



50th
abendmusik
season of gratitude

50th Anniversary Gala Concert

Abendmusik at First-Plymouth's 50th Anniversary Season

For fifty years, Abendmusik has brought inspiring, world-class musical experiences to Lincoln, and, thanks to the generosity of Abendmusik's sponsors and donors, this season's 50th anniversary concert series is featuring eight performances, offered free of charge, both in person at Lincoln's historic First-Plymouth Church and online. The season launch on October 3 marked the first live Abendmusik concert since the pandemic began: a chamber choir program poignantly entitled "...and so we go on..." On November 7, Abendmusik hosted the critically-acclaimed Jason Max Ferdinand Singers, a champion of music by BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) composers, in its Midwest debut.

Abendmusik's annual Messiah Community Sing, Christmas festival, and New Year's Eve Last Blast with the Plymouth Brass were exceptional this anniversary year, but the highlight of the season will surely be today's celebration when our Abendmusik Chorus and alumni members will sing together, conducted by both founding director Jack Levick and current director Tom Trenney. May today's concert be the commencement of Abendmusik's next 50 years—welcoming new generations to come together to experience the hope, light, and joy of music that inspires.

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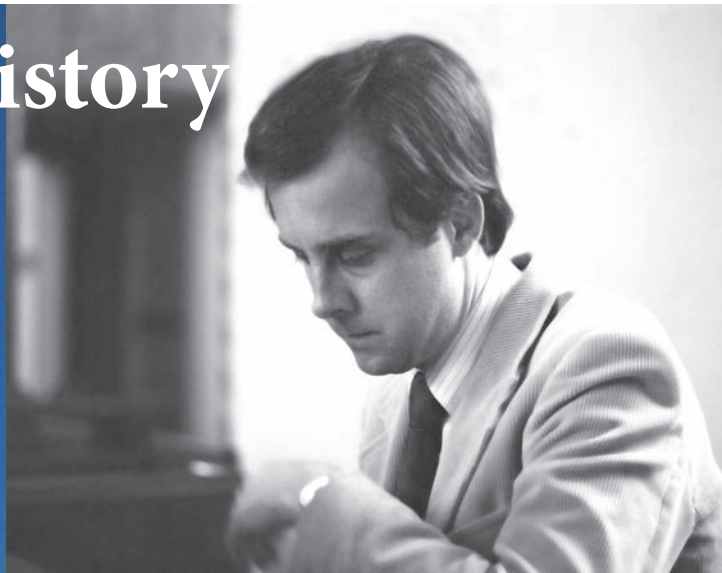
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Abendmusik History



THE ESSENCE OF ABENDMUSIK

When Jack Levick arrived in Lincoln in 1972, he brought with him a vision that First-Plymouth Church could become a gathering place for the community to experience music that inspires. With the support of Pastor Otis Young and the First-Plymouth congregation, Abendmusik was born. Abendmusik (literally translated as “evening music”) began to present and produce innovative, meaningful programming, consistently of the highest artistic quality. For five decades, Abendmusik’s audiences have gathered in the beautiful sanctuary of Lincoln’s historic First-Plymouth Church, an ideal environment to encounter the finest in choral, instrumental, and organ music. Even as the seasons change, those who experience Abendmusik at First-Plymouth continue to experience music that inspires.

A REPERTOIRE THAT KNOWS NO BOUNDS

Beginning with the Vivaldi *Gloria* in 1972, Abendmusik has produced and presented many major works in the choral/orchestral repertoire, including critically-acclaimed performances of Beethoven, Brahms, Duruflé, Dvorak, Fauré, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Poulenc, Puccini, and Vaughan Williams.

Abendmusik has also welcomed many of America’s most important composers and conductors to the Abendmusik stage. Luminaries such as Randall Thompson, Daniel Pinkham, Aaron Copland, Alice Parker and, more recently, Jake Runestad and Anton Armstrong have captivated Abendmusik’s singers and audiences alike. Robert Shaw, arguably the most influential choral conductor of the twentieth century, conducted the Abendmusik Chorus in a performance of Benjamin Britten’s *War Requiem* in 1981. Mr. Shaw wrote of the chorus, “I have never met a group so handsomely prepared and so quick to respond. I hope they received as much pleasure as they gave.”

Abendmusik’s performances have included commissions of many new works, championing particularly the compositions of Nebraska composers such as Robert Beadell, Marques L.A. Garrett, Kurt Knecht, Brian Pfofner, Jack Rinke, and Tom Trenney. Renowned arrangers Jeremy Bankson, John Hotchkiss, Arthur Harris, David Sharp, Keith Snell, and Richard Webster have scored pieces for the Plymouth Brass, a group featured annually on Abendmusik’s concert series in the popular Last Blast on New Year’s Eve.

Abendmusik has also brought many intriguing works to Nebraska audiences for the first time, most notably Andrew Lloyd Webber’s *Requiem*, David Fanshawe’s *African Sanctus*, John Muehleisen’s *Pietà*, and Craig Hella Johnson’s *Considering Matthew Shepard*. Abendmusik has also “rediscovered” rarely-performed gems from the repertoire such as Horatio Parker’s *Hora novissima*, which was recorded and distributed internationally by Albany Records.

Though best known for its unique productions involving the Abendmusik Chorus and Plymouth Brass, through the years Abendmusik has been the proud presenter of many acclaimed national and international touring ensembles including inspiring performances by the Cambridge Singers, the Vienna Boys Choir, the Jason Max Ferdinand Singers, VOCES8, the Paul Winter Consort, Chanticleer, the American Spiritual Ensemble, the St. Olaf Choir, and the Trinity Choir from Cambridge, England, to name a few.

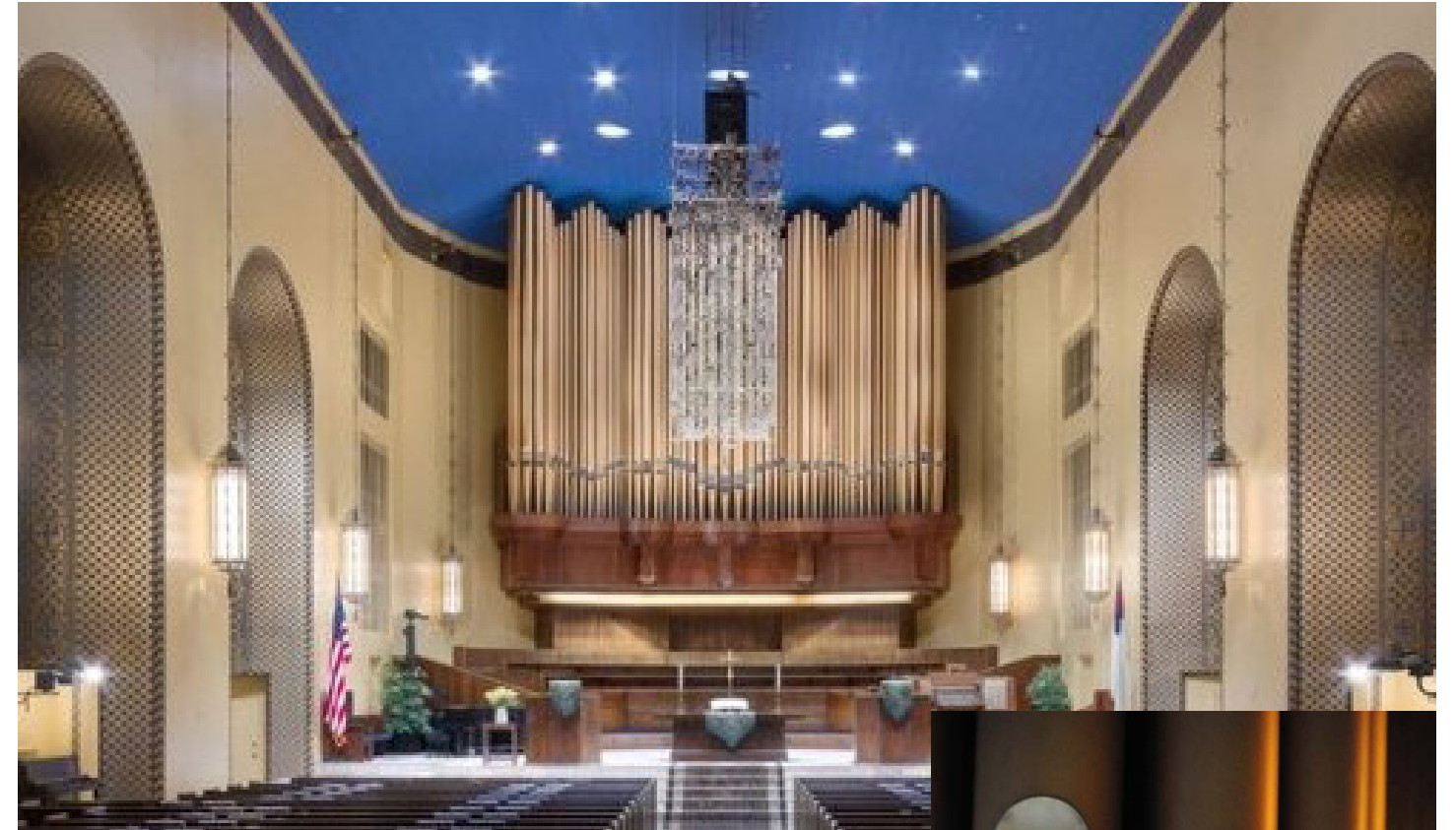


A WORLD OF MUSICAL EXPERIENCES

A devoted Anglophile, Jack Levick often reached across the Atlantic for inspiration. Abendmusik’s ongoing love affair with England prompted concerts of British coronation music, Festivals of Lessons and Carols, reenactments of Royal Weddings, and even the recreation of the Last Night at the Proms. Prolific British composer John Rutter conducted multiple performances with the Abendmusik Chorus and Plymouth Brass. Following a concert, Rutter wrote, “I was simply stunned with your Plymouth Brass. They played the *Gloria* far better than I have ever heard it done before.” Rutter’s mentor and friend Sir David Willcocks became a returning favorite of audiences as well, and his influence on Abendmusik’s tradition is undeniable.

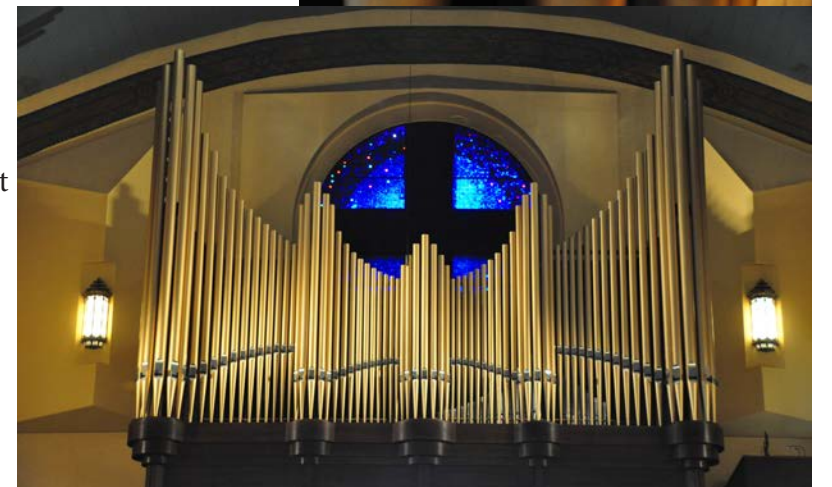


Sir David's frequent visits built strong mutual admiration, and he invited the chorus to be featured in an international choral festival he was leading at Coventry Cathedral in England. The honor of this invitation launched a series of international travels for the Abendmusik Chorus, beginning in England and including later trips to Austria, Italy, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Russia, Estonia, Latvia, and Finland. Many of the choir members' most treasured memories and friendships were shaped through the profound spiritual experiences of the tours which they fondly recount to this day: responding with awe to the grandeur of the English cathedrals; singing for worship in the holy sanctuary of the Vatican; encountering the outpouring of emotion from the Eastern European people so moved by their music and message; and singing music of faith and hope at the Auschwitz concentration camp where faith and hope had once come to die. The tours offered life-changing experiences that deepened the choir's artistic expression and musical commitment.



THE KING OF INSTRUMENTS

One of the most influential events in Abendmusik's history occurred during the 25th anniversary season. After decades of dreaming and planning, fundraising and constructing, First-Plymouth celebrated the installation of its magnificent 110 rank, 6327-pipe Schoenstein organ. The unique design of this incredible instrument includes literally two organs in one: the impressive 4-manual Lied Organ in the chancel; and the resourceful Ruth Marie Amen Organ in the gallery. The great organ of the Great Plains, First-Plymouth's Lied Organ was designed as an artistic gift to the entire community, and sharing this remarkable treasure has become part of Abendmusik's ongoing mission. In 1998, the Lied Organ's dedication was broadcast live on Nebraska Public Television in a spectacular concert featuring the Abendmusik Chorus, the Omaha Symphony Chamber Orchestra, and guest organist Todd Wilson, all under the direction of Abendmusik's own Jack Levick. Over the years, most of the world's foremost organists have performed on the Abendmusik concert series, including Virgil Fox, Frederick Swann, Thomas Murray, William Albright, Hector Olivera, John Scott, Dame Gillian Weir, and Marie-Madeline Duruflé.



A TIME OF TRANSITION AND A NEW BEGINNING

Jack Levick served as Artistic Director of Abendmusik from its inception in 1972 through his departure in October 2003. Thanks to Jack's creativity, vision and devoted artistic leadership, Abendmusik received the Governor's Arts Award in 1988 and the City of Lincoln's Mayor's Arts Award in 1985 and 2003. His thirty-plus-year tenure as founding Artistic Director established Abendmusik's powerful mission and ensured its lasting reputation. Jack has returned frequently to conduct significant milestone events for Abendmusik over the past 20 years.

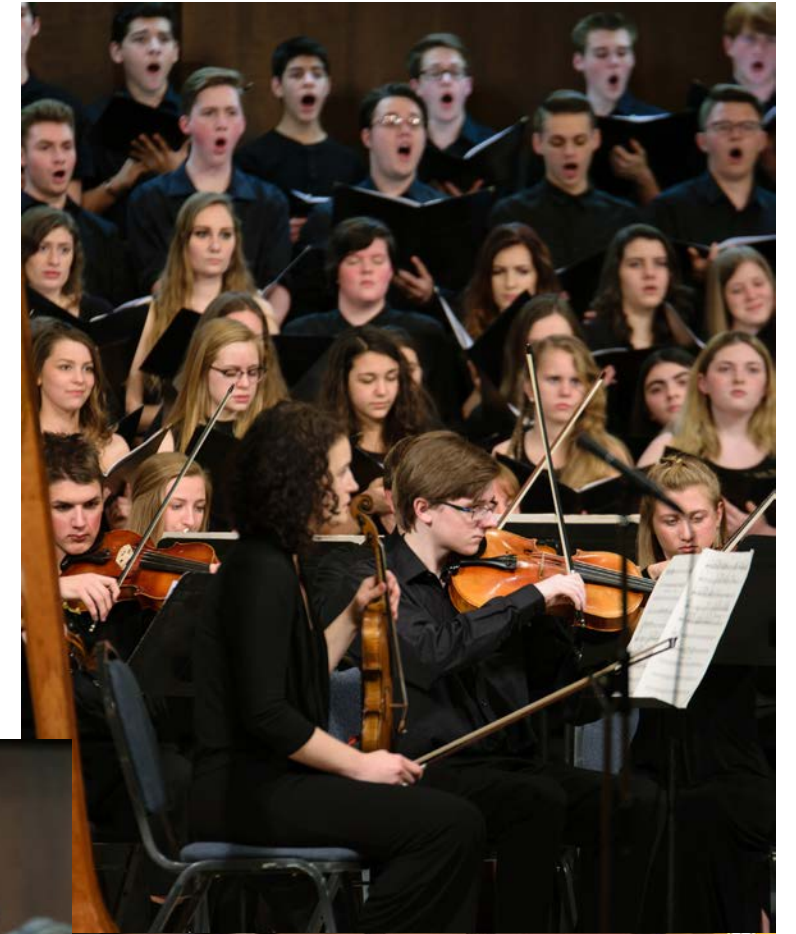
A collaborative spirit and an ongoing commitment to excellence led Abendmusik forward through nearly ten seasons of transition. The baton was handed from Jack Levick to Peter Eklund to Larry Monson to John Cummins and to Jeremy Bankson between the years of 2003 and 2009. These leaders each made significant contributions to affirm Abendmusik's tradition and to encourage its evolution.

Tom Trenney came to Lincoln in 2009 as Minister of Music to First-Plymouth Church and Artistic Director of Abendmusik. While honoring the tradition and spirit of a rich history, Tom has encouraged Abendmusik to expand its outreach to youth and collegiate musicians, to broaden the diversity of featured repertoire and performers, and to make Abendmusik events more accessible to the community.



INSPIRING COLLABORATION

Collaboration has been always at the core of Abendmusik's mission and vision. Five decades of performances have brought the Abendmusik Chorus together with choral ensembles from nearly every college and university in the state. The chorus has also partnered with the Nebraska Choral Arts Society, the Omaha Symphony, Lincoln's Symphony Orchestra, and the Lied Center in particularly memorable concerts over the years. Beginning in 2015, Abendmusik has brought high school choirs and instrumentalists together for an annual Youth Masterworks Festival. This unique choral/orchestral event has expanded so much that this season's performance of Mozart's *Requiem* was held at the Lied Center. Nearly 300 youth played and sang for an audience of more than 1,200—perhaps Abendmusik's largest concert ever.



ABENDMUSIK TODAY

Now in its 50th season, Abendmusik has never been stronger. Thanks to the dedicated leadership of the staff and board members, the strong relationship with First-Plymouth Church and, most importantly, the ongoing support of generous donors and community partners, Abendmusik is poised for growth for the next decade and beyond. Abendmusik will continue to offer free programming into its 51st season and will maintain its commitment to support other nonprofits in the community. In addition to our annual beloved traditions like Christmas with Abendmusik, our Messiah Community Sing, the Last Blast with the Plymouth Brass, the Youth Masterworks Festival, and our collaborative choral/orchestral performances, we will continue to welcome new artists and to commission new music to broaden and deepen our experience with music that inspires.





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Abendmusik's 50th Anniversary Gala

featuring

Abendmusik Chorus and Alumni
Plymouth Brass
Abendmusik Chamber Orchestra
Tom Trenney, Artistic Director
Jack Levick, Guest Conductor
Ariel Merivil, Organist

Sunday, May 29, 2022
4:00 p.m.
First-Plymouth Church, Lincoln, NE

Sponsored by Frank and Beth Thompson
the estate of Laurel Ann Berg Muff
and the Levick Legacy Society

The pre-concert Carillon Concert was performed by Kathie Johnson,
First-Plymouth Carillonneur

Program

Creation Sings!

Ludwig van Beethoven/ arr. Tom Trenney
orchestration by John Rutter (text: Tom Trenney)

This composition is dedicated to the Plymouth Choir in loving memory of
Laurel Ann Berg Muff who sang soprano in Abendmusik concerts for more than
40 years. Today's concert is sponsored, in part, by a gift from her estate.

*Creation sings of our God's grace and glory. The sky gives adoration and praise.
The sun and moon shine God's light on all nations.
The earth and sea resound with praise.
The flowers and forests blooming in beauty reveal the wonders of God's love.
All living creatures unite in thanksgiving; a melody our voices raise.
In harmony, we sing God's praise.*

Hymn 643: Now Thank We All Our God

arr. John Rutter

stanza 1: all; stanza 2: choir; stanza 3: all

John Rutter conducted the Abendmusik Chorus in concerts in the 1990s.

Rise, Shine

Negro spiritual/ arr. Marques L.A. Garrett and Tom Trenney

This piece was commissioned by Abendmusik for a
2020 performance with the American Spiritual Ensemble.

Amazing Grace

arr. Robert Beadell (Text: John Newton)

Ariel Merivil, tenor

This piece was performed by the choir in Coventry Cathedral
on their first international tour in 1994.

Hark, I Hear the Harps Eternal

arr. Alice Parker

This piece was performed by the choir with the composer conducting in 2011.

*Hark, I hear the harps eternal ringing on the farther shore,
As I near those swollen waters with their deep and solemn roar.
And my soul, tho' stain'd with sorrow, fading as the light of day,
Passes swiftly o'er those waters, to the city far away.
Souls have cross'd before me, saintly, to that land of perfect rest;
And I hear them singing faintly in the mansions of the blest.
Refrain: Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, praise the lamb!
Hallelujah, hallelujah, glory to the great I AM!*

Trinity Te Deum

Ēriks Ešenvalds

*We praise thee, O God: we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.
All the earth doth worship thee, the Father everlasting.
To thee all Angels cry aloud; The Heavens, and all the Powers therein.
To thee Cherubim and Seraphim continually do cry,
Holy, Holy, Holy: Lord God of Sabbaoth;
Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty of thy glory.
The glorious company of the Apostles praise thee.
The goodly fellowship of the Prophets praise thee.
The noble army of Martyrs praise thee.
The holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowledge thee;
The Father of an infinite Majesty;
Thine honorable, true, and only Son; Also the Holy Ghost, the Comforter.
Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ.
Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father.
When thou tookest upon thee to deliver man,
Thou didst not abhor the Virgin's womb.
When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death,
Thou didst open the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers.
Thou sittest at the right hand of God in the glory of the Father.
We believe that thou shalt come to be our Judge.
We therefore pray thee, help thy servants,
whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood.
Make them to be numbered with thy Saints in glory everlasting.
Holy, Holy, Holy.*

Hymn 641: When in Our Music

arr. Jeremy Bankson and Richard Webster

Jeremy Bankson was Assistant Conductor of the Abendmusik Chorus and Executive Director of Abendmusik from 2007-2015. His compositions and orchestrations are frequently performed by the Plymouth Brass and the Abendmusik Chorus.

Serenade to Music

Ralph Vaughan Williams (Text: William Shakespeare)

Kendall Reimer, Adrienne Dickson, Rebecca Shane, Drew Duncan,
Ariel Merivil, Brett Epperson, Patrick McNally, soloists

*How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!
Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music
Creep in our ears: soft stillness and the night
Become the touches of sweet harmony.*

*Look, how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold:
There's not the smallest orb that thou behold'st
But in his motion like an angel sings
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins;
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But, whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.
Come, ho! and wake Diana with a hymn:
With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear,
And draw her home with music.*

*I am never merry when I hear sweet music.
The reason is, your spirits are attentive:
The man that hath no music in himself,*

*Nor is not mov'd with concord of sweet sounds, Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils;
The motions of his spirit are dull as night, And his affections dark as Erebus:*

Let no such man be trusted...

*Music! hark! It is your music of the house.
Methinks it sounds much sweeter than by day.
Silence bestows that virtue on it.*

*How many things by season season'd are.
To their right praise and true perfection!*

*Peace, ho! the moon sleeps with Endymion, And would not be awak'd.
(Soft stillness and the night become the touches of sweet harmony.)*

Gloria in excelsis Deo

Antonio Vivaldi

This was the first piece performed by the Abendmusik Chorus
and founder Jack Levick in 1972-73 concert season.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to all people.

Sanctus (from *Requiem*)

Maurice Duruflé

The Abendmusik Chorus has performed the Duruflé *Requiem* frequently,
including a 1974 performance with the composer's wife, Marie-Madeleine Duruflé,
as organist. In 2018, the chorus performed this piece at Kennedy Center
under the direction of Anton Armstrong.

*Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts.
The heavens and the earth are full of Thy glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the One Who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.*

I Was Glad

C. Hubert H. Parry (Text: Psalm 122, vs. 1-3, 6-7)

The Abendmusik Chorus has performed this piece on many special occasions,
including a performance with Sir David Willcocks in 1992
and for Abendmusik's 40th Anniversary Celebration.

*I was glad when they said unto me, We will go into the house of the Lord.
Our feet shall stand in thy gates, O Jerusalem.
Jerusalem is builded as a city that is at unity in itself.
O pray for the peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love thee.
Peace be within thy walls, and plenteousness within thy palaces.*

*Abendmusik Chorus and Alumni***Soprano 1**

Lorraine Beadell Love
Diane Dinnel
Robin Forke
Megan (Armbruster) Franklin
Shaun Harner
Deanne Hyde Boilesen
Jacqueline Josten
Amy (Heusinkvelt) Joyce
Andrea Krill
Michelle Lisec-Talarico
Jane Mehrens
Regina Meyer
Julie A Nordlee
Jessica Rajewich
Kendall Reimer
Deanna Wehrspann

Soprano 2

Sally Buchholz
Lisa Caha
Kristin Clark
Susan Dinsdale
Hillary Doerr Engelhart
Anne Gray
Tari Hendrickson
Krista Lawrence
Ina Sivits Luhning
Elaina Matthews
Cindy Mohr
June Ryan
Autumn Santora
Patricia Smith
Karin L Van Deun

Alto 1

Renee Alexander
Laura Lee Atkinson
Kathryn Boilesen
Susan Briggs
Dori Bush
Victoria Ehly
Ann Finkner
Mary Fischer

Priscilla Handy
Loretta Hellmuth
Catherine Herbener
Rebecca Kouma Shane
Joan Michelsen
Rhonda Neely
Maureen Ose
Phyllis Owen
Darcy Pearcy
Janet Schorfheide
Shelby White
Susan Wood
Leila Zila
Zuri

Alto 2

Barbara Bartle
Ayndrea Bonnett Cannon
Jessica Brauer Echtenkamp
Peggy Campbell
Catherine Corbet
Adrienne C. Dickson
Julia Doerr
Christina Emra-Buchholz
Lydia Fry
Susan Garwood
Susan Goodrich
Sylvia Griffith
Patty Herrman
Alison Knudsen
Patti Lutter
Stephanie Pollock
Jennifer Rutt
Cathy Schlaebitz
Pamela F. Starr
Janet Keiser Woolsoncroft

Tenor 1

Christopher Donell Brown
Matthew Clegg
Brock Denton
Matthew Eschliman
Mark Gealy
Kevin Gunter

Timothy D Johnson III
Phu Le
Jon Michelsen
Joel Wehrspann

Tenor 2

Christopher Boilesen
Kim Clabaugh
Mark Kanitz
John W Reinert
Sebastian Sorensen
Stephen V. Talarico
Dr. A. Frank Thompson
Rich York

Bass 1

Jeremy Bankson
Chase Crispin
Paul Dunn
Marques L. A. Garrett
John Heineman
David Henske
Ryan Knollenberg
Paul Madvig
Ward Jacobson
Jacob Mason
Trey Meyer
Charles B. Muff
Eli Shane
Taylor Sullivan

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John Casey
Foster Collins
David Crews
Randy Dinsdale
Brett Epperson
Jason Hellmuth
Jeremy Kidder
James Kula
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Austin Reinke
Ken Winston

Abendmusik Chamber Orchestra

Flute

John Bailey
Betsy Bobenhouse

Oboe

William McMullen

English horn

Darci Griffith Gamerl

Clarinet

Diane Barger

Bassoon

Karen Sandene

Harp

Heidi Beran

Violin 1

Michael Keelan
David C. Neely
Kim Osborne Salistean

Violin 2

Donna Carnes
Rhonda Neely
Kristie Pfabe

Viola

Sarah Curley
Clark Potter
Cindy Ricker

Cello

Karen Becker
Jessica Dussault

Bass

Stephen Cantarero

Plymouth Brass

Tom Kelly, coordinator

Trumpet

Thomas Kelly
Deborah Bouffard
Ethan Berkebile

Horn

Alan Mattingly
Dalín Plog

Trombone

Ian Rutherford
Dan Iverson
Tim Dickmeyer

Timpani

Tony Falcone

Percussion

Jeremy Spale
Jason Varga

The Gift of Abendmusik

Celebrating 50 years of Abendmusik is a journey through many wonderful memories, not only of the music and those who created it, but also our many Abendmusik patrons who generously supported our concerts through the years.



Ruth Amen was born in Lincoln in 1909. A graduate of Lincoln High and the University of Nebraska, she was a musician and a music educator. She taught in Nebraska, Colorado, and Michigan, and lived for a time in New York where she helped found the New York City Opera Guild. In 1968, she returned to Lincoln, and four years later, Jack Levick arrived, and the first Abendmusik performance was held. Ruth was an active patron of Lincoln's musical arts, and she supported Abendmusik from the beginning. Jack and Ruth were kindred spirits, and they often attended Lied Center and Lincoln Symphony performances together. He was once introduced as her son, and they delighted in the misunderstanding so much that it became a running joke. Ruth's generosity until her passing in 2002 helped fuel Abendmusik during its first 30 years. The Ruth Marie Amen Gallery Organ in the balcony of First Plymouth and the Ruth the Ruth Marie

Amen Performing Arts Fund at the Lincoln Community Foundation are both lasting legacies of her partnership in "music that inspires."

Norma Somerheiser was born in 1934 and, like Ruth, was a Lincoln native and a graduate of Lincoln High and the University of Nebraska. Norma was well rounded, very athletic, especially in her youth, but also a lover of music. She was great with numbers and worked for Lincoln Telephone for 42 years. She was also very warm and personable and loved sharing stories as an active volunteer with the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, an organization that Ruth helped found. Norma was a member of First Plymouth Church and a frequent audience member for Abendmusik concerts. Without fanfare, she quietly included Abendmusik in her estate plans. After her passing in 2018, her generosity began providing an annual season sponsorship, sharing her joy and inspiration with all of us and with new generations of concert-goers.



Celebrating 50 years of Abendmusik is filled with wonderful memories, but it is also exciting to look to the future. With five decades of musical excellence and a tradition of generous support by Ruth, Norma, and many, many others, Abendmusik has a solid foundation on which to build the next 50 years. We invite you to join us! During this anniversary year, you may wish to designate a gift to the Levick Legacy Society to honor Abendmusik's founder Jack Levick and to provide a concert sponsorship in his name each season. You may also choose to leave your own legacy by including Abendmusik at First Plymouth in your estate plans; let us know how we can help. However you choose to donate, thank you for giving the gift of "music that inspires" to future Abendmusik audiences!



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Since March 2020, Abendmusik has offered a series of online concert fundraisers for local non-profits, including People's City Mission, the Malone Center, The Food Bank of Lincoln, Cedars, Mourning Hope, and Matt Talbot Kitchen and Outreach. Abendmusik remains committed to being an active community partner.

We believe that music empowers us to love and serve one another long after the concert ends. May the Abendmusik you experience today inspire you to reach out with more compassion and empathy in the days ahead.



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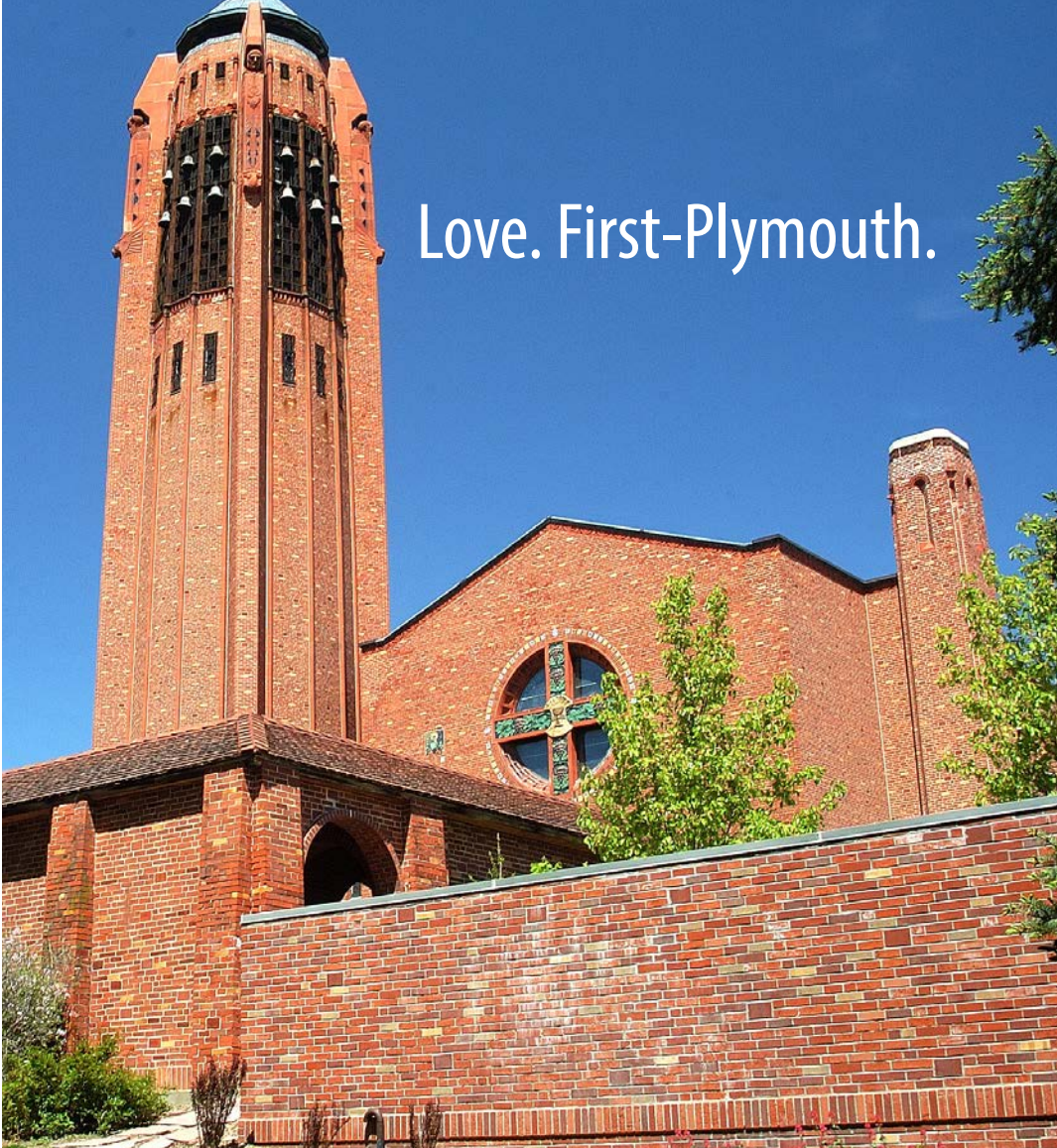
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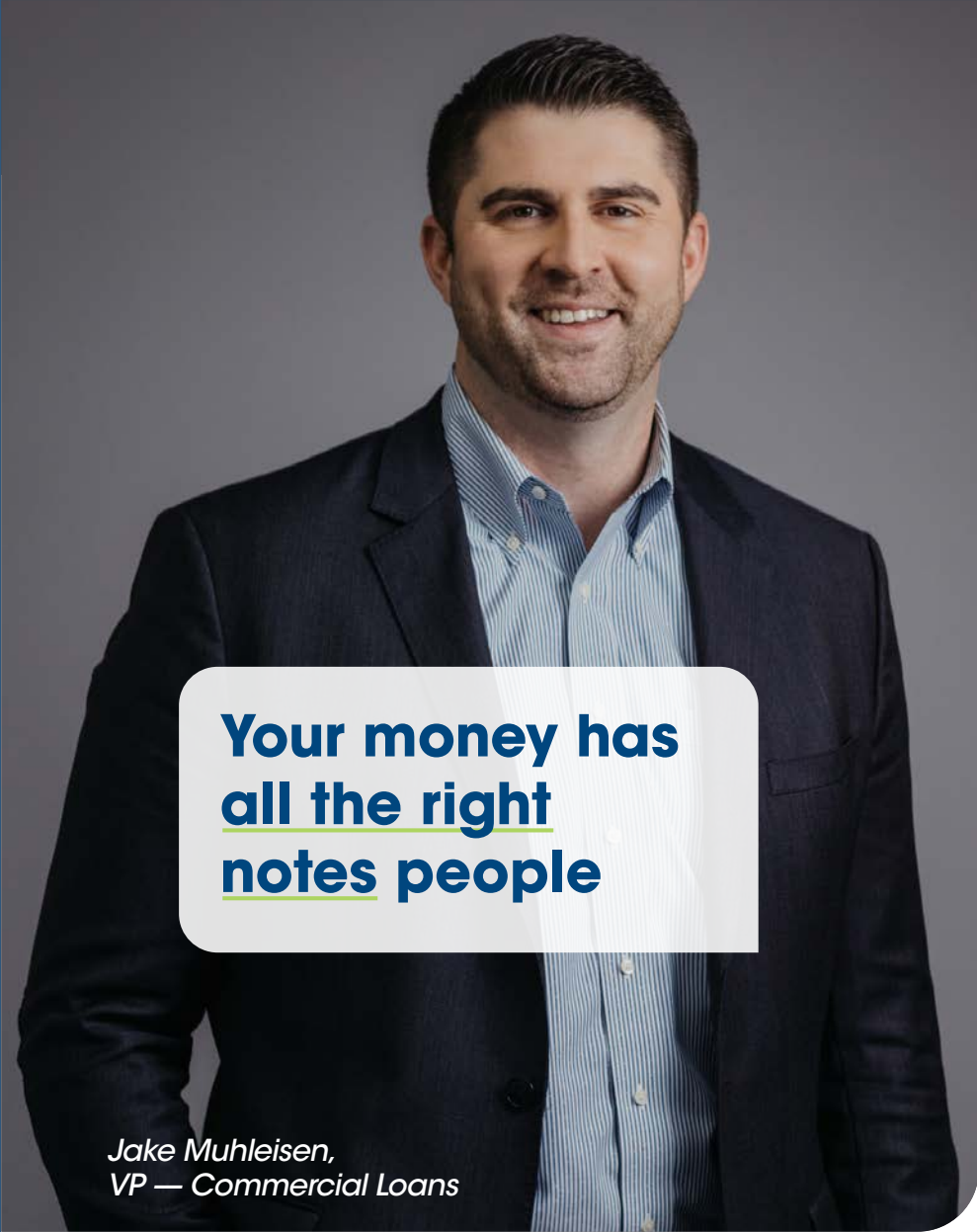


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