



Great River
Chorale

Take This Gift

Great River Chorale &
GRC Treble Choir

Sunday, April 27, 2025 | 4:00 p.m.
Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Saint Cloud, MN

Mary Kay Geston, *artistic director*
Barbara Brooks, *collaborative pianist*
Anne Rhodes, *ASL Interpreter*
Rich Pearson, *bass guitar*
Mary Emmons, *percussion*



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.

Program

I. Great River Choral

So I'll Sing with My Voice

Words & music: Dominick Argento (1927-2019)

Maria Erceg and Matthew Palmateer, *vocal soloists*

If I had a harp
Like David had a harp
I'd play on that harp
'Till the glorious day!
But I got no harp,
So I'll sing with my voice,
Hallelujah!

If I had a horn
Like Gabriel had a horn
I'd blow on that horn
'Till the judgement day!
But I got no horn,
So I'll sing with my voice,
Hallelujah!

If I had a lyre
Like Jubal had a lyre
I'd strum on that lyre
'Till the beautiful day!
But I got no lyre,
So I'll sing with my voice,
Hallelujah!

This Little Light of Mine

African-American spiritual, arr. Robert T. Gibson (cont.)

Barbara Brooks, *piano* | Rich Pearson, *bass guitar*

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.
Everywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine.
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

All day and all night, I'm gonna let it shine.
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.
My God gave it to me, I'm gonna let it shine.
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Take This Gift

Music: Tracy Wong (cont.)
Words: Tracy Wong & Cherie Chai

Barbara Brooks, *piano* | Mary Emmons, *djembe*

My feet are rooted to the ground,
My voice is soaring in the skies,
I am tied to the past,
beautifully tangled with you,
Hand in hand we look to the stars.

Here, take this gift
It's not mine to keep
Here, take this gift
Share it far so all may know
Let our love for singing grow.

We are branches
Independent, intertwined.
We are sunlight
Spreading warmth, dazzling bright.

II. GRC Treble Choir

Like a Singing Bird

Music: Bob Chilcott (b. 1955) & Traditional Scottish
Words: Christina Rossetti & Robert Burns

Barbara Brooks, *piano*

"A Birthday" by Christina Rossetti

My heart is like a singing bird
Whose nest is in a water'd shoot;
My heart is like an apple-tree
Whose boughs are bent with thickset fruit;
My heart is like a rainbow shell
That paddles in a halcyon sea;
My heart is gladder than all these
Because my love is come to me.

Raise me a dais of silk and down;
Hang it with vair and purple dyes;
Carve it in doves and pomegranates,
And peacocks with a hundred eyes;
Work it in gold and silver grapes,
In leaves and silver fleurs-de-lys;
Because the birthday of my life
Is come, my love is come to me.

"A Red, Red Rose" by Robert Burns

O my Luve is like a red, red rose
That's newly sprung in June;
O my Luve is like the melody
That's sweetly played in tune.

So fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
So deep in love am I;
And I will love thee still, my dear,
Till all the seas gang dry.

Till all the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt with the sun;
I will love thee still, my dear,
While the sands of life shall run.

And fare thee well, my only luve!
And fare thee well awhile!
And I will come again, my luve,
Though it were ten thousand mile!

The Valley (You Will Walk in Good Company)

Music & Words: Jane Siberry (b. 1955), arr. Beth Hanson

Barbara Brooks, *piano*

I live in the hills,
You live in the valleys,
And all that you know are these blackbirds.
You rise every morning wondering
what in the world will the world bring today.
Will it bring you joy or will it take it away?
And every step you take is guided by
the love of the light on the land
and the blackbird's cry.
You will walk in good company.

The valley is dark,
The burgeoning holding,
The stillness obscured by their judging.
You walk thru the shadows uncertain and surely hurting,
deserted by the blackbirds and the staccato of the staff.
And though you trust the light
towards which you wend your way,
sometimes you feel all that you wanted
has been taken away.
You will walk in good company.

I love the best of you,
You love the best of me,
Though it's not always easy,
lovely? Lonely?
We will walk in good company.
The Shepherd upright and flowing
you see.

Spes (Hope)

Music: Mia Makaroff (b. 1970)

Words: Ecclesiastes 8:1, 8; Sami text by Nils Aslak Valkeapää
English transl.: Mia Makaroff

(Latin)

*Quis talis, ut sapiens est?
Et quis cognovit solutionem rerum?*

(Sami)

*Biekka oapmi lean
muhto liiká ealán
ja dat lea vissa eallima dárkkuhus
Ealán odne dál ja dás
ja just dat lea madoheapme de in eali sat ihttín
nu ja maid dasto.*

(Latin)

*Non est in hominis potestate
dominari super spiritum,
nec cohibere spiritum
nec habet potestatem supra diem mortis.*

*Sapientia hominis illuminat vultum eius
et durities faciei illius commutator.*

(English)

Who is like the wise?
Who knows the explanation of things?

I belong to the wind,
but I live,
maybe that is the meaning of life.
I live here and now . . .
I won't be alive tomorrow.
That is the way – and so what.

As no one has power
over the spirit to contain it,
so no one has power
over the time of their death.

A person's wisdom brightens their face
and changes its hard appearance.

III. Great River Chorale

The Earth Adorned (Sommarpsalm)

Music & Words: Swedish folksong, arr. Waldemar Åhlén (1894-1982)
English trans.: Carolyn & Kenneth Jennings

The earth adorned in verdant robe
Sends praises upward surging,
While soft winds breathe on fragrant flowers
From winter now emerging.
The sunshine bright gives warmth and light
To budding blossoms tender,
Proclaiming summer splendor.

From out the wood, the birds now sing
And each its song now raises,
To join with all the universe
In voicing thankful praises.
With hope and joy their songs employ
A rapturous exultation
In praise of God's creation.

O God, amid these joys of life,
Creation's glory beaming,
Grant us the grace to keep your word
And live in love redeeming.
All flesh is grass, the flowers fade,
And time is fleeting ever;
God's word remains forever.

I denna ljuva sommartid (In this delightful summertime)

Music: Clark William Lawlor (b. 1980)
German: Paul Gerhardt, Swedish transl.: Joachim von Düben
English transl. (vs. 1 & 3): Sofia Karlsson; (vs 2): Eva Toller

(Swedish)

*I denna ljuva sommartid
gå ut, min själ, och gläd dig vid
den store Gudens gåvor.
Se, hur I prydnings Jorden står,
se, hur för dig och mig hon får
så underbara gåvor.*

*Av rika löv är grenen full,
och jorden täckt sin svarta mull
med sköna gröna kläder.
De fagra blommors myckenhet
med store prakt och härlighet
än Salomos dig gläder.*

*När jag hör trastens klara sång
när lärkan jublar dagen lång
högt ovan fält och backar,
då kan jag icke tåga still.
Min Gud, så länge jag är till
för livet jag dig tackar.*

(English)

In this delightful summertime
go out, my soul, and rejoice
in the great God's gifts.
See, how the earth is adorned,
see, how for you and me it brings
such wonderful gifts.

The tree branches abound in leaves
and Earth has covered her black soil
with glorious green attire.
The multitude of fair flowers
with their splendor and glory,
gladdens more than Solomon's [gardens].

When I hear the thrush's clear song
and the lark rejoices all day long
high above fields and hills,
then I cannot stay silent.
My God, as long as I am here
for life I thank you.

Aftonen (Evening)

Music & Words: Hugo Alfvén (1872-1960)
Words: Herman Säterberg
English transl.: Nathan Leaf

(Swedish)

*Skogen står tyst, himlen är klar.
Hör, huru tjugande vallhornet lullar.
Kvällssolens bloss, sänker sig,
Sänker sig ner uti den lugna, klara våg.
Ibland dällder, gröna kullar,
eko kring nejden far...*

(English)

The forest is still, the sky is clear.
Hear how enchanting shepherd's horns sing lullabies.
The evening sun's blush silently sinks,
Sinks down into the calm, clear waves.
Among the valleys and green hills,
the echo resounds near and far...

Farvel (Farewell)

Music: Daniel Pederson (b. 1971)
Words: Halvor H. Langslet; transl. Martha Hoghaug Glasoe; adapt. D. Pederson

(Norwegian)

Takk for tusen fugler som har sung't for meg, bekke ne det vakre grønne. Farvel.

(English)

Thank you for the thousand birds who've sung for me, [for the] the brooks in this beautiful green area. Farewell.

Thank you for the thousand birds who've sung for me. Thank you for your cooling streams.
I believe I may never come here again, but you will always be in my heart.
Here I have wandered many days among the beauty and the green.
Ah, yes, the time is at an end. From here I'm taking my farewell.

IV. Great River Chorale

It Takes A Village

Music: Joan Szymko (b. 1957)
Words: West African saying (adapt. Joan Szymko)

Chris Nhotsavang & Stephanie Otremba, *vocal soloists*
Mary Emmons, *djembe* & Amanda Koubsky, *shekere*

It takes a whole village to raise our children
It takes a whole village to raise one child
We all every one must share the burden
We all every one will share the joy

In Meeting We Are Blessed

Music: Troy D. Robertson (b. 1978)
Words: R. Gatsnahos, after John Donne

Mary Emmons, *djembe*

We are met together
and in meeting we are blessed.
Peace in coming and in going,
peace in labor and in rest.
Hold on, dear brother!
Hold on, dear sister!
Hold on! Hold on to me.

We are met together
and in meeting we are blessed.
Peace in coming and in going,
peace in labor and in rest.
You're not alone and you never more will be.
I will be with you and I will carry you with me.
Friendship endures and surely we will prove
it's not ourselves, but our bodies we move.

I Will Sing

Music & Words: Michael Engelhardt (b. 1974)

Barbara Brooks, *piano* | Rich Pearson, *bass guitar* | Mary Emmons, *drums*

We've all been given our little corner of space and time
with the permission to do with it as we see fit for a while.
So begs the question, what will I do with the portion given to me?
This one possession so pure and precious.
Darkness and fear abound,
but this song keeps calling out from deep within me.

With all of my soul, I will sing.
My heart ever steadfast, this melody will bring.
It may or may not resonate, but here's the thing:
Even so, with all of my soul, I will sing.

It's not that easy.
Great are the doubts from within and without.
They won't defeat me, not if I'm completely standing on higher ground,
confident in the sound that lives within me.

I will sing forevermore!
I will sing with all my heart and my soul!
I have decided that with this one life,
I will sing!

We will sing with all our souls,
we will sing with all our hearts!
We will sing forevermore,
so we're just getting' started!

GRC TREBLE CHOIR

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Barbara Brooks, *collaborative pianist*

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Kristie Elvehjem – *Sponsored by Julie Olson*
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Barbara Brooks, *collaborative pianist*
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AUDITIONS FOR NEXT SEASON

Auditions for the 2025 – 26 season for both the GRC Treble Choir and Great River Chorale will be held on Monday, May 19 and Thursday, May 22, 2025. Auditionees must prepare a vocal solo (art song, folk song, a song from musical theater, etc.) in English. Memorization isn't required and an accompanist is provided (bring a copy of the music for the pianist). The audition includes a check of your vocal range, aural recall, and sight and rhythmic reading abilities. To sign up go to www.greatriverchorale.org, click on the "Contact" in the upper right menu bar, then select "2025-26 Season Auditions" in the drop down menu. For questions or more information email Great River Chorale artistic managing director Mary Kay Geston at director@greatriverchorale.org.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Thank you to all who support Great River Chorale with donations and sponsorships. Donors are listed by our fiscal year (Sept. 1 – Aug. 31) rather than calendar year. Great River Chorale is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.

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