

Gwyneth Walker

PRAYERS AND
BLESSINGS



Sacred Songs for Baritone and Piano

1. Ubi Caritas (Welcome Love)
2. Make Me an Instrument of Thy Peace
3. Gaelic Blessing

Gwyneth Walker

Widely performed throughout the country, the music of American composer Gwyneth Walker is beloved by performers and audiences alike for its energy, beauty, reverence, drama, and humor. Dr. Gwyneth Walker (b. 1947) is a graduate of Brown University and the Hartt School of Music. She holds B.A., M.M. and D.M.A. degrees in Music Composition. A former faculty member of the Oberlin College Conservatory, she resigned from academic employment in 1982 in order to pursue a career as a full-time composer. For nearly 30 years, she lived on a dairy farm in Braintree, Vermont. She now divides her time between her childhood hometown of New Canaan, Connecticut and the musical communities of Sarasota, Florida and Randolph, Vermont.

Gwyneth Walker has been a proud resident of Vermont for many years. She is the recipient of the Year 2000 "Lifetime Achievement Award" from the Vermont Arts Council as well as the 2008 "Athenaeum Award for Achievement in the Arts and Humanities" from the St. Johnsbury (VT) Athenaeum. In 2012, she was elected as a Fellow of the Vermont Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Walker's catalog includes over 300 commissioned works for orchestra, chamber ensembles, chorus, and solo voice. A special interest has been dramatic works that combine music with readings, acting, and movement. The music of Gwyneth Walker is published by E. C. Schirmer (choral and vocal music) and Lauren Keiser Music (orchestral and instrumental music).

Prayers and Blessings

duration: 10 minutes

Program Notes

Prayers and Blessings was commissioned in 2003 by David Arnold, a North Carolina bass-baritone who is a soloist in the 80-voice Chancel Choir at Centenary United Methodist Church in Winston-Salem. Mr. Arnold premiered these songs at Centenary with organist Ray Ebert and cellist Jennifer Alexandra Johnston on February 27, 2005. A new version for voice and piano was created in 2005. A transposition for lyric Baritone was added in 2015, commissioned by Ferris Allen (Baritone) and Linda Holzer (Pianist) of Little Rock, AR.

These three songs are interconnected motivically, yet distinct in meter, tonality, and message. Peace and reverence flow throughout. The lyrics for “*Ubi Caritas*” are based on a new translation, by Christopher Brunelle, of the traditional “*Ubi Caritas Est Vera*.” A recurrent image in this translation is the gesture of welcoming: welcoming love, welcoming God, welcoming the “friendly unfamiliar thought,” welcoming Christ with us. The musical interpretation of welcoming is stepwise motion, either up or down, around a pitch center. Perhaps this might be heard as an opening of the door, or an opening of the heart.

An interlude leads to the second song, “*Make Me an Instrument of Thy Peace*,” a musical setting of the Prayer of Saint Francis. The accompaniment is sparse, with material reminiscent of the “welcoming” pattern in the first song. This song alternates between triple meter for the thematic sections (“*Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace*”) and duple meter for the more recitative sections (“*O Divine Master...*”). The music ends as it began, with simple open fifths accompaniment, this time filling in the chords to express the fullness of the lyrics “*born to eternal life*.”

A second interlude provides the bridge to the third song, “*Gaelic Blessing*.” The text for this song is a series of blessings for peace. The gentle chordal arpeggiations in the piano are intended to provide a peaceful accompaniment. [Once again, the stepwise intervals and recurrent regular rhythms relate to the first song.]

In keeping with the simplicity and repetition of the text, the music is formed by a series of four-measure phrases (blessings). The blessings are similar in contour, each spanning an interval of a fourth. Growth is achieved through repetition and some dynamic contrast. However, the principal aesthetic of this song is constancy and gentle flow. Only at the end of the song, when the voice descends into the deep range, is the melodic contour altered, and dynamic contrast introduced. As the voice ends on low tones, the piano line rises, perhaps to the source of peace.

The Poems

1. Ubi Caritas Est Vera

Christopher Brunelle tr., 2004

When we truly welcome love, we welcome
God.

Let our love bloom in many forms:
The love of Christ, uniting us in joy,
The love and reverence of the living God,
The honest love that binds our human hearts.

When we truly welcome love, we welcome
God.

Let our welcome take many shapes: (be rich
and free):
Welcome the friendly unfamiliar thought,
Farewell to bitter quarrels, welcome peace,
Welcome dear Christ with us, Emmanuel.

When we truly welcome love, we welcome
God.

So let true joy be our reward:
The joy that we will share with all the saints,
The glorious joy, to see the face of God,
The great and good and everlasting joy.

2. Make Me an Instrument of Thy Peace

(Prayer of St. Francis)

Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
Where there is sadness, joy.

O, Divine Master,
Grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled as to console;
To be understood as to understand;
To be loved, as to love.

For it is in giving, that we receive,
It is in pardoning, that we are pardoned,
And it is in dying, that we are born to eternal life.

3. Gaelic Blessing

Deep peace of the running waves to you.
Deep peace of the flowing air to you.
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you.
Deep peace of the shining stars to you.
Deep peace.

Deep peace of the early Spring to you.
Deep peace of the budding flower to you.
Deep peace of the warming sun to you.
Deep peace of the life to come to you.
Deep peace of the Autumn rain.
Deep peace of the harvest grain.
Deep peace of the Winter night.
Deep peace of the fading light.
Deep peace when my life is done.
Deep peace to you.

Contents

1. Ubi Caritas (Welcome Love)	4
2. Make Me an Instrument of Thy Peace	8
3. Gaelic Blessing	14

Prayers and Blessings

for Baritone and Piano

Gwyneth Walker

1. Ubi Caritas (Welcome Love)

Ubi Caritas Est Vera

anonymous, circa 800

translation: Christopher Brunelle, 2004

At a gentle tempo ♩ = 72

Baritone

Piano

p

with pedal

5

A

mf cantabile

When we tru - ly wel - come love, we wel - come God. —

Leg.

9

Let our love bloom in ma - ny forms. The love of Christ, u - ni - ting us in

Leg.

Note setting and format by Gwyneth Walker Music Productions.

13

joy, the love and reverence of the liv - ing — God, — the

8va (both hands)

And. *And.*

16

hon - est love that binds our hu - man hearts. — When we tru - ly wel - come love,

8va (R.H. only) *loco* **B**

cresc. *mf* *p*

And.

20

we wel - come God. — Let our wel - come be rich — and free.

mf *p* *mf*

24

Wel - come the friend - ly un - fa - mil - iar thought, fare - well to bit - ter quar - rels, wel - come —

p *mf* *p*

27

— peace, wel-come dear Christ with us, — E - man - u - el.

mf *p* *mf* (*mf*)

8va

31

(8va)

34

(*mf*)

When — we tru - ly wel-come love, we wel-come God.

(8va) *loco* 8va

37

So let true joy be our re - ward: the

(8va) *loco*

54 *mf*

God. Wel - come God.

p

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

Interlude I

58 *a tempo* (♩ = 72) *p*

a tempo (♩ = 72)

(Ped.)

62 *rit.*

2. Make Me an Instrument of Thy Peace

Gently ♩ = 138 (♩. = 46) *mf cantabile*

Lord, make me an in - stru - ment of Thy peace.-

Gently ♩ = 138 (♩. = 46)

p

much pedal

9

where there is ha - tred, — let me sow

16

love; — Where there is in - jur - y, — par -

23

- don; — Where there is doubt, — faith; —

30

Where there is des - pair, — hope; Where there is

B *accel.* [to C] — — — — —
cresc. [to C]

cresc. [to C]

Ped. — — — — — *Ped.* — — — — —

(*accel.*)

37 (*cresc.*)

dark - ness, _____ light; Where there is sad - ness, _____

(*accel.*)

(*accel.*) **C** More quickly ♩ = 160 (♩. = 54)

43 (*cresc.*)

joy. _____

(*accel.*) **C** More quickly ♩ = 160 (♩. = 54)

48

O, Di - vine

(*f*)

dim. *p*

D ♩ = 160 (♩. = 80)

53

Mas - ter, grant that I may not so much seek to be con - soled as to con - sole; to be

D ♩ = 160 (♩. = 80)

f *mf* *p*

mf

59 *p* *rit.*

un - der - stood as to un - der - stand; — to be loved, as to love. —

rit.

Red.

65 **E** ♩ = 160 (♩. = 54)

E ♩ = 160 (♩. = 54)

mf

70 *mf* **F** ♩ = 80

For it is in giv - ing, that we re -

F ♩ = 80

75

ceive, — it is in par - don - ing that we are par - doned,

Interlude II

a tempo ♩ = 160 (♩. = 54)

107

p lightly

(Ped.)

113

poco cresc.

poco ped.

120

126

133

rit.

dim.

p

3. Gaelic Blessing

Traditional
G. Walker, alt.

At a peaceful tempo ♩ = 108

A

p

Deep peace _____ of the run-ning

At a peaceful tempo ♩ = 108

A

ped. _____ *ped.* _____ *ped.* _____ *ped.* _____

7

waves to you. _____ Deep peace _____ of the flow - ing air to you. _____

12

B

_____ Deep peace _____ of the qui - et earth to you.

poco

B

mp

17 *p* *mf*

Deep peace of the shi-ning stars to you. Deep

23 *p* *mf*

peace.

29 *(p)*

C

Deep peace of the ear - ly Spring to

And. *simile*

32

you. Deep peace of the bud - ding

D

35

flower to you. Deep peace

D

38

of the warm - ing sun to you.

poco *mp*

41

Deep peace of the life to come to

p *cresc.*

E

44

you. Deep peace of the

mf *mf*

(cresc.)

47 *(mf)*
au - - - tumn rain. Deep

50
peace of the har - - - vest grain.

F 53 *p*
Deep peace of the win - - - ter

56
night. Deep peace of the

59 G

fa - - - ding light. Deep

62 *rit.* *mf*

peace when my life is done.

rit.

cresc. *mf*

65 *a tempo* *mf*

Deep

a tempo

mf

68 *p*

peace.

p

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Further information concerning Gwyneth Walker and her works is available at
www.gwynethwalker.com