

2002 MEMORIAL DAY CONCERT
“Lest We Forget”¹

Good evening ladies and gentlemen. We are the Mormon Choir of Washington D. C. and we welcome you to our Memorial Day Concert...”Lest We Forget.”

A wise man once said, "Courage is almost a contradiction in terms. It means a strong desire to live...taking the form of a readiness to die." ²

Tonight we honor those who loved life enough to die for it. We hope...and indeed we pray that our performance this evening will be a fitting memorial to those who laid down their lives that we might live in this great and free nation.

It is, therefore, to their memory that we dedicate this concert...”Lest We Forget.”

Battle Hymn of the Republic
America the Dream Goes On

“Lest we forget.” From flowers in fence lines to towering beams of light...Americans remember those who died September eleventh. And we say we will never forget. But years become decades and one generation replaces another.

With the passage of time and people it is important that we make the effort to remember. One place of remembrance began as a Union cemetery located on a hillside overlooking the Potomac River and the city of Washington.

The Choir now pays tribute to the many thousands of our fellow citizens who lie in Arlington National Cemetery and in other places marked or unmarked; known or unknown.

Each Life that Touches Ours for Good
Morning Breaks on Arlington

Some of our greatest heroes are those who“...Are willing to bear one another’s burdens, that they may be light...and are willing to mourn with those that mourn...and comfort those that stand in need of comfort...”³

As Americans, we should remember that we didn’t go to war without our allies. One such faithful ally is Australia. They fought shoulder to shoulder with us in the First World War, the Second World War, the Korean War, in Viet Nam, and in the Gulf War.

Tenor soloist, Skip Baird, will now sing an Australian ballad...a song about the sacrifice and sadness of World War One. He will be accompanied on the guitar by Paul Battista.

¹ Narration written and delivered by Kenneth A. Jarvis

² Anonamous

³ Mosiah 18:8-9

The Women will then sing a song of comfort and promise to those who are hurting and troubled. They will then be joined by the men in asking a Gaelic Blessing of deep peace.

And the Band Played Waltzing Matilda (solo)

Art Thou Troubled (women)

A Gaelic Blessing

When it come to keeping up the moral of the troops and the families back home, nothing is quite as effective as music. The Choir will now perform two popular songs from the past. The men will sing a David Harden arrangement of George M. Cohan's, "Yankee Doodle Boy" followed by the ladies bringing back memories of the Andrew Sisters with "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy." That, of course, makes a perfect introduction for our three trumpeters playing, "Bugler's Holiday."

The concluding song in this group starts out as a bold, joyous song celebrating the return of a war hero. Toward the end, however, we hear doubt and fear creep into the music as they realize what they might really see "When Johnny Comes Marching Home."

Yankee Doodle (w/solo)

Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy

Bugler's Holiday

When Johnny Comes Marching Home

This land of ours...this "one nation under God" is truly "...a land of promise, a land which is choice above all other lands..."⁴ "...And whatsoever nation shall possess it shall be free from bondage, and from captivity, and from all other nations under heaven, if they will but serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ..."⁵

Is it any wonder that the words of our next song "...Give me your tired your poor, your huddled masses yearning to be breath free..."⁶ would be so similar to the scripture, "Come unto me all ye that are labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."⁷

Do we Americans not see our responsibility to remember that, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me."⁸

Although we come here today to honor service members past and present, we should remember that their services would not be needed if mankind would replace hatred with help and loathing with love. The peacemaker is also a patriot.

⁴ 2 Nephi 1:5

⁵ Ether 2:12

⁶ "The New Colossus" by Emma Lazarus.

⁷ Matt. 11:28

⁸ Matt. 25:40

Peacemaking is usually done with small quiet acts. One neighbor fixes a meal for another. A Jewish youth group works at a Protestant homeless shelter on Christmas Day in order that their Christian friends can spend their holy day with family. A visit to a sick friend. Two neighborhood churches come together to offer their facilities to a tornado ravaged school.

The task is daunting but not impossible. We must start at home and in our own neighborhoods where “we often live side by side but do not communicate heart to heart.”⁹

But with the responsibility to serve comes a profound blessing. In these troubled times it is a great comfort to know that God’s promise to us has not changed from the time of Joshua. “I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee...Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.”¹⁰

The next three songs pay tribute to the many different people from many different lands who came together to make this nation that we call “The United States of America.”

Give Me Your Tired, Your Poor
So Many Voices Sing America’s Song (w/solo)
God Bless the USA (w/solo)

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for coming. We hope that our performance not only entertained you but strengthen you feeling of patriotism. Before closing we’d like to leave you these sobering words from the sixth President of the United States of America, John Quincy Adams. “Posterity--you will never know how much it has cost my generation to preserve your freedom. I hope you will make good use of it.”¹¹

Thank you...good night...and may God Bless America.

An American Tribute
America, the Beautiful (w/ solo & audience)

ENCORE
God Bless America (w/audience)

⁹ Thomas S. Monson, “With Hand and Heart,” General Conference, October, 1971.

¹⁰ Joshua 1:5,9

¹¹ July 4, 1837