

New Jersey
*Master
Chorale*



Haddonfield
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

point of view.

Reconciliation

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New Jersey MasterChorale
Jason Vodicka, Artistic Director

Ralph Vaughan Williams: *Dona Nobis Pacem*

Rosephanye Powell: *The Cry of Jeremiah*

May 5, 2024, 7:00pm
Haddonfield UMC Sanctuary
& online at haddonfieldumc.org

Cherisse Bonefont, soprano
Kimberly Christie, soprano
Jason Buckwalter, baritone

Soli Deo Gloria

**The New Jersey MasterChorale
presents**

reconciliation

Sunday, May 5, 2024 at 7:00 pm

Welcome

Patricia Del Camp, Music Committee Chairperson

Invocation

Reverend Chris Heckert, Senior Pastor

Dona Nobis Pacem

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

- I. Agnus Dei (Latin Mass)
- II. Beat! Beat! Drums! (Walt Whitman)
- III. Reconciliation (Whitman)
- IV. Dirge for Two Veterans (Whitman)
- V. The Angel of Death has been abroad (John Bright, Jeremiah)
- VI. O man, greatly beloved (Old Testament)

Jason Vodicka, conductor; Kimberly Christie, soprano; Jason Buckwalter, baritone

Invitation to Offering

Bob Shaffer, NJMC Board

The Cry of Jeremiah

Rosephanye Dunn Powell (b. 1962)

- I. Is Not His Word Like A Fire (Jeremiah 20:9)
- II. O Lord, You Have Deceived Me (Jeremiah 20:7-9)
- III. Cursed Be the Day (Jeremiah 20:14-18)
- IV. Hallelujah! (Jeremiah 20:11-13)

Ben Shively, conductor; Cherisse Bonfont, soprano; Rev. Chris Heckert, narrator

Audience members are invited to join the NJ MasterChorale and Philadelphia Orchestra and Friends at the conclusion of the concert, downstairs in Propert Café, as we honor Bob Shaffer for his 25 years as NJMC Business Manager.

TEXTS/TRANSLATIONS

Dona Nobis Pacem

I. (from the Latin Mass) *Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem.*
(Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world, grant us peace.)

II. (Walt Whitman, from "Beat! Beat! Drums!" 1861)

Beat! beat! drums! — blow! bugles! blow!

Through the windows — through the doors — burst like a ruthless force,

Into the solemn church, and scatter the congregation,

Into the school where the scholar is studying;

Leave not the bridegroom quiet — no happiness must he have now with his bride,

Nor the peaceful farmer any peace, ploughing his field, or gathering in his grain,

So fierce you whirr and pound you drums — so shrill you bugles blow.

Beat! beat! drums! — blow! bugles! blow!

Over the traffic of cities — over the rumble of wheels in the streets;

Are beds prepared for sleepers at night in the houses? No sleepers must sleep in those beds,

No bargainers' bargains by day — would they continue?

Would the talkers be talking? Would the singer attempt to sing?

Then rattle quicker, heavier drums — you bugles wilder blow.

Beat! beat! drums! — blow! bugles! blow!

Make no parley — stop for no expostulation,

Mind not the timid — mind not the weeper or prayer,

Mind not the old man beseeching the young man,

Let not the child's voice be heard, nor the mother's entreaties,

Make even the trestles to shake the dead where they lie awaiting the hearses,

So strong you thump O terrible drums — so loud you bugles blow.

III. **Reconciliation** (Walt Whitman, from Leaves of Grass, 1867)

Word over all, beautiful as the sky,

Beautiful that war and all its deeds of carnage must in time be utterly lost,

That the hands of the sisters Death and Night incessantly, softly, wash again and ever again this soiled world;

For my enemy is dead, a man divine as myself is dead,

I look where he lies white-faced and still in the coffin — I draw near,

Bend down and touch lightly with my lips the white face in the coffin.

IV. **Dirge for Two Veterans** (Walt Whitman, from Leaves of Grass, 1891)

The last sunbeam lightly falls from the finished Sabbath,

On the pavement here, and there beyond it is looking down a new-made double grave.

Lo, the moon ascending, up from the East the silvery round moon,

Beautiful over the house-tops, ghastly, phantom moon, immense and silent moon.

I see a sad procession, and I hear the sound of coming full-keyed bugles,

All the channels of the city streets they're flooding as with voices and with tears.

I hear the great drums pounding, and the small drums steady whirring,

And every blow of the great convulsive drums strikes me through and through.

For the son is brought with the father, in the foremost ranks of the fierce assault they fell,

Two veterans, son and father, dropped together, and the double grave awaits them.

Now nearer blow the bugles, and the drums strike more convulsive,

And the daylight o'er the pavement quite has faded, and the strong dead-march enwraps me.

In the eastern sky up-buoying, the sorrowful vast phantom moves illumined,

'Tis some mother's large transparent face, in heaven brighter growing.

O strong dead-march you please me! O moon immense with your silvery face you soothe me!

O my soldiers twain! O my veterans passing to burial!

What I have I also give you.

The moon gives you light, And the bugles and the drums give you music,

And my heart, O my soldiers, my veterans,

My heart gives you love.

V. (John Bright, from his speech in the House of Commons intended to prevent the Crimean War, February 23, 1855)

The Angel of Death has been abroad throughout the land; you may almost hear the beating of his wings. There is no one as of old ... to sprinkle with blood the lintel and the two side-posts of our doors, that he may spare and pass on.

(from the Latin Mass) *Dona nobis pacem.* (Jeremiah 8:15-22) We looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health and behold trouble! The snorting of his horses was heard from Dan; the whole land trembled at the sound of the neighing of his strong ones; for they are come, and have devoured the land ... and those that dwell therein ... The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved ... Is there no balm in Gilead?; is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?

VI. (Daniel 10:19) O man greatly beloved, fear not, peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. (Haggai 2:9) The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former ... and in this place will I give peace. (from Micah 4:3, Leviticus 26:6, Psalms 85:10 and 118:19, Isaiah 43:9 and 56:18-22, Luke 2:14) Nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. And none shall make them afraid, neither shall the sword go through their land. Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven. Open to me the gates of righteousness, I will go into them. Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled; and let them hear and say, it is the truth. And it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues. And they shall come and see my glory. And I will set a sign among them, and they shall declare my glory among the nations. For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, so shall your seed and your name remain for ever. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men. *Dona nobis pacem.*

The Cry of Jeremiah (Text paraphrased from the Book of Jeremiah)

I. Is not His Word like a fire shut up in my bones? I am weary. When I hold it, it consumes me. I must declare the Word of the Lord. Is not His Word like a burning fire! If I say, "I will not mention Him, nor will I speak in His name." I have no peace until I speak. How I am weary of trouble, weary of holding it in. My sorrow consumes me. Bring peace, O Lord, by Thine own Word.

II. O Lord, You have deceived me, I was deceived and overpower'd. All day long, I stand here ridiculed. They all mock me when I cry out. They all mock me at your word. I am weary of being ridiculed. You have deceived me. You have prevailed.

III. Cursed be the day I was born! Cursed be the day my mother bore me. Cursed be the man who brought the news. Cursed be the day he told my father. Cursed! If I say, "I will not mention Him, nor will I speak in His name." His word is like a burning fire. I have no peace until I speak. How I am weary, weary of trouble, weary of holding it in. My sorrow consumes me.

IV. Hallelujah! Praise the Lord above. He will deliver me. Hallelujah! Faithful God of love; His glory I will see. Rest in the Lord, O my soul. Trust in God. Fear not; He's always near. Stand on the Word of the Father. Pray in the spirit; believing God always hears. Hallelujah! Sing to the Lord of love, for He will provide for me. Hallelujah! Almighty God above; His glory I will see. Rejoice! God will deliver me. His glory I will see. God is my refuge, strong mighty tower. He is my deliverer. Hallelujah! Praise the Lord!

Program Notes

reconciliation

- 1: the act of causing two people or groups to become friendly again after an argument or disagreement
- 2: the process of finding a way to make two different ideas, facts, etc., exist or be true at the same time
- 3: a sacrament of penance

Ralph Vaughan Williams served as an ambulance driver and medic during World War I. His anti-war masterwork *Dona Nobis Pacem*, written in 1936, was intended to prevent further world conflict. Similarly, poet Walt Whitman volunteered in army hospitals during the Civil War, and hoped his poetry might bring an end to that war by depicting the human tragedy of battle. Tragically, neither was successful in their efforts, and tragically, war persists to this day, seemingly an inescapable part of the human condition.

The name of our program is taken from the central movement of the work. The text for this movement comes from a Whitman poem originally published in 1867. The poem describes a soldier (likely African American) who encounters the body of his enemy after battle. The soldier reconciles the ugliness of death, conflict, and division with the beauty of "the Word," and the beauty of the natural cycle of death, decay, and renewal. This cycle appears metaphorically throughout *Dona Nobis Pacem* as images of sunlight and moonlight, and in structural elements that reoccur as the work develops – the voice of the soprano soloist crying repeatedly for peace; the war march ("Beat! Beat! Drums!") that becomes a funeral dirge (Dirge for Two Veterans).

In movement five, the cycle is at its lowest point. Ravaged, beaten, and mournful, the choir sings plaintively, "We looked for peace, and no good came...and we are not saved...is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there?" This text, from the book of Jeremiah, finally calls the question – God, where is your promised peace? The response (movement six), is a string of quotations from other Old Testament prophets, encouraging us, God's "greatly beloved," to "be strong" in this life, and while working for peace here and now, to realize that true peace will only come in the next.

Rosephanye Powell's *The Cry of Jeremiah* also takes its text from the Book of Jeremiah. The story of Jeremiah is also one of reconciliation, of one man coming to terms with the seeming incompatibility of God's promises and his own lived reality. Powell depicts Jeremiah's anguish and torment using traditional African American idioms such as the spiritual and work song in tandem with techniques and forms found in the oratorios of Handel and Mendelssohn. Of the last movement, Powell writes, "Musically, 'Hallelujah' begins serenely, revealing that Jeremiah has resolved his issues with God. The song builds to a joyful celebration of God's faithfulness."

About Tonight's Performers

Jason Vodicka, Artistic Director

Jason Vodicka is associate dean in the College of Arts and Sciences at Rider University, where he works with students in the School of Communication, Media, and Performing Arts, and Westminster Choir College. Known for his innovative work in choral pedagogy, Dr. Vodicka has conducted numerous honor choirs and presented at state, regional, national and international conferences on music education. His writing can be found in publications such as *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education*; *The Oxford Handbook of Choral Pedagogy*, and *Visions of Research in Music Education*.

Matthew Smith, Organist

Matt Smith has served as the Organist at Haddonfield UMC since attaining his Master of Music degree from Princeton, NJ's, Westminster Choir College. He was awarded First Place at the 2017 Joan Lippincott Competition for Excellence in Organ Performance and continues to perform recitals on piano and organ at various venues. Matt's most recent recital as featured organist at the 2020 Mi Wha Lee Memorial Recital can be enjoyed by visiting Haddonfield UMC's YouTube channel (youtube.com/HaddonfieldUMC). He currently serves as Organist and Choirmaster at HUMC.

Ben Shively, Assistant Conductor

Ben Shively is a music educator and choral conductor who holds a Bachelor of Music in Education from the University of Missouri – Kansas City Conservatory of Music & Dance. In his work as Choir Director at Rodeo Palms Junior High School in Houston, TX, Ben earned recognition as 2021-2022 Teacher of the Year on his campus. He is currently pursuing a Master of Music in Choral Conducting at Westminster Choir College, where he serves as a graduate assistant for Dr. James Jordan. Ben also serves as Music Director at Hopewell United Methodist Church, Hopewell, NJ.

Cherisse R. Bonefont, Soprano

Cherisse R. Bonefont, founder of the Essence of Harmony Choral Society, is deeply committed to the art of conducting and the preservation and performance of Black American music. She is currently completing her Bachelor of Music at Westminster Choir College at Rider University and will pursue a Master of Music in Choral Conducting at Messiah University. Through a network of professional organizations, Cherisse endeavors to inspire a movement where communities embrace cultural diversity and celebrate classical and contemporary voices alike, fostering a rich and inclusive musical landscape.

Kimberly Christie, Soprano

Kimberly Christie is hailed by the *Washington Post* as a singer with "uninhibited movement and shining vocal abilities that stood out from the rest." She is a dynamic and versatile singer, equally skilled in opera, oratorio, recital, and musical theater. She performs primarily in the Mid-Atlantic region with a wide variety of companies including Washington National Opera, Maryland Opera, Washington Concert Opera, Annapolis Chorale, Baltimore Concert Opera, and the Maryland Choral Society. Kimberly completed her graduate work at the Peabody Conservatory.

Jason Buckwalter, Baritone

Jason Buckwalter lives in the Baltimore area and performs throughout the Mid-Atlantic region. He has performed with a wide variety of companies including the Washington National Opera, Maryland Opera, Annapolis Opera, Baltimore Concert Opera, Annapolis Chorale, and the Young Victorian Theatre Company. As a concert performer, Jason has performed solos with choirs up and down the East Coast, and is a regular soloist with the Northern Delaware Oratorio Society where he has sung both Brahms' and Mozart's *Requiems* and Mendelssohn's *Elijah*.

New Jersey MasterChorale

The New Jersey MasterChorale is a 70-voice symphonic choir which was begun 50 years ago as the Haddonfield UMC Oratorio Choir. An outreach of the HUMC music ministry, the NJMC partnered with Symphony in C last December to perform Vivaldi's Gloria, and with ChildrenSong of NJ last spring, to perform John Rutter's *Mass of the Children*. Other recently sung works include Haydn's *Lord Nelson Mass*, and Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*. For information about joining the NJMC, please email NJMC@haddonfieldumc.org.

Summer Sing-In

If you love to sing, please join the New Jersey MasterChorale for its 3rd annual Summer Sing-In, on Thursday, August 29, 2024, at 7 p.m., featuring John Rutter's Requiem

The New Jersey MasterChorale
Jason Vodicka, Director
Matt Smith, Accompanist
Ben Shively, Assistant Conductor

Soprano 1

Kathleen Bandaruk
Ruth Earley
Patricia Fisher

Bonnie Ford
Marilyn Frynkewicz
Laura Gealt

Kate MacLennan
Lois Purcell
Carol Richmond

Kirsten Schaney
Laelia Watt

Soprano 2

Sue Belle
Sally Brinkerhoff
Peggy Fiabane

Heather Kreisman
Deb MacBride
Mandy Mathieu

Wally Mattos
Rebecca Sheridan
Helen Stott

Leslie Tuttle
Peggy Van Name
Kimberly Weiler

Alto 1

Michele Davis-Tortu
Kristin DiAmore
Nancy Ellis
Barbara Francos

Ruth Griesback
Anaya Krwawecz
Karin LaBarge

Harriet Richmond
Jan Schopfer
Kim Seibert

Linda Welte
Jackie Williams
Cathy Wright

Alto 2

Christine Cassel
Pat Del Camp
Pam Holmdal

Nancy Masarek
Barbara Miles

Joan Shaffer
Nancy Sullivan

Kathryn Tusler
Carol Walton

Tenor 1

Buddy Deal
Tom Knight
Ron Li
Luke Norvell*
Joel Schwartz

Tenor 2

Vaughn Archie
Ed Carll
Noah Donahue*
John Gamble
Craig Otto
Larry Potts
Wayne Richmond

Bass 1

Stephen Dagrosa*
Bob Goodman
Don Impellizeri
Jim Robinson
Bob Shaffer
Ben Shively
Sterling Sproul

Bass 2

George Francos
Cumhur Görgün*
Richard Kitz

*Staff singer

The Orchestra
Robert Cafaro, Contractor

Violin I

Mark Rovetti,
concertmaster
Willa Finck
Jennifer Haas
Jina Lee

Cello

Robert Cafaro
Jesus Morales

Clarinet

Socrates Villegas

Tuba

Vivian Kung

Violin II

Davyd Booth
Valissa Wilworth
Samantha Crawford
Emily Nicholl

Bass

Mary Javian

Trumpet

William Gregory
Tessa Ellis

Timpani

Tom Blanchard

Viola

Ren Martin-Doike
Jon Beiler
Shannon Merlino

Flute

Dmitri Kasyuk

Trombone

Matthew Vaughn

Percussion

Andrew Malonis
Bill Wozniak
Dave Tarantino

Piccolo

Laura Dwyer

French Horn

Chris Dwyer
Kristin Andlauer

Harp

Clair Thai

Oboe

Jonathan Blumenfeld

Organ

Matt Smith

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