



NATIONAL LUTHERAN CHOIR

23
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As we gather to share sacred music, we acknowledge that the lands on which we perform are the ancestral and contemporary homelands seized from Dahkóta, Anishinaabe, and other Indigenous peoples. We acknowledge that the creation stories of the Dahkóta, Anishinaabe, and other indigenous people are rooted in this place and they were the first to love, pray, grow, celebrate, cry, drum and sing upon this land. We recognize the profoundly sacred relationship that our Native siblings have with the land, and we ask for forgiveness for the ways we have violated that which is sacred to them, and that which sustains us all.

Letter from the Director

Dear friends of the National Lutheran Choir,

Welcome to the '23-'24 season, *All Things New*, a story told in four parts. Our All Saints program, "New Life," begins this story with a commemoration and celebration of saints - a tradition at the heart of our National Lutheran Choir community.

J.S. Bach's motet "Fürchte dich nicht" includes text from Isaiah which welcomes us all into belonging: "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name." It is this idea that is punctuated throughout today's program. No matter where you find yourself, you - *and all people* - have a place in God's community.

New Life includes several selections that are derived from poetry that explore questions of personal legacy. Pärt Uusberg's "Kodutee" is a depiction of an Estonian folk story about the journey of life. Hans Heruth's setting of William Butler Yeats' poem "When We Are Old" calls us to reflect on regrets we may carry as we age - especially those regarding love. Christopher Tin's setting of Sara Teasdale's poem "All That Could Never Be Said" focuses on our stewardship of the natural world. The poetry surrounding these ideas invites us to consider God's response to our questions of legacy. It is during this meditation that we remember the legacy of the saints who have passed before us.

The concert continues with a celebration of the new saints in our lives - those who have been recently welcomed into our community through birth. Depicted in the words of Susan Palo Cherwien's "O Blessed Spring" is the idea that we are connected to each other through God's tree of life in every chapter of our lives; both birth and death are new beginnings. Tom Trenney's setting of Shirley Erena Murray's hymn "For Everyone Born" is both a statement of welcome and a commission to create a welcoming community for all.

In the final section of the program, the focus shifts from our journey as a community to our journey through life as individuals. Rhonda Sandberg's setting of the familiar chorale "Come Sweet Death" is brought alive through physical gestures by the singers. The musical expression reminds us that we all come into and leave this world as individuals. We are then each welcomed once again into God's grace and community in the final selections of the concert.

Let us remember today that we are called and named as God's children - *Tho' He giveth or He taketh, God His children ne'er forsaketh; His the loving purpose solely to preserve them pure and holy.* As a part of this community, I invite you to experience today's program by following an instruction from the title of our selection by Reena Esmail: "Take What You Need." May we meditate on our personal journeys while remembering both those who have touched our lives and departed as well as celebrating those who will touch our lives and have only just begun theirs.

Soli Deo Gloria,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennaya Robinson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with large loops and elegant curves.

There is no intermission during *New Life*. When possible, please only leave or enter the performance space during spoken reflections or transitional music to help preserve the concert experience of those around you.

The National Lutheran choir recognizes that God's existence cannot be limited to any one gender. Predominately masculine imagery and language for God has marginalized members of our community, especially women and members of the LGBTQIA+ community. When possible, NLC strives to use inclusive language when referring to God and humanity. There are times when musical and poetic material has not been changed to preserve the intentions of the composer and/or poet. The spirit in which we offer our musical gifts is one of inclusivity for all humanity.

New Life

ALL SAINTS 2023

*This concert is programmed to provide listeners a narrative experience;
please hold all applause until the conclusion of the final piece.*

Be Not Afraid

Knut Nystedt (1915-2014)

Be not afraid I am with thee,
Tremble not for I am thy God!
I strengthen thee for I am thy help,
I uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

By redemption thou art saved, you are mine!
Fear not for you are called and named.
Fear not, you are mine!

Isaiah 41:10, 43:1

Spoken Reflection

*"Every day I am getting to know people, at any rate their circumstances,
and sometimes one is able to see through their stories into themselves -
and at the same time one thing continues to impress me: here I meet the
people as they are, far from the masquerade of "the Christian world..."*

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945)

Take What You Need

Reena Esmail (b. 1983)

Soloists: Allison Ackmann, Anna Streeper, Abs Trewin

Stanza 1: Soloist

Stanza 2: Choir and soloists leading audience

Stanza 3: Choir and soloists leading audience

The musical score is written in 4/4 time and consists of eight staves of music. The lyrics are: 'Take a mo-ment', 'Take a breath', 'Take time', 'Take care', 'Take heart', 'Take hope', 'Take a step', 'Take a chance', 'Take cour-age', 'Take charge', 'Take a stand', 'Take pride', 'Take — joy', 'Take pause', 'Take a mo-ment', 'Take a breath', 'Take what you need', 'Take what you need', and 'Take — what you need'. The score includes various musical notations such as rests, eighth notes, quarter notes, and half notes. There are also triplet markings (indicated by a '3' and a bracket) over the notes for 'Take what you need' in the sixth and seventh staves. The final staff ends with a double bar line.

Take a mo-ment Take a breath Take time

Take care Take heart Take hope

Take a step Take a chance Take cour-age

Take charge Take a stand Take pride

Take — joy Take pause Take a mo-ment

Take a breath Take what you need Take what you need

Take — what you need

Kodutee (Journey Home)

Pärt Uusberg (b. 1986)

Sung in Estonian

Laskub öö ja hingab paati,
Ümber avamere siid,
Lapsuke on sünnist saati
Näinud unenägusid.

Night falls and breathes into a boat,
Surrounded by a sea of silk,
A little baby has, since birth,
Been dreaming solemnly.

Hälli ees an jäänud ema
Oma laulu magama,
Oma aega vananema,
Teda ei saa segada.

The mother by the cradle
Has fallen asleep singing,
Aging in time,
She cannot be interrupted.

Isa seisab kaevu ääres,
Väsimusest rasked käed,
Ainult mote liigub nii,
Et aega mõtelda ei jää.

The father stands by the well,
His hands weary from exhaustion,
Only his thoughts in such a way travel,
That no time is left for thought.

Meenub kevad, kõige algus,
Suve lämbe vihmahoog,
Tulub nagu vana sober
Läbi tumma ajaloo.

I remember the spring, the beginning,
And the sultry rainfall of summer,
Which arrived like an old friend,
Through the silent history.

Mõni tund ja tõuseb tuli,
Kirgas hommik tõstab kae,
Kunagine lapsepõli
Ujub üle taeva, näe!

Hours pass and there is light,
The bright morning waves her hand,
And look, distant childhood
Drifts away across the sky!

Minu armsa pilgus paistab
Igavene kodutee,
Üle elu, üle aja,
Üle surma sildade.

There, in the eyes of the one I love,
Is the eternal path home,
Over life, over time,
Over the bridges of death.

Kristjan Üksküla (b. 1987)

Children of the Heavenly Father

Arr. Paul Christiansen (1914-1997)

Soloist: Abs Trewin

Children of the heav'nly Father
Safely in his bosom gather;
Nestling bird nor star in heaven
Such a refuge e'er was given.

God his own doth tend and nourish,
In his holy courts they flourish.
From all evil things he spares them,
In his mighty arms he bears them.

Neither life nor death shall ever
From the Lord his children sever;
Unto them his grace he showeth,
And their sorrows all he knoweth.

Though he giveth or he taketh,
God his children ne'er forsaketh,
His the loving purpose solely
To preserve them pure and holy.

Carolina Sandell Berg (1832-1903)

Names displayed during this portion of the program are of those we are remembering today.

Fürchte dich nicht, BWV 228 (Do not fear)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Sung in German

Fürchte dich nicht, ich bin bei dir;	Do not fear, I am with you;
Weiche nicht, denn ich bin dein Gott!	do not give way, for I am your God;
Ich stärke dich, ich helfe dir auch,	I strengthen you, I also help you,
Ich erhalte dich durch die rechte Hand	I uphold you with the right hand
meiner Gerechtigkeit.	of my righteousness.

Fürchte dich nicht,	Do not fear,
denn ich habe dich erlöst;	for I have redeemed you;
Ich habe dich bei deinem Namen gerufen,	I have called you by your name,
du bist mein!	you are mine.

Isaiah 41:10, 43:1

Spoken Reflection

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope that I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this, you will lead me by the right road, though I may know nothing about it. Therefore will I trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death, I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.

Thomas Merton (1915-1968)

When You Are Old

Hans Bridger Heruth (b. 1997)

*Soloists: Susan Mancel, Christina Myers,
Anna Streeper, Andrew Kreye*

When you are old and grey and full of sleep,
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;

How many loved your moments of glad grace,
And loved your beauty with love false or true,
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing face;

And bending down beside the glowing bars,
Murmur, a little sadly, how Love fled
And paced upon the mountains overhead
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.

William Butler Yeats (1865-1939)

O Blessed Spring

Stanza 1: High Voices

Stanza 2: Low Voices

Stanza 3: Choir

Stanza 4: All

Stanza 5: All (Standing as you are able.)



1 O bless - ed spring, where word and sign em - brace us
2 Through sum - mer heat of youth - ful years, un - cer - tain
3 When au - tumn cools and youth is cold, when limbs their
4 As win - ter comes, as win - ters must, we breathe our
5 Christ, ho - ly Vine, Christ, liv - ing Tree, be praised for



in - to Christ the Vine: here Christ en - joins each one to
faith, re - bel - lious tears, sus - tained by Christ's in - fus - ing
heav - y har - vest hold, then through us, warm, the Christ will
last, re - turn to dust; still held in Christ, our souls take
this blest mys - ter - y: that word and wa - ter thus re -



be a branch of this life - giv - ing Tree.
rain, the boughs will shout for joy a - gain.
move with gifts of beau - ty, wis - dom, love.
wing and trust the prom - ise of the spring.
vive and join us to your Tree of Life.

Please sit.

Mourning into Dancing (from *Suite Remembrance*)

Melissa Dunphy (b. 1980)

Sing unto the Lord!
Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing:
thou hast put off my sackcloth,
and girded me with gladness;
weeping may endure for a night,
but joy comes in the morning.
I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me.
O Lord, I will give thanks unto thee forever.
Turn my mourning into dancing!

*From Psalm 30 (KJV)
Adapted by Melissa Dunphy*

Spoken Reflection

*Before the waters nourished earth or night imagined morning,
a Love conceived the universe and reveled in its forming.
The Love that called creation good all goodness still is bringing.
This Love turns death again to life and silence into singing.*

Jeannette M. Lindholm (b. 1961)

All That Could Never Be Said (from *The Lost Birds*)

Christopher Tin (b. 1976)

Soloists: Will Heller, Ellie Demitrius

All that could never be said,
All that could never be done,
Wait for us at last
Somewhere back of the sun;

All the heart broke to forego
Shall be ours without pain,
We shall take them as lightly as girls
Pluck flowers after rain.

And when they are ours in the end
Perhaps after all
The skies will not open for us
Nor heaven be there at our call.
After all that was never done.

Sara Teasdale (1884-1933)

Names displayed during this portion of the program are of those we are remembering today.

Musical Reflection

Based on **Brahms, Op 122, No 6**

*O wie selig seid ihr doch, ihr Frommen,
die ihr durch den Tod zu Gott gekommen!
Ihr seid entgangen
aller Not, die uns noch hält gefangen.*

*Oh, how blest are ye whose toils are ended,
Who through death have unto God ascended!
Ye have arisen
From the cares which keep us still in prison.*

Names displayed during this portion of the program are of those we are remembering today.

I Want to Die Easy

Arr. Roland M. Carter (b. 1942)

Soloist: Sara Langworthy

*I want to die easy when I die,
Shout salvation as I fly.*

*Good Lord, when I die,
Hallelujah, Good Lord, when I die.*

*I want to see my Jesus, when I die,
Shout salvation as I fly.*

*I want to die easy when I die,
O, my Lord, let me die easy.*

African American Spiritual

Affirmation of Baptism

*We give you thanks, O God,
for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters
and by your Word you created the world,
calling forth life in which you took delight.*

Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family. Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom. At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons, making us heirs of your promise and servants of all.

*We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life,
and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ. Shower us with your Spirit, and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love.*

Evangelical Lutheran Worship, p. 97

For Everyone Born

Arr. Tom Trenney (b. 1977)

For ev'ryone born, a place at the table,
for ev'ryone born, clean water and bread,
a shelter, a space, a safe place for growing,
for ev'ryone born, a star overhead.

And God will delight when we are creators of justice and joy, compassion and peace;
Yes, God will delight when we are creators of justice and joy!

For woman and man, a place at the table,
revising the roles, deciding the share,
with wisdom and grace, dividing the power,
for ev'ryone born, a system that's fair.

And God will delight when we are creators of justice and joy, compassion and peace;
Yes, God will delight when we are creators of justice and joy!

For young and for old, a place at the table,
a voice to be heard, a part in the song
the hands of a child in hands that are wrinkled,
for young and for old, the right to belong.

And God will delight when we are creators of justice and joy, compassion and peace;
Yes, God will delight when we are creators of justice and joy!

For ev'ryone born, a place at the table,
to live without fear, and simply to be,
to work to speak out, to witness and worship,
for ev'ryone born, the right to be free!

And God will delight when we are creators of justice and joy, compassion and peace;
Yes, God will delight when we are creators of justice and joy!

Shirley Erena Murray (1931-2020)

Names displayed during this portion of the program are of those whose births we are celebrating today.

Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones

Stanza 1: All

Stanza 2: All

Stanza 3: Choir

Stanza 4: All (Standing as you are able.)



1 Ye watch - ers and ye ho - ly ones, bright
2 O high - er than the cher - u - bim, more
3 Re - spond, ye souls in end - less rest, ye
4 O friends, in glad - ness let us sing, su -



ser - aphs, cher - u - bim, and thrones, raise the glad strain:
glo - rious than the ser - a - phim, lead their prais - es:
pa - tri - archs and proph - ets blest: "Al - le - lu - ia!
per - nal an - thems ech - o - ing: "Al - le - lu - ia!



"Al - le - lu - ia!" Cry out, do - min - ions, prince - doms,
"Al - le - lu - ia!" Thou bear - er of the e - ter - nal
Al - le - lu - ia!" Ye ho - ly twelve, ye mar - tyr
Al - le - lu - ia!" To God the Fa - ther, God the



pow'rs, arch - an - gels, vir - tues, an - gel choirs:
Word, most gra - cious, mag - ni - fy the Lord:
strong, all saints tri - um - phant, raise the song:
Son, and God the Spir - it, Three in One:



"Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!" Al - le -



lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

Please sit.

Spoken Reflection

In the midst of earthly life

*fear and death beset us;
who attends and hears our cry,
who does not forget us?
You only, God, you only.
In you our forebears put their trust,
hoped in you and were not crushed.
Holy and righteous God!
Holy and mighty God!
Holy and all-merciful Savior!
Everlasting God!
Though death would torment us,
let us not sink in the dust.
Lord, have mercy.*

*Martin Luther (1483-1546)
Tr. Susan Palo Cherwien (1953-2021)*

Bach (Again) Come Sweet Death

*Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
Conceived by Edwin London
Arr. Rhonda Sandberg*

*Come sweet death!
Come, soothing rest.
Come and lead me homeward.
I am weary of life and longing.
Come, I am waiting for thee,
Come now and set me free!
My eyes at last are gently closing now,
Come, blessed rest!*

Anonymous

Spoken Reflection

*This body is not me.
I am not limited by this body.
I am life without boundaries.
I have never been born,
and I have never died.*

*Look at the ocean and the sky filled with stars,
manifestations from my wondrous true mind.*

*Since before time, I have been free.
Birth and death are only doors through which we pass,
sacred thresholds on our journey.
Birth and death are a game of hide-and-seek.*

Thich Nhat Hanh (1926-2022)

I'll Be On My Way

Shawn Kirchner (b. 1970)

Soloist: Andrew Kreye

When I'm gone, don't you cry for me,
don't you pity my sorry soul.
What pain there might have been will be past
and my spirit will be whole.

I'll be on my way,
I'll have left my feet of clay upon the ground.
I will be glory bound,
I'll be on my way!

When I am gone, please forgive the wrongs
that I might have done to you;
There'll be no room for regrets up there,
high above, way beyond the blue.

I'll be on my way,
I'll have laid my frown and all my burdens down,
I'll be puttin' on my crown,
I'll be on my way!

When I am gone, don't you look for me
In the places I have been;
I'll be alive, but somewhere else,
I'll be on my way again!

I'll be on my way,
I will lift my wings and soar into the air,
There'll be glory ev'ry where
I'll be on my way!

I'll be on my way,
I'll have laid my frown and all my burdens down,
I'll be puttin' on my crown,
I'll be on my way!

I'll have left my feet of clay upon the ground
I will be glory bound
I'll be on my way!

Shawn Kirchner (b. 1970)

Spoken Reflection

On the day I die, when I'm being carried toward the grave, don't weep. Don't say, He's gone! He's gone. Death has nothing to do with going away. The sun sets and the moon sets, but they're not gone. Death is a coming together. The tomb looks like a prison, but it's really release into union. The human seed goes down in the ground like a bucket into the well where Joseph is. It grows and comes up full of some unimagined beauty. Your mouth closes here and immediately opens with a shout of joy there.

Mevlana Jelaluddin Rumi (1207-1273)

And I Saw a New Heaven

Eric Nelson (b. 1959)

And I saw a new heav'n and I saw a new earth;
for the first heav'n and the first earth were passed away,
and there was no more sea.

And I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem,
coming down from God out of heav'n,
prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a great voice out of heav'n saying,
"Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men,
behold, he will dwell with them,
and they shall be his people;
and God, God himself shall be with them and be their God.
And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes,
and there shall be no more death,
neither sorrow, nor crying,
neither shall there be any more pain,
for the former things are passed away."

Revelation 21:1-4

National Lutheran Choir

Jennaya Robison, Artistic Director

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 Ebersole Memorial Chair
Shaun Halland*^
Seth Hartwell
Aaron Holmgren
 Uecker Family Chair
Ken Holmen
Brad Kolstad
Travis Karstad
 Matt and Allana Helland Chair
Andrew Kreye
Brian Lensch
 Kenneth C. and Dorothy A.
 Bailey Memorial Chair
William Mills
Caleb Poissant
Dain Swanson
 John and Priscilla Folin Chair
Mark Uecker

* *Section Leader*
^ *Assistant Conductor*

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Will Heller
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The National Lutheran Choir

The National Lutheran Choir is rooted in its mission to celebrate, invigorate, and expand sacred choral music, bringing inspiration and meaning to people of diverse faiths and backgrounds. Founded in 1986 by the late Larry Fleming, grown under the direction of David Cherwien from 2002-2023, and now led by Jennaya Robison, the National Lutheran Choir sings a spiritual story through diverse repertoire including selections from early chant and simple folk anthems to complex choral masterworks and new compositions. Currently in its 38th year, the National Lutheran Choir features a roster of more than 65 volunteer singers from various backgrounds and faith traditions. In addition to concertizing in the Twin Cities and on annual tours, the choir serves a national audience through artfully produced digital content, concert livestreams, and other releases on YouTube, as well as through a Virtual Subscription program. A discography of 36 recordings showcases the ensemble's music making over the years and presents hymns, choral classics, contemporary works, spirituals, and major new works commissioned by the National Lutheran Choir. Much of this influential new work is featured in MorningStar Music Publishers' collection, the "National Lutheran Choir Series." The National Lutheran Choir has been honored with the Wittenberg Award from the Luther Institute, Chorus America's Margaret Hillis Award, and the Dale Warland Singers Commissioning Award.

Jennaya Robison, Artistic Director

Dr. Jennaya Robison is the Artistic Director of the National Lutheran Choir and is a highly accomplished conductor, educator, and vocalist. She holds a Doctor of Musical Arts in choral conducting from the University of Arizona, a Master of Music in conducting and voice from the University of New Mexico, and an undergraduate degree in music (music education and voice) from Luther College. Her extensive work in the field of choral conducting includes serving as the Raymond R. Neevel/Missouri Associate Professor and Director of Choral Studies at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory until 2023, Associate Professor of Choral Music at Luther College from 2013 to 2020, and founding Scottsdale Musical Arts in 2009.



In demand as a clinician and guest speaker, Robison frequently appears at regional and national choral conferences and seminars; regularly leads All State and honor choirs, workshops, and festivals; and has taught courses in choral singing and global connection in the United States, Namibia, South Africa, Germany, and an upcoming festival in Italy (2024). She is the editor of the National Lutheran Choir Series with MorningStar Music Publishers as well as the Jennaya Robison Series with Pavane Publishing and is an active composer and arranger of choral music. Robison has served as soloist and chorister with the Dale Warland Singers, True Concord Voices, Spire Chamber Ensemble, the Tucson Symphony, and many other ensembles. She is the national chair of Music in Worship for the American Choral Directors Association, a member of Chorus America, and has held leadership positions at Lutheran churches in Arizona, Missouri, Iowa, and Minnesota.

A Continued Remembrance of Saints

With gratitude for the lives of our Saints, we recognize those who were memorialized with a gift to the National Lutheran Choir in the past year (10/15/2022 – 10/15/2023).

In memory of **Maury Anderson** from
Bob Nesheim

In memory of **Valeria Anderson** from
Johnathon Anderson
Diane Fleming
Carole J. Harlowe
Judy and Max Hill
Sandra Remde
Beverly and James Schwarz
Mark Schwarz

In memory of **Susan Palo Cherwien** from
Marian and Kevin Christopherson
Stephen Crippen
Laurie and Ralph Johnson
Paula Carlson and Thomas Schattauer

In memory of **Peter Dodington** from
Pamela Cantley

In memory of **Ron Ebersole** from
Rhoda Ebersole

In memory of **Larry Fleming** from
Marian and Kevin Christopherson

In memory of **John Folin** from
Allied Concert Services
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Pamela and William Bullock
Robin and Derek Clark
Debra and Terry Coss
William and Pam Cowardin
Marcia Dale
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Marlaine And John Doidge
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All Saints: New Life

November 3rd, 2023 | Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, St. Paul | 7:30pm
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