



*A Musical Tribute
to our Local Hospital Workers*

Live Performance on Tuesday, March 9, 2021
Wellstar Spalding Regional Hospital

Video Release on Tuesday, March 16, 2021
Video Venue: Griffin First United Methodist Church

Dr. Stephen J. Mulder, conductor
Kitty Grubbs, rehearsal accompanist

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With These Hands

Dr. Stephen J. Mulder, conductor
Mrs. Kitty Grubbs, rehearsal accompanist

PROGRAM

Ubi caritas	Elizabeth Wilson, solo	Jacques Berthier (1923-1994)
Hold On!		Jester Hairston (1901-2000)
The Lord's Prayer (<i>Notre Pere</i>)		Maurice Duruflé (1902-1986)
God shall wipe away all tears (from <i>The Armed Man</i>)		Karl Jenkins (b. 1944)
Serenade of Gratitude	Melody from <i>Peace, Peace</i> by Rick and Sylvia Powell Text by William Allen Pasch	

Singers Roster

Soprano

Cynthia Armstrong
Debby Daniel-Bryant
Peggy Carroll
Valerie Gill
Jean Gregory
Sally Hartman
Bailey Harvil
Sylvia Hollums
Tricia Ivey
Susan Landry
Patty Mitchell
Dotty Murray
Adi Smith
Madison Smith
Patsy VanHoy

Alto

Kit Benson
Jackie Clark
Margie King
Katrina Lazenby
Patti Morrow
Susie Whatley

Tenor

Alan Benson
Art Hammond
Emory Schroeter
Brandon Smith
Josh Smith

Bass

George Brown
Travis Graham
Adam Grubbs
Skip Lazenby
Bruce Reid
John Strickland
Ken VanHoy

Our Next GCA Concert:



Dan Forrest's "Requiem for the Living" was an immediate chorus and audience favorite when we performed it in March 2019. The central themes of life and light and the ever-present reality of our mortality are explored in this magnificent choral-orchestral masterwork. This performance will provide an opportunity for our community to heal and reflect on a year of disruption, loss, and pain.

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Texts

Ubi Caritas

*Ubi caritas et amor,
Deus ibi est.*

Where there is charity and love,
God is there.

Hold On!

Keep your hand on the plow, hold on, hold on.

Nora, Nora, let me come in,
The doors' all fastened and the windows
pinned.
Nora said you done lost track,
You can't plow straight and keep a-looking
back.

If you wanna get to heaven let me tell you how,
Just keep your hand on the gospel plow.
If that plow stays in your hand,
Land you straight in the promised land.

Hold on! Oh, Brother, hold on!
Hold on! Oh, Sister, hold on!

Mary had a golden chain,
Every link spelled my Jesus' name.
Keep on climbing and don't you tire.
Every rung goes higher and higher.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name;
Thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our tresspasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

God shall wipe away all tears

God shall wipe away all tears
and there shall be no more death,
neither sorrow or crying,
Neither shall there be anymore pain.

Praise the Lord.

Serenade of Gratitude

Loving hands, selfless hearts:
These, your true healing arts.
You give comfort easing our pain,
so our spirits might hope again.
Deepest thanks to you;
Deepest love to you.

Thank you for your gifts of courage and skill.
This is our song of thanks;
This is our song of love.
We will forever remember
your steadfast, kindly care.

Program Notes

On March 9, 2020, we had our last "regular" Griffin Choral Arts rehearsal before suspending our activities for the pandemic. Exactly one year later, on March 9, 2021, we honor and celebrate frontline hospital workers from our local Wellstar Spalding Regional Hospital. As our world was slowing down to an eventual halt, THEIR pandemic journey was just starting to take off. Since the beginning of the health crisis, they have worked additional hours and shifts on top of their already intense schedules. They have adjusted their job responsibilities and have taken on new roles and learned new skills. They have had to handle unthinkable pressure, and they have had to provide care under the most trying of situations. They are heroes.

This day, we provide a musical tribute to their dedication and resilience. We sing words of faith, love, and hope. We stand in recognition of their outstanding efforts in service to our community.

In addition to our musical tribute, we share written expressions of love and support, from our Griffin Choral Arts family and from area school children. And, finally, we share baskets of snacks to say "thank you" and to make those long shifts a little sweeter and more bearable.

The Music of "With These Hands"

"With These Hands" was to be our May 2020 concert project. The theme leaned into hands lifted in praise, hands folded in prayer, and hands reaching out to help others. We commissioned a new choral composition that used a text written by a local 5th grader. That premiere composition and much of that concert repertoire is on hold until we can get back to regular concerts. We had hoped that by March 2021 we would be able to try again. But, we had to again adjust our plans and postpone the original concert concept.

But the "With These Hands" theme turned out to be perfect for this tribute event. Bobby Wheaton's revised concert artwork features medically gloved hands forming the shape of a heart, aptly symbolizing the love and care provided by healthcare workers over the past year.



The hands/heart image is further embodied in the newly written text for "Serenade of Gratitude" (words by long time GCA singer and program-note writer Bill Pasch). The song begins with these words:

"Loving hands, selfless hearts..."

This final selection of tonight's program uses the partner-song melody from the well loved GCA Christmas concert closer "Peace, Peace" with a new text.

All of the music on tonight's program is sung *a cappella* (unaccompanied).

The program begins with a simple Taizé chorus, ***Ubi caritas***. Beginning with a solo child's voice and building into the full choir, the Latin text is repeated many times in variations.

As the choir sings *Ubi caritas*, they assume an ancient prayer posture known as Orans. The palms-up gesture represents a position for releasing (supplications, burdens) and for receiving (blessings, gifts).

The spiritual ***Hold On!*** is a work song with a theme of resilience and determination. The verses call forward biblical images including the Old Testament story of Noah as well as the admonition from Jesus in Luke 9:62: "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."

Maurice Duruflé composed his motet setting of ***The Lord's Prayer*** (*Notre Pere*) in 1978. Dedicated to his wife, Marie-Madeleine, it was his last published composition. Normally performed in French, we will sing an English edition tonight.

In March 2010, Griffin Choral Arts performed Karl Jenkins' *The Armed Man* in a collaboration with the Griffin Ballet Theatre. One of the most memorable concerts in our

history, it's hard to believe that was over a decade ago in Season 3. The work (which has considerable energy and orchestral color throughout) concludes with a simple chorale: ***God shall wipe away all tears***. The first part of the text is directly from Revelation 21:4. The second half of the chorale is a flowing, therapeutic repetition of the phrase "Praise the Lord."

The ***Serenade of Gratitude*** concludes the program, perhaps conjuring up the emotions of the annual Christmas concert closer. Instead of a prayer for peace on earth, the new text is an expression of heart-felt thanks for outstanding service provided to our community by the hospital staff and frontline healthcare workers.

With gratitude to the GCA Board of Directors, Griffin First United Methodist Church, our dedicated singers, our donors and advertisers--thank you for your continued support as we strive to use inspiration and beauty to create community.

Stephen J. Mulder
Artistic Director
Griffin Choral Arts



May we never again take for granted the simple pleasure of gathering to sing together.

Images from March 9, 2020 (exactly one year ago)



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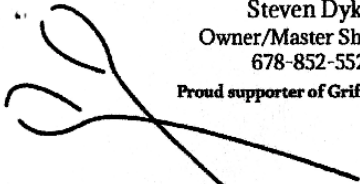
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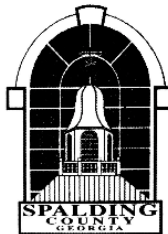


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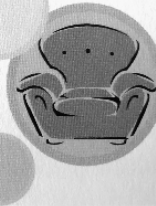
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