

Spring 2012 Choir/Band Concert
America, Home Sweet Home

Narrator: Welcome. Blah, Blah, Blah – Guests, announce prayer, etc.

Prayer:

Narrator(@2:00): The title for tonight's concert is America, Home Sweet Home. And though a lovely quilt surrounds the flyer, tonight is more than just our hearth and home. It is about our country home. It is about our Heaven home and the dying that gets us there. Let's start with a poem about happiness:

Fifteen Happy Moments

(after the manner of Chin Shengt'an)

To saunter down a sun-shadowed street,
To watch a man watering his lawn,
To smell the wet earth and grass,
To take a large bite of warm brown bread,
To watch the walk of a healthy woman, who carries her body like a banner,
Ah, is not life good?

To watch a man work his own ground with the stubborn strokes of the hoe,
To heave an axe hard and split without a chip,
To walk into a grocery and eat one strawberry without paying,
To drink grapefruit juice after eating honey,
To throw a breadcrumb on the roof and listen to the bickering of birds,
Ah, is not life good?

To listen to Bach when he is morning light on wet grass,
To read Aristotle and see the motion and harmonic resolution of his mind in De Poetica,
To see three barefoot children brownbacked in the sunshine,
To feel the delicate pulse in a child's body,
Ah, is not life good?

When the grey sleepwalker comes,
Will you not go with him?

Is not life good? (©Don Decker - Used by Permission)

In our frantic race from birth to death hooked up to almost continual electronic media; how often do we stop and listen to the bickering of birds, feel the cool wash of morning breeze or watch the whip of Old Glory in the wind? e. e. cummings says "*The most wasted of all days is one without laughter.*" Robert Frost comments, "*Happiness makes up in height for what it lacks in length.*" Sounds like we need to disconnect, unplug, unwire un-pin, un-tweet and un-face and get a little music in the soul.

Music in My Soul (Choir only)

Narrator(@1:00): We are proud to say we are Americans. Our love of country is evident in our folk songs. Originally a poem called *My Western Home*, Home on the Range was originally published as a song called *Oh, Give Me a Home Where the Buffalo Roam*. Home on the Range was adopted by settlers, cowboys and others who sang it and passed it along as they walked and rode to new lives in the west.

*I love the wild flowers in this bright land of ours,
I love the wild curlew's shrill scream;
The bluffs and white rocks, and antelope flocks
That graze on the mountains so green.*

Home on the Range (Choir Only)

Narrator: Home on the Range then leads us to another rambling song. Although we squabble and jeer at each other over politics and economy, at the end, we are the people and this is our land.

This Land is Your Land (Choir Only)

Narrator(@:50): It takes a special something in a man to meld an alkali desert, a false hearted lover, wolves and owls with their terrifying growls, and chickens crowin' on Sourwood Mountain; let alone deliver them up as one of the most frequently played high school band arrangements. Arranger Clare Grundman is credited with about 50 works for band, as well as many other types of music. He taught arranging, woodwind, and band at Ohio State University. He also served as the Coast Guard's chief musician during World War II. An American Folk Rhapsody includes old folk favorites such as: On Top of Old Smokey, Shantyman's Life, Sourwood Mountain and Sweet Betsy from Pike.

American Folk Rhapsody (6:15) (Band only)

Narrator(@1:10):

*God Bless America,
Land that I love.
Stand beside her, and guide her
Thru the night with a light from above.
From the mountains, to the prairies,
To the oceans, white with foam
God bless America, My home sweet home. – Irving Berlin*

Long before Irving Berlin was entertaining crowds in night clubs, Broadway shows and in the movies he was an immigrant boy from Belarus, Russia named Israel Baline. Author and music historian Ian Whitcomb describes his life:

The floor of the Baline hut-home was of hard black dirt. Outside, the squiggly streets of Tyumen were either mud or dust according to the season. Lining the squiggles were horrid wooden huts. Suddenly one day, the Cossacks rampaged in on a pogrom... they simply burned it to the ground. Israel and his family watched from a distant road. Israel was wrapped in a warm feather quilt. Then they made a hasty exit. Knowing that they were breaking the law by leaving without a passport, the Balines smuggled themselves creepingly from town to town, from satellite to satellite, from sea to shining sea, until finally they reached their star: the Statue of Liberty.

Irving Berlin (choir with band)

Narrator (@1:40): Benjamin Franklin said, "*In this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes.*"

*Death can sneak up on you like a silent kitten, surprising you with its touch and you have a right to act surprised. Other times death stomps in the front door, unwanted and unannounced, and makes its noisy way to your seat on the sofa. **Hugh Elliott***

If you live to be one hundred, you've got it made. Very few people die past that age. - George Burns (born 1896 - died 1996)

It is impossible that anything so natural, so necessary, and so universal as death, should ever have been designed by Providence as an evil to mankind. Jonathan Swift

*I know dark clouds will gather 'round me
I know my way is rough and steep
Yet golden fields lie just before me
Where God's redeemed shall ever sleep
I'm going there to see my father
He said he'd meet me when I come
I'm only going over Jordan
I'm only going over home*

Poor Wayfaring Stranger (choir only)

Narrator: A Brown Girl Dead By Countee Cullen

*With two white roses on her breasts,
White candles at head and feet,
Dark Madonna of the grave she rests;
Lord Death has found her sweet.
Her mother pawned her wedding ring
To lay her out in white,
She'd be so proud she'd dance and sing
To see herself tonight.*

Amazing Grace (Choir only)

Narrator(@1:00): Flight of Valor was Commissioned in 2002 by Somerset Community Band and written by James Swearingen as a memorial for the victims of United Airlines Flight 93 which crashed in Somerset County, PA during the September 11, 2001 attacks. Swearingen based his composition on a well-known hymn, It is well with my Soul.

*When peace like a river, attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to know,
It is well, it is well, with my soul.*

Flight of Valor (6:15) (Band only)

Narrator: Message on the Rock takes us to Greenfield, Iowa where sits a rock that for the last 10 years has displayed painted patriotic images. Each year a new image reminds us of those that have given their lives in the service of our country.

*"Dear Lord,
Lest I continue in my complacent way,
help me to remember, somewhere out there
a man died for me today.*

*As long as there be a war,
I must ask and answer
Am I worth dying for?" – Eleanor Roosevelt*

Message on the Rock (4:15) (Band only)

Narrator (@:45):

The kind of ancestors we have had is not as important as the kind of descendants our ancestors have. – Anonymous

From our ancestors come our names from our virtues our honor. - Proverb

Pilgrim Song speaks for a moment about our ancestors, Bring Him Home about the sons of our hearts.

*Perhaps you think me wild, or simple as a child. I am a child of glory
I am born from above my soul is filled with love; I love to tell the story*

Pilgrim Song (Choir only)

Bring Him Home (Choir only)

Narrator(@:20):

*This story shall the good man teach his son;
And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,
From this day to the ending of the world,
But we in it shall be remember'd;
We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;
For he to-day that sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother;*

William Shakespeare, King Henry V, before the field of Agincourt

Band of Brothers (5:15) (Band only)

Narrator(@:30):

America, home of the free, because of the brave. – T-shirts, bumper stickers, hats, hoodies and pins.

In keeping with the tradition of the choir and band, we present the Armed Forces Salute to the men and women of the United States military. If you have served, or have a family member who has served, or is currently serving, we would invite you to stand during their hymn. Please feel free to join in singing with us.

Armed Forces Salute (Band with choir)

Narrator(@:25): We are grateful for your attendance today. Immediately after The Battle Hymn of the Republic we will finish with a closing prayer by _____. As is tradition, the band will then send us out with that old favorite, Stars N Stripes Forever. *May your walls know joy; May every room hold laughter and every window open to great possibility. Maryanne Radmacher-Hershey*

Battle Hymn of the Republic (Band with choir)

Prayer

Stars and Stripes (after prayer) (Band only)