

HARVARD UNIVERSITY CHOIR



THE WEB OF LIFE

Musical Reflections on the Earth

By Ruth Watson Henderson, Gwyneth Walker, and Alfred V. Fedak

SUNDAY, MARCH 5, 2023 • 4 PM

PROGRAM

Ruth Watson Henderson (b. 1932)

From Darkness to Light (2001)

(in two parts)

(soloists: Henrique Neves and Inés Hynett)

Gwyneth Walker (b. 1947)

The Great Trees (2009)

1. The Peace of Wild Things *(soloists: Peggy Yin and Ian Chan)*
 2. The Silence *(Sophie Choate)*
 3. The Dark Around Us
 4. The Steps of the City *(Olympia Hatzilambrou)*
 5. The Timbered Choir
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Alfred V. Fedak (b. 1953)

The Web of Life: Litanies for the Earth (2000)

Prologue: Dawn Hymn *(soloists: Caitlin Paul and Rhys Moon)*

Reading 1: “There is a religion in everything” by John Ruskin (1819–1900)

Song 1: Unnamable God *(Dhruw Goel)*

Reading 2: “Apprehend God in all things” by Meister Eckhardt (ca. 1260–1328)

Song 2: Teach your children *(Ari Cheriyen)*

Song 3: God, who stretched the spangled heavens *(Tara Goetzloe and Christopher Ong)*

Reading 3: “The small plot of ground” by Alla Renée Bozarth (b. 1947)

Song 4: We have forgotten who we are *(Soren Choi and Isabella Meyer)*

Reading 4: “I swear the earth shall surely be complete” by Walt Whitman (1819–1892)

Song 5: House made of dawn *(Sophia Lerebours, Sonja Johnson-Yu,
Victor Quintas-Martínez, and John Burton Rogers III)*

Reading 5: “The day we die” from the San peoples of Africa

Song 6: Earth teach me stillness *(Arhan Kumar)*

Song 7: And then all that has divided us shall merge

Harvard University Choir and Ensemble

Edward Elwyn Jones, conductor

David von Behren, organ and piano

WELCOME to the Memorial Church of Harvard University, and to this afternoon's spring concert, given by the Harvard University Choir. As we continue to celebrate the ninetieth anniversary of the dedication of this building, today's presentation offers musical reflections on our relationship with the earth, in keeping with our year-long exploration of Religion and the Global Climate Crisis.

Canadian composer Ruth Watson Henderson's *From Darkness to Light* juxtaposes biblical texts with the powerful poetry of fellow Canadian Wilfred Watson; Gwyneth Walker's *The Great Trees* sets the poetry of Wendell Berry; while Alfred V. Fedak's *The Web of Life* is a multi-movement cantata that incorporates spoken and sung texts from a wide variety of sources.

It continues to be my very great privilege to serve in this church, and to lead a choir of students whose love of singing brings so much joy to the community. Our soloists are taken from the ranks of the Harvard University Choir, many of whom are taught by our inspiring and devoted voice teacher, Frank Kelley, a cherished and valued member of our church staff. In addition, today's instrumentalists represent the finest from Harvard's undergraduate body, playing alongside local professionals. Our work would not be possible without the support of so many benefactors, and I would like to thank all of our patrons for their ongoing generosity. This is indeed an exciting time for music and ministry in the Memorial Church, and I encourage you to join our email list by visiting our website, memorialchurch.harvard.edu, where you can also make a contribution towards our free concert series.

My sincere thanks go to my colleagues in the church, and in particular to the Pusey Minister, Professor Matthew I. Potts, Assistant University Organist, David von Behren, and Composer in Residence, Carson Cooman, for their support, friendship, and encouragement. To the Harvard University Choir secretaries, Sophie Choate and Soren Choi, I give my heartfelt gratitude for all they do to ensure the group's smooth-running. Finally, I thank you, our audience, for your support of this afternoon's concert, and for your enthusiasm for the music program here in the Memorial Church.

Edward E. Jones

ABOUT THE MUSIC

Canadian composer and pianist **Ruth Watson Henderson** (b. 1932) has written prolifically in multiple genres and produced a catalog of more than 300 works. She studied piano at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto and the Mannes College of Music in New York. Henderson made her professional concert debut as a pianist in 1952 and became a frequent soloist with orchestras throughout the country as well as on radio broadcasts for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. She had studied composition privately during her college years, but began her specializing in writing choral music due to her extensive activities as a pianist/accompanist for various prominent choral ensembles in Toronto, beginning with the Festival Singers of Canada. Notably, she was the accompanist for the renowned Toronto Children's Chorus under Jean Ashworth Bartle from its founding in 1978 until her retirement in 2007. Henderson also worked as a church musician, including serving as director of music for Kingsway-Lambton United Church in Toronto from 1996 to 2013.

Henderson's cantata *From Darkness to Light* was commissioned by the American Guild of Organists and premiered at its 2002 National Convention in Philadelphia by the Voices of Ascension (from New York

City) under the direction of Dennis Keene. The July week of the convention was exceptionally hot, and the final concert took place in the unairconditioned, tightly packed chapel of Girard College. The temperatures on stage were well over 100 degrees and the members of the Philadelphia Orchestra were nearly unwilling to play due to it exceeding their contract threshold. (Small portable air conditioning units got the temperature “technically” under the limit and the concert went ahead). Despite the deeply unpleasant conditions for the performers and the several thousand audience members, the premiere of Henderson’s cantata is widely remembered as one of the great highlights of at least several decades worth of AGO conventions. The exquisite beauty of the music and its seamless and moving trajectory left the audience breathless.

The piece is structured in two large parts, each of which draw on Canadian writer Wilfred Watson’s (no relation to the composer) poem “Canticle of Darkness.” In between sections from Watson’s poem, Henderson interpolates familiar scripture passages. The general trajectory of the cantata follows the title. Part One moves from the creation narrative towards a tense conclusion. In Part Two, the light emerges in both triumph and eventual peace.

Widely performed throughout the country, the music of American composer **Gwyneth Walker** (b. 1947) is beloved by performers and audiences alike for its energy, beauty, reverence, drama, and humor. Walker is a graduate of Brown University and the Hartt School of Music. 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 before returning to live in her childhood hometown of New Canaan, Connecticut. A composer since age two, Gwyneth Walker has always placed great value on writing in a broad array of genres. More than 400 commissioned works for orchestra, chamber ensembles, solo instruments, chorus, and solo voice have been created—all arising from the impetus of performers and collaboration with musicians. Over the decades, she has traveled throughout North America to attend performances of her works and to meet her musician colleagues. She is a proud resident of New England. She was the recipient of the 2000 “Lifetime Achievement Award” from the Vermont Arts Council and the 2018 “Alfred Nash Patterson Lifetime Achievement Award” from Choral Arts New England. In 2020, her alma mater, the Hartt School of Music of the University of Hartford, presented her with the Hartt Alumni Award.

The Great Trees was commissioned by the Wolf River Singers, Ben J. Legett, director. The composer provided the following commentary: “*The Great Trees* is a group of musical settings of the poetry of Wendell Berry. The poetry and music focus on the beauty and spirituality of nature—trees, birds, still water—“one household, high and low.

“Five poems have been selected for this set. #1, #3 and #5 are generally descriptive in character: quiet beauty (“The Peace of Wild Things”); a clearing in the woods (“The Dark Around Us”) and great trees rising to heaven (“The Timbered Choir”). These songs are scored for the full chorus. Poems #2 and #4 are more introspective (“Silence” and “The Steps of the City”) and are composed for solo voice.

“A clarinet is added to the piano accompaniment, and indeed is a featured element in this work. The clarinet was chosen for this role due to its gentle, ‘wood’-wind sonority and appearance. In the first song, the clarinet portrays a lone bird in flight. In the second song, the clarinet provides commentary to the solo voice. Clarinet becomes the essence of the dance in the fourth song, and rises in range with the great trees in the finale.

“*The Great Trees* is an expression of ecstatic reverence for the spiritual presence in nature. This expression

ranges from the peaceful reverence of the ‘grace of the world’ to the celebratory reverence of ‘O light come down to earth, be praised!’”

American composer and organist **Alfred V. Fedak** (b. 1953) holds degrees in organ performance and music history from Hope College and Montclair State University, and has done additional study at Westminster Choir College, Eastman School of Music, and in Austria and England. A Fellow of the American Guild of Organists (AGO), he also holds the AGO’s Choirmaster Certificate and is a member of the Guild’s national Board of Examiners. A widely-published and well-known composer of church music, Fedak has well over 300 choral and organ works in print, and more than 100 of his hymn tunes appear in hymnals and collections throughout the English-speaking world and Asia. Four anthologies of his hymns have been published by Selah Publishing Company: *The Alfred V. Fedak Hymnary* (1990), *Sing to the Lord No Threadbare Song* (2001), *God of the Future* (2009), and *Stones Unthrown* (2014). A review of *God of the Future* in *The Hymn* (the journal of the Hymn Society in the United States and Canada) called Fedak “the finest composer of hymn tunes working today.” The winner of numerous awards in both performance and composition, Fedak served on the editorial committee that produced *Glory to God: The Presbyterian Hymnal*. From 1990 to 2021, he served as Minister of Music and Arts at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Albany, New York.

The Web of Life: Litanies for the Earth (2000) was commissioned by the Burnt Hills Oratorio Society (Rand Reeves, director) to celebrate their 30th anniversary season. Fedak was the accompanist for this group (now known as the Saratoga Voices) for several decades, and his wife, Susan Hermance Fedak, served for several years as its director following Reeves’s retirement. The work is based on a diverse selection of texts from different traditions all connected to the themes of the earth, its environment, and lessons of earth/climate justice. Some of the texts are set to music, while some appear as spoken readings. The piece is musically unified through a theme of pillar-like triadic chords, which draw to mind the music of Ralph Vaughan Williams and Alan Hovhaness. This musical idea returns throughout the piece in both quiet inward presentations and gloriously full ones.

The Prologue emerges with whispered urgency, building a bright conclusion: “Such is the salutation of the dawn.” A psalm paraphrase by Stephen Mitchell forms the text for “Unnamable God,” followed by an atmospheric “pastorella” on words attributed to Chief Seattle about the lessons passed onto future generations.

Canadian hymn poet Catherine Cameron’s text “God, who stretched the spangled heavens” is matched with the early American folk hymn melody “Holy Manna.” “We have forgotten who we are” (words from the United Nations Environmental Sabbath Program Service) becomes a litany; the repetitions build in intensity before a chorale-coda matches words from the Mass ordinary (“Lord, have mercy”) with a quotation from the Lenten chorale “Herzliebster Jesu.”

“House made of dawn” is a setting of a familiar Navajo ritual text. Another American Indian text is used for “Earth teach me stillness,” which is set antiphonally—the chorus answering the invocations of the soloist.

The exciting finale uses words by the American artist Judy Chicago, drawn from a poem printed on the banners that lead to the table of her groundbreaking feminist installation artwork *The Dinner Party*. The text speaks of an imagined future restoration of universal harmony when “everywhere shall be called Eden once again.”

Carson Cooman

From Darkness to Light (2001)

Part One

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God.
He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him.
In him was life, and the life was the light of men.
The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not comprehended it.*

Remind you, that there was darkness in my heart
And into the darkness in my heart
Sang the light, and the singing light
Comprehended the darkness, but the darkness,
How could the darkness comprehend
The singing light ringing in my heart?
Which was not peace but storm, the gull
Flying, and the water pouring wave
Into the wind's teeth, and the gull
Crying into the mouth of the harbor
Which was not peace but the sea's jaw.

*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.
The earth was without form and void, and the darkness was upon the face of the deep;
And the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters.
And God said, "Let there be light;" and there was light.
And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness.
And God said "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to separate the day
from the night; and to give light upon the earth."
And it was so.*

Know you, that all knowing must sing again
In the love which sang, the first light commanded,
The waters divided, the earth parcelled out
For flowers, beasts and creeping things,
The air given for birds,
The sun made round and warm,
The moon mild as milk but how can I begin?
For the singing light was wrath not peace
O Venus, your love was the sea's jaw.
Let me alone that I may find a little comfort before I go
Never to return, to the land of darkness and the shadow of death,
A land as dark as darkness itself, as the shadow of death,
without any order, where even the light is like darkness.

Best you, might we not lie sleeping in the dark
Of darkness, in the nothing which is our womb?

Lie sleeping, and never cough at the air?
Lie sleeping soft, folded up quiet and warm?
And never suckle the teats of despair?
Does not the singing light, sing us into the storm,
Light us to the tomb? O Mary, the door
Of our home, O let the night cover
The light which is our doom.

Part Two

*The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.
It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing;
It will be beautiful like the forest of Lebanon, as beautiful as the hill of Carmel,
and the plain of Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the Lord and the majesty of our God.*

Stand gentle in my words. It was
The Friday of roses.
And there was a rose
Singing the red song of your blossom.
When I came to the rose, there was Gethsemane.
When I came to Gethsemane, there was the rose.
Stand gentle in my words
It was the Friday of Golgotha, the place
Of skull.
O cross of petals, O crossed petals
Stand gentle in my words. For I thought
It was the rose of crucifixion, till I knew
It was the rose of resurrection.

*Behold, I tell you a mystery.
We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet.
The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

Saying I saw
The things of the world drop their skins.
Saying I saw
White wings swanning in
Endless flocks of white.
Saying I saw
The earth like a white lamb walking
Beside the mother ewe.
Saying I heard
The nations like a lost calf bawling

For the mud flanks of the cow. Stand
Gentle in my words. I saw the darkness
Tremble. I heard the darkness singing.

*For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.
But we have treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the glorious power belongs to God and not to us.*

Tell you, darkness was pierced by the rose
Which vanished in a sun. Tell you, it was
A sun of glory the singing rose was
Saying. From the rose to the woman.
From the woman to the man. From the man
To the sun. From the sun to the earth,
Beasts, and all creeping things. To the waters
Divided. To the light created. And the singing
Rose sang in the lap of Mary.

*And the night shall be no more; they need no light of lamp or sun,
For the Lord God will be their light.*

Darkness
Sang to the light and the kiss of love was peace.

*Text from "Canticle of Darkness" (1955) by Wilfred Watson (1911–1998) and from the Bible
(Genesis, Isaiah, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, and Revelation)*

The Great Trees (2009)

1. The Peace of Wild Things

When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

2. The Silence

Though the air is full of singing
my head is loud
with the labor of words.

Though the season is rich
with fruit, my tongue
hungers for the sweet of speech.

Though the beech is golden
I cannot stand beside it
mute, but must say

“It is golden,” while the leaves
stir and fall with a sound
that is not a name.

It is in the silence
that my hope is, and my aim.
A song whose lines

I cannot make or sing
sounds men’s silence
like a root. Let me say

and not mourn: the world
lives in the death of speech
and sings there.

3. The Dark Around Us

The dark around us, come,
Let us meet here together,
Members one of another,
Here in our holy room,

Here on our little floor,
Here in the daylit sky,
Rejoicing mind and eye,
Rejoining known and knower,

Light, leaf, foot, hand, and wing,
Such order as we know,
One household, high and low,
And all the earth shall sing.

4. The Steps of the City

I stood and heard the steps of the city
and dreamed a lighter stepping than I heard,
the tread of my people dancing in a ring.
I knew that circle broken, the steps awry,
stone and iron humming in the air.

But I thought even there, among the straying
steps, of the dance that circles life around,
its shadows moving on the ground, in rhyme
of flesh with flesh, time with time, our bliss,
the earthly song that heavenly is.

5. The Timbered Choir

Slowly, slowly they return
To the small woodland let alone:
Great trees, outspreading and bright,
Apostles of the living light.

Patient as stars, they build in air
Tier after tier a timbered choir,
Stout beams upholding weightless grace
Of song, a blessing on this place.

They stand in waiting all around,
Uprisings of their native ground.
Downcomings of the distant light;
They are the advent they await.

Receiving sun and giving shade,
Their life's a benefaction made,
And is a benediction said
Over the living and the dead.

In fall their brightened leaves, released,
Fly down the wind, and we are pleased
To walk on radiance, amazed.
O light come down to earth, be praised!

Wendell Berry (b. 1934)

The Web of Life: Litanies for the Earth (2000)

Prologue: Dawn Hymn

Listen to the salutation of the dawn:
Look to this day for it is life, the very life of life.
In its brief course lie all the verities and the realities of our existence.
The bliss of growth, the splendor of beauty.
For yesterday is but a dream and tomorrow is only a vision.
But today well spent makes every yesterday a dream of happiness and every tomorrow a vision of hope.
Look well therefore to this day.
Such is the salutation of the dawn.

Anonymous Sanskrit

Song 1: Unnamable God

Unnamable God, how measureless is your power on all the earth, and how radiant in the sky!
When I look up at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the multitude of stars,
What is man, that you love him, and woman, that you gladden her heart?
Yet you made us almost like the angels and crowned us with understanding.
You put us in charge of all creatures and placed your whole earth in our hands:
All animals, tame and wild; all forests, fields, and deserts,
Even the pure air of the sky; even the depths of the ocean.
Unnamable God, how measureless is your power on all the earth.
Unnamable God, how terrible is your power on all the earth.

Psalm 8, paraphrased by Stephen Mitchell (b. 1943)

Song 2: Teach your children

Teach your children what we have taught our children:
That the earth is our mother. Whatever befalls the earth befalls the children of earth. This we know.
This we know: the earth does not belong to us; we belong to the earth.
This we know: all things are connected like the blood which unites one family.
We did not weave the web of life, we are merely a strand in it.
Whatever we do to the web we do to ourselves.

attributed to Chief Seattle (ca. 1786–1866)

Song 3: God, who stretched the spangled heavens

God, who stretched the spangled heavens,
infinite in time and place,
flung the suns in burning radiance
through the silent fields of space,
we, your children, in your likeness,
share inventive powers with you.
Great Creator, still creating,
show us what we yet may do.

Proudly rise our modern cities,
stately buildings row on row;
yet their windows, blank, unfeeling,
stare on canyoned streets below,
where the lonely drift unnoticed
in the city's ebb and flow,
lost to purpose and to meaning,
scarcely caring where they go.

We have conquered worlds undreamed of
since the childhood of our race;
known the ecstasy of winging
through uncharted realms of space;
probed the secrets of the atom,
yielding unimagined power,
facing us with life's destruction
or our most triumphant hour.

As each far horizon beckons,
may it challenge us anew,
children of creative purpose,
serving others, honoring you.
May our dreams prove rich with promise,
each endeavor well begun.
Great Creator, give us guidance
till our goals and yours are one.

Catherine Cameron, 1967 (1927–2019)

Song 4: We have forgotten who we are

We have forgotten who we are.
We have alienated ourselves from the unfolding of the cosmos.
We have become estranged from the movements of the earth.
We have turned our backs on the cycles of life.
We have sought only our security.
We have exploited supply for our own ends.
We have distorted knowledge.
We have abused our power.

Now the land is barren and polluted and waters are poisoned, and the air is polluted.
Now the forests are dying, and the creatures are disappearing and humans despairing.

We ask forgiveness. We ask for the gift of remembering. We ask for the strength to change.

Kyrie eleison. [*Lord, have mercy.*]

from the United Nations Environmental Sabbath Service, 1990

Song 5: House made of dawn

House made of dawn. House made of evening light.
House made of the dark cloud. House made of male rain.
House made of dark mist. House made female rain.
House made of pollen. House made of grasshoppers.
Dark cloud is at the door. The trail out of it is dark cloud.
The zigzag lightning stands high upon it.
An offering I make.
Restore my feet for me. Restore my legs for me.
Restore my body for me. Restore my mind for me. Restore my voice for me.
This very day take out your spell for me.
Happily I recover. Happily my interior becomes cool.
Happily I go forth. My interior feeling cool, may I walk.
No longer sore, may I walk. Impervious to pain, may I walk.
With lively feelings, may I walk. As it used to be long ago, may I walk.
Happily may I walk. Happily, with abundant dark clouds may I walk.
Happily, with abundant showers may I walk. Happily, with abundant plants may I walk.
Happily on a trail of pollen may I walk. Happily may I walk.
Being as it used to be long ago, may I walk.
May it be beautiful before me. May it be beautiful behind me.
May it be beautiful below me. May it be beautiful above me.
May it be beautiful all around me.
In beauty it is finished.

A Prayer of the Fourth Day of the Night Chant (Navajo)

Song 6: Earth teach me stillness

Earth teach me stillness as the grasses are stilled with light.
Earth teach me suffering as old stones suffer with memory.
Earth teach me humility as blossoms are humble with beginning.
Earth teach me caring as the mother who secures her young.
Earth teach me courage as the tree which stands all alone.
Earth teach me limitation as the ant which crawls on the ground.
Earth teach me freedom as the eagle which soars in the sky.
Earth teach me resignation as the leaves which die in the fall.
Earth teach me regeneration as the seed which rises in the spring.
Earth teach me to forget myself as melted snow forgets its life.
Earth teach me to remember kindness as dry fields weep with rain.
Earth teach me stillness.

Traditional Ute

Song 7: And then all

And then all that has divided us will merge
And then compassion will be wedded to power
And then softness will come to a world that is harsh and unkind
And then both men and women will be gentle
And then both women and men will be strong
And then no person will be subject to another's will
And then all will be rich and free and varied
And then the greed of some will give way to the needs of many
And then all will share equally in the Earth's abundance
And then all will care for the sick and the weak and the old
And then all will nourish the young
And then all will cherish life's creatures
And then all will live in harmony with each other and the Earth
And then everywhere will be called Eden once again.

"The Merger Poem" from The Dinner Party (1979), Judy Chicago (b. 1939)

HARVARD UNIVERSITY CHOIR

Edward Elwyn Jones, Gund University Organist and Choirmaster
David von Behren, Assistant University Organist and Choirmaster
Carson Cooman, Research Associate in Music and Composer in Residence
Frank Kelley, Vocal Instructor
Sophie Choate and Soren Choi, Choir Secretaries
Caitlin Paul, Social Secretary

Sopranos

Elizabeth Bennett
Sophie Choate
Tara Guetzloe
Olympia Hatzilambrou
Sophia Lerebours
Isabella Meyer
Caitlin Paul
Nicole Newell
Akhila Yalvigi
Peggy Yin

Altos

Ari Cheriyam
Rosie Du
Will Flintoft
Inés Hynett
Sonja Johnson-Yu
Nina Kapoor
Harvey Lin
Julia Paolillo
Nelly Rousseau
Roseanne Strategos
Angela Wu
AJ Yi

Tenors

Fabim Ahmed
Jonathan Caron
Ian Chan
Jonathan D'Souza
Isaac Kim
Gavin Kramar
Arban Kumar
Eusung Rhys Moon
V́ctor Quintas-Martínez

Basses

Lucas Amory
Soren Choi
Dhruv Goel
Judah Lampkin
Henrique Neves
Christopher Ong
Luis Pabón Rico
Lucas Reccitelli
John Burton Rogers III
Sebastian Rojas
Caleb Shi
Moritz von Brescius

Italics denote members of the Ferris Choral Fellows.

ENSEMBLE

Violin 1

Ethan Chaves
Alex Zhou

Violin 2

Enoch Li
Michelle Stern

Viola

Joshua Cai
Sidney Lee

Cello

Sean Yu
Derek Hwang

Bass

Catherine Deskur

Oboe

John Russell

Clarinet

Veronica Li

Percussion

Nicholas Tolle
Craig McNutt

Piano (*Fedak*)

Lucas Amory

Piano (*Walker*)

David von Behren

Organ

David von Behren

ABOUT THE PERFORMERS

For over 180 years the **Harvard University Choir** has provided a unique opportunity for student singers to perform choral literature at the highest level, both in concert and during the services of the Memorial Church. Its program of daily choral services, broadcasts, tours, commissions, and recordings make it one of the premier college chapel ensembles in the United States, and each year the choir presents America's longest-running Christmas Carol Services to packed congregations. Highlights of recent seasons include concert performances of Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* and *Vespers*, Haydn's *The Creation*, J. S. Bach's *St. John Passion* and *Mass in B minor*, C. P. E. Bach's *Die Israeliten in der Wüste*, Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*, Handel's *Athalia*, *Saul*, and *Messiah*, Mozart's *Requiem* and *Mass in C minor* (in completions by Harvard Professor Robert Levin), Roxanna Panufnik's *Westminster Mass*, Alice Parker's *Melodious Accord*, Stephen Paulus's *The Three Hermits*, and Benjamin Britten's *St. Nicolas*. Committed to the presentation of new music, the choir has premiered works by today's most prominent composers, including David Conte, Tarik O'Regan, Alice Parker, Daniel Pinkham, Craig Phillips, and John Rutter.

Edward Elwyn Jones is the Gund University Organist and Choirmaster at Harvard University, a post he has held since 2003. Mr. Jones directs the music program in the Memorial Church in the midst of Harvard Yard and leads the 180-year old Harvard University Choir in its daily choral services, broadcasts, tours, commissions, and recordings. Mr. Jones is also Music Director of the Harvard Radcliffe Chorus, the Lowell House Opera (New England's longest-running opera company), and is a frequent collaborator with Yale's Schola Cantorum. As a conductor, he has guest conducted with such organizations as Boston Modern Orchestra Project, Grand Harmonie, Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra of Boston, Boston Camerata, Emmanuel Music (Boston), Longwood Symphony Orchestra, and the Handel and Haydn Society Orchestra. He has led opera productions with Enigma Chamber Opera, Iceland's Reykjavik Summer Opera Festival, New England's Intermezzo Opera, Lowell House Opera, and the Harvard Early Music Society. Mr. Jones has worked alongside William Christie, Christopher Hogwood, Nicholas McGegan, and Gil Rose, and has served as continuo player and Assistant Conductor to Sir John Eliot Gardiner and the English Baroque Soloists.

During his time at Harvard, Mr. Jones has overseen the publication of a new university hymnal and the installation of two new pipe organs in the Memorial Church, and has commissioned works from some of America's most prominent contemporary composers, including Daniel Pinkham, Alice Parker, and David Conte. A native of Wales, Mr. Jones studied music at Cambridge University, where he was Organ Scholar of Emmanuel College, and served as conductor of three university orchestras. He received the Master of Music degree in orchestral conducting from Mannes College of Music in New York City, where he was the recipient of the Felix Salzer Memorial Award.



HARVARD
The Memorial Church

The Memorial Church of Harvard University
One Harvard Yard, Cambridge, MA
617.495.5508 | memorialchurch.harvard.edu