

PODIUM

Winter 2020

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

THE CHORAL 'CIRCLE OF LIFE'

Jeffrey S. Wilson

"For now we see through a glass, darkly;
but then face to face..." – I Corinthians
13:12

This biblical passage came to mind as I walked to work this morning. The cool December air was thick with fog, obscuring trees and campus buildings from my sight. Later, while sitting in my office, the sunlight steadily overtook the grey mist and the snow began to glisten, revealing a bright, beautiful day. This visual picture reminds me of my choral 'circle of life' — the process whereby I project, plan, prepare, and perform choral programs.

As I reflect on the past six months, my mind recalls summer conferences, choral programming days, fall auditions, choir retreat, rehearsals, homecoming, more rehearsals, travel, and numbers of concerts and church services. I have grown accustomed to this process and enjoy the 'bright, beautiful day' experiences like: singing with my advanced chamber choir to an incredibly appreciative audience at a local prison; observing university choir members develop lifelong friendships; and conducting the final 'Amen' chorus of Handel's *MESSIAH* with an inspired chorus and orchestra. But, of course, there were also some times when: my artistic vision was obscured; it was difficult to see my way in certain relationships; and the music really didn't sound that great. ;-) I found

myself sharing both my sunny day and my foggy morning experiences with close friends, including my choral colleagues. Perhaps you have experienced something like this as well.

Now, we are in one of those 'in between' moments where we are ALMOST FINISHED with fall semester tasks, holiday concerts, and gift shopping, and we are STRAINING AHEAD toward some extended family time, R & R, and the 'fleshing out' of plans for the upcoming New Year! All of the preparations and execution of fall season plans are nearly complete and we are in need of some time away to gain fresh perspective on life. There are a several places I go for this refreshment, including my ACDA friends.

As I begin to create and collaborate in preparation for 2020 choir tour programs, alumni choir concerts, music festivals, and worship events I will, no doubt, consult again with my IL-ACDA colleagues. They are trusted friends who are also familiar with this process and recognize that it requires inspiration, effort, persistence, and encouragement. They also need to be encouraged by others—you and me.

I am particularly grateful for the cadre of gifted musicians known as the IL-ACDA Board. These individuals are actively engaged in the creative process of initiating, developing, and guiding groups of people in what author Ray Robinson calls "the choral experience." And they voluntarily come together to equip and encourage

CHORAL REPERTOIRE AND RESOURCES

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choir directors from throughout our state thru a wide range of activities and events. I hope that you will partake in this rich feast of choral festivals, conferences and activities, several of which are listed below!

IMEC: January 29-February 1 – Peoria, IL

- **IL-ACDA Reception** – Thursday, 9-11pm – Obed & Isaac's Microbrewery Open to all choir directors!
- **ACDA Reading Session** – Friday, 2:15pm – SRC-Auditorium

IL-ACDA Treble Choir Festival – North:

February 6 – College of DuPage, Glen Ellyn, IL

IL-ACDA Treble Choir Festival – Central:

February 6 – Five Points Washington, Washington, IL

Joining Voices ACDA Conference (Central and Northcentral Region): March 4-7 - Milwaukee, WI

IL-ACDA Tenor/Bass Choir Festival:

March 8 – Western Illinois University, Macomb, IL

IL-ACDA Summer ReTreat: June 24-25 – Illinois State University, Normal, IL

For more information about all of these events and activities, see www.IL-ACDA.org.

Best wishes to all in 2020! Let me and our board know how we may be of assistance to you. I look forward to seeing many of you at IMEC in January and the Summer ReTreat in June!

Jeff Wilson,
President, Illinois ACDA

When Are We Good Enough?

Janet McCumber
District 5 representative

Nearly every day I get notifications on Facebook from the many choral "groups" to which I belong, just as I'm sure you do. Quite a few of the recent posts in these groups have been sad stories of student, parent, pastor, or administrator confrontations or mishaps that occurred at the winter/holiday choral events of the posters. Sometimes the posters are new to their jobs and are looking for advice on how to deal with a specific situation; other posters are more experienced but are frustrated with people or events that are causing what should be a joyous season of music making to be a nightmare of emotions and logistics that make us question why we decided to make a career of music in the first place.

I had three notable performance experiences this past semester: in October, I sang the Orff *Carmina Burana* with the University of Illinois Oratorio Society, the Chicago Apollo Chorus, and the Champaign-Urbana Symphony Orchestra, under the baton of Apollo Cho-

rus and CUSO director Stephen Alltop. The following weekend, the UI Oratorio Society took the work on the road to Indianapolis and performed the two piano/percussion version (under the direction of OS director Andrew Megill) at All Saints' Unitarian Church. In December, I conducted a community production of Handel's *Messiah* in a small community in central Illinois where they have performed *Messiah* for the past 76 years. Yes, you read that right- 76 consecutive years! The next weekend was my church choir's Lessons and Carols service, in a different rural central Illinois town. My church choir has 13 members- five sopranos, four altos, two tenors, and two basses- and most of them read music well, allowing us to do SATB or SSATB music.

As you might imagine, the *Carmina Burana* performances were thrilling and great fun. The CUSO played brilliantly, the soloists were fabulous, and the collaboration with the Apollo Chorus was meaningful and something that we're looking forward to doing again. The audience was on its feet before the final cut-

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Audition Dates

- Saturday, December 7, 2019
- Saturday, January 11, 2020
on Quad Cities Campus
- Saturday, January 24, 2020
- Sunday, February 9, 2020
- Sunday, February 17, 2020



Dr. Brian Winnie,
Director of Choral Activities

WIU Choral Faculty:



Dr. Jason Hawkins,
Choral Music Education and Vocal Jazz

For more information visit:

wiu.edu/choirs

309.298.1378

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CHORAL REPERTOIRE AND RESOURCES

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off, and raved afterward at how spectacular the performance was, as did the newspaper reviewers who were present. In Indianapolis, we had to deal with a very tight performance space and two pianos that weren't quite in tune, but it was very well received by those attending and was the first time that many of us singing the work had done the two piano/percussion version. If you've not experienced it, this 1956 reduction by Orff's student Wilhelm Killmayer is not as bombastic as the full orchestral version but still incredibly exciting and effective.

This was my second time conducting *Messiah* in that small community, and I never cease to be amazed at the dedication of the people on the music foundation board to make it happen every single year. They hire a small orchestra and soloists and do a significant portion of the oratorio. This year I made some changes, cutting a couple of solos and adding in a duet and two choruses. From the first rehearsal, we did not have as many singers as we did the last time I conducted it, and never seemed to have the same singers at each rehearsal. We lost one rehearsal to a snowstorm, and due to a conflict with another rehearsal I was not able to work with the players until the dress rehearsal. Every week during the rehearsal cycle, a couple of board members and I debated whether or not to really change things up next year and do something different (gasp), something not so difficult for volunteer singers, something new for the audience that comes each year. The last time I conducted, the church was barely half full, and we thought that perhaps the time had come to leave a 76-year-old tradition behind and move on. This year's choir struggled with "But Thanks Be To God" and "Worthy Is the Lamb," especially in the dress rehearsal, although they never gave up on them. Both of these choruses were still a little rough in the pre-concert warmup, and I held my breath during the performance. Although the soloists were brilliant in the dress rehearsal, in performance there were a couple of missed cues that caused brief moments of

(unseen) panic.

I don't do a Christmas cantata with my church choir every year; in fact, we rarely do a full cantata. This year I felt like it was the right thing for our congregation to do something that they could participate in and that could bring in our Sunday School children (we don't have a children's choir). We had some of our junior high and high school students act as readers, along with couple of adults. We began rehearsing the music in early October along with our regular service music, and the choir was generally doing well with it. However, the week before the performance one of my two basses emailed me to let me know he was sick and it had settled in his voice. I gave him advice on how to take care of his voice and planned for my other bass to shoulder the load for that week. Until, that is, bass no. 2 showed up to rehearsal with...very little voice. The day of the dress rehearsal they were both still sick and I strongly considered cutting the TB piece in the cantata, although they wanted to wait until the next day to make the final call. Also at the dress rehearsal, only two of the children were able to come, which meant that the logistics of moving them around through the performance couldn't really happen until...the performance. The morning of the performance, my strongest first soprano had to leave suddenly after the warmup due to a gall bladder attack, and the basses still weren't in good voice. As if that wasn't enough, I hadn't checked our hymnal carefully enough and so the congregation was rather startled to discover that they were singing a different final verse to "O Come All Ye Faithful" than the choir was.

In other words, I'm giving you the Facebook group version of my two December performances. You might think that I'm comparing them unfavorably with the performances of the Orff in October. But here's what I haven't told you: the day of *Messiah*, the church was full. The players were brilliant, as were the soloists (minus the missed cues). No one noticed that "But Thanks" and "Worthy" were a little



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Freshman Visit Days:

Friday November 15, 2019
Monday January 20, 2020
Monday February 17, 2020
Friday March 13, 2020

Transfer Visit Days:

Friday November 1, 2019
Tuesday November 26, 2019
Monday December 16, 2019
Monday, January 20, 2020



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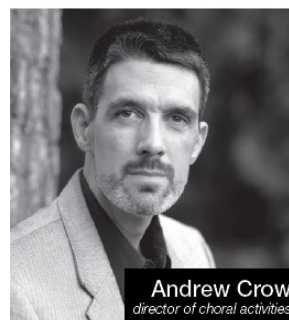
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Andrew Crow
director of choral activities



Kerry Glann
associate director of choral activities

To learn more, contact Andrew Crow, director of choral activities,
at arcrow@bsu.edu.

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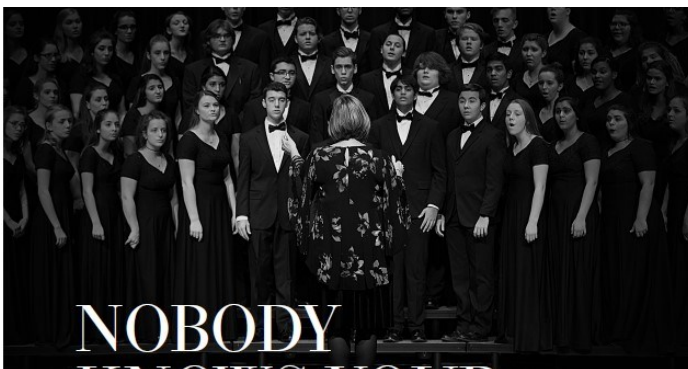
Ali Kordelewski
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hesitant in a couple of places, and many people said afterward that they thought it was the best performance of *Messiah* that they had attended there. The next day a smaller but-still-floating-on-the-performance-high group of choristers sang a few of the choruses and some carols for the very appreciative residents of a local nursing home. We bonded through a rehearsal and performance process that was challenging at times, but still affirming and meaningful.

My church choir cantata was also a success. The basses were both there, albeit with less power than normal, and we didn't cut the TB number. We're probably going to do it again in early January when everyone (fingers crossed) is healthy. The other first sopranos stepped up without their leader, and the children navigated through their parts seamlessly. We had more people in attendance that day than we've had in months, and many came up to tell me

how much they appreciated what we had done. As with *Messiah*, the challenges we faced brought us closer together as musicians and friends.

So many times, we doubt that what we're doing is good enough. Sometimes others make us feel that way; more often we do it to ourselves. We're professionals, after all, and shouldn't we be working at a professional level always? Of course that's the goal, but it's not always reality. My experience with *Carmina Burana* was intensely satisfying on many levels, but I'm not sure that it was any more so than the experiences I had with the community and church choirs. When are we and the music good enough? It's when we the performers, and our audiences, are moved to have an emotional reaction to and by the music, not when the performance is deemed "perfect." I'll take good enough any time.



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**2020 IL-ACDA Summer ReTreat
Wed & Thurs, June 24 & 25
Illinois State University**

Registration will begin spring 2020

Our headliners are:



- Eugene Rogers ([bio](#)), University of Michigan (Directors' Chorus)
- Jill Trink ([bio](#)), Coastal Carolina University (Workshops/Clinics)
- Robert Bastian, M.D ([bio](#)), Bastian Voice Institute (Workshops/Clinics)

You can expect reading sessions, the Directors' Chorus, our composition contest winner, sessions on pedagogy, repertoire, conducting and more. And most importantly, a chance to enjoy the vibrant and welcoming community that is Illinois ACDA!

*illinois
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Announcing the 2020



Choral Composition Contest Win \$1000 for your choral composition!!

Illinois composers with a creative voice and clear compositional ability are invited to submit works for choirs to Illinois-ACDA's annual Choral Composition Contest. The winning composition will be premiered at the Illinois-ACDA Summer Re-Treat, Summer 2020.

Entries for the 2020 IL-ACDA contest will be accepted from now until **April 1st, 2020**. The required voicing will be **SATB (a capella or accompanied by piano, keyboard, organ or harp)**. Details and forms for submitting your work can found on the following links:

See Below for more detailed information

Questions?

Illinois ACDA 2020 Choral Composition Contest
ENTRY SUBMISSION FORM
(please type or print):

Name _____

Address _____

City and State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone Day _____ Evening _____ Cell _____

E-mail address _____

Composition Information and Declaration:

Composition Title

Text Source _____

Is the text under copyright? (check one) Yes ____ No ____

If yes, you must include a copy of written permission from the copyright holder.

Please sign this declaration:

This is an original composition that has not been previously published or commissioned. I hereby give permission to IL-ACDA to reproduce this composition for the purposes of contest evaluation and, if this work is chosen as the contest winner, grant IL-ACDA the right to both reproduce and perform this composition at the summer IL-ACDA Retreat conference.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Submission Requirements: a) A clearly legible pdf of the score; b) One Entry Submission Form for each submitted score. **Submissions must be received no later than April 1, 2020.**

Please e-mail pdf scores and forms to:

Illinois-ACDA Choral Competition Contest

Donald Fraser

donald@donaldfraser.com

IL-ACDA Choral Composition Contest Entry Requirements and Guidelines

**All composers with an Illinois connection –
i.e. residency, education, employment - are invited to submit works to Illinois-ACDA's
annual Choral Composition Contest to earn a \$1000 prize!
The winning composition will be premiered at the Illinois-ACDA Retreat in Summer 2020.**

Entry Deadline is April 1, 2020.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO ENTER?

- a) All composers with an Illinois connection (see above) who are age 18 or older by the entry deadline.
- b) Anyone who is not currently an officer of IL-ACDA.
- c) Anyone who has not previously won the IL-ACDA composition contest within five preceding years.

WHAT ARE THE COMPOSITION CATEGORIES AND PRIZES?

- a) A \$1,000 prize will be awarded to the winning composer. Only one prize will be awarded.
- b) The winning composition will be premiered at the IL-ACDA 2019 Summer Convention/ Retreat.
- c) Composers may submit as many compositions as they wish. Each composition must be treated as a separate entry, accompanied by the required entry materials.

WHAT ARE THE COMPOSITION REQUIREMENTS?

- a) Duration: approximately 3-8 minutes.
- b) Voicing for 2020 Contest: or SATB voicing, divisi acceptable
- c) Accompaniment options: 1. Unaccompanied/a cappella 2. Piano 3. Organ
- d) Text may be secular or sacred and may be in any language. An English translation must be provided for any text not in English.

- e) If the composer is not the author and copyright holder of the lyrics submitted or the lyrics are not in the public domain, the composer must enclose a written statement of permission signed by the copyright holder.
- f) Composers are at liberty to choose the composition's style and form.

WHAT ARE THE ADDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY AND ENTRY REQUIREMENTS?

In addition to meeting the composition requirements above, submitted works:

- a) Must be original, not an arrangement of another composer's work.
- b) Must not be a commissioned work.
- c) Must currently be unpublished and must not be published prior to July 1, 2020, including self published.
- d) Must not be performed publicly prior to July 1, 2020.
- e) Must not be recorded or broadcast prior to July 1, 2020.
- f) May not have won or placed (second, third, honorable mention, etc.) in any prior composition contest.
- g) Must not be entered in other contests between entry to IL-ACDA and July 1, 2019.

WHAT IS THE PROCEDURE FOR SUBMISSION OF MATERIALS?

- a) The following items must be submitted with each composition:
 - 1. Electronic submission in pdf format via e-mail
 - 2. A legibly completed entry form.
 - 3. Additional documentation (if applicable):
 - a) English translation for any text not in English.
 - b) Written statement of permission signed by the copyright holder, if the text is under copyright protection. Entries printed using music notation software are encouraged. Legibly handwritten entries are also acceptable. A manuscript size of 8-1/2"x 11" is preferred.
 - c) The composer's name and any other identifying information must not anywhere on the music.
 - d) The composer's name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address should appear only on the entry form. The judge will not have access to the entry forms until the final decisions have been made. No recordings will be accepted.
 - e) Compositions must be e-mailed. Faxed applications will not be accepted.
 - f) Each composer will be notified by e-mail of receipt of the entry.

- g) The following will be considered ineligible: 1. Late entries 2. Incomplete entries 3. Illegible copies 4. Any entries with composer identification on the scores 5. Entries which do not follow submission requirements.
- h) All decisions of the contest committee are final and may not be discussed with the applicants.

HOW WILL THE ENTRIES BE JUDGED?

- a) Entries will be judged by the Choral Composition Contest Committee of IL-ACDA.
- b) If, in the opinion of the judges, no composition meets the expected standards, no award will be given.
- c) Criteria for selection include evidence of a unique creative voice and of choral compositional ability, as well as suitability for performance.
- d) The decision of the contest committee will be final and no correspondence may be entered into regarding the award.

HOW WILL THE APPLICANTS BE NOTIFIED OF RESULTS?

- a) All applicants will be notified of contest results by mail no later than June 1st, 2020.
- b) A public announcement of the winning composers will be made at the IL-ACDA Summer Retreat/Conference in June 2020. Winners also will be announced after July 1st, 2020 on the ILACDA website.
- c) Each winning composer will be contacted by IL-ACDA to follow through on details about: 1. Distribution of prize money. A check will be awarded upon completion of items b and c below, at the IL-ACDA Summer Retreat/Conference. 2. Agreement of rights. The composer will be required to sign a form confirming the items stated in sections 8) and 9) below. 3. Final version of score and parts. The composer must provide a new score bearing the composer's name and appropriate dedication. (see section 8a)

WHAT RIGHTS ARE GRANTED TO ACDA-ILLINOIS?

- a) The following dedication must be included in all subsequent manuscript and published editions of the winning compositions: Winner of the 2020 ACDA Illinois Choral Composition Contest
- b) IL-ACDA will have the right to make copies for distribution to the members of the summer 2020 IL-ACDA performing chorus, its conductor, and accompanist. Use of the winning composition will be strictly limited to the Retreat/Conference, unless permission of the composer is granted.
- c) The winning composer will be asked to provide biographical information for publicity purposes. IL-ACDA will have the right to use the composer's name and composition title in the future IL-ACDA communications.

d) The winning composer will be asked to be present for the award in person, if possible, at his/ her own expense.

WHAT RIGHTS ARE GRANTED TO THE COMPOSER?

- a) Copyright ownership will be retained by the composer.
- b) Publication rights will be retained by the composer.
- c) The composer will be given the privilege to display/advertise other compositions at the ILACDA Retreat.

WHAT IS THE CONTEST CONTACT INFORMATION?

E-mail: donald@donaldfraser.com
Phone: (608) 219-2814

Donald Fraser, Chair, Illinois-ACDA Choral Composition Contest