

Program Notes for Songs of Hope and Promise

Songs of Hope and Promise for chorus and organ was commissioned by St. Mark's Lutheran Church (San Francisco, CA) in celebration of their Director of Music's 25 years of service. The piece is constructed in three sections and is designed to be performed as one composite, or as individual movements that can be interspersed throughout a worship service. The text of each section, arranged by the composer, is intended to encourage the Director of Music in his ministry, as well as each singer or listener in their individual walk with God.

Section One, *The Eternal God*, with texts from Zephaniah, Jeremiah, and Deuteronomy, focuses on God's deep love for us, a love so strong that he delights in us, and walks with us through every step of our lives, promising to be our refuge.

Adonai your God is with you,
A mighty one who will save.
God will take great delight in you,
And will quiet you with love.
Adonai your God will rejoice over you with joyful songs.
Zephaniah 3:17

"I have loved you with an everlasting love;
I have drawn you with loving-kindness." Jeremiah 31:3

God rides on the heavens to help you
and on the clouds in his majesty.
The eternal God is your refuge,
and underneath are the everlasting arms. Deuteronomy 33:26-7

Section Two, *A Quiet Place*, uses passages from the books of Mark and Matthew, and speaks directly to the much needed spiritual rest that Christ provides; also, it addresses a literal, physical need to go away and spend time with God.

Then Jesus told his disciples,
"Come with me by
yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." Mark 6:31

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, 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. Matthew 11:28-9

Section Three, *Children of Light*, encourage us to live as “children of light,” and to be “led by the light,” with texts from Ephesians, the gospel of John, and a verse from the poem by John H. Newman, *Pillar of Light*.

For you were once darkness,
but now are light in the Lord.
Live as children of light,
Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord,
always giving thanks to God the Father for everything,
in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ephesians 6: 8-10; 19-20

Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom;
Lead thou me on!
The night is dark, and I am far from home;
Lead thou me on!
Keep thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step enough for me. Cardinal Newman

While you have light,
Believe in the light,
That you may be the children of light. John 12:36