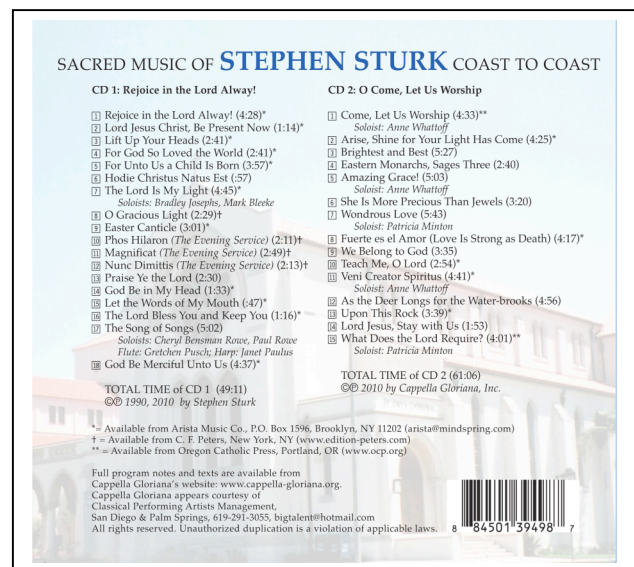
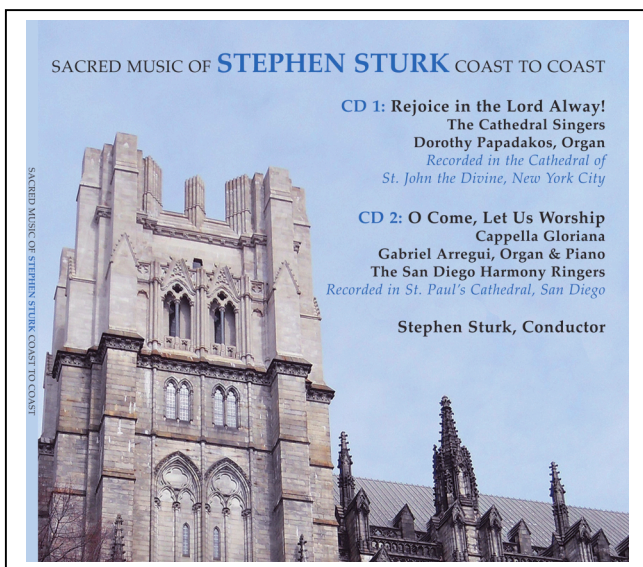


PROGRAM NOTES and TEXTS for

Sacred Music of STEPHEN STURK Coast to Coast

This double-CD set presents music composed by Stephen Sturk over a period of nearly 40 years. CD 1 was recorded in 1990 in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York City, and includes works composed between 1972 and 1989. CD 2 was recorded in 2010 by Cappella Gloriana, San Diego's professional chamber choir, and contains works written between 1990 and 2010.

All performances are conducted the composer, Dr. Stephen Sturk.



CD 1: Rejoice in the Lord Alway!

1. Rejoice in the Lord Alway! (1989)

For SATB choir, organ

Publisher: Arista Music (AM 587)

Text: Philippians 4:4-7

Dedication: For the Parish of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Belvedere, California and Jonathan Dimmock, Music Director on the occasion of their organ dedication, October 1, 1989

2. Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now (1972)

For SATB choir, a cappella

Publisher: Arista Music (AM 588)

Text: Wilhelm IV of Sachsen-Weimar, translated by Catherine Winkworth, *The Chorale Book for England*, 1863

Dedication: To Barry O'Neal

3. Lift Up Your Heads (1988)

For SATB choir, handbells

Publisher: Arista Music (AM 145)

Text: Psalm 24: 7-8 (this text appears over the Central Portal of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York City)

Dedication: To Phillip Sneed

4. For God So Loved the World (1988)

For SATB choir, a cappella

Publisher: Arista Music (AM 117)

Text: John 3:16 (this text appears over the South Tower Portal of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York City)

Dedication: To Velma Rowe and the choirs of Maximo Presbyterian Church, St. Petersburg, Florida

5. For Unto Us A Child Is Born (1988)

For SATB choir, handbells

Publisher: Arista Music (AM 115)

Text: Isaiah 9:6 (this text appears over the North Tower Portal of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York City)

Dedication: To Dr. Ann W. McKinley

6. Hodie Christus Natus Est (1974)

For SATB choir, a cappella

Publisher: Associated Music Publishers (A-863) [currently out of print]

Text: Antiphon to Magnificat at Second Vespers on Christmas Day

Dedication: To Auntie, In Memoriam

7. The Lord Is My Light (1988)

For soprano or tenor solo, SATB choir, organ

Publisher: Arista Music (AM 119)

Text: adapted from Psalm 27, The Book of Common Prayer

Commissioned for the Conference of the Association of Anglican Musicians, New Haven, Connecticut, 1988 in honor of Mildred Buttrey.

First performed at the AAM Conference, June 1988, at Trinity-on-the-Green Episcopal Church, New Haven, Connecticut.

Another Recording: *Refuge and Strength* (Episcopal Church Publishing Corporation, 2001) by the choir of St. Luke in the Fields, New York City.

8. O Gracious Light (Phos Hilaron) (1985)

For SATB choir, a cappella

Publisher: C.F. Peters (No. 67195)

Text: The Book of Common Prayer

Dedication: To J. Michael Rousch and the Choir of St. Barnabas Episcopal Church, Greenwich, Connecticut

9. Easter Canticle (1989)

For SATB choir, organ

Publisher: Arista Music (AM 589)

Text: The Book of Common Prayer

Dedication: To the memory of Larry King, Music Director of Trinity Church, Wall Street, New York City

10-12. The Evening Service (1985)

For ATB choir, a cappella

1. Phos Hilaron (Dedication: To Bruce Fifer)
2. Magnificat (Dedication: To Albert de Ruiter)
3. Nunc dimittis (Dedication: To Glen Vecchione)

Publisher: C.F. Peters (No. 67196)

Texts: 3rd Century Greek, translated by Edward W. Eddis, 1864 (Phos hilaron);

The Book of Common Prayer (Magnificat and Nunc dimittis)

Written for Candlelight Vespers at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City. Summer, 1985.

13. Praise Ye the Lord (1974)

For SATB, organ, optional brass

Publisher: Associated Music Publishers (A-861) [currently out of print]

Text: Psalm 150

Dedication: To Paul Halley, Organist, and the Choristers and Gentlemen of The Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine, New York City

14. God Be In My Head (1988)

For SATB choir, a cappella

Publisher: Arista Music (AM 114)

Text: Sarum Book of Hours (1514)

Dedication: To my mother and father

15. Let the Words of My Mouth (1989)

For SATB choir, a cappella

Publisher: Arista Music (AM 591)

Text: Psalm 19:14

Dedication: To Jack Gottlieb

16. The Lord Bless You and Keep You (1986)

For SATB choir, a cappella

Publisher: Arista Music (AM 123)

Text: Numbers 6: 24-26 (The Aaronic Blessing)

Dedication: To Thomas Hewes in deepest friendship

17. The Song of Songs (1987)

For soprano, baritone soli, flute, harp

Unpublished

Text: Song of Solomon 8:6, 2:10-12

Dedication: For Cheryl Bensman and Paul Rowe on their Wedding Day, July 5, 1987

18. God Be Merciful Unto Us (1989)

For SATB choir, organ

Publisher: Arista Music (AM 111)

Text: Psalm 67

Dedication: For Helena White and Brice Fifer on their Wedding Day

TEXTS and TRANSLATIONS (CD 1)

1. Rejoice in the Lord Alway!

Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice! Let your moderation be known unto all. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice! (Philippians 4: 4-7)

2. Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now

Lord Jesus Christ, be present now, Our hearts in true devotion bow; Thy Spirit send with grace divine, And let thy truth within us shine. Unseal our lips to sing thy praise, Our souls to thee in worship raise; Make strong our faith, increase our light That we may know thy name aright. Amen. (Wilhelm IV of Sachsen-Weimar, translated by Catherine Winkworth, *The Chorale Book for England*, 1863)

3. For God So Loved the World

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3: 16)

4. Lift Up Your Heads

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. He is the King of glory. (Psalm 24: 7-10)

5. For Unto Us a Child is Born

For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9: 6)

6. Hodie Christus Natus Est

Hodie Christus natus est: Hodie Salvator apparuit; Hodie in terra canunt Angeli, lætantur Archangeli: Hodie exsultant justi, dicentes: Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Today Christ is born: Today the Saviour has appeared. Today on earth the angels sing and the archangels rejoice. Today the just exult, saying: glory to God in the highest!

(Antiphon to Magnificat at Second Vespers on Christmas Day)

7. The Lord Is My Light

The Lord is my Light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom then shall I be afraid? One thing have I asked of the Lord; one thing I seek; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life; To behold the fair beauty of the Lord. Therefore I will offer in the dwelling of my God an oblation with sounds of great gladness; I will sing and make music to the Lord. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen. (from Psalm 27, *The Book of Common Prayer*)

8. O Gracious Light

O gracious Light, pure brightness of the everliving Father in heaven. O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed! Now as we come to the setting of the sun, and our eyes behold the vesper light, we sing thy praises, O God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Thou art worthy at all times to be praised by happy voices, O Son of God, O Giver of life, and to be glorified through all the worlds. (from *The Book of Common Prayer*)

9. Easter Canticle

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast, Not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. Alleluia. Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Alleluia. Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. Alleluia. (from *The Book of Common Prayer*)

10. Phos Hilaron (The Evening Service)

O Brightness of the immortal Father's face, Most holy, heav'nly, blest, Lord Jesus Christ, in whom his truth and grace Are visibly expressed: The sun is sinking now, and one by one The lamps of evening shine; We hymn the eternal Father, and the Son, and Holy Ghost divine. Worthy art thou at all times to receive our hallowed praises, Lord. O Son of God, be thou, in whom we live, Through all the world adored. (3rd Century Greek, translated by Edward W. Eddis, 1864)

11. Magnificat (The Evening Service)

My soul doth magnify the Lord; and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden. For behold, from henceforth: all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath magnified me; and holy is his Name. And his mercy is on them that fear him: throughout all generations. He hath shewed strength with his arm: he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seat: and hath exalted the humble and meek. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel: as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed, for ever. GLORIA PATRI. (Luke 1:46-55)

12. Nunc Dimittis (The Evening Service)

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people, To be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of thy people Israel. GLORIA PATRI. (Luke 2: 29-32)

13. Praise Ye the Lord!

Praise ye, the Lord! Praise God in His sanctuary. Praise Him in the firmament of His power. Praise Him for His mighty acts. Praise him according to His excellent greatness. Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet. Praise Him with the timbrel and dance, Praise Him with stringed instruments and organs. Praise Him upon the loud cymbals, Praise Him upon the high sounding cymbals. Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord! Praise ye the Lord! Alleluia! (Psalm 150)

14. God Be in My Head

God be in my head, And in my understanding; God be in mine eyes, And in my looking; God be in my mouth, And in my speaking; God be in my heart, And in my thinking; God be at mine end, And at my departing. (Sarum Book of Hours, 1514)

15. Let the Words of My Mouth

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be alway acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer. (Psalm 19:14)

16. The Lord Bless You and Keep You

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. Amen. (Numbers 6:24-26)

17. The Song of Songs

Set me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thine arm. For love is strong as death. My beloved spoke, and said unto me: Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away. For lo, the winter is past: the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing is come. Set me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thine arm. (The Song of Solomon 8:6, 2:10-12)

18. God Be Merciful

God be merciful unto us and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us. That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God shall bless us. God shall bless us, and all the ends of the earth shall fear him. (Psalm 67, *The Book of Common Prayer*)

NOTES on the MUSIC (CD 1)

by Dr. Stephen Sturk

Rejoice in the Lord Alway! was commissioned by Jonathan Dimmock, organist-choirmaster of St. Stephen's Church in Belvedere, Calif. It was to celebrate the dedication of a new organ there in 1989. Written in my "signature" 7/8 meter, "Rejoice in the Lord Alway" has some rather extensive organ interludes. The composition seems to go through a myriad of keys, primarily because my aim was to have the organist touch every key and every pedal on his new instrument during the course of this one piece! This was accomplished by using scale passages in C major (all white keys) and F-sharp major (covering all the black keys). It also recalls the work of the same name by Henry Purcell.

Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now is among my earliest compositions, written while a college student in 1972. It was intended to be sung as an introit or "call to worship."

Lift Up Your Heads, For God So Loved the World, and **For Unto Us a Child Is Born** were composed as a group, shortly after I "discovered" these three texts carved over the west portals of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. The Cathedral had recently been given a two-octave set of English handbells, and I was anxious to incorporate them in a composition. The simple handbell parts were intended to be played by the singers. The central piece, "For God So Loved the World," is a canon with many performance possibilities.

Hodie Christus Natus Est dates from 1971 and was intended as an Introit for Christmas services. It pays homage to the famous setting by Sweelinck. (Originally published by Associated Music Publishers, New York, but currently out of print.)

The Lord Is My Light was commissioned by the Association of Anglican Musicians for their 1988 conference at Yale University. It has the distinction of being my only piece of music that was published BEFORE I actually heard a performance of the work! "The Lord Is My Light" was also recorded in 2001 by the choir of St. Luke in the Fields, New York City, and appears on a CD entitled "Refuge and Strength" from the Episcopal Church Publishing Corporation.

O Gracious Light was written in 1985 for Vespers services at New York City's Cathedral of St. John the Divine, where I was Associate Conductor of the choirs until 1990. During my years at St. John the Divine, I noticed that certain chords had a wonderful "ringing" property in the famed acoustics of the Cathedral, with its 7-second reverberation. The particular chords were all major triads on B-flat, C and D. This composition makes use of these three chords on the words "Father" (B-flat major), Son (C-major),

and Holy Spirit (D-major). I subsequently used these chords as a cadential formula (although sometimes transposed) in many compositions, particularly **The Evening Service** (below).

Easter Canticle was composed in 1989, and is dedicated to the memory of Larry King, Music Director of Trinity Church, Wall Street in New York City. Larry King had served as organist-choirmaster from 1963 to 1968 at St. Paul's Church, San Diego, prior to the church's designation as the diocesan Cathedral.

The Evening Service was written in the Summer of 1985 for candlelight Vespers at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City. The conspicuous absence of treble voices—particularly at vacations and in summer—led me to compose this setting for ATB voices only. This setting has also been performed frequently at Grace Cathedral, San Francisco and Canterbury Cathedral, England.

Praise Ye the Lord!, composed in 1974, is one of my earliest compositional efforts, and was my first published work.

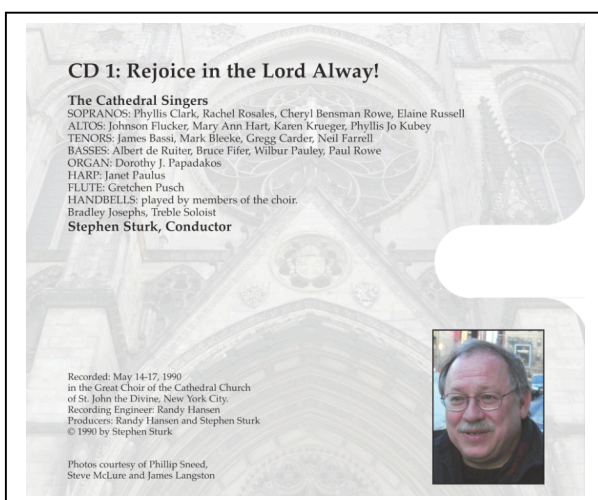
God Be in My Head is an old English prayer from a Sarum Primer. Many composers have been tried their hand at this familiar text. My setting of this text is dedicated to "my mother and father."

Let the Words of My Mouth is another brief composition intended as a "call to worship" or prayer response. Because of the importance of this text in Jewish worship, the work was dedicated to Jack Gottlieb, a close friend and noted composer of Jewish music.

The Lord Bless You and Keep You was written in 1986 for a friend who was dying of cancer.

The Song of Songs, written for the wedding of two close friends and colleagues, is my first of several settings of texts from The Song of Solomon. This duet, for soprano and baritone (or tenor) with flute and harp accompaniment, features the bride's musical initials (CB), and these two notes appear prominently throughout the piece. The work begins in a steady 4/4 rhythm to familiar words ("Set me as a seal upon thy heart") from the Song of Songs, sometimes called the Song of Solomon. At the words "Arise, my love," the mood changes to joyous excitement in 7/8 and other complex rhythms, and the piece concludes with a return of the steady opening material.

God Be Merciful is a setting of Psalm 67, one of the appointed Psalms for a marriage. It was written for the wedding of two singer friends at New York's Cathedral of St. John the Divine.



Apologies to baritone **Adam Johnson**, whose name was inadvertently omitted from the list of Cappella Gloriana singers on CD 2.

CD 2: O Come, Let Us Worship

1. O Come, Let Us Worship (2002)

For SATB choir, soprano solo, organ

Publisher: Trinitas (Oregon Catholic Press), to be released in 2011

Text: Psalm 95:6, 7 & 10; Psalm 71:17, 7 & 10

Commissioned by Trinity Episcopal Church, Escondido, California, in celebration of the fortieth birthday of their rector, The Reverend Margaret Decker, August 2, 2002

2. Arise, Shine for Your Light Has Come (2000)

For SATB choir, handbells

Publisher: Arista Music (AM 656)

Text: The Third Song of Isaiah, The Book of Common Prayer

Dedication: In celebration of the work of Episcopal Community Services, Diocese of San Diego

3. Brightest and Best (2001)

For SATB choir, organ, oboe

Unpublished

Text: Reginald Heber (1811)

Dedication: For Frank Palms on his 64th Birthday, January 9, 2001

4. Eastern Monarchs, Sages Three (1987)

For TBB choir, handbells

Unpublished

Text: 15th Century Latin, anonymous English translation

Commissioned by Velma Rowe and the Maximo Presbyterian Church choir, St. Petersburg, Florida.

5. Amazing Grace! (2002)

For SATB choir, soloist, keyboard and handbells

Unpublished

Text: John Newton (1779)

Commissioned by the musicians of the First United Methodist Church of Escondido, California. Dedicated to the Glory of God and in remembrance of those who have entered life eternal.

6. She Is More Precious Than Jewels (2006)

For SATB choir, a cappella

Unpublished

Text: Proverbs 3:15-18

Commissioned by her children, and dedicated to Clare Friedman on the occasion of her 70th Birthday (August 2, 2006)

7. Wondrous Love (1991)

For SATB choir, soloist, keyboard, handbells

Unpublished

Text: American folk hymn, ca. 1835

Tune: Wondrous Love, from *The Southern Harmony*, 1835

Dedication: To René Rowland, Minister of Music, and all the music makers at California Heights United Methodist Church, Long Beach, Calif.

8. Fuerte Es El Amor (Love Is Strong as Death) (2007)

For SATB choir with percussion (sticks, maracas, triangle)

Publisher: Arista Music (AM 669)

Text: Song of Solomon 8:6-7, both Spanish and English (Spanish version by Ann Gary & Gabriel Arregui)

Dedication: In celebration of the Fiftieth Wedding Anniversary of Ann & Kenneth Gary, October 16, 2007

First performance (October 21, 2007) by the choir of St. Paul's Cathedral, San Diego, CA, Canon Martin Green conducting.

9. We Belong to God (2006)

For SATB choir, organ

Unpublished

Text: from "A Brief Statement of Faith" of the Presbyterian Church, USA

Commissioned by Fairmount Presbyterian Church, Cleveland Heights, Ohio (Robert Moncrief, Minister of Music) for the Church's 90th Anniversary, October 2006.

10. Teach Me, O Lord (1990)

For SATB choir, a cappella

Publisher: Arista Music (AM 592)

Text: Psalm 119: 33, 103, 105, Psalm 89:15b; with "Lucis creator optime", 6th Century Latin, Office Hymn for Vespers.

Dedication: For Michael and Maria

Another Recording: *Wondrous Love* (2009) North Dakota State University Concert Choir, Dr. Jo Ann Miller, conductor.

11. Veni Creator Spiritus (1992)

For SATB choir, soprano soloist, keyboard, handbells

Publisher: Arista Music (AM 629)

Text: "Veni Creator Spiritus", 9th Century Latin, Office Hymn for Terce and Vespers on Pentecost, with Psalm 36:5-9.

Dedication: To the Rev. Susan L. Tobias, for her institution as Rector of St. David's Episcopal Church, San Diego

12. As the Deer Longs for the Water-brooks (2005)

For treble choir, organ, oboe

Unpublished

Text: From Psalm 42, The Book of Common Prayer

Dedication: For the Rev. Canon Lee B. Teed on the occasion of her retirement from St. Paul's Cathedral, San Diego (August 2005)

13. Upon This Rock (2000)

For SATB choir, organ

Publisher: Arista Music (AM 659)

Text: Matthew 16:18-19

Dedication: For the First Presbyterian Church of Atlanta on its 150th Anniversary; Charles W. Whittaker, Director of Music

14. Lord Jesus, Stay With Us (2004)

For SATB choir, a cappella

Unpublished

Text: The Book of Common Prayer

Dedication: For Marie Zadarnowski, in deepest friendship and admiration

Another Recording: *Here Might I Stay and Sing* (2005), The Saint Cecilia Choir of Girls and Men, St. Paul's Cathedral, San Diego, Canon Martin Green, conductor.

15. What Does the Lord Require? (2002)

For SATB choir, organ

Publisher: Trinitas 30103389 (Oregon Catholic Press)

Text: Micah 6:8 and Psalm 108:1-5

Dedication: For the Rev. Michael G. Kaehr on the occasion of his Sixtieth Birthday, January 26, 2002

TEXTS and TRANSLATIONS (CD 2)

1. O Come, Let Us Worship

O come, let us worship and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker. For he is the Lord our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their hearts, for they have not known my ways.

Forsake me not, O God, in mine old age, when I am gray-headed, until I have showed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to all them that are yet to come. O let my mouth be filled with thy praise, that I may sing of thy glory and honor all the day long. As for me, I will patiently abide always, I will abide, and will praise thee more and more, I will praise thee more and more. (Psalm 95:6, 7, 10 and Psalm 71:17, 7, 10)

2. Arise, Shine, for Your Light Has Come

(Antiphon) Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has dawned upon you.

For behold, darkness covers the land; deep gloom enshrouds the peoples.

But over you the Lord will rise, and his glory will appear upon you.

Nations will stream to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawning.

(Antiphon)

Your gates will always be open; by day or by night they will never be shut.

They will call you, The City of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

Violence will no more be heard in your land, ruin or destruction within your borders.

(Antiphon)

You will call your walls, Salvation, and all your portals, Praise.

The sun will no more be your light by day; by night you will not need the brightness of the moon.

The Lord will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory.

(Antiphon)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

(Isaiah 60:1-3, 11a, 14c, 18-19, the Third Song of Isaiah, from *The Book of Common Prayer*)

3. Brightest and Best

Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,
Dawn on our darkness and lend us Thine aid;
Star of the East, the horizon adorning,
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

Cold on His cradle the dewdrops are shining;
Low lies His head with the beasts of the stall;
Angels adore Him in slumber reclining,
Maker and Monarch and Savior of all!

Say, shall we yield Him, in costly devotion,
Odors of Edom and offerings divine?
Gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean,
Myrrh from the forest, or gold from the mine?

Vainly we offer each ample oblation,
Vainly with gifts would His favor secure;
Richer by far is the heart's adoration,
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.

Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,
Dawn on our darkness and lend us Thine aid;
Star of the East, the horizon adorning,
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.
(Reginald Heber, 1811)

4. Eastern Monarchs, Sage Three

Eastern monarchs, Sages three,
Come with gifts in great plenty,
Worship Christ on bended knee,
Cum virgine Maria. (*with the Virgin Mary*)

Gold in honor of the King,
Incense to the Priest they bring,
Myrrh for time of burying,
Cum virgine Maria.

His the praise and glory be,
Laud and honor victory,
Pow'r supreme and so sing we
Cum virgine Maria.

Eastern monarchs, Sages three,
Come with gifts in great plenty,
Worship Christ on bended knee,
Cum virgine Maria.
(15th Century Latin, anonymous English translation)

5. Amazing Grace!

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed!

Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me,
His Word my hope secures;
He will my Shield and Portion be,
As long as life endures.

Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess, within the veil,
A life of joy and peace.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we'd first begun.
John Newton (1779)

6. She Is More Precious Than Jewels

She is more precious than jewels, and nothing you desire can compare with her. Long life is in her right hand; in her left are riches and honour. Her ways are pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her; those who hold her fast are called happy. She is more precious than jewels, and nothing you desire can compare with her. (Proverbs 3:15-18)

7. Wondrous Love

What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul,
What wondrous love is this, O my soul,
What wondrous love is this, That caused the Lord of bliss
To lay aside his crown for my soul, for my soul,
To lay aside his crown for my soul.

To God and to the Lamb, I will sing, I will sing,
To God and to the Lamb, I will sing,
To God and to the Lamb, who is the great I AM,
While millions join the theme, I will sing, I will sing,
While millions join the theme, I will sing.

And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on,
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing and joyful be,
And through eternity, I'll sing on, I'll sing on,
And through eternity, I'll sing on.
(American Folk Hymn, ca. 1835)

8. Fuerte Es El Amor (Love Is Strong As Death)

Fuerte como la muerte es el amor,
Pasión feroz como la tumba.

Sus chispas son chispas de fuego,
como una llama ardiente.

Las aguas no pueden extinguir el amor,
Ni los diluvios lo pueden a hogar.

Love is strong as death,
Passion fierce as the grave.
Its flashes are flashes of fire,
a raging flame.
Many waters cannot quench love,
Neither can the floods drown it.

(Song of Solomon 8:6-7, both Spanish and English; Spanish version by Ann Gary and Gabriel Arregui)

9. We Belong to God

In life and in death we belong to God.

Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,

and the communion of the Holy Spirit,
we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel,
whom alone we worship and serve.

(from "A Brief Statement of Faith" of the Presbyterian Church, USA)

10. Teach Me, O Lord

Teach me, O Lord, the way of your statutes, and I shall keep it to the end. How sweet are your words to my taste! They are sweeter than honey to my mouth.

Lucis Creator optime,
Lucem dierum proferens,
Primordiis lucis novae
Mundi parans originem.

*O blest Creator of the light
Who mak'st the day with radiance bright,
And o'er the forming world didst call
The light from chaos first of all.*

Your word is a lantern to my feet and a light upon my path. They walk, O Lord, in the light of your presence. (from Psalms 119 and 85, and the Latin Office Hymn for Vespers)

11. Veni Creator Spiritus

Veni Creator Spiritus,
Mentes tuorum visita:
Imple superna gratia
Quae tu creasti pectora.

*Come, O Creator Spirit, come,
And make within our hearts thy home;
To us thy grace celestial give,
Our souls' anointing from above.*

Your love, O Lord, reaches to the heavens, and your faithfulness to the clouds. Your righteousness is like the strong mountains, and your justice is like the great deep. How priceless is your love, O God! Your people take refuge under the shadow of your wings. They feast upon the abundance of your house; you give them drink from the river of your delights.

Qui diceris Paraclitus,
Altissimi donum Dei,
Fons vivus, ignis, caritas,
Et spiritalis unctio.

*O Comforter, that name is thine,
Of God most high the gift divine;
The well of life, the fire of love,
Who of thy breathing move and live.*

For with you is the well of life, and in your light we see light. Amen.
(Plainsong hymn, with Psalm 36:5-9)

12. As the Deer Longs for the Water-brooks

As the deer longs for the water-brooks, so longs my soul for you, O God. My soul is athirst for God, athirst for the living God; when shall I come to appear before the presence of God? My tears have been my food day and night, while all day long they say to me, "Where now is your God?" I pour out my soul when I think on these things: how I went with the multitude and led them into the house of God, With the voice of praise and thanksgiving, among those who keep holy-day. (from Psalm 42)

13. Upon This Rock

Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Alleluia. (Matt. 16:18-19)

14. Lord Jesus, Stay With Us

Lord Jesus, stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past; be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts, and awaken hope, that we may know thee as thou art revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of thy love. Amen. (from *The Book of Common Prayer*)

15. What Does the Lord Require?

He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast: I will sing and make melody. Awake, my soul! Awake, O harp and lyre! I will awake the dawn. I will give thanks to you, O Lord, among the peoples, and I will sing praises to you among the nations. For your steadfast love is higher than the heavens, and your faithfulness reaches to the clouds. Be exalted, O God, above the heavens, and let your glory be over all the earth. (Micah 6:8 and Psalm 108:1-5)

NOTES on the MUSIC (CD 2)

by Dr. Stephen Sturk

O Come, Let Us Worship was composed in honor of the 40th birthday of the Rev. Meg Decker, rector of Trinity Episcopal Church, Escondido, Calif. Although the musical scale contains only the first seven letters of the alphabet, it is possible to spell the name (M)eg Dec(k)e(r)) by assigning the non-musical

letters (M,K, and R) to a scale tone. In this case, M=F, K=D, and R=D. thus yielding her name as the following musical "motto": F-E-G – D-E-C-D-E-D

These notes (clearly stated in the first bars) form the basis of the melodic and harmonic material of the entire piece. After an exploration of this theme on words from the Psalms relevant to worship, aging, and ministry, the piece introduces one of the Rev. Decker's favorite tunes – the plainsong hymn "Conditor alme siderum" (Creator of the stars of night). A joyous conclusion is achieved by a return of the musical motto of Meg's name. (Incidentally, the text for this anthem comes from Psalm verses that were cleverly chosen by members of Trinity church to mark the auspicious occasion.)

Arise, Shine, for Your Light Has Come was commissioned to honor the work of Episcopal Community Services (ECS) in San Diego, and was first performed by a diocesan choir at the annual ECS Advent Lessons and Carols Service in 1997. I have written many choral works that include the incidental use of handbells, usually to be rung by the singers themselves. The handbell parts in this work, however, require a dedicated group of ringers.

Brightest and Best is an arrangement of two Epiphany hymn tunes: "Star of the East" from The Southern Harmony, and "Morning Star" by James Procter Harding. It was commissioned to celebrate the 64th birthday of Frank Palms, a verger and member of St. Paul's Cathedral, San Diego. The setting is for SATB choir, organ and oboe. The oboe part contains echoes of a famous Beatles tune.

Eastern Monarchs, Sages Three dates from 1987 and properly belongs on CD 1. It was commissioned by Velma Rowe and the choir of Maximo Presbyterian Church in St. Petersburg, Florida. It was designed to be sung and rung in procession.

Amazing Grace! is an arrangement of the familiar hymn for SATB choir, keyboard and handbell choir, commissioned by the musicians of the First United Methodist Church of Escondido, California, where I briefly served as Music Director in 1998-99.

She Is More Precious Than Jewels is a setting of a text from the Book of Proverbs, selected by the children of Dr. Clare Friedman, who commissioned this piece to honor their mother on her birthday. I consider it a fun and "quirky" piece, because the melodic materials are derived from a set of numbers selected by the family. (Dr. Friedman was a professor of mathematics.) I have been privileged to provide compositions for many celebratory events, but it's always special when the dedicatee is a personal friend, as is the case with Clare.

Wondrous Love is an arrangement of the well-known American folk hymn. It was my first composition written after moving to California in 1991. It was commissioned by René Rowland, minister of music, for California Heights United Methodist Church in Long Beach.

Fuerte Es El Amor (Love Is Strong as Death) is a bilingual, multicultural setting of the familiar text from the Song of Solomon, for SATB choir and a few percussion instruments. It was commissioned to celebrate the 50th wedding anniversary of Ann and Ken Gary, long-time parishioners at St. Paul's Cathedral, San Diego, where the first performance took place in 2007. The Garys were married in the Anglican church in Mexico City, so I tried to capture a Mexican flavor in this piece. The text is presented first in Spanish, followed by an English translation of the same words. I have come to think of this work as a traditional Anglican anthem enclosed in a little "Mariachi" number, in which the voices imitate trumpets and guitars.

We Belong To God was written to celebrate the 90th anniversary of Fairmount Presbyterian Church in Cleveland Heights, Ohio (Robert Moncrief, Music Director). San Diego resident Julie Hudson, a former member of the Ohio church, was responsible for the commission. The text is the first paragraph of "A Brief Statement of Faith" of the Presbyterian Church USA, affectionately known as "The Statement."

Teach Me, O Lord is the last composition I wrote in New York (but, too late to be included on CD 1). It was written to honor the ministry of the Rev. Michael Kuhn and his wife, Maria, at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City. Fr. Michael was chaplain of the Cathedral School, as well as a wonderful preacher at the Cathedral's Vespers services. The texts were selected to commemorate these aspects of his ministry. The North Dakota State University Concert Choir, under the direction of Dr. Jo Ann Miller, also recorded this work in 2009.

Veni Creator Spiritus was one of my earliest California compositions. Composed for the 1992 installation of the Rev. Susan Tobias as rector of St. David's, San Diego, this popular piece has been sung at many ordinations, including that of the fourth Episcopal Bishop of San Diego in March, 2005.

As the Deer Longs by the Water-brooks is a setting of the well-known text from Psalm 42 for treble voices, organ and oboe. The piece was commissioned to celebrate the retirement of the Rev. Canon Lee Teed, sub-Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, San Diego, in 2005. The extremely gifted San Diego oboist Susan Barrett has been a long-time collaborator of the composer.

Upon This Rock was commissioned by the First Presbyterian Church of Atlanta, Georgia (Charles W. Whittaker, music director) to celebrate the church's 150th anniversary in 1995.

Lord Jesus, Stay With Us was written in 2004 as an introit for Evensong at St. Paul's Cathedral, San Diego. It is dedicated to Marie Zadarnowski, a long-time friend of Cathedral Music. This short introit was also recorded by the Cathedral's Saint Cecilia Choir on their CD "Here might I stay and sing." It was also sung throughout Germany by Cappella Gloriana on their Summer 2005 tour.

What Does the Lord Require? combines a favorite passage of scripture from the prophet Micah with various Psalm verses related to praise and singing. The anthem is dedicated to the Rev. Michael Kaehr and was commissioned for his 60th birthday celebration in 2002.

ABOUT THE COMPOSER

Stephen Sturk (born in Chicago, October 2, 1950) was named "composer in residence" at St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral, San Diego in October 2000. He is conductor of Cappella Gloriana, San Diego's professional chamber choir, as well as several other choirs in southern California. Dr. Sturk is also a founding director of San Diego's Pacific Academy of Ecclesiastical Music (PACEM). He served on the faculty of the University of San Diego where he was director of the Choral Scholars Program. Dr. Sturk's anthems have been published by Arista Music (Brooklyn, NY), C.F. Peters Corporation (New York, Associated Music Publishers (New York)), and Oregon Catholic Press (Trinitas series).

Before settling in California in 1991, he was a conductor, composer and tenor in New York City where his principal positions included music director of The New York Motet Choir, associate conductor of the choirs at the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine and director of The Juilliard Singers at The Juilliard School of Music (under the auspices of the Lincoln Center Student Program). He appears as conductor or singer on more than 60 recordings, most notably on the soundtrack of the Disney animated feature "Beauty and the Beast."

Dr. Sturk was educated at North Central College in Naperville, Illinois (B.A. in Classics) which recognized his career as a composer by awarding him the college's prestigious Fine Arts Medal in October 2008. He received the M.A. in music history and literature from San Diego State University, where his specialty was music of the California Missions. He earned the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in choral conducting from North Dakota State University.