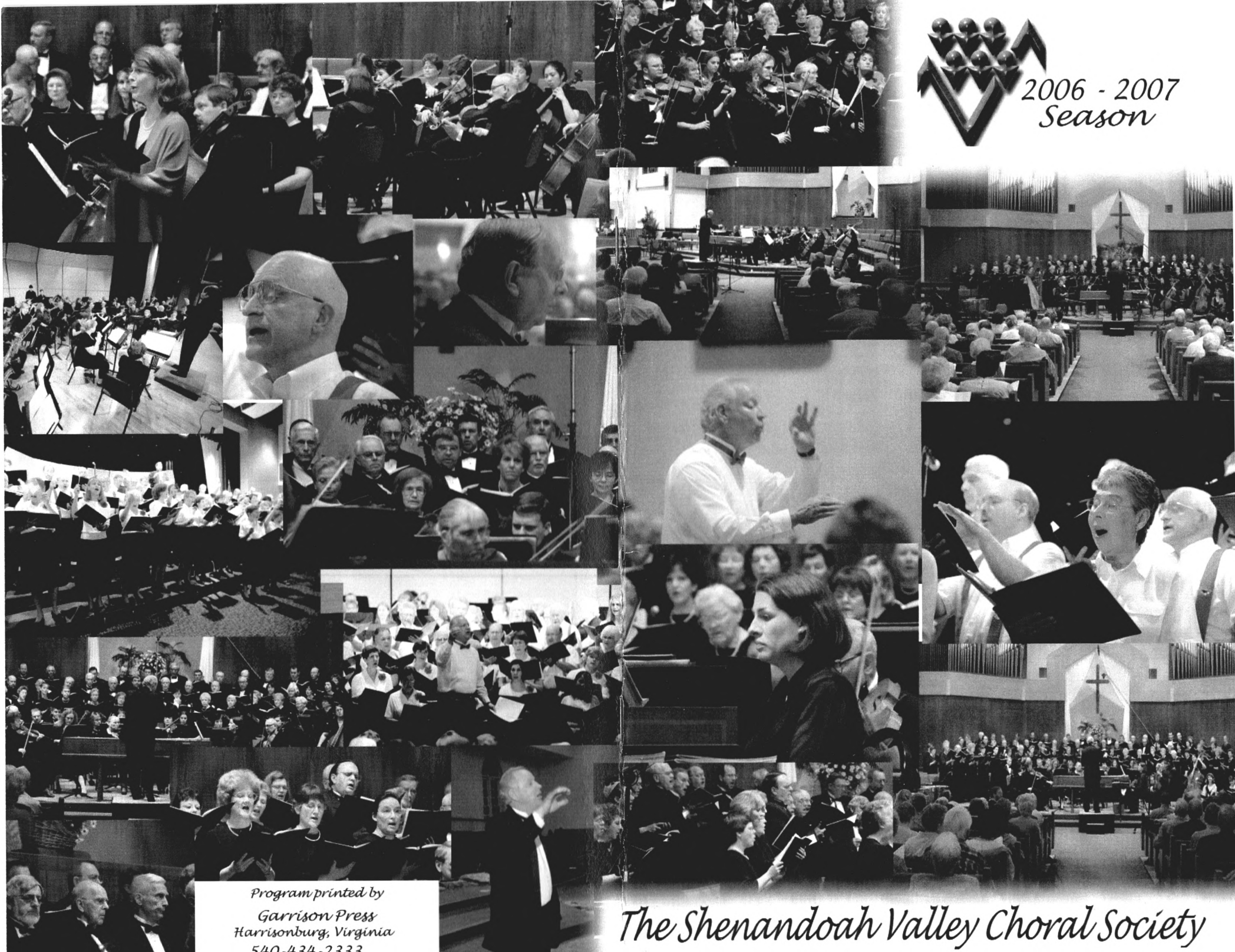


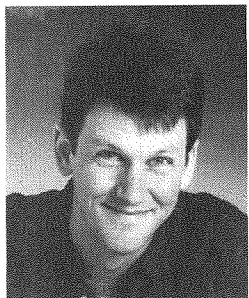


2006 - 2007
Season



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The Shenandoah Valley Choral Society



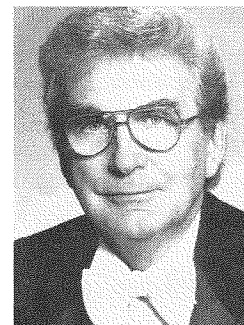
DAVID NEWMAN, Baritone

American baritone David Allen Newman enjoys an active and varied concert career throughout North America. Hailed as "electrifying" by the Washington Post and noted by the Sacramento Bee for his "rather perfect oratorio voice," he is in particular demand as a Bach specialist. He has performed Messiah with Tafelmusik, Portland Baroque Orchestra, Jacksonville Symphony, and with Masterwork Chorus in Carnegie Hall; St. John Passion with the American Bach Soloists, Carmel Bach Festival, Chorale Delaware, and the Bach Chamber Orchestra of Honolulu; and St. Matthew Passion with the Bach Society of St. Louis, Baroque Choral Guild, San Francisco Bach Choir, and a national tour with the combined forces of Santa Fe Pro Musica and the Smithsonian Chamber Players.

In his debut with the Washington Bach Consort, Mr. Newman was noted by the Baltimore Sun for his "exquisitely-phrased, velvet-toned Mache dich, mein Herz." Other notable appearances include Bach's B Minor Mass and Christmas Oratorio with The Bethlehem Bach Choir, Coffee Cantata, Easter Oratorio, and Christmas Oratorio with the Santa Fe Bach Festival, and Haydn's Creation with The Honolulu Symphony. He was also a featured soloist in the Sorbonne's 2003 Festival Berlioz in Paris with the UC Davis Symphony Orchestra.

He appears regularly as a guest artist with the Four Nations Ensemble, including performances in Lincoln Center and Merkin Hall, and has also performed with the Spoleto Festival, Opera Company of Philadelphia, Metropolitan Opera Guild, Opera Birmingham, Philadelphia Orchestra, and the Russian National Orchestra. Mr. Newman has taught voice at the University of California, Davis and San Jose State University.

Dedication



The Shenandoah Valley Choral Society dedicates this performance evening to the memory of Dr. Gordon L. Ohlsson, our founding Music Director. Dr. Ohlsson was Head of the Music Department at Madison College when he volunteered to organize a chorus of local church choir and other singers in the Shenandoah Valley to be a part of a workshop experience for student conductors in the Shenandoah Valley Music Festival at Orkney

Springs. The American Symphony Orchestra League held annual workshops during the festival at Orkney Springs for conductors, using orchestra players from around the nation. A chorus was needed for the ensemble to perform Beethoven's 9th Symphony. Dr. Ohlsson was asked to prepare the singers to perform the final movement, "Ode to Joy" with the symphony orchestra. He and his wife, Mary, our piano accompanist, produced such excellent results that a reviewer for the Washington Evening Star opined that Dr. Ohlsson's choir "sang like angels" following a public performance of Beethoven's masterpiece in Woodstock Virginia in 1970. Again in 1971 a "call for singers" went out and The Creation by Haydn and Brahms' German Requiem were performed in rapid succession with the Orkney Springs orchestra. The "fuse had been lit" and the experience of public performance with orchestral accompaniment had enthused the singing group which became the Shenandoah Valley Choral Society. With that enthusiasm came confidence that we could perform anything that Dr. Ohlsson thought possible. In 1973 the group incorporated and became a non-profit legal entity, performing at least three works a year. Dr. Ohlsson continued to lead the Choral Society until 1980. An outstanding baritone soloist, Dr. Ohlsson used his wonderful voice with frequent illustrations of the quality of music that he expected from the chorus. He gave ten years of voice lessons to many choral singers during the rehearsals. He retired from Southeastern Louisiana University in 1987 and resided in Deland, Florida where he died in March of this year at age 85 years.

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The Shenandoah Valley Choral Society

presents

An Evening with

Brahms

Six Love Songs
Lied Solos



German Requiem

Brenda Witmer, Soprano

David Newman, Baritone

with

4-hand piano accompaniment

Amy Robertson and Debbie McGuire

Curtis Nolley, Director

Friday April 20, 2007 7:30 P.M.

Bridgewater Church of the Brethren

Bridgewater, Virginia

Johannes Brahms (1833 - 1897)

A German Requiem (Ein Deutsches Requiem)

For many years Brahms had been preoccupied with the idea of composing a Requiem, but only in 1866, when he was 33, did he begin serious work on it. It was completed the following year, with the exception of the fifth movement, which was added later. In its incomplete form Ein Deutsches Requiem (A German Requiem) was first heard in Bremen Cathedral on Good Friday 1868. The final version was performed in 1869 at Leipzig's famous concert-hall, the Gewandhaus.

Brahms may have written the Requiem in memory of his mother, who died in 1856; it is equally possible that he had in mind his great friend and mentor, Robert Schumann, whose madness and tragic death profoundly affected the young Brahms. Schumann's widow, Clara, was of the opinion that the work was in memory of the composer's mother. Brahms himself gave no indication of whose memorial the Requiem might be, if indeed it was any one person's. As with all great music, the universal message of its vision transcends the circumstances of its conception.

The title, Ein Deutsches Requiem, reflects the fact that Brahms selected verses from the Lutheran Bible rather than employing the customary Latin. He compiled the text himself from both Old and New Testaments, and from the Apocrypha. The result has little in common with the conventional Requiem Mass, omitting as it does the horrors of the Last Judgment, which are such a striking feature of the liturgical Requiem Mass, or any final plea for mercy or prayers for the dead. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the title of "Requiem" has at times been called into question. It is clear that Brahms was a deeply serious thinker, a philosopher even, with an intimate knowledge of the Scriptures. He proclaimed that he did not want to write a Requiem for the dead, but one to comfort the living, and it is in this context that the German Requiem needs to be considered. Despite its unorthodox text, the work was immediately recognized as a masterpiece.

The similarity of the opening and closing sections unifies the whole work, while the funeral-march of the second movement is balanced by the triumphant theme of the resurrection in the sixth. Similarly, the baritone solo in the third movement, "Lord make me to know the measure of my days..", is paralleled in the fifth by the gentleness of the soprano solo, "Ye now sorrowful....shall again behold me and shall be joyful..". The fourth section, "How lovely is thy dwelling place..", therefore stands at the center of the work, framed as it is by the solemnity of the first three movements and the transition from grief to the certainty of comfort in the last three.

Brahms' masterful fusion of robust classical counterpoint and romantic lyricism, heard at its most visionary in A German Requiem, has ensured the work's enduring reputation as one of the supreme masterpieces of the choral repertoire.

Six Love Song Waltzes (Liebeslieder Waltzes)

A reserved, studious North German, Brahms settled permanently in Vienna, after several previous stays there, in 1868. Although he wrote many works for chorus, the Liebeslieder (Love Song) Waltzes reflect most vividly the light-hearted influence of his adopted hometown, and of Vienna's native sons, Schubert and Strauss. A first set of waltzes (Opus 53, Nos. 1-18) for vocal quartet or chorus and piano duet was published in 1868, and premiered in Vienna with Brahms and Clara Schumann at the keyboard. They were a big hit. By popular (and publisher's) demand, Brahms produced a sequel, the Neue Liebeslieder (New Love Song-Opus 65 Nos. 1-15), in 1874.

This evening we will be doing four pieces from the first set (Opus 52, Nos. 6, 9 and 11) and two from the Neue Liebeslieder (Opus 65, Nos. 7 and 14). The short pieces provide contrasts within the waltz meter by varying tempo and spirit. Most are built of exact repetitions of musical phrases, in a folk-dance style. The final piece, "Now, ye Muses, be hushed," is different, however. Here the meter expands into 9/4, and the form is a passacaglia (a variation form over a repeating bass line) with a contrasting middle section. The text, chosen from a poem by Goethe, concludes that comfort comes only from the inspiration of art.

Brahms Lieder

One of the great joys of every serious singer is the vocal music of Johannes Brahms. The scope, variety, depth of emotion, and sheer artfulness of this body of work is unmatched in the romantic repertoire. Very few composers have written so rich a variety of works for the voice that somehow speak so directly to the soul of the performer and listener, though Schubert and Mahler are certainly worthy of the same esteem. Choral singers love this music unabashedly -- choral directors, too. And this genre was certainly important to Brahms -- smaller/shorter vocal works total more than half of his musical output. This evening our soloists, Brenda Witmer and David Newman, will sing four of Brahms' most beloved songs for us.

Program

Johannes Brahms

Six Love Songs

Op. 52, Nos. 12, 13, 15, 18; Op. 65, Nos. 7 and 14

I. A Tremor's in the branches

A tremor's in the branches,
a bird has lost his pinions
through yonder tree.
Thus my heart within me, thro' all it's depths is trembling;
In love and joy and sorrow, I think of thee.

II. Nightingale, thy sweetest song

Nightingale, thy sweetest song
sounds when night is darkling.
Kiss me, oh, my heart's delight,
When no star is sparkling in darkness.

Two Brahms Songs

David Newman, Baritone

Wie bist du, meine Konigin
(How blissful you are, my queen)
How blissful you are, my queen,
when you are gentle and good!
Merely smile, and spring fragrance wafts
through my spirit blissfully!

The brightness of freshly blooming roses,
shall I compare it to yours?
Ah, soaring over all that blooms
is your bloom, blissful!

Wander through dead wastelands,
and green shadows will be spreading,
even if fearful sultriness
broods there without end...blissfully!

Let me Die in your arms!
It is in them that death itself,
even if the sharpest pain
rages in my breast...is blissful!

Von ewiger Liebe

(Of eternal love)

Dark, how dark it is in the forest and field;
Night has fallen; the world now is silent.
Nowhere a light and nowhere smoke.
Yea, now even the lark is silent.

From yonder village there comes the young lad,
taking his beloved home.
He leads her past the willow bushes,
talking so much, and of so many things.

"If you suffer shame and if you grieve,
if you suffer disgrace before others because of me,
then our love shall be ended ever so fast,
as fast as we once came together;
It shall go with the rain and go with the wind,
as fast as we once came together."

Then says the maiden, the maiden says,
"Our love shall never end!
Steel is firm and iron is firm,
yet our love is firmer still.

Iron and steel can be recast by the smith
but who would transform our love?
Iron and steel can melt;
Our love, our love will have to last forever!"

III. Bird in air will stray afar
Bird in air will stray afar,
Seeks a sheltered bower;
So a heart must find ere its life can flower.

IV. From yon hills the torrent speeds
From yon hills the torrent speeds,
And the rain ne'er ceases.
Would that I might give to thee,
Hundred thousand kisses!

V. Locksmith, Ho!
Locksmith, ho!
A hundred padlocks!
Bring me padlocks great and small!
I will fasten for the slanderous lips with them
I'll fasten once for all!

Two Brahms Songs

Brenda Witmer, soprano

Botschaft
(Message)
Blow, little breeze, softly and sweetly
around the cheeks of the beloved one.
Play tenderly in her curls,
hasten not hurriedly away!
If she then perhaps should ask
how I, poor wretch, am faring,
say to her: "Unending was his misery
and most critical his condition.
But now can he hope again
to joyfully return to life,
for you, gracious one, are thinking of him!"

Wiegenlied (Cradle Song)

Good evening, good night,
with roses bedecked,
and carnations adorned,
slip under the quilt.
Tomorrow morning, if God wills,
you will awaken again.

Good evening, good night,
with angels to keep watch,
they'll show you in your dreams
the little Christ child's tree.
Sleep now, happy and sweet;
behold in your dreams: Paradise.

VI. Now, ye Muses, be hushed
Now, ye Muses, be hushed!

You have sought to tell,
But how vainly,
Of sorrow and joy
swaying a fond lover's heart;
Ye the heart's cruel wounds
cannot heal from love's barbed arrow.
But his torments to assuage,
Oh, that ye only can do.
Oh, ye kind ones only can do.

A German Requiem

Op. 45

I. Chorus

Blessed are they that mourn,
for they shall have comfort.-Matthew 5
They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.
They go forth and weep,
and bear precious seed,
shall doubtless return with rejoicing
bringing their sheaves with them.-Psalm 126

II. Chorus

Behold all flesh is as the grass,
and all the goodliness of man is as the flower of grass.
For lo, the grass withers, and the flower decayeth... -I Peter, I
Therefore, be patient, O my brethren,
until the coming of Christ.
See how the farmer waits
for the precious fruit of the earth,
and hath long patience until he receives
the early and the latter rains.
So be ye patient. -James 5
But yet, the Lord's work endureth forevermore.
The redeemed of the Lord shall return again,
and come rejoicing unto Zion.
Joy everlasting upon their heads shall be.
These shall be their portion.
Tears and sighing shall flee from them.

Johannes Brahms

III. Baritone & Chorus

Lord, make me to know,
the measure of my days on earth,
to consider my frailty that I must perish.
Surely, all my days here are as an handbreath to thee,
and my lifetime is as naught to Thee.
Verily, mankind walketh in a vain show,
and their best state is vanity.
Man passeth away like a shadow.
He is disquieted in vain.
he heapeth on riches and cannot tell who shall gather them.
And now, O Lord, what do I wait for?
My hope is in Thee. - Psalm 84
But the righteous souls are in the hand of God,
Nor pain nor grief shall nigh them come.

Intermission

IV. Chorus

How lovely is thy dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!
For my soul, it longeth, yea, fainteth
for the courts of the Lord.
My soul and body crieth out,
yea, for the living God.
Blessed are they that dwell in thy house.
They praise Thy name evermore! -Psalm 84

V. Soprano & Chorus

Ye now are sorrowful.
Wherefore, ye shall again behold me,
and your hearts shall be joyful. -John 16
Yea, I will comfort you,
as one whom his mother comforteth.
Look upon me; you know that for a little time
labor and sorrow were mine,
but at the last, I have found comfort. -Ecclesiasticus 51

VI. Baritone & Chorus

Here on earth have we no continuing place,
wherefore, we seek one to come.-Hebrews 13
Lo, I unfold unto you a mystery:
we shall not all sleep when he cometh,

but we shall all be changed;
 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,
 at the hour of the trumpet.
 For the trumpet shall sound,
 and the dead shall be raised incorruptible,
 and we shall be changed.
 Then that of old was written,
 The same shall be brought!
 For death shall be swallowed up in victory.
 Grave, where is thy triumph?
 Death, where is thy sting?-I Corinthians 15
 Worthy art Thou to be praised, Lord of honor and Might!
 For Thou hast earth and heaven created,
 And for Thy good pleasure all things have their being,
 and were created. -Revelation 4

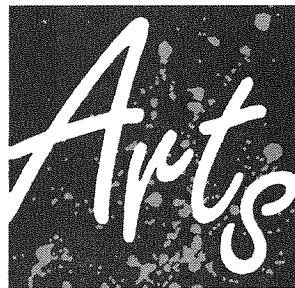
VII. Chorus

Blessed are the dead
 which die in the Lord from henceforth.
 Saith the Spirit,
 "they that rest from their labors,
 and their works do follow after them."-Revelation 14

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Shenandoah Valley Choral Society Singers

Sopranos

Dorothy Anderson
 Lois B. Bowman
 Doris K. Boyer
 Miriam Clark
 Suzanne Cockley
 Lisa Dunlap
 Karen Early-Williams
 Linda J. Finks
 Nancy Hanna
 Abigail Hostetter
 Pat Hughes
 Miriam Kauffman
 Julia Kraus
 Betty Leidal
 Lisa Mast
 Kathleen M. Molinari
 Grace N. Mumaw
 Leona Myers
 Betty Myers
 Edie Pritt
 Maria Prytula
 June Rickel
 Barbara Riddleberger
 Mary Ellen Rublee
 Cara D. Salmon
 Mildred Stoltzfus
 Mazie K. Wampler
 Phyllis Wine
 Anne Wright

Altos

Julia Alleman
 Bethel Arefaine
 Jennifer A. Brown
 Kate Butterfield
 Christine Carpenter
 Patricia Costie
 Margaret K. Dent
 Ann D. Farrell
 Samantha Gangwer
 Dorcas Good
 Mary Green
 Wendy Pierce Haines
 Betty Hoskins
 Rebekah Houff
 Carol LaSpina
 Lois Martin

Debbie McGuire

Amber Olinger
 Evelyn M. Sabino
 Elaine H. Schaefer
 Audrey Shenk
 Linda Shifflett
 Virginia Spicher
 Rhonda Steele
 Jo Artz Umberger
 Cara Walton
 Dorothy Jean Weaver
 Brenda Wilkinson
 Kay Woolf
 Margaret Wurst
 Julianne Zerkel

Tenors

Richard Boyer
 Linda Bradley
 Darren Campbell
 Brittany Davis
 Charles Davis
 Dwayne Hartman
 John Held
 Ray E. Horst
 Luke Hudnall
 Joe Jennings
 Robert F. Jochen
 John Kauffman
 Jay B. Landis
 Ronald Matthews
 Nathan Mitchel
 Ann C. Ridder
 Ed Stoltzfus

Bass

Neel B. Ackerman
 Chuck Arnold
 Adam Blagg
 Leonard Clymer
 David Cockley
 Jonathan Cranston
 Tom DeVore
 Ted Flory
 Richard Forbes
 Preston Hadley
 Richard E. Hayes

Ian Hinkle
 Elroy W. Kauffman
 Eugene Lantz
 Knute Leidal
 Dwayne Martin
 Dwight E. Miller
 Sam Miller
 Clarence M. Moyers
 Wilson Myers
 Bill Reed
 Don Tyson
 David A. VanPelt
 William H. Voige
 Richard Wurst
 Richard L. Yoder

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