



Calvary by the Sea Lutheran Church

“Sharing the Blessing of God’s Grace with Aloha”

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“Words of Grace”

A Cantata for Mixed Voices and Accompaniment

by

Bruce Kau

Offered by the Calvary Choir

Jon Osorio, Tenor

Kahu Tim Mason, Narrator

Ina Young, Keyboards

Good Friday

March 25, 2016

7 pm

Words of Grace, a cantata by Bruce Kau, was composed in 2008, and revised in 2014. It was composed specifically for presentation now, Holy Week at Calvary by the Sea Lutheran Church. It is a musical and theological meditation on the crucifixion of Jesus, and utilizes the Gospel accounts as well as Bruce's own commentary on that day's events.

This work was composed for the Calvary Choir and soloist, Jon Osorio. The cantata consists of seven movements (the seven "words") and a prologue—eight movements in all. It is written in a non-pretentious style which is easily understood by the listener as well as the singer. The cantata is surprisingly lyrical with long-phrased arching melodies that are never ends in themselves. The very melodies and harmonies, the use of dissonance and consonance, communicate the intention and meaning of the text.

Traditional musical forms are incorporated into the compositional language. One finds *ground bass* (Fourth Word: "My God, My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me?"), and *canon* (Sixth Word: "It Is Finished"). At the same time, the cantata integrates unexpected techniques such as a duet for the women singing the part of Mary, mother of Jesus, and men singing the part of John, the beloved disciple (Third Word: "Woman Behold Your Son"); a breathing chorus (Fifth Word: "I Thirst"); and an instrumental reprise of the prologue (Seventh Word: "It Is Finished") into the work.

The great power of this cantata is found not so much in the setting of the Gospel texts as in the movements which comment on the "words." Notice in particular the heart-wrenching texts of the Third Word: "Woman, Behold Your Son," and the Sixth Word: "It Is Finished," where the choir sings the words of the heavenly host bidding Jesus, "Come."

“Words of Grace”

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Bruce Kau

I.

While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is my body.” Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.

Matthew 26: 26–28

PROLOGUE

“Do This in Remembrance of Me”

Take and eat this bread; it is my body.

Take and drink this cup; it is my blood.

Shed for you for the forgiveness of sin, given for you and for many.

Do this in remembrance of me. Do this in remembrance of me.

II.

Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. Then Jesus said, “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.” And they cast lots to divide his clothing. And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, and saying, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!” There was also an inscription over him, “This is the king of the Jews.”

Luke 23: 32–38

FIRST WORD

“Father, Forgive Them”

Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.

My God, O these are your children, in love, were filled with your breath.

In sin, they're lost and broken. Free their souls from death.

Father, forgive them.

III.

One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, “Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!” But the other rebuked him, saying, “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but his man has done nothing wrong.” Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” He replied, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.”

Luke 23: 39–43

SECOND WORD

“Today, You Shall Be with Me in Paradise”

Jesus, remember me, when you come into your kingdom.

Truly, I say you'll be in paradise with me, today.

Lord, I pray that you remember me.

You shall be in paradise with me.

IV.

...Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

John 19: 25 –27

THIRD WORD

MARY, HIS MOTHER

*They say the angels sang that night
But all that I could hear was you.
You, my child and my delight,
You were loving, good, and true.*

*I saw the first light in your eyes,
And when your smile reached out to me,
I would hold you when you cried,
In my bosom close to me.*

*Oh, my child here to die,
what can a mother do but cry?
I pray that God will find a way
to bring you back into my breast,
Turn this darkness into day,
bring you home and bring you rest.*

"Woman, Behold Your Son"

JOHN, HIS BELOVED DISCIPLE

*What sound did you really hear.
Baby, breathing in your ear.
Still you care and hold him dear,
Reach out to him,
let him know you're here.*

*Laughing, sunlight filled his face,
Woman, in him I saw you.
You know, I can't take his place,
Let me hold you, I will be with you.*

*Shaking, as I watch him fade,
help me, I am so afraid.
Dear God, take the pain away,
how did we all go astray?
Woman, let me help you pray,
let me take you home so you can rest.*

V.

From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "This man is calling for Elijah." At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him." Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"

Matthew 27: 45–54

FOURTH WORD "My God, My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me?"

My God, why hast thou forsaken me?

VI.

After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty." A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth.

John 19: 28–29

FIFTH WORD

"I Thirst"

I thirst.

VII.

When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

John 19: 30

Come to me, all that you are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Matthew 11: 28–30

SIXTH WORD

"It Is Finished"

THE HOST OF HEAVEN BID JESUS, "COME."

*Come to me, precious child you are weary,
For you have suffered and borne the grief of all,
Your blood has forgiven ev'ry sin,
I will love and hold you 'til the end,
Rest in me, this is the time,
Be at peace for you are mine.*

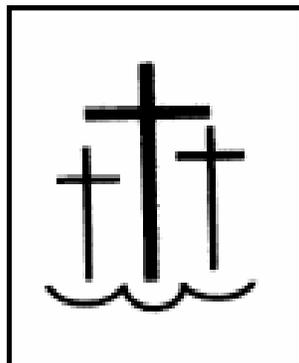
VIII.

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." Having said this, he breathed his last. When the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God and said, "Certainly this man was innocent." And when all the crowds who had gathered there for this spectacle saw what had taken place, they returned home, beating their breasts. But all his acquaintances, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

Luke 23: 44-49

SEVENTH WORD "Father, Into Your Hands I Commend My Spirit"

Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.



When **Bruce Kau**, the composer of the cantata, *Words of Grace*, was asked to write a biographical sketch he offered “highlights” instead of a narrative. The highlights are listed as bullets below. But what he did not list was that he is a local product of Hawai‘i, a graduate of Kalani High School, married to Linda Hansen, and the father of Matthew. Bruce also did not include the fact that he is entirely self-taught as a composer, and is overwhelmingly generous with his gifts and time to Calvary by the Sea Lutheran Church and its ministries. Bruce wrote of himself,

- Baptized at Calvary at the age of six
- Involved with Calvary music in some form or another (mostly choir) since about the age of 20
- My “day job” is in the field of information technology
- My music background includes:
- Two years of piano, and a total failure at actually practicing between lessons
- Learned ‘ukulele in sixth grade on an instrument that was intonationally challenged
- Took six years of band to get out of physical education, playing oboe (mostly), tuba, and trombone
- Learned recorder to try and impress the flute players (didn’t work)
- Learned guitar to try and impress the non-flute players (didn’t work either)
- Began choir at the age of 20 in spite of the fact that I still had not grasped the concept of “pitch.”
- Wrote a ditty in 1985, “Go in Peace”
- Wrote a song for Matthew’s baptism in 1990 that is published in the UCC Praise Hymnal—which is just a bit odd because I don’t consider myself a writer of worship and praise music.

The **Calvary Choir** is an all-volunteer, non-audition choir which provides choral and instrumental service music for the Sunday 10 AM Worship Service, and other special services and events at Calvary by the Sea Lutheran Church. This “loving and strong-willed” choir, which ministers through music, specializes in the unusual and unexpected anthem, including Hawaiian songs and hymns, and popular and popular-sounding songs. The choir, through the great variety and styles of music it sings, also communicates the adage of Martin Luther that the devil shouldn’t get all the good tunes!

The choir takes seriously the responsibility of leading the congregation in song and hymn, and modeling for the congregation and for the community ways of relating in love to each other. The director of the Calvary Choir describes the choir as “a group of people who are bound together by their love and enjoyment of each other, and who just happen to sing and make music together.”

The choir is made up of both trained and untrained singers. Membership is open to both young and old, and both experienced and inexperienced singers. The choir rehearses in the Calvary Sanctuary the first Thursday evening of each month from 6:30 to 8:30 pm, and from 8:45 to 9:45 am each Sunday morning.

Calvary by the Sea Choir

Tom Poole, director
Ina Young, accompanist

Soprano

Lara Adelberger
Lea del Castillo
Erin Day
Helga Emmerson
Naomi Kau
Pulelehua Quirk
Laura Sprowls
Martha Staff

Alto

Monika Day
Linda Hansen
Terri Madden
Bev Matsumoto
Jan Sung
Jennifer Welch

Tenor

Marc Adelberger
Jack Ashby
Jon Osorio
Nackil Sung
John Travis
Marty Welch

Bass

Bill Bekemeier
Ted Hsia
Bob Joseph
Bruce Kau
Peter Matsumoto
Michael Quirk
Larry Schmitt
Tim Sprowls