

HOW CAN I KEEP FROM SINGING

for
SSA chorus
with piano

by
Steven Paxton

also available for:
SATB and SABar choir

lyrics by members of
The Derventio Choir
Allestree, Derbyshire
UK



CREATIVE SPIRIT

IN 2023 *THE DERVENTIO CHOIR* IN ALLESTREE, DERBYSHIRE UK invited composers to create a new work in celebration of the choir's 30th anniversary. The text to be set was created collaboratively by the Derventio choir members themselves. My composition did not win the competition, but the choir generously gave composers permission to use the poem in their own published compositions. It is certainly a poem that will *strike a chord* with many singers, especially those in long-standing community choruses.

Steven Paxton
San Marcos, Texas

How can I keep from singing!

In friendship, harmony and tone
For many years we've sung and grown.
Each part, though singing separate lines,
To glorious unity combines.
Though seasons come and seasons go,
Our voices sing — Fortissimo!

Our choir's life flows in endless song,
In heartfelt words and rhythm strong.
In songs of protest, songs that calm,
Songs that spread that healing balm.
Though seasons come and seasons go,
Our voices sing — Fortissimo!

We sing of lovers' hopes and dreams,
We sing of wild cascading streams,
We sing of joy, we sing of sorrow,
We sing the promise of tomorrow.
Though seasons come and seasons go,
Our heart sings out — Fortissimo!

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HOW CAN I KEEP FROM SINGING

lyrics by members of the DERVENTIO CHOIR

STEVEN PAXTON

Moderato *mf* **rit.**

SOPRANO I
In friend-ship, har-mo - ny and tone

SOPRANO II
In friend-ship, har-mo - ny and tone, har - mo - ny and

ALTO
In friend-ship, har-mo - ny and tone, har - mo - ny and

PIANO
Moderato *mf* **rit.**
rehearsal only

5 *mp* **a tempo** *cresc. poco a poco*

For man - y years we've sung and

mp *cresc. poco a poco*

tone, For man - y years we've sung and grown. _

mp *cresc. poco a poco*

tone For man - y years we've

5 **a tempo** *mp* *cresc. poco a poco*

9 *mf* *cresc. poco a poco*

grown. Each part, though sing - ing

mf *cresc. poco a poco*

Each part, though sing - ing, sing - ing sep - a - rate lines, Each part, though

mf *cresc. poco a poco*

sung and grown. — Each part, though

9 *mf* *cresc. poco a poco*

13 *f* *ff*

sep - a - rate lines, sep - a - rate lines,

f *ff*

sing - ing sep - a - rate lines, Each part, though sing - ing sep - a - rate lines, —

f *ff*

sing - ing sep - a - rate — lines,

13 *f* *ff*

Allegro moderato (♩. = c. 86)

17 (3 + 2) *f* ♩ = ♩

To glo-ri-ous u-ni-ty com-bines.

To glo-ri-ous u-ni-ty com-bines.

To glo-ri-ous u-ni-ty com-bines.

Detailed description: This block contains three vocal staves. Each staff begins with a treble clef, a 3/8 time signature, and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The first measure of each staff contains a triplet of eighth notes followed by a pair of eighth notes, marked with a forte (f) dynamic. The lyrics 'To glo-ri-ous u-ni-ty com-bines.' are written below each staff. The music continues with a 4/4 time signature and concludes with a 3/8 time signature.

Allegro moderato (♩. = c. 86)

17 (3 + 2) *mf* ♩ = ♩

mf

Detailed description: This block contains the piano accompaniment for the first system. It features a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The music begins with a 3/8 time signature and a key signature of one flat. The first measure contains a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a pair of eighth notes in the left hand, marked with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. The tempo is marked 'Allegro moderato' with a quarter note equal to approximately 86 beats per minute. The piece concludes with a 3/8 time signature.

21

Detailed description: This block contains three vocal staves for the second system. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a 3/8 time signature. The music continues from the first system, with the lyrics 'To glo-ri-ous u-ni-ty com-bines.' repeated. The staves are mostly empty, indicating that the vocalists are holding their notes from the previous system.

21

mp sub.

Detailed description: This block contains the piano accompaniment for the second system. It features a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The music continues from the first system. The right hand has a mezzo-piano (mp) dynamic with a 'sub.' (sustained) marking. The piece concludes with a 3/8 time signature.

26 *mf*

Though sea - sons come and sea - sons

mf

Though sea - sons come and sea - sons

mf

Though sea - sons come and sea - sons

30

go, Our_ voic - es sing— For - tis - si -

go, Our_ voic - es sing— For - tis - si -

go, Our voic - es sing— For - tis - si -

30

34 *ff* (2 + 3) *mp legato*

- mo! _____ Our choir's life

- mo! _____ Our choir's life

- mo! _____ Our choir's life

34 (2 + 3) *p sub.*

39

flows in end - less song, In heart - felt

flows in end - less song, In heart - felt

flows in end - less song, In heart - felt

39

44

words and rhy - thm strong. — In songs of pro -

words and rhy - thm strong. — In songs of pro -

words and rhy - thm strong. — In songs of pro -

44

49

- test, songs — that calm, — Songs that

- test, songs — that calm, — Songs that

- test, songs — that calm, — Songs that

49

54 *mf* *mp*
spread that heal - ing balm.

54 *mf* *mp*
spread that heal - ing balm.

54 *mf* *mp*
spread that heal - ing balm.



59 *mp*
— Though sea - sons come and

59 *mp*
— Though sea - sons come and

59 *mp*
— Though sea - sons come and



74 *mf* **Tempo I°**

We sing— of lov - er's hopes— and dreams,

mf

We sing— of lov - er's hopes— and dreams,

mf

We sing— of lov - er's hopes— and dreams,—

74 **Tempo I°**

79 **rit.** *mp* **a tempo**

We sing of wild cas -

mp

lov - er's hopes and dreams, We sing of wild cas - cad - ing,

mp

lov - er's hopes and dreams, We sing of

79 **rit.** **a tempo**

83

- cad - ing streams, We sing of joy, of
 wild cas - cad - ing streams, We sing of wild cas - cad - ing streams, We sing of joy, we sing of
 wild _____ streams, We sing of

83

88 rit. **Allegro moderato**
 (3 + 2) *mf*

joy, we sing of sor - row. We _____ sing the
 sor - row, _____ We _____ sing the
 joy and sor - row, _____ We _____ sing the

88 rit. **Allegro moderato**
 (3 + 2)

93

f

prom-ise of to - mor - row.

f

prom-ise of to - mor - row.

f

prom-ise of to - mor - row.

93

f

mf dim.

98

mf

Though sea - sons come and sea - sons

mf

Though sea - sons come and sea - sons

mf

Though sea - sons come and sea - sons

98

mp

102

go, Our hearts sing out— For - tis - si -

go, Our hearts sing out— For - tis - si -

go, Our hearts sing out— For - tis - si -

102

106 *cresc.* *poco allarg.* *ff* (2 + 3)

- mo!

- mo!

- mo!

106 *f* *poco allarg.* *ff* (2 + 3)

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ONLINE AND PRINT PUBLICATIONS

CHORUS

MIXED CHOIR

Amy Beach (1543–1623)

Agnus Dei from Grand Mass in E-flat Major SATB, solos, pno or orch

Beethoven (1666–1727)

Kyrie from Mass in C Major SATB, opt. solos, pno or orch

Mass in C Major SATB, solos, pno or orch

Francisco López Capillas (1608–1674)

Missa Benedicta SATB unac

Sanctus and Benedictus from Missa Benedicta SATB unac

Karl Michael Komma (1913–2012)

Die Weihnachtsgeschichte nach Lukas SATB (double), solos, fl, ob, tpt, org, perc

Frances Meier

Pasque Flower in April SATB unac

Steven Paxton

Aeterna Christi munera SATB unac

Ave Maria SATB unac

Eye SATB, pno

Frè Timoniè SAB / TBB, pno, opt perc,

How Can I Keep From Singing SATB, pno

Lucis Creator Optime SATB unac

The Open Door SATB unac

Prophecy SATB divisi unac

The singer only sang SATB divisi unac

Three Hymns to the Son SATB unac

Three Marian Hymns SATB unac

Visions SATB, eng hn (or alto sax), cello, perc, or pno

Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (1562–1621)

Psalm 1 SATB unac

Psalm 20 SATB unac

Psalm 90 SATB unac

Psalm 96 SATB unac

John Taverner (1490–1545)

In pace, in idipsum SATB unac

Weber, Joseph (1936–1999)

Cantata on the Oracle of Edom SSATTB, tenor duo, variable winds/stgs, or org

TREBLE CHOIR

William Byrd (1540–1623)

Sanctus and Benedictus from Mass for 3 Voices SSA unac

Johanna Kinkel (1810–1858)

Drei Duetten SA, pno

Steven Paxton

If I Had a Ribbon Bow SSA, pno

From the Garden of Kama SSA unac

Raindrop Song SSA, pno

Three Spring Songs SSA, pno

MUSIC OF UGANDA

Ga-ze SSA / 3-Part Mixed / TTB, pno, opt perc, opt inst

Konikoneco SATB / 3-Part Mixed / TTB, pno, opt perc, opt ins

MUSIC FOR CHOIR WITH OVERTONE SINGING

Stuart Hinds

Beauty SATB divisi, unac

Meeresstille SATB, solos, unac

Pacem SATB unac