

'DEAR LORD AND FATHER OF MANKIND'

PROGRAMME NOTE

This setting of 'Dear Lord and Father of Mankind' is scored for SATB choir and a vocal quartet comprising one soloist from each of the four sections. The words were written by the American Quaker poet, John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892). I have chosen to take five of the six verses that were set to music by Hubert Parry (1848-1918) to the tune, 'Repton'. I do not believe that it is possible to improve upon Parry's beautifully structured and deeply felt melody. Instead, I have sought to focus on different forms of choral texture. For me, the words and music of the original hymn convey three specific qualities: purity, yearning and hope. To reflect a sense of purity I have alternated the full choral sound with brief passages sung by the four soloists. I have also incorporated several single-line phrases and short periods of unison singing to affirm a pure tone. The impression of yearning is presented through the use of suspension and of the interval of the falling second (normally the minor second). And the feeling of hope comes with the sounding of the final chord of E major in a piece which is largely based on the Aeolian mode beginning on E. There is an overall form of ABABA but with each respective repetition containing slight variation and an element of harmonic surprise. The composition lasts approximately 4:25.

DEAR LORD AND FATHER OF MANKIND

John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892)

James Robertson (1959-)

Adagio ♩ = 65

SOPRANO *solo mp*
Dear Lord and Father of man - kind, for - give, for - give.

ALTO *solo mp*
for - give our foo-ish ways, our fool-ish ways.

TENOR

BASS

6 *tutti mp* *slight rall.* *mp a tempo*
Re-clothe us in our right-ful mind; in pur-er lives thy ser-vice find, thy ser-vice

tutti mp
Re - clothe us in our right-ful mind; in pur-er lives thy ser-vice

mp *mp*
our right-ful mind; in pur-er lives thy ser-vice

mp
our right-ful mind;

12 *mp*
find. In sim-ple trust like theirs who heard, be-side the

mp
find. be - side the Syr-ian sea, be-side the

mp
find. In sim-ple trust like theirs who heard,

mp *mp*
in dee-per re - v'rence, praise. be - side the Syr-ian sea,

19

mf

Sy-rian sea.____ Let us like them,____ rise up and

mf

Sy-rian sea.____ Let us, like them, with - out a word, _

mf

The gra-cious cal - ling_ of the Lord, Let us, like them, with - out a word, rise up and

mf

The gra-cious cal - ling_ of the Lord, Let us, like them, with - out a word,

//

25

f

fol-low thee.____

f

fol-low, fol - low.

f

fol - low thee.

solo mp

O Sab - bath rest by Gal - li - lee,____

f

Fol - low___ thee.

solo mp

O calm___ of hills a -

//

33

mp *slight rall.* *a tempo*

Where Je - sus knelt to share with thee.

mp

Where___ Je - sus knelt to share,

tutti mp

by Gal-li - lee.____

tutti mp

Where Je - sus knelt to share, the____

tutti mp

bove.____

Where___ Je - sus knelt to share,

40 *mp* the si-lence of e-ter-ni - ty. _____

mp in-ter-pre- ted by love. Till

8 si-lence of e-ter-ni-ty. _____

mp Drop thy still dew's of quiet - ness, _____

//

47

Take from our souls the strain and stress, _____

all our striv-ings cease; Take from our souls the strain and stress, *mf*

till all our striv-ings cease. _____ And let our

Take from our souls the strain and stress, _____

//

53 *mf* And let our or-dered lives con - fess the beau-ty of thy peace, _____ thy peace. *f* *mp*

mf And let our or-dered lives con - fess the beau-ty of thy peace. *mf* *with much warmth* *3* *mp*

8 or - dered lives con - fess the beau - ty of thy peace, _____ thy peace. *f* *mp*

mf And let our or-dered lives con-fess thy peace. _____ *f* *mp*

60 *solo mp* $\text{♩} = 60$ *tutti p*

Breathe through the heats of our des - ire, _____ Let sense be

solo mp 3
Thy cool-ness and thy balm; _____

solo mp Breathe through; _____

solo mp *tutti p*
thy _____ balm; _____ let sense be

//

67

dumb, let flesh re - tire: _____

tutti p
let flesh re - tire: _____

tutti p
let flesh re - tire: _____ speak through the earth - quake wind and

dumb, let flesh re - tire: _____ speak

//

70 , *with reverence*

O still _____ small voice _____ of _____ calm.

, *with reverence*

O still _____ voice _____ of _____ calm.

, *with reverence*

fire, _____ O still _____ voice _____ of _____ calm.

with reverence

through the earth-quake wind and fire, _____ of _____ calm.