

Program
One Voice: For Peace
Sunday, November 3, 2019, 4PM
First Congregational Church
Steven Szalaj, Artistic Director
Spencer Lent, Assistant Conductor
Randy Casey, Piano and Organ

One Voice Daniel E. Gawthrop (b. 1949)

The Tree of Peace Gwyneth Walker (b.1947)

A Sermon from the Mountain (Martin Luther King, Jr.) Alice Parker (b. 1925)

Readers: Mary Ann Wilson
Karen Reinhard
Leo Bezdek
Crystal Click
Catherine Carroll
Shannon Guzik

Soloists: Peter Carroll, Bass-Baritone
Spencer Lent, Tenor
Beth Taylor, Soprano
Johanna Nagorny, Alto
Steve Geske, Tenor

Guitar: Pat Gaughan
Percussion: Anthony Houston

- I. **Invitation:** Way up on the mountain
- II. **Blessings:** He's the Lily of the Valley
- III. **Exhortation:** I want to live so God can use me
- IV. **The Rule:** My feet is tired
- V. **The Promise:** Well, I feel all right
- VI. **The Reward:** Let justice roll down like waters

Voice Of The River Matthew Orlovich (b. 1970)
Sung by *Viva Voce*

Kum Bah Yah George Scherer (1923 - 2007)
Someone's crying, Lord...
Someone's praying, Lord...
Someone's singing, Lord...

Kumbaya Stacey Gibbs (b. 1964)

Program Notes

Dan Gawthrop lives in Fort Wayne, IN. **One Voice** is a setting of an original text by Jane Griner. It speaks of the power of singing together as “one voice” and promotes unity both in the literal, musical sense, and in the broader social context.

The Tree of Peace is adapted by Gwyneth Walker from *O Brother Man*, a poem by John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892). In her composition, Walker begins with “O, my sister and my brother, all who walk upon this earth, fold to your hearts each other.” She inserts the text “Listen, listen to one another” as an interlude, and concludes with a focus on the poem’s final line, “Love shall tread out the fire of anger, and in its ashes plant a tree of peace.” Walker said of this work, “Musical passages of tenderness (“peace”) alternate and intertwine with passages of strength (“tree”) to form a confluence of the message: a prayer for peace.”

A Sermon From The Mountain is a tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr., and Alice Parker was commissioned to compose the work in April, 1968, almost immediately after his assassination. MLK’s words and actions still resonate today: “...returning hate for hate multiplies hate, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.” Parker has chosen six quotes from MLK and coupled them with Scripture verses that reflect the same ideas. These verses are proclaimed by the baritone soloist, and each are then followed by a choral response. The choral responses are in a variety of styles calling to mind, spirituals, the blues and folk music.

Voice Of The River, sung by *Viva Voce*, the select ensemble from VIH, by the Australian composer, Matthew Orlovich. The text draws on two sources: Victor Carell’s 1992 poem, *Voice Of The River*, and excerpts from a 12th century hymn, *Dulcis Jesu Memoria*. The exuberant poem, with its vibrant images, is a celebration of love. The Latin hymn conveys the joys and frustrations when searching for the object of one’s adoration, in this case, *Jesu*. Here is a translation of the hymn:

The sweet memory of Jesus
Giving true joy to the heart:
But more than honey and all things
His sweet presence.
Nothing more delightful is sung,
Nothing more pleasing heard,
Nothing sweeter thought,
Than Jesus, the Son of God.
O Jesus, hope of the penitent,
How gracious you are to those who ask
How good to those who seek you;

But what [are you] to those who find?
No tongue may tell,
No letter express;
He who has experience of it can believe
What it is to love Jesus.
O Jesus, may you be our joy,
You who are our future reward.
May our glory be in you
Throughout all eternity.
Amen

How all of our lives have been affected by the simple African American folk song, **Kumbaya!** The song is thought to have originated from the Gullah culture in the islands off of South Carolina and Georgia. The first recorded version was collected in 1926 by Robert Winslow Gordon, the founder of what became the Library of Congress’ *Archive of Folk Song*.

The simple, straight forward arrangement by George Scherer, will call to mind campfires and folksong festivals. The setting by Stacy Gibbs employs in the rhythms and articulations from spirituals, gospel and African folk music.