



Carol Barnett

We Clasp the Hands




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WE CLASP THE HANDS

words by Wendell Berry

music by Carol Barnett

Commissioned by Aurora Chorus in celebration of her 25th Anniversary
Season.

Joan Szymko, Artistic Director

...we clasp the hands of those who go before us,
and the hands of those who come after us;
we enter the little circle of each other's arms,
and the larger circle of lovers
whose hands are joined in a dance,
and the larger circle of all creatures,
passing in and out of life,
who move also in a dance,
to a music so subtle and vast
that no ear hears it
except in fragments.

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Duration: 3:45

We Clasp the Hands was written for the Aurora Chorus of Portland, Oregon, to celebrate the group as a welcoming and empowering community as well as marking their 25th Anniversary. I am indebted to Artistic Director Joan Szymko for finding the perfect text; it is excerpted from Wendell Berry's poetic essay "Healing," found in his volume *What Are People For?*

We Clasp the Hands

Wendell Berry

Carol Barnett

$\text{♩} = 132$

mf

Soprano 1
We clasp the hands, we

mf

Soprano 2
We clasp the hands, we

Alto

$\text{♩} = 132$

mf

mp

Piano

5

S 1
clasp the hands of those who go be - fore us,

S 2
clasp the hands of those who go be - fore us,

A
mf
We

5

mf

mp

Pno.

We Clasp the Hands

9

S 1 we clasp the hands, we clasp the hands of

S 2 we clasp the hands, we clasp the hands of

A clasp the hands, we clasp the hands of

Pno.

12

S 1 those who go be - fore us, — and the hands of those, the

S 2 those who go be - fore us, — and the hands of those, the

A those who go be - fore us, — the hands of

Pno.

mf *mp*

16

S 1 *f* *mf*
hands of those who come af - ter us, come af - ter

S 2 *f* *mf*
hands of those who come af - ter us, come af - ter

A *f* *mf*
those, of those who come, who come af - ter us,

Pno. *mf*

20

S 1 *p*
us, come af - ter us; we

S 2 *p*
us, come af - ter us; we

A *p*
come af - ter us, come af - ter us;

Pno. *p* *mf*

We Clasp the Hands

25 *legato*

S 1 en - ter the lit - tle cir - cle of each oth - er's arms, each

S 2 en - ter the lit - tle cir - cle of each oth - er's arms, each

A *legato* we en - ter the lit - tle

25 *p legato*

Pno.

28 *mf*

S 1 oth - er's arms, — and the larg er cir - cle of

S 2 oth - er's arms, — and the larg er cir - cle of

A *mf* cir - cle of each oth - er's arms — and the larg - er cir - cle of

28 *mp*

Pno.

32

S 1 *p* *lightly*
 lov - ers whose hands are joined in a dance,

S 2 *p* *lightly*
 lov - ers whose hands are joined in a dance,

A *p* *lightly*
 lov - ers whose hands are joined, joined in a

Pno. *p* *lightly*

35 *cresc. poco a poco*

S 1 joined in a dance, joined in a dance, clasp the hands,

S 2 *cresc. poco a poco*
 joined in a dance, joined in a dance, clasp the hands,

A *cresc. poco a poco*
 dance, joined in a dance, joined in a dance, joined in a

Pno. *cresc. poco a poco*

We Clasp the Hands

38

S 1
clasp the hands, clasp the hands, dance, dance,

S 2
clasp the hands, clasp the hands, dance, dance,

A
dance, joined in a dance, joined in a dance, a dance, a

Pno.

41

S 1
dance, we dance, we dance, we dance, *f* *mf*

S 2
dance, we dance, we dance, we dance, *f* *mf*

A
dance, a dance, a dance, we dance, we dance, *f* *mf*

Pno.

46 *mf* legato

S 1 and the larg - er cir - cle of

S 2 *mf* legato and the larg - er cir - cle of

A *mf* legato and the larg - er cir - cle of

Pno. *mp* legato

51

S 1 all crea - tures, pass - ing in and out of

S 2 all crea - tures, pass - ing in and out of

A all crea - tures, pass - ing in and out of

Pno.

We Clasp the Hands

56 *mp*

S 1 life, _____ of life, _____ of life, _____ of

S 2 *mp* life, _____ in and out, _____ in and out, _____ in and

A *mp* life, in and out of life, in and out of life, in and out of

Pno. *p*

59 *p*

S 1 life, _____ of life, _____ who move _____

S 2 *p* out, _____ out of life, _____ who move _____

A *p* life, in and out of life, out of life, _____ who move

Pno. *p*

63

S 1
al - so in a dance, in a dance, in a

S 2
al - so in a dance, in a dance, in a

A
al - so in a dance in a dance, in a dance, in a

Pno.

67

S 1
dance, in a dance, in a dance, in a dance, in a

S 2
dance, in a dance, in a dance, in a dance, in a

A
dance in a dance, in a dance, in and out, in and out

Pno.

mp

70 *cresc. poco* *mf cresc.*

S 1 dance, in a dance, in and out in a dance, to a mu - sic, a

S 2 dance, in a dance, in and out in a dance, to a mu - sic, a

A — in a dance, in and out in a dance, to a mu - sic, a

Pno. *cresc. poco* *mf cresc.*

74 *f*

S 1 mu - sic so sub - tle, — so vast, — ah, — that

S 2 mu - sic so sub - tle, — so vast, — ah, — that

A mu - sic so sub - tle, — so vast, — ah, — that

Pno. *f*

79 *pp* *lightly*

S 1 no ear hears it ex - cept in frag - ments,

S 2 no ear hears it ex - cept in frag -

A no ear hears it ex - cept in

Pno. *pp* *lightly*

85

S 1 frag - ments, frag - ments of mu - sic.

S 2 ments, frag - ments, frag - ments of mu - sic.

A frag - ments, frag - ments, frag - ments of mu - sic.

Pno. *mf* *sub.*

We Clasp the Hands

90 *mf*
S 1 We clasp the hands, — we

90 *mf*
S 2 We clasp the hands, — we

90 *mf*
A We clasp the hands, we

90 *mp*
Pno.

94
S 1 clasp the hands of those who go be - fore us, — we

94
S 2 clasp the hands of those who go be - fore us, —

94
A clasp the hands of those who go be - fore us, — we

94 *mf* *mp*
Pno.

98

S 1 *p sub.*
clasp the hands of those who go,

S 2 *p*
we clasp, clasp the hands of those who go,

A *p*
clasp the hands of those who go,

Pno. *p sub.*

102

S 1 *mp*
of those who come

S 2 *mp*
who go, of those who come, who come

A *mp*
who go, of those who come, those who come in-to the

Pno. *mp*

106 *mf*

S 1 in - to the cir - cle of arms, — in - to the cir - cle of arms,

S 2 in - to the cir - cle of arms, — in - to the

A cir - cle, in - to the cir - cle of arms, —

106 *mf*

Pno.

109

S 1 the cir - cle of arms, — the cir - cle of

S 2 cir - cle of arms, — the cir - cle of arms, — the cir - cle of

A in - to the cir - cle of arms, — the cir - cle of arms, — the cir - cle of

109

Pno.

The image shows a musical score for the song 'We Clasp the Hands'. It is divided into two systems, each containing vocal parts (S1, S2, A) and a piano accompaniment (Pno.). The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 3/4. The first system starts at measure 106. The vocal parts have lyrics: S1 'in - to the cir - cle of arms, — in - to the cir - cle of arms,'; S2 'in - to the cir - cle of arms, — in - to the'; A 'cir - cle, in - to the cir - cle of arms, —'. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a more complex bass line in the left hand. The second system starts at measure 109. The vocal parts have lyrics: S1 'the cir - cle of arms, — the cir - cle of'; S2 'cir - cle of arms, — the cir - cle of arms, — the cir - cle of'; A 'in - to the cir - cle of arms, — the cir - cle of arms, — the cir - cle of'. The piano accompaniment continues with similar patterns, and the time signature changes to 3/4 at the end of the system.

112

S 1 *dim.*
lov - ers, arms of lov - ers, of lov -

S 2 *dim.*
lov - ers, arms of lov - ers, of lov -

A *dim.*
lov - ers, arms of lov - ers, of lov -

Pno. *dim.*

117

S 1 *p* *cresc. poco a poco*
ers, and all, all crea - tures, all crea - tures,

S 2 *p* *cresc. poco a poco*
ers, and all crea - tures, all crea - tures, all crea - tures,

A *p* *cresc. poco a poco*
ers, and all, all crea - tures, all crea - tures, all

Pno. *p* *cresc. poco a poco*

122

S 1
all crea - tures, all, _____ all, _____ all, _____

S 2
all crea - tures, all, _____ all, _____ all, _____

A
crea - tures, all, _____ all, _____ all, _____ all, _____

Pno.

126

S 1
ff
all, _____ ah. _____

S 2
ff
all, _____ ah. _____

A
ff
all, _____ ah. _____

Pno.