



Over The Mountain Festivals
and Margaret H. Roy
present



Tune My Heart

A Concert of Sacred Choral Music

The Over the Mountain Festival Choir and Orchestra

Dr. Eliezer Yanson Jr., Guest Conductor

Ms. Karen Payne Krekelberg, Organist/Accompanist

Sunday, February 15, 2026 • Three O'clock in the afternoon

Bluff Park United Methodist Church, 733 Valley Street, Birmingham, Alabama 35226

otmfestivals.org • info@otmfestivals.org



Over the Mountain Festivals 2026

A Warm Welcome

“Choral music is not one of life’s frills. It’s something that goes to the very heart of our humanity, our sense of community, and our souls.” Sir John Rutter

Welcome, returning friends and new! In this, our 17th season, we want to express our gratitude to everyone who has supported us through their participation, professional advice, attendance, and financial support. It has been our joy to prepare and present our programs to you each year.

We welcome Dr. Eliezer Yanson, our Choral Conductor. He won the hearts of our singers in the first hour of our first rehearsal and has done a wonderful work in preparing us for this day for you.

Paraphrasing Sir John Rutter, anthems, large works, and even hymns don’t have to be sung by professionals — that’s the great thing about music. It can be sung by everyone in this room. The majority of choirs worldwide are not professional choirs. They are students, children, amateurs. They are people in church choirs, who sing once or twice per week. They are those who sit in a congregation. They are the people sitting here today reading these words. They can all contribute and share in this great feast of riches and enjoy an experience which they couldn’t have had on their own. That is why it is our prayer that today you will feel lifted up, your troubles leaving you, even if only for little while.

“Come unto Me all ye who labor, all who are heavy laden, come unto Me and I will give you rest.” The pivotal words sung by the tenor soloist in the final moments of Dan Forrest’s *Requiem for the Living* provide the cornerstone for our program today. In *Vanitas Vanitatum*, Forrest draws on the text from Job to illustrate the “turmoil and sorrow which face humanity.” This movement is surrounded by the traditional Kyrie, a plea for mercy, and the Agnus Dei, a plea for deliverance and peace. The Sanctus becomes a “response to this redemption with three different glimpses of the heavens and the earth, full of Thy glory.” And finally, the Lux Aeterna “...portrays light, peace, and rest — for both the deceased and the living.” According to the composer, his unique take on the traditional Requiem setting is described this way: “A Requiem, at its core, is a prayer for rest, traditionally, for the deceased. The five movements, however, form a narrative just as much for the living, and their own struggle with pain and sorrow, as for the dead.”

Returning to OTM Festivals for her fifth season is our Festival Organist and Accompanist, Ms. Karen Krekelberg. You will enjoy getting acquainted with Dr. Yanson and Ms. Krekelberg in the pages that follow and as you visit with them after the concert.

It has been requested by the Festival Chorus that all refrain from applause until the conclusion of Parts I, II, and III. At those times, feel free to show your appreciation as the Spirit leads.

And lastly, as we sing our congregational hymns together, remember the words of John Wesley, “Sing lustily and with a good courage. Beware of singing as if you were half dead, or half asleep; but lift up your voice with strength.”

*Please silence all electronic devices so that all may enjoy the performance without distraction.
Any recording of this concert is strictly prohibited.*

Tune My Heart

Words of Welcome and Thanks

Philip J. Capra, Jr., Executive Director

Part I. Beloved Hymns and Master Works

Hymn No. 126

Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above

MIT FREUDEN ZART

Stanzas 1-4

The Festival Choir and Congregation

Veni Sancte Spiritus

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Veni sancte Spiritus:
Reple tuorum corda fidel, et tui amoris
In eis in ignem accende
Qui per diversitatem linguarum cunctarum
Gentes in unitate fidei congregasti
Alleluia.

Come Holy Spirit:
Fill the hearts of your faithful, and
Kindle your love in them.
You have gathered the
Nations together in the unity of faith.
Alleluia.

Melanie Haynes, Soprano; Heather Batey, Alto; John Phillips, Tenor; Steve West, Bass
The Festival Choir

He, Watching Over Israel (from *Elijah, Op. 70, No. 29*)

Felix Mendelssohn, (1809-1847)

He, watching over Israel, slumbers not nor sleeps.
Shouldst thou, walking in grief, languish;
He will quicken thee.

The Festival Choir

Hymn No. 103

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

ST. DENIO
Walter Chalmers Smith, 1867

The Festival Choir and Congregation

Part II. Requiem for the Living

Requiem for the Living

Dan Forrest (b. 1978)

1. Introit

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,
Et lux perpetua luceat eis.
Exaudi orationem meam,
ad te omnis caro veniet.
Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison.

*Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them.
Hear my prayer,
for unto Thee all flesh shall come.
Lord have mercy; Christ have mercy; Lord have mercy.*

The Festival Choir

2. Vanitas Vanitatum

Vanitas Vanitatum, omnia vanitas!
Pie Jesu Domine, dona eis requiem.
Lacrimosa,
et locutus est, pereat dies in qua natus sum.

*Vanity of vanities, all is vanity! (from Ecclesiastes)
Merciful Lord Jesus, grant them rest.
Full of tears, (from the Dies Irae)
He said, Let the day perish wherein I was born. (Job 3:2-3)*

The Festival Choir

3. Agnus Dei

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis, dona eis requiem.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona nobis pacem, miserere nobis, dona eis requiem

*Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us; grant them rest.
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
grant us peace; have mercy on us; grant them rest.*

Sadie Goodman, Soprano

The Festival Choir

4. Sanctus

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth.
Pleni sunt caeli et terra Gloria tua.
Hosanna in excelsis!

*Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.
Hosanna in excelsis!*

The Festival Choir

5. Lux Aeterna

Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine:
Cum sanctis tuis in aeternum: quia pius es.
Et lux perpetua luceat eis.
Come unto me,
all ye who labor and are heavy laden,
and I will give you rest.
Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat eis.
Dona nobis pacem.

*May light eternal shine upon them, O Lord,
in the company of Thy saints forever: for Thou art merciful.
Let perpetual light shine on them.*

*Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them.
Grant us peace.*

Sadie Goodman, Soprano

Philip McCown, Tenor

The Festival Choir

Part III. Beloved Hymns and Anthems

I'll Sing

ELLACOMBE

Isaac Watts and from Psalm 104:33
arr. with new music by Molly Ijames

I'll sing the mighty power of God that made the mountains rise,
That spread the flowing seas abroad, and built the lofty skies.
I sing the wisdom that ordained the sun to rule the day:
The moon shines full at His command and all the stars obey.

I'll sing to the Lord while I live, I'll sing.

I sing the goodness of the Lord that filled the earth with food, I'll sing.
He formed the creatures with His Word and then pronounced them good.
Lord, how Thy wonders are displayed where'er I turn my eye,
If I survey the ground I tread or gaze upon the sky!

There's not a plant or flow'r below but makes Thy glories known;
And clouds arise and tempests blow by order from Thy throne.
While all that borrows life from Thee is ever in Thy care,
And everywhere that man can be, Thou, God, art present there.

I'll sing to the Lord while I live, I'll sing.

The Festival Choir

Of the Father's Love Begotten

Prudentius 348-413
arr. James A. Brown, 2002

Of the Father's love begotten 'ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega, He the Source, the Ending He.
Of the things that are, that have been, and that future years shall see,
Evermore and evermore!

O that birth forever blessed, when the Virgin full of grace,
By the Holy Ghost conceiving, bore the Savior of our race;
And the babe, the world's Redeemer, first revealed His sacred face,
Evermore and evermore!

This is He whom heav'n-taught singers sang of old with one accord,
Whom the Scriptures and the prophets promised in their faithful word;
Now He shines, the long-expected; let creation praise its Lord,
Evermore and evermore!

O ye heights of heav'n, adore Him; angel hosts, His praises sing;
All dominions bow before Him and extol our God and King;
Let no tongue on earth be silent, ev'ry voice in concert ring,
Evermore and evermore!

The Festival Men and conducted by the arranger, Mr. Brown

Psalm 100

René Clausen (b. 1953)

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, serve the Lord with gladness,
Come into His presence with singing, Alleluia.

Know that the Lord is God; it is He who made us,
Not we ourselves, Alleluia.

We are His people, the sheep of his pasture.
Alleluia, Alleluia, and we are His.

Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise;
Give thanks to Him and praise His holy name. Alleluia!

For the Lord is good, His mercy endures forever,
And His faithfulness endures from generation to generation,
from age to age. Alleluia! Amen!

The Festival Women

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

Hymn tune by Johann Crüger (1598-1662)

Robert Robinson (1735-1790)

arr. Mack Wilberg (b. 1955)

Come, thou Fount of ev'ry blessing, tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet, sung by flaming tongues above.
Praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it, mount of Thy redeeming love.

Here I raise my Ebenezer, hither by Thy help I'm come;
And I hope, by Thy good pleasure, safely to arrive at home.
Prone to wander Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, O take and seal it, seal it for Thy courts above.

Jesus sought me when a stranger wand'ring from the fold of God;
He, to rescue me from danger, interposed His precious blood.
Prone to wander Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, O take and seal it, seal it for Thy courts above.

O to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be!
Let Thy goodness, like a fetter, bind my wand'ring heart to Thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, O take and seal it, seal if for Thy courts above.

The Festival Choir

Thank you for spending your Sunday afternoon with us. Although we will not have a formal reception, please plan to stay awhile to meet Dr. Yanson, Ms. Krekelberg, our soloists, and our singers, who have diligently prepared to share this program with you. They would love to meet you.

Our Festival Conductor

The Festival welcomes **Dr. Eliezer Yanson Jr.** as our guest clinician for Festival '26. Dr. Yanson serves as Professor of Music and Director of Choral Activities at Jacksonville State University, where he conducts the A Cappella Choir and Civic Chorale and teaches undergraduate and graduate music classes. Prior to his appointment at Jax State, he served on the music faculty at Bob Jones University in Greenville, South Carolina. He earned a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in choral conducting from the University of South Carolina, and a Master of Music in church music (conducting) and a Bachelor of Music in piano performance from Bob Jones University. His main conducting mentors have been Larry Wyatt and Warren Cook. Dr. Yanson has also worked and studied with André Thomas, Don Portnoy, Paul Vermel, Dian Tchobanov, and Hilary Apfelstadt.

An active adjudicator, conference speaker, and clinician, Dr. Yanson has conducted choirs and clinics in the United States, Thailand, Bulgaria, and his native Philippines. He is a two-time 3rd prize winner (2015 and 2023) in conducting – college/university chorus division of The American Prize and has appeared in Carnegie Hall as conductor in 2015, 2018, and 2023. His other ongoing responsibilities include Collegiate Chair, Alabama American Choral Directors Association; Editorial Board, The Choral Scholar & American Choral Review; and Faculty Advisor, JSU American Choral Directors Association Student Chapter.

While passionate about conducting and teaching, Dr. Yanson's greatest role is being husband to Martha and father to Isabella and Andre.

Our Festival Organist and Accompanist

Karen Payne Krekelberg is serving in her sixth season as accompanist and organist for Over the Mountain Festivals. She is currently serving as the Associate Director of Music and Arts/Organist at Vestavia Hills Methodist Church, where she has been since 2011. Prior to this, Ms. Krekelberg served as pianist/organist at Trussville First United Methodist Church for 13 years and at other churches from the age of 16. She earned a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Montevallo, with an emphasis in piano pedagogy. While there, she studied piano with Robert Cowan and organ with Betty Louise Lumby. She has enjoyed teaching private piano as well as group classes to students of all ages over the years. Karen maintains a piano studio at the Conservatory of the Arts at Vestavia Hills Methodist Church and serves as head of the piano faculty. She can often be found accompanying various music groups and theatre productions around Birmingham, including the Birmingham Girls Choir, the Birmingham Harmony Belles, and the Cahaba Chamber Chorale. Karen is mother of two adult children and proud grandmother of two.

The Bluff Park UMC Organ

One of the treasures in the Bluff Park United Methodist Church sanctuary is the pipe organ. For many years, it was housed in the sanctuary of the McCoy United Methodist Church on 8th Avenue West in Birmingham, adjacent to the campus of Birmingham-Southern College. Many concerts and musical programs from the college were held there, along with worship and ordination services of the North Alabama Conference. Due to a changing neighborhood and declining membership, the McCoy Church closed in 1993. The Bluff Park Church was able to obtain the organ for use in its proposed new sanctuary. As the building plans were developed, it was removed from its original location, repairs were made, and some computerized mechanical upgrades were added.

Our Festival Soloists

Soprano **Sadie Goodman** holds Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance and Master of Music Education degrees from Samford University, a Master of Music degree in Voice and Opera from Northwestern University, and a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Alabama.

Sadie has worked with Alabama-native composer Terre Johnson as the soprano soloist for the premieres of his works *Missa Femina* (2014) and *Song of the Captive* (2016). She was the featured soloist for the world premiere of his work for orchestra, chorus, and soprano, entitled *The Wind* (2017), at Carnegie Hall in New York City. She was the featured soloist for the Alabama Symphony's "It's a Holiday Feeling!" concert this past December at the BJCC. For more than a decade Sadie has been a chorister, cantor, and soloist for daily masses broadcasted internationally on the Eternal Word Television Network, headquartered in Irondale. Over the Mountain Festivals commissioned Sadie and baritone Zachary Palamara to create the recital "Nativity in Song" in December 2022. In December 2023, a version of it was filmed by EWTN as a special program for cable television; it is also a CD and DVD available for purchase. She served on the faculty at Judson College for four years and currently lectures for the School of the Arts and the Division of Music at Samford University.

Sadie has enjoyed more than a decade of friendship and musical collaboration with Over the Mountain Festivals and is thrilled to be back for another wonderful concert!

Tenor **Philip McCown**, is a singer and choral conductor based in Alabama and Atlanta. He holds a Bachelor's degree from Auburn University, where he studied with Dr. Matthew Hoch, and a Master's degree from Indiana University, where he studied with Peter Volpe. Philip is currently pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA) degree at the University of Alabama, studying voice with Dr. David Tayloe and choral conducting with Dr. Morgan Luttig and Dr. Scott AuCoin. He is also an adjunct professor of voice at Samford University.

Philip has performed a wide range of repertoire, with notable roles including Nemorino (*L'elisir d'amore*), Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*), Ralph Rackstraw (*H.M.S. Pinafore*), Bardolph (*Falstaff*), Laurie (*Little Women*), Eisenstein (*Die Fledermans*), and Aeneas (*Dido and Aeneas*). His performance credits include the Atlanta Opera, Opera Birmingham, TUNDI Productions, Opera Huntsville, Druid City Opera, Indiana University Opera and Ballet Theater, and the University of Alabama Opera Theatre. Beyond opera, Philip enjoys performing concert works and has appeared as a soloist in Franz Joseph Haydn's *Lord Nelson Mass*, Handel's *Messiah*, and Charles Wood's *St. Mark Passion*.

Equally comfortable on the podium and the stage, Philip has served as Assistant Conductor for the Auburn University Men's Chorus and as Director of the Schola Cantorum at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Auburn, Alabama. He has prepared choruses for operas and major works, including Handel's *Messiah*, Vivaldi's *Gloria*, Rutter's *Gloria*, Verdi's *Requiem*, Fauré's *Requiem*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Rigoletto*, *Don Giovanni*, and *Il barbiere di Siviglia*.

Currently, Philip serves as Assistant Conductor for the University Chorus at the University of Alabama, Associate Conductor for the University of Alabama Opera Theatre, and Chorus Master for Druid City Opera in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

The Festival Singers

Sopranos

Mary Jane Allen	Pam Coffey	Brooke Jones	Amy Pheil Neimkin
Dale Baldwin	Cathy Crittenden	Judy E. Jones	Jan Parks
Deborah Barone	Donna DePrine	Susan Leveille	Karen Pitts Pearson
Heather Batey	Anna Flemming	Sarah Lumpkin	Diane Popwell
Susan Bellis	Emilee Garrett	Lissa Lutenbacher	Paula J. Reid
Beth Branscome	Mary Ethel Gross	Kat Martin	Holly Simmons
Janice Bricker	Kay Harris	Kathy Martin	Laura Stewart
Elizabeth Calhoun	Melanie Haynes	Erin McDow *	Tonya Tishaw
Jaana Clayhills	Emily Grimes Henderson	Nikki Mestre	Mary Frances Wheeler
Elaine Clowers	Jessica Hudson	Kim McRae	

Altos

Melissa Behm	Jan Conder	Wendy Hellings	Amy Plourde
Monica Burson	Holly Dees	Cathy Henry	Brenda Posey
Robin Callihan	Josie Doelman	Emily Horton	Laura Reder
Jackie Cantelmo	Risa Entrekin	Amber Johnson	Carol Reed
Teresa P. Capra	Susan Ervin	Alice Krug	Ruth Robinson
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JoAnne Hamrick Coggins	Robyn Felton	Karen McKelroy	Jan J. Shultz
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Tenors

James Brown	Rusty Chastain	Mark Nabholz	Jay Vaughn
Bruce Burson	Dan Medders	John Phillips **	
Cary Campbell	Rob Moore	Albert Smith	
Philip Capra	Jerry V. Norman	Patrick Tisdale	

Basses

Dave Balias	George Fritsma	Matthew Morgan	Dick Voran
Bruce Burson	Caleb Hamblin	Keith Reed	Michael Weems
Bob Chamberlain	Joe Jones	Harold Simon	Paul West
Craig Cordes	Al Lassiter	Stack Stachelski	Steve West
James Diaz	Steve Lee	Gerry Stewart	

* Understudy to Mrs. Goodman

** Understudy to Mr. McCown

The Festival Orchestra

First Violin	Second Violin	Viola	Cello	Bass
Daniel Szasz Mayumi Masri Serghei Tanas	Sarah Dennis Julianne Steele Bonnie Furuto	Tian Tian Lam Meredith Treaster	Warren Samples Samuel Nordlund	Sam Rocklin

Flute	Oboe	Clarinet	Bassoon
Lisa Weinhold Barbara Harrington	Jim Sullivan Kelly Newport	Robert Janssen Lori Ardivino	Jack Sharp

Trumpet	French Horn	Timpani	Percussion
Nick Ciulla Joe Ardivino	Valerie Sly Nina Tarpley	Jay Burnham	Mark Libby

Harp
Katie Hoppe McQueen

Bonnie Furuto, Orchestra Contractor

Church Choirs and Choral Groups Represented

Alabama Civic Chorale	Hunter Street Baptist Church Choir and Orchestra
Alabama Symphony Orchestra Chorus	Huntsville Community Chorus
Auburn United Methodist Church	Independent Presbyterian Church, Memphis, TN
Birmingham Southern College Alumni Choir	Mountain Brook Baptist Church
Briarwood Presbyterian Sanctuary Choir	Mountain Chapel Methodist Church
Cahaba Springs Presbyterian Church	North American Vocal Ensemble
Christ Church Birmingham	Oak Mountain Presbyterian Church
Christ Church PCA, Trussville	Our Lady of the Valley Catholic Church
Christ Covenant Reformed Church, Germantown, TN	Riverchase United Methodist Church
Dawson Memorial Baptist Church	Saint Alban's Episcopal Church
Episcopal Church of the Ascension	Saint Mark the Apostle Catholic Church
Evangel Church PCA, Alabaster	South Highland Presbyterian Church
First Methodist, Trussville	Southminster Presbyterian Church
First Presbyterian Church of Alabaster	Third Presbyterian Church Ensemble
First Presbyterian Church, Prattville	Trinity Presbyterian Church, Birmingham
Helena Methodist Church	Trinity Presbyterian Church, Montgomery
Fultondale Baptist Church	Trussville First Methodist Church
Hope Community Church, Gardendale, AL	Vestavia Hills Baptist Church
Huffman United Methodist	Warblers Club

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It is through your generosity that the work of Over the Mountain Festivals will continue. If you have not made a contribution and wish to do so, a pre-addressed envelope has been provided for your convenience. You may mail the envelope or leave it in an offering basket in the narthex.

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Bluff Park United Methodist Church, for hosting this year's Festival of Sacred Music; Pastors Ross Furio and Quinten Lochman, Jason McCrory, Cara Thomas, Ken Watson, and the gracious members of Bluff Park United Methodist Church

Riverchase United Methodist Church for providing rehearsal space; Pastor Tony Johnson, Daniel deShazo, Chris Higginbotham, Dianne Roberts, and the gracious members of Riverchase United Methodist Church

Our section leaders and rehearsal hostesses

Special thanks to David H. Balias, Jr., webmaster, program cover designer, logistics director, and audio specialist

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The dozens who participated in our various fundraisers and helped with various activities throughout our season. These include, but are not limited to, Gayle and Robert Kirby, Jeannette Minor, Barbara Ramsay, and Dr. Bill and Ginny Whitaker.

What We Do and for Whom

Over the Mountain Festivals exists to foster and perpetuate the singing of sacred choral music and to provide training and encouragement to directors of small choirs and their choristers, both adults and children, for the glory of God, for the edification of participants, and for the enjoyment of the community.

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