

Janet Palmer, Artistic Director

Caleb Wescott, Associate Director

Mary Remsburg, Accompanist and Rehearsal Assistant

Hagerstown Choral Arts Presents, "Soaring Sing"

Today's program selected from the following repertoire:

Choose Something Like A Star Randall Thompson (1899 - 1984) The Lion Sleeps Tonight Solomon Linda (1909-1962), arr. Alan Billingsley Rhythm Of Life Cy Coleman (1929-2004), arr. Richard Barnes You Are The New Day John David (b. 1984), arr. Peter Knight Waitin' For The Light To Shine Roger Miller (1936-1992), arr. Mark Brymer Gospel Mass Robert Ray (1946 - 2022) Brian McClinton, soloist I. Kyrie - Lord, Have Mercy II. Gloria - Glory To God In The Highest Elizabeth Phillipson, soloist Allison Todd, soloist III. Credo - I Believe In God IV. Acclamation - Hallelujah, Praise The Lord V. Sanctus - Holy, Holy Lord God Of Hosts Dan Ritchey, Steven Pastena, Brian McClinton, soloists VI. Angus Dei - Lamb of God Daniel Speis, soloist Sawyer Gaydon, drums Larry Palmer, bass guitar

Program Notes

The Rhythm Of Life - From the musical Sweet Charity, this song is a celebration of life's journey, urging us to embrace the ups and downs, the highs and lows, and the constant flow of experience. It's a reminder that even in the face of challenges, there's a beauty and a purpose to be found in the rhythm of life itself. Many of our members remember singing this one in high school choir, and maybe you will, too!

The Lion Sleeps Tonight - Originally recorded in 40's South Africa by Solomon Linda, this song's long, complicated history was just beginning. In 1951, US folk singer Pete Seeger was handed a copy and decided to record a version ("Wimoweh") with his band, the Weavers, where the looped chorus of "uyimbube" ("You are a lion" in Zulu) became "awimoweh". Four decades later the song would become a centerpiece of Disney's animated classic movie *The Lion King*.

Come In and Choose Something Like A Star - These two songs are taken from Randall Thompson's Frostiana: Seven Country Songs (1959), a choral suite setting seven poems by Robert Frost. Frost personally approved Thompson's selection of texts, which reflect themes of nature, rural life, and human reflection. Each movement showcases Thompson's ability to highlight Frost's poetic imagery through accessible yet expressive musical settings, making Frostiana a staple of American choral repertoire.

You Are The New Day - In composer John David's own words: "The inspiration for New Day was quite simple; I had just had a major blow in my personal life, and was sitting alone late at night on the settee feeling very low, and watching an ominous story on the news about the very real possibility of nuclear war. The tune and the words popped into my head at the same time, and it was all written in about 10 minutes, which is why (to me at least) it's not perfect. But I didn't feel I had the right to change anything."

Program Notes, continued

Waitin' For The Light To Shine - The musical Big River, written by Roger Miller (yes, the "King of the Road" Roger Miller!) is based on Mark Twain's The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, and touches on themes of freedom and one's place in the world. Huck sings this heartfelt song, and although not a person of faith, this moment seems to be a moment of reflection and prayer.

Gospel Mass - Robert Ray's Gospel Mass was written as an experimental work, intended, he believed, for a one-time performance. The official premiere was in 1979 at the University of Illinois-Urbana, with a chorus of students and Ray as the director. He recalled, "There was an incredible response. We performed to jam-packed houses. I was very, very excited. To have that kind of response to the first work you have ever written was very gratifying. It was the hand of the Almighty." Gospel Mass is Dr. Ray's interpretation of two thousand years of liturgical tradition, combined with the more contemporary music of the African-American Church tradition. After the first performance, he packed the music in storage and went on with his life. Several years later a friend asked to use Gospel Mass in a high school concert. The piece, Ray believes, struck an ecumenical chord that "allowed people of all denominations or faith to embrace the style." The music for the Mass, like other pieces Ray later composed, was based on his own musical experience, growing up in the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

"I want[ed] everyone to experience the sense of joy and celebration that is generally felt in true African-American worship." - Robert Ray



Gospel Mass by Robert Ray

Lyrics

<u>Kyrie</u> - Lord, Have Mercy

In the name of the Father, in the name of the Son,

In the name of the Holy Ghost, the blessed Three in One.

Oh, Lord, have mercy, Kyrie eleison. Oh, Lord, have mercy.

Oh, Lord, have mercy on me. Send us a Savior, set my soul free.

Give us your word and teach us to pray.

I want to praise and serve you always.

Lord God of Isaac and Jacob, look down, have mercy upon us.

Oh, Christ, have mercy. Christe eleison. Oh, Christ, have mercy.

Oh, Christ, have mercy on me.

Send us Your comfort, grant us Your peace,

You are the way, the truth and the light.

I love you more each day and each night.

Jesus, the Rock of Salvation, the Light of the World,

Have mercy upon us. Oh, Lord, have mercy, Kyrie eleison.

Oh, Christ, have mercy. Christe eleison. Oh, Lord, have mercy.

Gloria - Glory To God In The Highest

Glory to God in the highest, peace to all men of good will.

We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we adore Thee, we glorify Thee.

We give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory.

We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we adore Thee, we glorify Thee.

Lord God, King of heav'n, Father, Almighty One,

Glory be to Jesus Christ, Lamb of God, the Father's only Son.

Glory to God in the highest, peace to all men of good will.

Thou who takes away all the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Thou who takes away all the sins of the world, receive our prayer.

Thou who sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty in Heaven,

Have mercy on us. For only Thou art holy, only Thou art the Lord, $\,$

Only Thou art holy, only Thou art most high.

We come to praise Your name today, we come to serve You in every way.

Let the loud hosannas ring, shouting the praises to God our King,

In the name of the Father, in the name of the Son,

In the name of the Holy Ghost, the Blessed Three in One, Amen!

Gospel Mass Lyrics, Continued

Credo - I Believe In God

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,

Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost.

Born of the Virgin Mary, suffer'd under Pontius Pilate.

Crucified, died, and was buried, He descended into hell.

On the third day, He arose.

He ascended to heaven, from death He was set free.

Now He sits at the right hand, and He's waiting for you and me.

He will judge all the world, He will judge you and me.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Catholic Church.

I believe, Lord, in one baptism, for the remission of sins and rebirth.

I believe in the resurrection and the communion of saints in this world.

I believe when my life is over, I'm going home just to live with my God.

I believe in God and in the Holy Ghost, I believe, I believe in God.

Acclamation - Hallelujah Praise The Lord

Hallelujah, praise the Lord. Hallelujah, let us praise the Lord.

Praise Him with stringed instruments. Praise Him with dance.

Praise Him on the psalt'ry and harp. Everything that has breath, ought to praise Him.

Hallelujah, let us praise the Lord.

Sanctus - Holy, Holy Lord God Of Hosts

Holy, holy Lord God of hosts.

Hosanna be to Thee in the highest, who gave me victory.

There was a man sittin' by the roadside.

He was blind, he could not see.

Then the Master of the earth and skies touched his eyes,

And he looked around, saying holy, holy Lord God of hosts.

Hosanna be to thee in the highest, who gave me victory.

Another man lay by a poolside: thirty-eight years in his infirmity.

Then the Lord troubled the waters.

The man arose, and he jumped for joy saying holy, holy Lord God of hosts.

Hosanna be to thee in the highest, who gave me victory.

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

We will always sing, always sing thy praise.

Hosanna in the highest. Sing hosanna in the highest.

Lyrics, continued

Like the blind man and the lame man, I was lost, living in sin.

Gospel Mass Lyrics, Continued

Then I opened up my heart one day. I let the Savior in, Now I shout saying holy, holy Lord God of hosts. Hosanna be to thee in the highest, who gave me victory. Holy, holy Lord Jesus. Holy!

Agnus Dei - Lamb of God
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
Have mercy on us, have mercy on us.
For You came to die for me.
Suffer'd, bled, and died, died on Calvary.
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
Have mercy on us, have mercy on us.
In Your word, you showed us how.
We are trying, Lord, hear our prayer right now.
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
Grant us Thy peace, grant us Thy peace. Amen.

Hagerstown Choral Arts, Inc.

Soprano I—Linda Barnhart, Zoey Breakall, Beverly Kotchenreuther, Mary Licht, Marianne Mooney, Kathy Robinson, Sallie Sterling, Erin Stuller

Soprano II –Candice Craig, Elyssa Doub, Elizabeth Farmer, Heather Hughes, Carolyn Mentzer, Robin Spickler

Alto I—Deb Danner, Shannon Lang, Caroline Lewis, Gerrie Mangum, Elizabeth Phillipson, Brenda Plummer, Symphony Walkley, Jennifer Wedde

Alto II—Margaret McKee, Therese Ramey, Daria Riegler, Allison Todd

Tenor—Colter Farraiolo, Brian McClinton, Rich Owens, John Sabine, Daniel Speis,

Baritone/Bass - Torben Aarsand, Richard Dobson, Jr., Tim Doyle, Matthew Hinz, Mark Holmes, Dennis Holovach, Buddy Mentzer, Steven Pastena, Daniel Ritchey, Terry Tierney

Our Leaders and Accompanist



Janet Palmer, Artistic Director After graduating from Millikin University in Decatur, Illinois, with a degree in Choral Music Education, Janet taught K-12 choir and vocal and general music in public schools in Illinois, Wyoming, and Wisconsin for 38 years, retiring in 2019. While in Wyoming, she was named Teacher of the Year in Big Horn County School District 1, and cofounded the Big Horn County Elementary Music

Festival. Janet worked for nearly 40 years as a choir director and church musician in multiple denominations, and as director, music director, accompanist, choreographer, or costumer in well over 100 school and community theatre productions. Janet sings Soprano II or whatever part is needed and is a board member with HCA. She is also involved with Potomac Playmakers and Authentic Community Theatre in Hagerstown. Janet and her husband, Larry, relocated to Maryland in April of 2023, and are enjoying getting to know and become involved in the area and spending more time with granddaughter Coraline.



Caleb Wescott, Associate Director, a native of Boonsboro, Maryland, currently teaches music in Washington County Public Schools. Graduating with his bachelor's degree in 2022, he studied music education and classical saxophone at the University of Tennessee with a focus on instrumental music. Caleb directs his musical passions toward voice, singing with various ensembles and performing as a church musician. Caleb

sings Tenor as a member of HCA and is on the HCA Board of Directors. Self-taught, he plays the piano by ear and enjoys performing periodically for smaller venues. In his free time, Caleb enjoys working outdoors and tinkering with automobiles.



Mary Remsburg, Accompanist and Rehearsal Assistant, was raised in the small town of Franklin, West Virginia, and graduated from Shepherd University in 2016 with a Music Education degree.

As a child, she was part of the Shenandoah Valley Children's Choir for nine years, which

gave her the opportunity to be selected to perform at numerous venues, including Carnegie Hall and The White House.

While at Shepherd University, Mary played in the Jazz Combo and Jazz Ensemble, earning the honor of performing with award winning composer Maria Schneider. Mary also performed at several Honors Recitals at the Washington County Museum of Fine Arts, as a classical soloist and in the Jazz Combo. She accompanied for Women's Camerata, for performance forums and senior recitals.

Currently, Mary teaches private studio lessons at Shepherd University, teaches at Saint James School, and is the accompanist for Hagerstown Choral Arts. Mary also frequently plays for musical productions, recitals, recordings, private events, and concerts.

Mary recently released her first folk album *Sounds Like Home*, under the stage name Mister Mae, and her music has been featured on multiple radio programs both in the United States and the United Kingdom. She is married to Chase Remsburg, a fellow graduate of Shepherd University.

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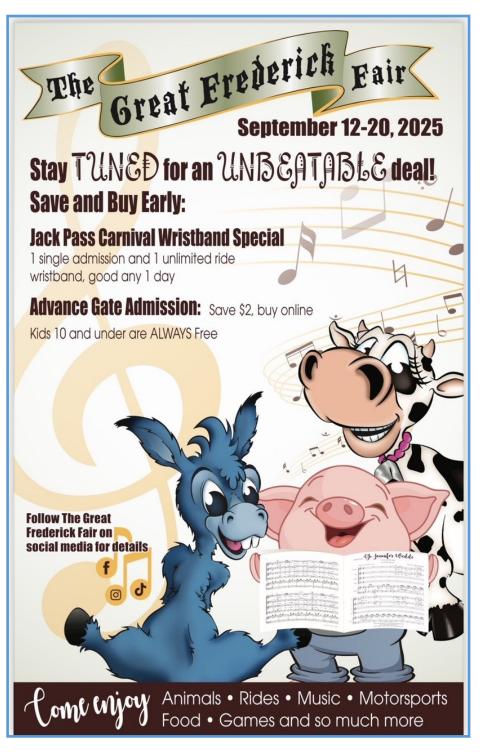
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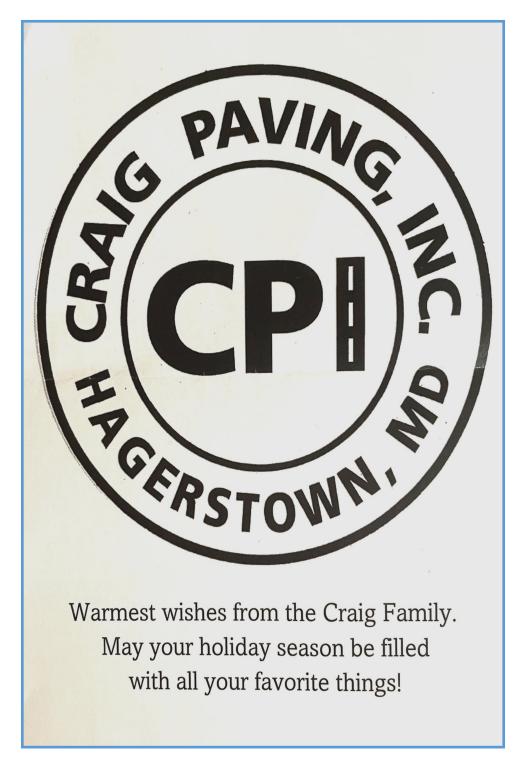


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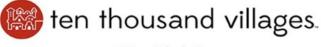




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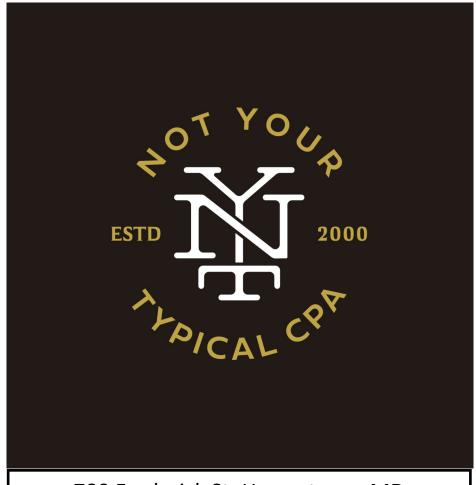
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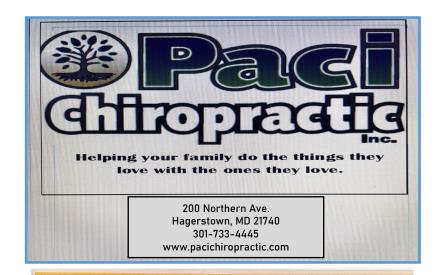
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- St. John's Episcopal Church for the use of their beautiful space for our concert.
- St. John's members for providing a lovely reception after our May 3 concert.
- The many singers, their families, other volunteers, and audience members who have been a part of Hagerstown Choral Arts over the years.
- Leslie LeBlanc for overseeing and writing our grants.
- Charlotte Trout for many years of serving on our Board of Directors and for managing many successful grants applications.





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