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We are delighted you've joined us for our annual spring concert, *Raising Our Songs – Lifting Our Voices*. This program invites you on a vibrant journey through centuries of choral music, celebrating the power of the human voice to inspire, comfort and uplift.

Under the direction of Dr. James B. Kinchen, Jr., we are pleased to present a rich tapestry of voices and styles, flowing from powerful, uplifting moments to more intimate and reflective ones. Each selection offers its own way of expressing what words alone often cannot – joy, hope, longing and connection. You can learn more about the music in Dr. Kinchen's program notes on page 11.

Thank you for being here and for supporting the arts in our community. We look forward to greeting you after the performance. Your presence means so much to us and we are honored to share this program with you. We hope it stays with you long after the final note.

—The Milwaukee Choristers

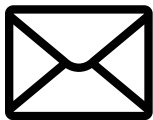
Dates to Remember

New Member Auditions: Wednesday, August 19. Use QR code at right for details.

Christmas with the Choristers Friday, December 11, and Saturday, December 12, 2026.
Spring Concerts Friday, April 23, and Saturday, April 24, 2027.



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Raising Our Songs—Lifting our Voices

Dr. James B. Kinchen, Jr., Music Director

Christine Simon Halverson, Assistant Director • Joan Nowaczynski, Collaborative Pianist

Let Thy Hand Be Strengthened from *Four Coronation Anthems* George Frideric Handel
Let Thy Hand Be Strengthened
Let Justice and Judgment
Alleluia
Jing Yuan, cellist

The following four pieces will be sung without break. Please hold your applause until the conclusion of “Don’t you weep no More, Mary.”

The Woman with the Alabaster Box Arvo Pärt
Tristis Est Anima Mea from *Four Lenten Motets* Francis Poulenc
Soprano Christine Simon Halverson, Friday night; soprano Alivia Gundlach, Saturday night
Crucifixus a 8 Antonio Lotti
Don’t You Weep No More, Mary African American/Robert Nathaniel Dett
Canticle of Praise John Ness Beck

— Intermission —

The following two pieces will be sung without break. Please hold your applause until the conclusion of “The Lord’s Prayer.”

Pilgrims’ Hymn Stephen Paulus
The Lord’s Prayer Albert Hay Malotte/arr. by Carl Weinrich and Carl Deis
We Are Ysaye M. Barnwell
Group 1: Gabrielle Beiler, Natalie Fleury, Ashley Grainger, Jim Halverson, Katie Pitzl, Rachel Wery, Sharon Zsebe.
Group 2: Rachel Chiariello, Kayla Duvall, Jean Grainger, Kathi Hillyer, Kathy Keleher, Laurie Knapp, Jim Zsebe.
‘S Wonderful George and Ira Gershwin/arr. Dick Thompson
Verano Porteño Astor Piazzolla/arr. Oscar Escalada
Beautiful Savior arr. F. Melius Christiansen
Gabrielle Beiler, alto



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Soprano I

Deborah Bernhardt, Brookfield
 Rachel Chiariello, Glendale
 Jana Cozine, Milwaukee
 Kelley Daugherty, Glendale
 **Celeste Gonzalez, Cudahy
 Jean Grainger, Oak Creek
 Alivia Gundlach, Oak Creek
 *Christine Simon Halverson, Wauwatosa (Asst. Director)
 Charlotte Herbolsheimer, Milwaukee
 Laurie Knapp, Milwaukee
 Brittany McNally, Hartland
 Laura Neu, Waukesha
 Aly Olson-Turek, Brookfield
 Lynnae Ortiz, West Allis
 Carrie Pruhs, Wauwatosa
 Leah Sigmon, Pewaukee
 Erika Stueven, Milwaukee
 Vickie Wagner, Milwaukee

Soprano II

Kelly Corroy, Brookfield
 Ashley Grainger, Milwaukee
 Trudy Haas, Glendale
 Marilyn Harrower, Richfield
 Jean Jankovich, Brown Deer
 Debbie Jenks, Racine
 Pam Kothrade, Greenfield
 Haley Kroes, Wauwatosa
 Maggie LaRose, Franklin
 Gwen McWilliams, Franklin
 Sandy Moen, South Milwaukee

*Rachel Mosey, Mequon
 **Ruth Ohlendorf, Milwaukee
 Christy Peters, Menomonee Falls
 Jessie Peters, Menomonee Falls
 Katie Pitzl, Cudahy
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 Caitlin Schaffer, Waukesha
 Rachel Wery, Fox Point
 Jean Wesley, Milwaukee
 Emily Whitcomb, Waterford

Alto I

Gabrielle Beiler, Franklin
 Serena Clardie, Milwaukee
 Suzanne Clegg, Cedarburg
 Linda Czarnecki, Muskego
 Anya Fairchild, Wauwatosa
 Natalie Fleury, Wauwatosa
 Penny Hargarten, Wauwatosa
 Cheyenne Janssen, Hubertus
 Shelly Johnsen, Hales Corners
 Toni King, Beaver Dam
 Laura Lange, West Allis
 Carly Olin, Milwaukee
 MaryAnn Priebe, West Allis
 Becchi Torrence, Milwaukee
 *Jeanne Tyszka, Franklin
 Lisa Vande Yacht, Muskego
 *Erica Wilkinson, Brookfield
 Jen Zastrow, Cedarburg

Alto II

Catherine Bopp, Wauwatosa
 Melissa Carter, Wauwatosa

Kayla Duvall, Franklin
 Fiona Guiley, Milwaukee
 Kathryn Hillyer, Milwaukee
 *Kathy Keleher, Oconomowoc
 Christina Mayer, West Allis
 Kirsten O'Quinn, Menomonee Falls
 Donna Tanzer, Wauwatosa
 Rosie Towey, West Allis
 Sharon Zsebe, Cudahy

Tenor I

*James Halverson, Wauwatosa
 William Polk, Franklin
 Jim Zsebe, Cudahy

Tenor II

Jeff Hosler, Cedarburg
 Dan Kaminski, West Allis
 Chad Ohlendorf, Milwaukee
 *Jackson Palmer, Watertown
 Andrew Robertson, Milwaukee
 Morris Srinivasan, New Berlin
 Brandon Ward, Franklin

Baritone

Christopher Bruett, Milwaukee
 *Gregory Davidson, Milwaukee
 *John Emanuel, Whitefish Bay
 James Gingery, Milwaukee
 **Jonah Hildemann, Cudahy
 Matthew Martin, Shorewood
 David Vargas, Cedarburg
 Adrian Veary, Mequon

Bass

Joseph Brickman, Milwaukee
 Andrew Cady, Cudahy
 Roger Harris, Glendale
 Thomas Kearney, Wauwatosa
 Jonah Morioka, Milwaukee
 John Nate, Pewaukee
 Brandon Pitts, Milwaukee
 Brian Wallace, Germantown
 Gus Zuccaro, Whitefish Bay

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Asst. Director

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Joan Nowaczynski, Hales Corners

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Dr. James B. Kinchen, Jr.

Music Director



James Benjamin Kinchen Jr. has been music director of the Milwaukee Choristers since 1993. He is Professor of Music and Director of Choral Activities at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside, where he has been on the faculty since 1989. A native of Jacksonville, Florida, James has taught music and directed choral groups at

Stanton High School, Jacksonville; Florida Community College at Jacksonville; Southern Illinois University; Southeastern Illinois College; Hampton University; and Winston-Salem State University. His degrees are from Jacksonville University, Southern Illinois University and the University of North Carolina Greensboro.

James is in frequent demand as a guest conductor, adjudicator and clinician and has been a *Wisconsin Teaching Fellow*. A two-time recipient of UW-Parkside's *Stella Gray Teaching Excellence Award* (2002–03 and 2014–15), he was also given the university's 2005–2006 *Faculty Distinguished Service Award* and the 2011–2012 *Campus Diversity Award*. He is most honored to have received the Wisconsin Choral Directors Association *Morris D. Hayes Award* in 2021, recognizing his achievements and contributions to the choral art. He is listed in the most current edition of Marquis *Who's Who in America*. Earlier this year he was honored as a recipient of the Gateway Technical College *Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Humanitarian Award*. An affiliate of the Center for Black Music Research, James holds membership in the National Association for Music Education (formerly Music Educators National Conference), National Collegiate Choral Organization, and Chorus America. An active member of the American Choral Directors Association, he has served ACDA in several leadership capacities at state, regional and national levels. He has presented at state, divisional and national ACDA conventions and has written for and reviewed new music and new recordings for *The Choral Journal*. He has also served as president and vice president of the Wisconsin Choral Directors Association and the former North Central Division of ACDA, a region that encompassed Wisconsin, Minnesota, Nebraska, Iowa and the Dakotas.

Since 1993 James has conducted the Choristers in several significant performances, including concert tours of

Germany, Austria, Poland, the Czech Republic and Italy. He has led them in selected-by-audition performances for the Wisconsin Choral Directors Association (most recently January 2023) and in concert collaborations with the Decorah Chorale (Decorah, Iowa) and the Brazeal Dennard Chorale (Detroit, Michigan). James' travels as a choral conductor and scholar include trips to India, Germany, Austria, Poland, the Czech Republic, Sweden, Italy, twice to China, and, on four occasions, Cuba. He made his Carnegie Hall conducting debut in 1998, conducting a concert of spirituals. He returned to that stage in 2004 to lead a 190-voice choir and orchestra in a performance of the Fauré *Requiem*, in 2006 to conduct a performance of the Vivaldi *Gloria*, and again in 2024 to conduct Margaret Bonds' *The Ballad of the Brown King*. In 2010 he directed the New York City premiere of Glenn Edward Burleigh's Kwanzaa work, the *Nguzo Saba Suite* at Avery Fischer Hall in the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. In 2002 James was one of 18 Fellows selected nationwide for participation in the Chorus America-Chicago Symphony Choral/Orchestral Conducting Workshop and Master Class.

In addition to teaching and directing the UW-Parkside's three choral groups, the University Chorale, Master Singers and Voices of Parkside, James teaches courses in basic and choral conducting, elementary & middle school choral methods, secondary choral methods, student teacher residency, and African American music.

He is also on the music staff of Saint Paul Baptist Church, Racine.

Christine Simon Halverson

Assistant Conductor



Christine Simon Halverson has been a member of the chorus since 1983 and assistant director for over 30 years. She is proud to be section leader of the first sopranos. Chris holds a choral music education degree from the University of Wisconsin—Eau Claire. She retired from her position as office manager/associate stated clerk for the Presbytery of Milwaukee in

2023. In retirement she is a Forward Scholars reading tutor in the Milwaukee Public Schools, continues to sing and ring in her church choirs, and is relearning how to play the bassoon.

Joan Nowaczynski Collaborative Pianist

Joan Nowaczynski enjoys a diverse career as a piano instructor, collaborative pianist, choral accompanist and liturgical music director.

As a collaborative pianist, she has spent nine summers with the opera program, La Musica Lirica, eight of them in Italy. She has also worked with the Florentine Opera Studio Artists Community Outreach Program and private voice studios. Through her work as an accompanist, Joan has played extensively for area high school choirs and at Wisconsin Music Education Association Conventions, Wisconsin Choral Directors Association Conventions and statewide choral music festivals. She is the accompanist for Women of Note as well as the Milwaukee Choristers.

Joan has been a rehearsal and performance pianist for the

Milwaukee Opera Theater and multiple high school musical productions. She teaches piano and serves as music director and pianist at Faith Presbyterian Church in Franklin.

One highlight of Joan's performing career was playing with a PianoTeams ensemble at the Well-Prepared Pianist Institute festival in Flagstaff, Arizona. Steinway artist N. Jane Tan founded PianoTeams, which feature five pianists playing repertoire composed, transcribed or arranged for five pianos.

Joan holds a bachelor of music degree in piano performance and pedagogy from Alverno College.



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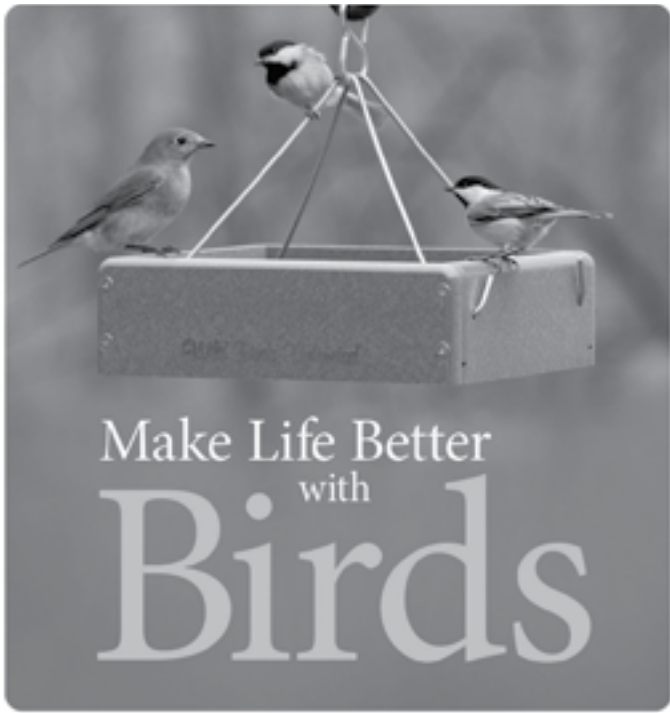


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Program Notes

by Dr. James B. Kinchen, Jr.

Of all instruments, none is so wondrous as the human voice! Who knows how the voice transitioned from a functional tool for conveying speech to an instrument that made musical sound? The “singing” article in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* points out that, even in the earliest of times, there is every indication that the singing voice was almost always linked to the singing of *words*, not that we should be surprised. The same article goes on to point out the ability of the voice to convey emotion and to posit that the voice is the “most subtle and flexible of musical instruments.” Voices becoming a unified collective, lifted in communal music-making goes back into antiquity. The ancients employed their singing in worship. They also discovered an important recreational benefit in singing together.

Fast-forwarding to the 20th century, the decade of the 1930s marked a time in our nation’s history when the economy sagged, poverty and want became the order of the day for millions, banks failed, and jobs were scarce. Hunger, homelessness, and hopelessness became new normals for many. Riverside High School students had found solace in sharing their songs. Then, at the very nadir of the Great Depression, as they realized that graduation from high school would mark the end of their opportunity to come together and make music, they decided to act. They asked their choral director if she would be willing to direct them in a newly formed community choral group. She agreed. And so, these wonderful young people and their director – our founders – embarked on a journey of lifting their voices and raising their songs in ways that have touched many, many thousands of lives. We have certainly found a deep sense of fulfillment coming together for what is approaching a century to make music with our collective voice for audiences like you! We continue that Milwaukee Choristers tradition in this concert, whose theme is the joy and power of human voices singing artfully and meaningfully together.

We open with a sequence of selections which, though now three centuries old, are still relevant in many ways beyond their sheer artistic significance.

Coronation Anthems composed by Handel were heard in Westminster Abbey at the 2023 crowning of Charles and Camilla. From the original set, we choose for this concert ***Let Thy Hand Be Strengthened***, which consists of three pieces that are linked together. By 1727, when Handel composed the four anthems for the coronation of George II as King of England, the German-born Georg Friedrich Händel (1685-1759) had become George Frideric Handel, one of the best known and beloved of English composers. Proof of his high popularity is the fact that Handel was chosen to compose music for such an auspicious and historic occasion. Actually, we are right to be somewhat amazed at this fortuitous turn of events. Handel was in the employ of Georg the Elector (Prince) of the German state of Hannover as a young man. He requested permission to travel to England to learn first-hand about musical style and practices in England. But Handel did not return to Germany when he should have. Meantime, Queen Anne of England died. The nearest male heir was Georg, Handel’s German boss. Now, Handel would have to face the music (quite literally!) as his old boss moved to England to become his new boss. But Georg, who became George I, forgave Handel and showed him favor, the most important act being to make Handel a naturalized English citizen. When George I died and his son ascended to the throne, Handel was delighted and honored to compose special music for the occasion, music that has been heard at every royal coronation since! ***Let thy hand be strengthened*** opens with a substantial introduction (piano reduction of the orchestra at this performance) and begins with a strongly declarative theme imitated in each voice part. The following movement, ***Let justice and judgment***, moves amicably along in triple meter. The anthem set concludes with the jubilant ***Alleluia***.

One of Western music’s greatest composers, the Baroque era master **George Frideric Handel** (1685–1759) was born in Germany in the same year as Johann Sebastian Bach. Yet he spent much of his career in London, becoming a central figure in English music. When we consider him today, we count him as an

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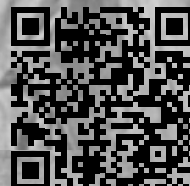
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English, not German, composer. In fact, when Handel died, some 3,000 people attended his funeral as he was laid to rest in the venerable, iconic Westminster Abbey! (Of course, many will recall that Handel's greatest hit was the oratorio *Messiah*, which he composed in 1741.) Renowned for his operas, oratorios, and ceremonial works, Handel's music combines dramatic expression, masterful counterpoint, and memorable melodies, with the *Coronation Anthems* remaining some of his most iconic musical creations, compositions first intended expressly for the royals.

In this time of the spring, with about one-third of the world's population just having observed Lent, Good Friday, and Easter, we now raise our voices in collective musical synergy with the story of hope that inspires the faith and joyful anticipation of billions of believers. The first piece, **The Woman with the Alabaster Box**, captures the scene in the village of Bethany. Jesus and unnamed disciples have been invited to dinner at the home of Simon, a man whom Jesus had healed of leprosy. There a woman breaks open a container of expensive, fragrant ointment and adoringly rubs the creamy fragrance on Jesus. Some disciples (almost certainly including the dishonest, avaricious Judas) considered this a prodigal act. Jesus instead saw it as an act of devotion that symbolically presaged the anointing that would happen after his death on the cross. Composer Arvo Pärt's touching setting presents this text as introductory narration, disciples' rebuke, Jesus' response, and closing summation, often using his unique *tintinnabular* technique. This device has the chorus singing broken melodic lines at times, almost as if they were a choir of ringing bells (think handbells), causing the musical subject to migrate from one voice part to another. Male voices, especially the basses, at first sing the words of the disciples, decrying the woman's profligate use of such a precious and valuable resource. Then the men become the voice of Jesus Himself, strong yet compassionate, shifting their focus to His impending death and burial, and to the woman's selfless act of adoration that will be forever memorialized, as, indeed, it ends up being enshrined in Matthew's Gospel. **Tristis Est Anima Mea**, from *Quatre Motets pour un temps de pénitence* (*Four Motets for the Time of Lent*), is the second responsory of the Tenebrae for

Maundy Thursday. It casts a tableau in the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus went with His disciples after they had finished the Last Supper at the conclusion of their sharing the Passover Seder. The first two lines of text come directly from the Matthew Gospel. The remaining text was written later by an anonymous poet. Jesus, in the solitude of his sorrow at the suffering that lies before Him, is heard through the disconsolate solo voice of the soprano. He asks his Disciples to keep watch there in the garden with Him, but knows that, all said and done, they will not muster the courage to stand with Him. The choir captures this moment of foretelling perfectly: "Vos fugam capietis..." Jesus *alone* will go – *must* go – to the cross as the Sacrifice for humanity. (We appreciated Poulenc's creative genius this past December, when we joined forces with the Concord Chamber Orchestra to sing his *Gloria*, a six-movement setting of the Gloria of the *Mass Ordinary* for choir, soprano solo and orchestra.) The eight voice setting of the motet, **Crucifixus**, was one of several settings of that text, a single sentence from the Credo of the *Mass Ordinary*, to be composed by the Italian master, Antonio Lotti. The motet we sing tonight is one of the most beautiful jewels in the choral repertory. It begins with each voice part singing the word "Crucifixus," one at a time from low to high, each new line engendering harmonic tension as it creates dissonance with the line that entered before it. The use of *suspension* (notes that are held over against changing harmonies resulting in dissonance that requires resolution) is a huge tool for Lotti in this piece. His employment of "word painting" technique through suspension on the word "passus" ("suffered") is particularly effective. Lotti's adroit and sensitive use of musical tension and release, of dissonance and suspended resolution allows listeners to almost "hear" the agony of the crucifixion and the suffering of the Savior. The final phrase of *Crucifixus* ends sepulchraly on a darkly voiced C-major chord. Though not without its own tinge of darkness (it is set in the minor mode), the African American folksong arranged here by Robert Nathaniel Dett, shares the joyful news of the Resurrection. Jesus has risen from that very sepulcher – the tomb – "third day in that morning!" As is often the case with the songs from this repertory of an enslaved people, **Don't You Weep No More Mary**, takes an event from the long ago past, and

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casts it as present-tense news. Mary grieved as only a mother could, watching her Son die on the cross. Now her grief, though never forgotten, is superseded by these gladsome tidings! Dett's genius is demonstrated by how he takes what is a quite simple pentatonic melody and casts it so that it is attractive as a work of musical art, but without losing its vernacular appeal.

Arvo Pärt composed "The Woman with the Alabaster Box" in 1997 for unaccompanied mixed choir. The ninety-year-old Pärt (b. 1935) is an Estonian composer renowned worldwide for his sacred and minimalist music. Developing his distinctive *tintinnabuli* technique in the 1970s, in the words of one biographer, "Pärt blends ancient liturgical influences with modern simplicity, crafting music of luminous clarity and spiritual depth." He is a highly feted composer who enjoys having his works frequently performed. **Francis Poulenc** (1899–1963) was a French composer whose music blends clarity, wit and lyricism with deep expressive sensitivity. Though he wrote in many genres, his sacred choral works – composed mainly after Poulenc's return to faith in the 1930s – are especially admired for their emotional intensity and distinctive harmonic language. He was a member of an informal group of highly respected composers, five French; one Swiss, known as *Les Six*, who, in search of new aesthetic pathways, had rejected both the heavy Romanticism of Richard Wagner and the Impressionistic style of Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel. In addition to Poulenc, they were Georges Auric, Louis Durey, Arthur Honegger, Darius Milhaud, and Germaine Tailleferre. The Italian master, **Antonio Lotti** (1667-1740), was one of the leading composers of the Late Baroque (ca. 1680-1750). He was roughly contemporaneous with fellow Italian, Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741), and the two undisputed giants of the era, Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) and George Frideric Handel (1685-1759). The compositional style of his "Crucifixus" harks back to the Renaissance masters who came before him. But many of Lotti's works were composed in the forward-looking *concertato* style of that day with strings, basso continuo, and occasionally oboes and trumpets. Lotti, who wrote in a variety of forms, producing masses, cantatas, madrigals, operas, and instrumental music, was born in Venice (the same

city in which Vivaldi lived and worked) and worked at the fabled Saint Mark's Basilica there, eventually becoming *maestro di cappella* (music director), a position he held until his death. Canadian-born American composer, pianist, and educator, **Robert Nathaniel Dett** (1882–1943), played a pivotal role in the early 20th-century recognition of African American "spirituals" as a serious art form. Trained in classical European traditions, he sought to honor and preserve Black musical heritage by incorporating "spirituals" and folk idioms into refined choral and piano works, influencing generations of musicians and composers. Dett grew up near Niagara Falls in a community of Black Canadian residents, many of whom had either fled U.S. enslavement themselves or descended from those who did, an ex-migration made necessary by the tightening grip of slavery in the United States in the decades before the Civil War. He held appointments at several institutions during his lifetime, most notably, Hampton Institute (now University) in Virginia.

The **Canticle of Praise**, published in 1964, is one of John Ness Beck's most enduring choral works. It draws its text from the 103rd and 148th divisions of the Psalms. Its lyrical beginning focuses on the tender care of God the Father for the frailty and finiteness of humanity. We are ephemeral. But God's mercy endures forever, indeed, a reason for highest praise! As the anthem progresses to its midpoint, energetic, effusive and exuberant, it accompanies exclamations of praise that border on the frenetic! "Canticle" concludes with the unabashed exhortations: "Praise ye the Lord! Praise ye the Lord! Praise ye the Lord!"

John Ness Beck (1930–1987) was an American composer, conductor and editor best known for his contributions to sacred choral repertoire. Based primarily in Ohio, he taught music theory on the faculty of The Ohio State University before leaving academia to focus more on the business and creative side of church music. He worked extensively with church choirs and publishing houses, helping shape the sound of American liturgical music in the mid-20th century through both his original compositions and editorial work. Beck established the *John Ness Beck Foundation* in 1987, only a few months before his death.

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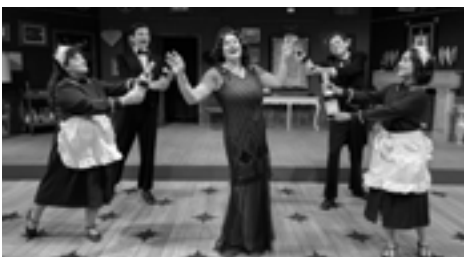
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I REMEMBER IT WELL: THE MUSIC OF LERNER AND LOEWE



The voice raised in prayer has permeated history. Literature offers many instances of prayers being raised. The Bible is replete with cases-in-point. Most religious traditions agree that prayer is a heartfelt expression of the believing soul to the Almighty Supreme, whether in petition for some desired favor or, perhaps, to thank Him for some good thing already given. Sometimes the prayerful voice is singular. An individual speaks to God. Or, others may join their voices and desires to form a spiritual unison, touching and agreeing in faith for God to act on their collective behalf. Here, as we resume these song offerings to you, our collective voice is lifted in two very moving, but different, supplications to God. Stephen Paulus' 1997 **Pilgrims' Hymn** comes from his setting of a Leo Tolstoy story as an opera – *The Three Hermits* – commissioned by St. Olaf College for their 100th anniversary. Each of the three gentle, reclusive hermits find that they ultimately reach the Divine in prayer, not because of specific and prescribed words that they utter (“... *even when we seek the words to say...*”), but because they speak to the Almighty Eternal from sincere and seeking souls. There follows the Paulus piece a setting of the prayer that literally billions hold dear, **The Lord's Prayer**. Unlike the “Pilgrims' Prayer,” it is formulaic and intended so to be! The disciples of Jesus asked Him, “Lord, teach us to pray.” So, he did. And while many, many believers can recite the words to this prayer by heart, it was actually intended as a kind of *model* – a pattern of prayer for these followers of Jesus. The petitioner

begins with reverence to the One being petitioned. The supplicant prays that Heaven's righteous order might become the paradigm for our earthly reality. The plaint seeks satiation of physical human needs as well as for spiritual protection. (And the petitioner acknowledges that we have scarce standing to ask pardon from God for our own trespasses if we are unwilling to forgive those who have wronged us.) The prayer closes with the affirming doxology, known to so many. Though others have composed music for it, Malotte's setting of this well-known prayer is arguably its most recognized musical framing. Indeed, it may just be the most famous musical setting of a prayer ever composed. (And the music was composed when the Milwaukee Choristers were only *two* years old!) It is heard at this concert in a version that arranges the original solo version for mixed voices.

Stephen Paulus (1949–2014) was a prolific American composer known for his operas, orchestral works, and especially his contributions to choral music. A co-founder of the American Composers Forum, he played a significant role in supporting new music in the United States, and his works are widely performed for their lyrical beauty, accessibility, and emotional depth. Philadelphia native **Albert Hay Malotte** (1895–1964) was an American composer, pianist, organist, and educator known for his work in both sacred and popular music. Although “The Lord's Prayer” is his enduring “greatest hit,” Malotte scored a



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number of early Hollywood films. He also wrote music for over a dozen Disney cartoons. His classic setting of this beloved prayer remains a staple of concert and worship repertoire worldwide. **Carl Weinrich** (1904–1991) was a distinguished American organist, teacher, and arranger, who was renowned for his refined musicianship and advocacy of both Baroque and contemporary organ repertoire. His organ accompaniments helped bring works like Malotte’s “The Lord’s Prayer” into broader liturgical and concert use. **Carl Deis** was an American choral conductor and arranger known for his accessible and expressive choral editions of sacred music. His arrangements of Malotte’s works, including “The Lord’s Prayer,” have been widely adopted for church and concert choirs.

Drawing on the sensibilities of the ensemble in which she sang and to which she contributed so richly for nearly three-and-a-half decades – Sweet Honey in the Rock, the three-time Grammy Award–nominated, all-female, a African-American *a cappella* ensemble founded in 1973 by Bernice Johnson Reagon – Ysaye Barnwell’s song, **We Are**, can be aptly described as “an affirming choral work that celebrates identity, community, and shared humanity through a series of powerful, cumulative statements.” Rooted in the oral and musical traditions of the African diaspora, **We Are** combines accessible harmonies with a call-and-response sensibility, inviting both performers and audiences into a collective expression of unity and pride. We are fondly reminded of her song, “Wanting Memories,” which we have programmed on past concerts!

Harlem-born **Ysaye M. Barnwell** (b. 1946) is an American composer, vocalist, educator, and was a member of the acclaimed ensemble Sweet Honey in the Rock from 1979 to 2013. Trained as a speech pathologist (she holds a PhD in Speech Pathology from University of Pittsburgh), she has devoted much of her artistic career to preserving and teaching African American musical traditions, with a particular emphasis on community singing, social justice and cultural history. The daughter of a violinist, she began her 15 year study of the violin with her father when she was only 2 and a half years old! She produced Sweet Honey in the Rock’s 1998 25th anniversary album, ...

Twenty-Five..., and edited *Continuum: The First Songbook of Sweet Honey in the Rock* which was released in 1999. Barnwell’s acting credits include a principal role on a television series called *A Man Called Hawk*; she also appeared in the 1998 film *Beloved*. She released a solo recording of stories and song, *Um Humm*, in 2000 and wrote a children’s book with CD, *No Mirrors in My Nana’s House*. A second children’s book and CD set was released in March 2008: *We Are One*.¹

Let’s swing a bit! This delightful American popular song was written in 1927 for the Broadway musical *Funny Face*. George Gershwin was one of our most impactful American composers of the early 20th century. His popular song collaborations with his brother, Ira, have produced a treasure trove of delightful ditties and ballads, songs that remained in the “popular song domain,” but just as importantly, often populated the repertoires of jazz musicians. **’S Wonderful** is a quintessential example of the Gershwins’ sophisticated yet effortlessly charming style. With its syncopated rhythms, playful text, and memorable melody, the song captures the exuberance of early American popular song and remains a favorite in both jazz and choral arrangements.

George Gershwin (1898–1937) was one of America’s most influential composers, celebrated for bridging classical and popular music in works ranging from Broadway songs, to concert pieces like *Rhapsody in Blue*, to his folk opera, *Porgy and Bess*, which is now a staple of the operatic canon. His brother, **Ira Gershwin** (1896–1983), was a master lyricist known for his wit, elegance, and inventive wordplay. Together, they created some of the most enduring contributions to the American Songbook. **Dick Thompson** (1925–2014) was an American choral arranger and conductor known for his accessible, stylistically faithful arrangements of jazz standards and popular music for choirs.

Originally composed in 1965 as part of Piazzolla’s *Las Cuatro Estaciones Porteñas* (“The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires”), *Verano Porteño* (“Buenos Aires

Summer”) aptly captures the intensity and sensuality of urban summer through the rhythms and expressive style of *nuevo tango*. In Oscar Escalada’s choral arrangement, this originally instrumental work is transformed into a vibrant vocal showpiece, often incorporating percussive effects, rhythmic drive and dramatic contrasts that evoke both the heat and energy of the city. In spite of some of the musical challenges that Verano presents, we found it fun and hope that you have as much fun listening to us – perhaps *almost* as much fun!

Astor Piazzolla (1921–1992) was an Argentine composer and bandoneón (a distant cousin to the accordion) virtuoso who revolutionized traditional tango by blending it with elements of jazz and classical music, creating the style known as *nuevo tango*. His innovative approach brought tango to international concert stages and continues to influence musicians across genres. **Oscar Escalada** (b. 1945), also of Argentina, is a composer, arranger, and conductor who is widely respected in the international choral community. Known for his creative and idiomatic vocal writing, he has produced numerous arrangements of Latin American music that are performed by choirs around the world. Members of the American Choral Directors Association were especially glad when Escalada brought his exciting vocal arrangements of music (published by the San Diego-based Kjos company) from South America!

Perhaps next to the Peter Lutkin setting of “The Lord Bless You and Keep You,” no other song has held so

treasured and enduring a place in the repertory of the Milwaukee Choristers as has **Beautiful Savior**. And, so, we have decided to bring our concert to a close by making it our final song-offering to you. According to the Wikipedia article, this hymn first appeared in a 1662 Jesuit manuscript in Münster, Germany. It was later printed in the Münster *Gesangbuch* of 1677, a Catholic hymnal, as “Schönster Herr Jesu” or “Fairest Lord Jesus.” The melody originated in Silesia, a region that was mostly part of present-day Poland. F. Melius Christiansen’s inspiring arrangement of this beloved hymn, translated as “Beautiful Savior,” is a cornerstone of the Lutheran choral tradition in America, known for its serene, flowing lines and richly blended harmonies. This setting reflects the signature “Christiansen style,” favoring the timbres of unaccompanied voices, employing careful dynamic shaping, and evoking a warmly devotional character, which allows the simple hymn tune to unfold with reverence and depth.

F. Melius Christiansen (1871–1955) was a Norwegian-born American conductor, composer and educator who founded the renowned choir at St. Olaf College in 1912. A central figure in shaping American *a cappella* choral singing in the early 20th century, he established a distinctive approach and aesthetic, emphasizing tonal purity, balance, and expressive phrasing, which continues to influence many choral ensembles today, and, most especially, in the upper Midwest.

Notes by James Benjamin Kinchen Jr. with research assistance from Rachel Mosey



The Milwaukee Choristers thank St. Monica Parish for being such a gracious host. We also acknowledge the countless volunteer members and friends who have a hand in making our concerts possible. THANK YOU for your hard work and dedication!

Lyrics

Let Thy Hand Be Strengthened from Four Coronation Anthems

1. Let thy hand be strengthened and thy right hand be exalted.
2. Let justice and judgment be the preparation of thy seat!
Let mercy and truth go before thy face.
Let justice, judgment, mercy, truth go before thy face.
3. Alleluia.

The Woman with the Alabaster Box

Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, there came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat.
But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, to what purpose is this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor.
When Jesus understood it, he said unto them:
Why trouble ye the woman? For she hath wrought a good work upon me, for ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always.
For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial.
Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

Tristis Est Anima Mea from Four Lenten Motets

Tristis est anima mea usque ad mortem:
sustinete hic, et vigilate mecum:
nunc videbitis turbam, quæ circumdabit me.
Vos fugam capietis, et ego vadam immolari pro vobis.
Ecce appropinquat hora, et Filius hominis tradetur in manus peccatorum.

Translation:

Sad is my soul and sorrowful, even unto death;
Tarry with me here, stay and watch with me awhile;
Now you see the multitude, come to lay hold on me.
You arise and flee away, I go forth to die, suffer and die, die for you.
See now, see now, this is the appointed hour,
When the Son of Man needs must be betrayed
Into the hands of evil men.
You arise and flee away,
I go forth to die, suffer and die, die for you.

Crucifixus a 8

Crucifixus etiam pro nobis,
sub Pontio Pilato,
passus et sepultus est.

Translation:

He was crucified for us
under Pontius Pilate,
he suffered and was buried.

Don't you weep no more, Mary

Don't you weep no more, Mary,
Sigh-a no more, Martha,
Jesus rose, third day in-a that morning!
My Jesus, went to Galilee,

Because he promised for to set me free,
Rose third day in-a that morning,
They nailed Him to that cursed tree,
And there He hung for you and me.
Rose third day in-a that morning,
The angel came down from above,
He came down on the wings of love;
Rose third day in-a that morning,
O hallelujah, on that day,
The angel rolled the stone away.
Rose third day in-a that morning,

Canticle of Praise

As a father pitieth his children,
so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.
For He knoweth our frame;
He remembreth that we are dust.
As for man, his days are as grass;
as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth,
For the wind passeth over it,
and it is gone, gone, gone, gone,
gone;
And the place thereof shall know it no more.
But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting
to them that fear Him,
To such as keep His covenants.
The Lord hath prepared His throne in the heavens,
And His kingdom ruleth over all.
Praise ye the Lord! Praise ye the Lord from the heavens!
Praise Him in the heights! Praise ye Him, all His angels,
Praise ye Him, all His hosts.
Praise ye Him, sun and moon,
praise Him, all ye stars of light.
Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps:
Fire and hail; snow and vapours;
stormy wind fulfilling His word!
Kings of the earth, and all people,
princes and all judges of the earth,

Young men and maidens, old men
and children,
Let them praise the name of the
Lord!
For His name alone is excellent, His
glory is above the earth and heaven.
Praise ye the Lord!

Pilgrims' Hymn

Even before we call on Your name
To ask You, O God,
When we seek for the words to
glorify You,
You hear our prayer;
Unceasing love, O unceasing love,
Surpassing all we know.

Glory to the Father,
and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit.

Even with darkness sealing us in,
We breathe Your name,
And through all the days that follow
so fast,
We trust in You;
Endless Your Grace, O endless Your
Grace,
Beyond all mortal dream.

Both now and forever,
And unto ages and ages,
Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy Name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done in earth,
As it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
As we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation;
But deliver us from evil:
For thine is the kingdom, and the
power, and the glory, for ever.
Amen, Amen.

We Are...

For each child that's born
a morning star rises
and sings to the universe
who we are. (repeats)

We are our grandmothers' prayers.
We are our grandfathers' dream-
ings.
We are the breath of our ancestors.
We are the spirit of God.

We are mothers of courage
and fathers of time,
We are daughters of dust
and the sons of great visions.

We're sisters of mercy
and brothers of love,
we are lovers of life and
the builders of nations.

We're seekers of truth
and keepers of faith,
we are makers of peace and
the wisdom of ages.

We are our grandmothers' prayers,
and
We are our grandfathers' dream-
ings.
We are the breath of our ancestors.
We are the spirit of God.

For each child that's born
a morning star rises
and sings to the universe
who we are. (repeats)

We are one.

'S Wonderful

I think it's great,
I think it's swell,
That you should care for me.

'S wonderful, 's marvelous
You should care for me
'S awful nice, 's paradise
What I love to see

You made my life so glamorous,
You can't blame me for feeling
amorous.
Oh, 's wonderful, 's wonderful, 's
marvelous!
That you should care for me.

(lyrics repeat)

You made my life complete,
You made me glamorous,
You can't blame me for feeling
amorous.
It's so wonderful and marvelous!
That you should care for,
That you should care for,
That you should care for me.

Verano Porteño

Note to audience:

The Spanish title of this song, "Verano Porteño", literally means "Summer in the Port". Specifically, this song describes summer in the port of Buenos Aires, Argentina. The lyrics of this song are nonsense syllables, not words. Please relax and enjoy the MUSIC, while imagining that stylishly-dressed people are tango dancing in a beautiful South American port city in the summertime.

Beautiful Savior

Fair are the meadows, Fairer the
woodlands,
Robed in flow'rs of blooming
spring;
Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer;
He makes our sorr'wing spirit sing.

Beautiful Savior, Lord of the na-
tions,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Glory and honor, Praise, adoration,
Now and forevermore be Thine.

Now and forevermore be Thine!

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These individuals were with The Milwaukee Choristers for 15 or more years.

Gail Anderson	Marilyn Ehler	John Lutz	Robert H. Strehlow
Richard Bergman	Karen Engelhardt	Thomas Niebler	Janice Sufferling
Patricia Ilika Black (Accompanist)	Linda Ertel	Catherine Nolan	Justin Van Able
Keralyn Bolliger	Kathy Estlund	Betty Nordahl	Joanne Weinberg
Erin Bowles	Joanna Fairchild	Mary Rundle	Peggy Welden
David Brown	Barbara Foss	Gerald Schmidt	Sue Wing
Virginia Cameron	Ana de la Cuesta Gerlach	Roberta Seifert	Marie Zehnder
Dolores Davidson	Sandra Hook	Dawn Skoczek	
Janelle Dougherty	Karen Kirsch	Jeanine Sonntag	
	Kern Konley	Mary Stephani	

Choristers in Memoriam

*Donald Arndt	*Fred Gerlach	*Donald F. Mohr	Frank F. Sieckman
Kathryn Akers	Margaret Gerlach	*Idabelle ("Goldie") Mohr	Robert Sieckman
Richard Barkow	Ginny Giese	Richard Moog	*Carl Simon
Clair Baum	Luther Golden	Gregory Mrozek	*Peggy Simon
George Bausch	*Kathy Griffin	*Patricia Mrozek	Carol Ann Slaybaugh
Liane Becker	Harold F. Haller	Eric Nelson	*Thomas Smeltzer
Paul Been	Joan Hanus	Don Norris	*E. Jane Smith
Eric Bell	Bernadine Hartzell	*Donald Omon	Nancy Stevens
*Lorraine Bell	*Ernest Haug	Ben Pagel	Greg Stone
*Gloria Bergman	Margaret Henry	*Olive Pagel	Mark Sufferling
Kathryn Berthold	Billi Henske	Sue Painter	*Kay Tornow
Jack C. Boder	Gerald Hinkes	Warren Parish	*Roger Tornow
*Joe Bonfiglio	*Wayne Hofland	Karen Peters	Ellen Sargeant Trapp
*Jerry Bowles	*John Hoaglund	Charles Peterson	Dorothy Trauth
Gary Bressers	*George Huhnke	*Robert Plack	*Bart Trentadue
*Bonny Buran	*Doris Jensen	Valerie Pogue	Judy Trentadue
Robert R. Cameron	*Dwight Johnson	Karolyn Powell	Geraldine Wachholz
Toni Carini	*Gordon Kassilke	Robert Powell	*Donald Wanek
*Barbara Christianson	*Debra Kelm	Douglas Prebelski	Ella Washington
*Gordon Christianson	Eugene R. Kemmer	*Nola Prebelski	*Betty J. Williams
Thomas Cleary	*Dorothy Kincaid	*Doris Radke	Harry Williams
Gretta Comiskey	*Franklin Kling	*Anne Ramsey	Betty Jo Williamsen
Carol Conklin	Lottie Klotwicz	*Edward S.A. Ramsey	Harry Wilson
*Ken Cook	*Eldon Knoche	*Charles Reiser	Dr. George Woodward
*Ruth Cook	Dorothy Royt Krash	*Marion Renick	Sue Woodward
*Tom Couillard	Marie Kraus	*Faith Rhodes	Jennifer Yorkey
Robert Dale	Mildred Lawrence	Laurence E. Royt	Shirley Zimmerman
Roger Davidson	Lillian S. LeMaster	*Ruth Royt	Don Zurn
Charles "Chuck" Davis	Jerry Leising	*Robert Ruggieri	
Esther Dawe	Ruth Lucht	*Kay Sands	<i>*Honorary Member</i>
Richard Dawe	Willard Manthei	Marilyn Schmit	
*Mary Ann Eckes	Eugene Masters	John Schmitt	
*Carol Eggert	Rose Mastrogiovanni	*Lorraine Schoeller	
Phyllis Ewing	*Marion McCormick	*Marion Scholtka	
*Milton Fairchild	Gloria Metzger	*Beth Schuelke	
*Eileen Freshley	*Anthony Mirasola	Marie E. Schultz	
Stuart Gale	Dottie Moench	*Joan Seeger	