My life flows on in endless song above earth's lamentations.
I hear the real though far-off hymn that hails a new creation.
No storm can shake my inmost calm, while to that rock I'm clinging.
Since love prevails in heaven and earth, How can I keep from singing?

While though the tempest 'round me roars, I know the truth it liveth,
And though the darkness 'round me close, songs in the night it giveth.
No storm can shake my inmost calm, while to that rock I'm clinging.
Since love prevails in heaven and earth, How can I keep from singing?

I lift my eyes, the cloud grows thin; I see the blue above it.
And day by day, this pathway smooths, since first I learned to love it.
No storm can shake my inmost calm, I hear the music ringing,
It sounds an echo in my soul. How can I keep from singing?

I Sing Because I'm Happy

Music: Charles H. Gabriel, arr. Kenneth Paden, adapt. Rollo Dilworth
Words: Civilla D. Martin

Terry Vermillion, *percussion*

I sing because I'm happy.
I sing because I'm free.
His eye is on the sparrow,
and I know He watches me.

Aspects of Love

In Love with You

Music & words: Alec Powell

I will fetch the golden lilies from the field.
I will paint the sky a hue so bright and blue.
Drifting, fading, into pools of light.
I have never been this much in love.

I will touch the sky and never leave the earth.
I will sing the sparrow's song and know its worth.
Diving, falling, fast for you.
I have never been this much in love.

Watching as the sunset turns to twilight.
Embers burn and glow so strong, so bright!
And with my breath I'll love you
'till the very end.

I Will

Music & words: John Lennon & Paul McCartney, arr. Roger Emerson

Who knows how long I've loved you?
You know I love you still.
Will I wait a lonely lifetime?
If you want me to, I will.

Love you forever and forever,
Love you with all my heart.
Love you whenever we're together,
Love you when we're apart.

For if I ever saw you,
I didn't catch your name,
But it never really mattered,
I will always feel the same.

And when at last I find you,
Your song will fill the air.
Sing it loud so I can hear you,
Make it easy to be near you,
For the things you do endear you to me.
And you know I will. I will!

Make You Feel My Love

Music & words: Bob Dylan, arr. Mark Armstrong

Riley Wenisch, *vocal solo*

When the rain is blowing in your face
And the whole world is on your case
I could offer you a warm embrace
To make you feel my love.

I'd go hungry, I'd go black and blue
I'd go crawling down the avenue
There is nothing that I wouldn't do
To make you feel my love.

When the evening shadows and the stars appear
And there is no one there to dry your tears
I could hold you for a million years
To make you feel my love.

The storms are raging on the rolling sea
And on the highway of regret
The winds of change are blowing wild and free
You ain't seen nothing like me yet.

I know you haven't made your mind up yet
But I will never do you wrong
I've known it from the moment that we met
No doubt in my mind where you belong.

I could make you happy,
make your dreams come true
Nothing that I wouldn't do
Go to the ends of the earth for you
To make you feel my love.

i carry your heart

Music: Toby Young
Words: e.e. cummings, adapt. T. Young

I carry your heart with me,
I carry it in my heart,
I am never without it near,
anywhere I go you go.

Your heart, I carry it in my heart,
I am never without it anywhere I go,
And where I go you go, my dear.

I carry your heart with me,
anywhere that I go, my dear,
whatever is done by me
is only done for you.

I fear no fate, for you are my fate, my sweet,
I want no world, (you are my true)
and whatever a moon has meant
and whatever a sun will sing.
I am never without it near,
anywhere I go, I carry your heart.

All of Us

The Times They Are A-Changin'

Music & words: Bob Dylan, arr. Adam Podd

Charles Welter, *vocal solo*

Come gather 'round people wherever you roam
And admit that the waters around you have grown
And accept it that soon you'll be drenched to the bone
If your time to you is worth savin'
And you better start swimmin' or you'll sink like a stone
For the times they are a-changin'.

Come mothers, and fathers throughout the land
And don't criticize what you can't understand
Your sons and your daughters are beyond your command
Your old road is rapidly aging
Please get out of the new one if you can't lend your hand
For the times they are a-changin'.

The line it is drawn the curse it is cast
The slow one now will later be fast
As the present now will later be past
The order is rapidly fading
And the first one now will later be last
For the times they are a-changin'!

Light of a Clear Blue Morning

Music & words: Dolly Parton, arr. Craig Hella Johnson

Aera Moscho, *vocal solo*

Nina Lasceski, Steph Otremba and Natalie Copeland, *vocal trio*

It's been a long dark night,
And I've been a waiting for the morning.
It's been a long hard fight,
But I see a brand-new day a-dawning.
I've been looking for the sunshine
'cause I ain't seen it in so long.
Ev'rything's gonna work out fine.
Everything's gonna be alright, it's gonna be okay.

I can see the light of a clear blue morning,
I can see the light of a brand-new day.
I can see the light of a clear blue morning,
Everything's gonna be alright, it's gonna be okay.

Meet me here (from *Considering Matthew Shepard*)

Music & words: Craig Hella Johnson

Stephanie Otremba, *vocal solo*

Marion Judish, *violin* | Jennifer Wildeson, *viola* | Thea Stockinger, *cello* | Patrick Dinndorf, *double bass*
Bruce Thornton, *clarinet*

(CHORUS)
Meet me here
Won't you meet me here
Where the old fence ends and the horizon begins
There's a balm in the silence
Like an understanding air
Where the old fence ends and the horizon begins
We've been walking through the darkness
On this long, hard climb
Carried ancestral sorrow
For too long a time
Will you lay down your burden
Lay it down, come with me
It will never be forgotten
Held in love, so tenderly (CHORUS)

Then we'll come to the mountain
We'll go bounding to see
That great circle of dancing
And we'll dance endlessly
And we'll dance with all the children
Who've been lost along the way
We will welcome each other
Coming home, this glorious day
We are home in the mountain
And we'll gently understand
That we've been friends forever
That we've never been alone
We'll sing on through any darkness
And our Song will be our sight
We can learn to offer praise again
Coming home to the light ...

All of Us (from *Considering Matthew Shepard*)

Music: Craig Hella Johnson

Words: Michael Dennis Browne & C. H. Johnson

Deborah Ferrell, Aera Moscho and Chris Ann Johnson, *vocal trio*
Marion Judish, *violin* | Jennifer Wildeson, *viola* | Thea Stockinger, *cello* | Patrick Dinndorf, *double bass*
Bruce Thornton, *clarinet* | Terry Vermillion, *percussion*

What could be the song?
Where begin again?
Who could meet us there?
Where might we begin?
From the shadows climb,
Rise to sing again;
Where could be the joy?
How do we begin?

Never our despair,
Never the least of us,
Never turn away,
Never hide our face;
Ordinary boy,
Only all of us,
Free us from our fear,
Only all of us.

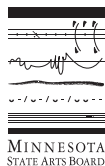
Only in the Love,
Love that lifts us up,
Clear from out the heart
From the mountain's side,
Come creation come
Strong as any stream;
How can we let go? How can we forgive?
How can we be dream?

Out of heaven, rain,
Rain to wash us free;
Rivers flowing on,
Ever to the sea;
Bind up every wound,
Every cause to grieve;
Always to forgive,
Only to believe.

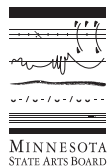
Most noble Light, Creation's face,
How should we live but joined in you,
Remain within your saving grace
Through all we say and do
And know we are the Love that moves
The sun and all the stars?
O Love that dwells, O Love that burns
In every human heart.
(Only in the Love, Love that lifts us up!)

This evergreen, this heart, this soul,
Now moves us to remake our world,
Reminds us how we are to be
Your people born to dream;
How old this joy, how strong this call,
To sing your radiant care
With every voice, in cloudless hope
Of our belonging here.

Only in the Love ...
Only all of us ...
(Heaven: Wash me ...)
All of us, only all of us.
What could be the song?
Where do we begin?
Only in the Love,
Love that lifts us up.
All of us. All.



This activity is made possible by a grant provided by the Minnesota State Arts Board through an appropriation by the Minnesota State Legislature and a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.



This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.



This organization is funded, in part, by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Central MN Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.



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Marion Judish, *violin*
Jennifer Wildeson, *viola*
Thea Stockinger, *cello*

Patrick Dinndorf, *double bass*
Bruce Thornton, *clarinet*
Terry Vermillion, *percussion*

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Biographies

GREAT RIVER CHORALE is a 54-voice adult community choir based in Saint Cloud, Minnesota, that was founded in 2001. The choir draws its membership from across Central Minnesota and is distinguished by its commitment to artistic excellence, collaborations with local and regional artists, and commissions of new music from Minnesota composers. The choir is the principal choral partner of the Saint Cloud Symphony Orchestra and has been selected four times (in 2019, '17, '15 and '13) for Classical Minnesota Public Radio's "Taste of the Holidays" CD featuring "Minnesota's best regional ensembles." It was the only Minnesota choir outside the Twin Cities metro area to perform in Chorus America's 2021 National Conference and was one of 10 Minnesota choirs to headline the 2015 Northern Voice Festival in Saint Paul.



MARY KAY GESTON, conductor and artistic managing director of Great River Chorale, has led the choir since 2010. Dr. Geston taught at universities in MN, WI, CO, and SD for thirty-one years and conducted the MMTA Honors Concert from 2013-19. Choirs under her direction have performed at state, regional and national professional conferences and with the Minnesota

Orchestra and St. Cloud Symphony Orchestra. She has conducted all-state and honor choirs across the US, presented clinics in Taiwan and South Korea, and presented at state, regional and national professional conferences. She has held state and regional leadership roles in the American Choral Directors Association and received ACDA-MN's 2012 Choral Director of the Year award. She has a BA in voice from NDSU, an MM in choral conducting from U of M Twin Cities, and a DMA in choral literature and conducting from CU Boulder.



BARBARA BROOKS, collaborative pianist, is a Twin Cities-based vocal coach and pianist who has worked with opera companies in the USA and Canada. Ms. Brooks is on staff at the Wesley Balk Opera/Music Theatre Institute and has been a music director for Theatre de la Jeune Lune and The Minneapolis Children's Theatre Company, and an opera coach at universities in Texas,

Colorado and Minnesota. Barb has studied with Gyorgy Sandor, Martin Isepp, and at England's Britten-Pears School.



ANNE RHODES is a professional American Sign Language interpreter and the Sign Language Interpreter Coordinator at Saint Cloud Technical and Community College. Anne specializes in the fine arts and platform interpreting and has had the pleasure of working with the Guthrie Theater and *A Prairie Home Companion*, as well as for heads of state and federal government.

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Our Mission *Enriching the Community Through Choral Excellence*
Our Values *Inspiring connection, community and learning through the choral art*
Our Vision *Great River Chorale seeks to inspire a lifelong appreciation of the choral art by connecting with, enriching, and educating the community through performances of choral music at the highest artistic level.*

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