



CHORUS POLARIS
with the Minnesota State Band

Music for Life's Journey

Sunday, Nov. 3, 2024
3:00 p.m.

First Lutheran Church
Columbia Heights, MN

William H. Mathis, Chorus Polaris Artistic
Director and Conductor

Keith Liuzzi, Minnesota State Band Director

Music for Life’s Journey

(in memory of Don Ostlund)

African Processional
Soloists: Keith Liuzzi and Ryan Natrass
D. V. Montoya, ed. Ron Kean

Come and Go with Me to That Land
Soloist: Jennifer Broden
Gwyneth Walker

Hard Times
Stephen Foster; arr. Gerald Custer

Autumn Lament
Michael Glasgow

Teach Us Wisdom
Ken Medema and Cathy Chamblee

Sometimes I Feel
Soloist: Justine Scarbrough
Negro spiritual; arr. Alice Parker

Trust
Johannes Brahms

Rhythm of Life
Cy Coleman, Dorothy Fields; arr. Richard Barnes

Forever Young
Soloist: Janine Emerick
John Corigliano

My People Shall Be One
Soloists: Christine Chase, Justine Scarbrough, Ben Polach, Steven Hodulik
Robert J. Maderich II

Sing Me to Heaven
Soloists: Ben Polach, Sarah Hemstad
Ken Medema

There’s a Place for Us
Soloist: Grace Maunula
Leonard Bernstein

Unclouded Day
Shawn Kirchner

Music Down in My Soul
Soloist: Janine Emerick
Moses Hogan

Listening Guide

This concert is about the many twists and turns, ups and down, starts and stops we encounter in our lives. To borrow a phrase from Lennon and McCartney, life is a “long and winding road.” We each do our best to live as a healthy, productive, and caring person within our communities, giving support and receiving support to and from each other, as circumstances demand or allow.

The individual pieces we’re singing today aren’t in a specifically thematic or chronological order (birth to death or downs to ups, for instance), but as they might come along in our real lives. We hope you find something here that will resonate in your life!

African Processional – A Song of Welcome

The elders call us all to the celebration, and we arrive in a state of great anticipation.

Jambo refiki yangu!	<i>Welcome, my friend!</i>
Kawaida ume fahamu,	<i>Always remember me,</i>
Ni se fahamu.	<i>And I will remember you.</i>
Wewe ni mwema.	<i>You are so wonderful.</i>

Come and Go with Me to that Land

American composer Gwyneth Walker lives in New England, now retired from teaching at the Oberlin Conservatory. Her catalogue includes musical works of many sorts: arrangements of traditional folk songs (like this one); original music in both vocal and instrumental genres inspired by great American poetry; dramatic works that combine music with readings, acting, and movement; works for student performers of all ages; and large-scale pieces for professional players and ensembles.

Hard Times

Another American folk song gets a special treatment by Dr. Gerald Custer, who lives in Detroit, MI. He teaches at Wayne State University and serves as Director of Music at First Presbyterian Church of Farmington Hills. He is a friend of Chorus Polaris, having written several pieces for us and leading our fall retreat two years ago.

Autumn Lament

This colorful piece was written in memory of a friend of the composer. Like many choral pieces, it conjures up feelings many of us have experienced, and may even help us sort out our own ways of getting into, through, and past them.

Listening Guide - *con’t.*

Teach Us Wisdom

Ken Medema is a composer, pianist, and singer living in the San Francisco Bay area; Cathy Chamblee teaches at the University of Pennsylvania. This work from just a couple of years ago helps explain how we can be inspired to live. Ken will be with us in May for our **A Place to Call Home** concert.

Sometimes I Feel

One of the most powerful slave songs from the Negro spiritual tradition, arranged here by Ms. Parker, who did much to shape 20th century American choral music.

Trust

One of the most lyrical short choral pieces by that giant of the Romantic period of music, this is an 1856 setting of a German poem written two centuries earlier, which seeks to give people hope in times of trouble or heartache. The translation we’re using was made by our soprano section leader, Janine Emerick and her mom, Sabine Ernsting. The accompaniment was originally organ, reworked for this concert (along with several other of our instrumental settings) by Bill Mathis.

Rhythm of Life

From the 1965 Broadway musical, *Sweet Charity*.

Forever Young

Original music for a poem by Bob Dylan.

My People Shall Be One

This short cantata was composed for the two ensembles in today’s concert, and gave us the impetus to put it all together. Robert Maderich is a Twin Cities composer, and a friend of both of today’s conductors. The two poems which make up the lyrics are by Herman Melville and Thomas Merton. Chorus Polaris shared a concert with the Minnesota State Band several years ago for a Veterans’ Day program. We’re grateful to Bob Maderich for giving us this opportunity to work with a subset of that terrific ensemble.

Sing Me to Heaven

The moving music is another by our friend Ken Medema. It was composed in July for today’s concert. We’re honored to be giving the premiere performance for this one, as well!

There's a Place for Us

From Leonard Bernstein's 1957 musical West Side Story.

Unclouded Day and *Music Down in My Soul*

We close with two wonderful settings of American songs from different folk traditions. The first is an 1879 gospel hymn from a Michigan pastor, J. K. Alwood. The second is from much the same time, but comes from the southern U.S. Negro spiritual tradition.



TEXTS

Autumn Lament

Leaves drift beyond the windowpane;
they rise as one and fall as many.
See the falling leaves, so frail,
frail like life, like life leaves...
We fall like leaves.
We, as leaves, are clinging to the branches.
We cling to one, releasing many.
Colors fall, cascading down;
dull, crumbling: like leaves that fall
as life leaves.
Spirits rise beyond the windowpane:
they rise as one; they rise as many.
Drifting, free, and new again,
Like leaves that never fall...
Like leaves that never leave.

Trust

Let nothing be regretful or mournful. Be peaceful as God commands; and so be joyful, my soul.
Why worry now, today for tomorrow? The Holy stands for us all and gives to you what's your own.
Be steadfast in your dealings without change. Stand firmly! What God decides, this is known as the best.
Amen.

My People Shall Be One

Shiloh, a Requiem

Skimming lightly, wheeling still,
The swallows fly low
Over the field in clouded days,
The forest-field of Shiloh—
Over the field where April rain
Solaced the parched ones stretched in pain
Through the pause of night
That followed the Sunday fight
Around the church of Shiloh—
The church so lone, the log-built one,
That echoed to many a parting groan
And natural prayer
Of dying foemen mingled there—
Foemen at morn, but friends at eve—
Fame or country least their care:
(What like a bullet can deceive!)
But now they lie low,
While over them the swallows skim,
And all is hushed at Shiloh.

– Herman Melville

Earthquake

Go tell the earth to shake
And tell the thunder
To wake the sky
And tear the clouds apart.
Tell my people to come out
And wonder
Where the old world is gone,
For a new world is born,
And all my people
Shall be one.

So tell the earth to shake.
With marching feet
Of messengers of peace,
Proclaim my law of love
To every nation,
Every race.

For the old wrongs are over,
The old days are done;
A new world is rising
Where my people shall be one.

For the old world is ended,
The old sky is torn
Apart. A new day is born:
They hate no more,
They do not go to war any more.
My people shall be one.

And say:
The old wrongs are over,
The old ways are done;
There shall be no more hate
And no oppression.
The old wrongs are gone,
My people shall be one.

– Thomas Merton

About

Chorus Polaris is a premiere community choral ensemble based in the Twin Cities of Minnesota. In the “land of 10,000 choirs,” Chorus Polaris is an auditioned, adult community concert choir comprised of professional, semi-professional, and talented amateur singers. The 50+ voice choir presents music spanning nearly a thousand years – from the Renaissance to jazz, to classic and modern choral masterworks complete with orchestra.

Find them at: <https://choruspolaris.org/>

William H. (Bill) Mathis is a graduate of Westminster Choir College. He has served churches and colleges in the Midwest, New Jersey, California, and Oklahoma.

Bill is an active clinician, leading workshops or guest conducting in 35 states, including national events for the American Choral Directors Association, Choristers Guild, the American Guild of Organists, and teaching conferences. He has served on state boards of ACDA in California, Oklahoma, and Minnesota. His compositions are found in the catalogues of 15 music publishers. He is married to Carolynne Mathis, also a recently retired church musician. They have six children.

The **Minnesota State Band** is the Official Band of the State of Minnesota and has been in existence for over 125 years. It is the only remaining State Band in the United States. The Band has represented the State of Minnesota on six International Goodwill Tours since 1986. While international travel is important, the band sees its primary mission as providing high quality music to the residents of Minnesota. While at one time the band received funding from the State of Minnesota, it is now operated as a nonprofit organization with an all-volunteer membership.

Find them at: <https://minnesotastateband.org>

Keith Liuzzi has been the principal conductor of the Minnesota State Band since 2016. Before retiring as a full-time music educator, he was the Instrumental Music director (band, orchestra, and jazz) for 19 years at Southwest High School in Minneapolis (1995-2014). Besides singing with Chorus Polaris as a tenor section leader, Keith sings with and manages the *a cappella* quartet, Merrie Olde Christmas Carolers.

CHORUS POLARIS

William Mathis, Artistic Director
Tim O’Grady, collaborative pianist

SOPRANO

Hailey Barry
Jennifer Broden
Kristi Castillero
Carolyn Caswell
Christine Chase
Julie Crawford
Janine Emerick *
Becky Flory
Adrienne Harrison
Sarah Hemstad
Esther Hope
Kristen Husby
Cheryl Joseph
Linda Ribbach
Elizabeth Richter
Suzy Schultz
Ava Sletten

ALTO

Rachel Biegel
Laura Coale *
Gail Gordon
Andrea Kircher
Carol Lacey
Rebecca Margolis
Grace Maunula
Robin McCormack
Maddie Mularky
Ije Omeoga
Nancy Petersen
Barb Ruble
Justine Scarbrough *
Satomi Shinde
Carol Stoops
Jill Wilhelmi

TENOR

Alex Asp
Ralph Jacobson
Fred Jensen
Brett Johnson
Keith Liuzzi *
Warren Moe
Bill O’Brien
Frank Petersen
Ben Polach *
Jeff Saarela

BASS

Shawn Connor
Henry Harriel
Steven Hodulik *
Josh Hunt
Nick Lewis
Jaakob Maunula
Ryan Natrass *
Dick Reiersen
Paul Schultz
Brian Tamminen
Zachary Tamminen
Bill Van Schyndel
Colby Wong

* denotes Section Leader

Librarian: Gail Gordon

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MINNESOTA STATE BAND

Keith Liuzzi, Conductor

(select musicians)

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Donna Hogenson
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Clancy Theade

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Gerald Abraham

TRUMPET

Gordy Flam

TROMBONE

Michael Sweet

TUBA

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PERCUSSION

Julie Henry
Craig Allen

UPCOMING CONCERTS

Chorus Polaris

Mozart’s Requiem

with

Mississippi Valley Orchestra
and the

A Cappella Choir of Westwood Lutheran Church

3:00 p.m., Sunday, April 6, 2025 - Benson Hall, Bethel University
3:00 p.m., Sunday, April 13, 2025 - Westwood Lutheran Church, St. Louis Park

Website: <https://choruspolaris.org>
LinkedIn: <https://linkedin.com/company/chorus-polaris>
Facebook: <https://facebook.com/ChorusPolaris>
X (Twitter): https://x.com/Chorus_Polaris

Minnesota State Band

Holiday Concert

7:00 p.m., Friday, December 13, 2024

St. Joseph the Worker
7180 Hemlock Ln N
Maple Grove, MN 55369

<https://minnesotastateband.org>

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Don Ostlund

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OUR MISSION:

*to engage, connect, and strengthen communities through collaboration and
educational outreach*

Chorus Polaris is a premiere community choral ensemble based in the Twin Cities of Minnesota, United States. In the “land of 10,000 choirs,” Chorus Polaris is an auditioned, adult community concert choir comprised of professional, semi-professional, and talented amateur singers. The 50-voice choir presents music spanning nearly a thousand years – from the Renaissance to jazz, to classic and modern choral masterworks complete with orchestra.

Chorus Polaris connects and engages with other community and professional artists to present programs of musical excellence for our audiences to enjoy.

Chorus Polaris is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and is governed by a volunteer board of directors.

In memory of Donald W. Ostlund

November 18, 1931 - July 22, 2024

Chorus Polaris dedicates today’s performance to the memory of our long-time benefactor, former member, and friend, Don Ostlund. Don was a major supporter of Chorus Polaris and other Twin Cities arts organizations. He will be greatly missed.



CHORUS POLARIS

www.choruspolaris.org • EIN: 26-0162911

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