

Great River  
Chorale

# SONGS FOR THE PEOPLE

Sunday, April 28, 2024 | 4:00 p.m.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Saint Cloud, Minnesota



Mary Kay Geston, *conductor*  
Barbara Brooks, *collaborative pianist*  
Anne Rhodes, *ASL Interpreter*  
Rich Pearson, *bass guitar*  
Terry Vermillion, *drums*  
Hayley Elvendahl-Rumley &  
Amanda Koubsky, *auxiliary percussion*

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# THE PROGRAM

## Choral Variations on Simple Gifts

Music & Words: Shaker hymn, arr. Aaron Copland, adapt. David Conte

'Tis the gift to be simple, 'tis the gift to be free,  
'Tis the gift to come down where we ought to be.  
And when we find ourselves in the place just right  
'twill be in the valley of love and delight.

When true simplicity is gained,  
To bow and to bend we shan't be ashamed.  
To turn, turn will be our delight,  
'Til by turning, turning we come 'round right.

## Down in the River to Pray

Words & Music: Southern gospel hymn, arr. David L. Mennicke

As I went down in the river to pray,  
Studyin' about that good ol' way  
And who shall wear the robe and crown (the starry crown);  
Good Lord, show me the way!

Oh, sisters (brothers, fathers, mothers, sinners, children)  
Let's go down,  
Let's go down, come on down.  
Down in the river to pray.

## Will the Circle Be Unbroken

Music: Southern hymn, arr. J. David Moore; Words: B. Rose, C. Winter, M. Taylor  
*Stephanie Otremba, Claire Studt & Matthew Palmateer, soloists*

Will the circle be unbroken by and by, Lord, by and by,  
There's a better home a-waitin' if we try, Lord, if we try.  
I was singing with my sisters, I was singing with my friends,

And we all can sing together, 'cause the circle never ends.  
I was born down in the valley where the sun refuse' to shine  
But I'm climbing up to the highland, gonna make that mountain mine!

## Bright Morning Stars

Music & Words: Kentucky folk hymn, arr. Jay Althouse  
*Marit Ortega, Jean Kraft & Maureen Otremba, soloists*

Bright morning stars are rising.  
Day is breaking in my soul.

Oh, where are our dear fathers?  
They are in the valley praying.  
Day is breaking in my soul.

Oh, where are our dear mothers?  
They are gone to heaven a-shouting.  
Day is breaking in my soul.

## The Road Home

Music: Folk hymn, arr. Stephen Paulus; Words: Michael Dennis Browne  
*Darcy Lease-Gubrud, soloist*

Tell me where is the road  
I can call my own,  
That I left, that I lost,  
So long ago?  
All these years I have wandered,  
Oh, when will I know  
There's a way, there's a road  
that will lead me home?

After wind, after rain,  
When the dark is done,  
As I wake from a dream  
In the gold of day,  
Through the air there's a calling  
From far away,  
There's a voice I can hear  
that will lead me home.

Rise up, follow me,  
Come away is the call,  
With love in your heart  
As the only song;  
There is no such beauty  
as where you belong,  
Rise up, follow me,  
I will lead you home.

## The Water Is Wide

Music & Words: Scottish folksong, arr. Stephen Paulus

The water is wide, I cannot get o'er,  
And neither have I wings to fly.  
Give me a boat that can carry two,  
And both shall row, my love and I.

I leaned my back 'gainst some young oak,  
Thinking it was a trusty tree.  
But first it bent and then it broke,  
Just as my love proved false to me.

Oh, love is handsome, love is fine,  
Bright as a jewel when first it's new,  
But love grows old and waxeth cold,  
And fades away like morning dew.

## Shenandoah

Music & Words: American folksong, arr. James Erb

Oh, Shenandoah, I long to see you,  
And hear your rolling river, 'way,  
I'm bound away, across the wide Missouri.

I long to see your smiling valley,  
And hear your rolling river, 'way,  
I'm bound away, across the wide Missouri.

'Tis seven long years since last I see you,  
And hear your rolling river, 'Way,  
we're bound away, across the wide Missouri.

## Bring Me Little Water, Silvy

Music & Words: Huddie Ledbetter (Leadbelly), arr. Adam Podd

Bring me little water, Silvy, bring me little water now  
Bring me little water, Silvy, ev'ry little once in a while  
Bring it in a bucket Silvy, bring it in a bucket now  
Bring it in a bucket Silvy, ev'ry little once in a while

Silvy come a runnin' bucket in her hand  
She will bring a little water fast as she can  
Can't you see me comin', can't you see me now?  
I will bring a little water ev'ry little once in a while

## Yonder Come Day

Music & Words: Georgia Sea Islands spiritual, arr. Paul John Rudo  
*Jacob Lohman & Stephanie Otremba, soloists*

Oh day, yonder come day.  
Day done broke inna my soul, yonder come day.  
Good mornin' day, yonder come day.  
A brand new day, yonder come day.  
Oh come on child, hush, hush, somebody's callin' my name.  
Oh my Lord, oh my Lord what shall I do?

Oh day, yonder come day.  
I was on my knees, yonder come day.  
When I heard him say, yonder come day.  
Oh come on child, steal away, steal away, steal away to Jesus.  
Steal away, steal away, I ain't got long to stay here.  
Swing low, sweet chariot, comin' for to carry me home.

## Songs for the People

Music & Add'l Lyrics: Rollo Dilworth; Words: Frances E. W. Harper

Let me make the songs for the people,  
Songs for the old and young;  
Songs to stir like a battle-cry  
Wherever they are sung.

Let me sing for little children,  
Before their footsteps stray,  
Sweet anthems of love and duty,  
To float o'er life's highway.

Music to soothe all its sorrow,  
Till war and crime shall cease;  
And the hearts of men grown tender  
Girdle the world with peace.

Not for the clashing of sabres,  
For carnage nor for strife;  
But songs to thrill the hearts of men  
With more abundant life.

I would sing for the poor and aged,  
When shadows dim their sight;  
Of the bright and restful mansions,  
Where there shall be no night.

Sing songs for the people,  
Let the voices of the people sing;  
Sing songs for the people;  
Let the harmonies of freedom ring!

Let me make the songs for the weary,  
Amid life's fever and fret,  
Till hearts shall relax their tension,  
And careworn brows forget.

Our world, so worn and weary,  
Needs music, pure and strong,  
To hush the jangle and discords  
Of sorrow, pain, and wrong.

## City Called Heaven

Music & Words: Edward Boatner, arr. Josephine Poelinitz

*Amanda Koubsky, soloist*

I am a pilgrim, a pilgrim of sorrow,  
I'm left in this wide world, this wide world alone!  
Ain't got no hope, got no hope for tomorrow  
Trying to make it, make heaven my home.

Sometimes I'm tossed and I'm driven, Lord.  
Sometimes I just don't know which way to turn.  
Oh, I heard of a city called heaven  
I'm trying to make it, make heaven my home.

## O! What a Beautiful City

Music & Words: African American spiritual, arr. Shawn Kirchner

O! What a beautiful city!  
Twelve gates to the city, hallelujah!  
Have you heard about the city?  
The streets are paved with gold!  
Twelve gates to the city, hallelujah!

Three gates in-a the east! Three gates in-a the west!  
Three gates in-a the north! Three gates in-a the south!  
See those gates of pearl, open to all the world.  
Twelve gates to the city, hallelujah!

## United in Purpose

Music: Rollo Dilworth; Words: Maya Angelou

The onus is upon us all to work to improve the human condition. Perform good deeds, for that is truly the way to battle the forces of entropy that are at work in our world. The composite of all our efforts can have an effect. Good done anywhere is good done everywhere.

## Down by the Riverside (with A Brand New Day from *The Wiz*)

Music & Words: African American spiritual & Luther Vandross, arr. Rod Vester

Gonna lay down my burden  
Down by the riverside  
Study war no more.

Gonna lay down my heavy load ...  
Gonna lay down my sword and shield ...  
Gonna shake hands around the world ...

Gonna climb up on that mountain ...  
For I can feel a brand new day.  
Can't you feel a brand new day?

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