The Canticle of Hannah

SATB chorus and piano

I: My Loving Friends (5 min)
II: A Virtuous Woman (4.5 min)

Music by Melissa Dunphy Texts adapted from letters by Hannah Callowhill Penn and Proverbs 31

2022



Commissioned by Singing City Choir of Philadelphia with the generous support of
Jeffrey Brillhart & Joacy Mendonca
Mark & Peggy Curchack

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I: My Loving Friends

My loving Friends My marriage is the greatest comfort in this world so is it mixt with great exercises: a wilderness of thorns, and the extreme trouble of the sea. But I have strength of mind and the strength of God which are greater than the strength of the discords. I hitherto go on with comfort and hope for the people are safe and their comfort is so near interwoven with mine and my children's whole fortune, my husband's reputation, my own satisfaction and their happiness hang all in a thread together and shall be carefully preserved by me, if not broken by them. I recommend to thy utmost care to promote virtue, sobriety, peace and love; to reconcile all animosities for thine own honor, and the reputation of the country. Oh may it be so, saith my soul. And in this I earnestly desire the Lord may bless thy endeavors, from whence the most solid comfort will arise to thy self, And a very great one to Thy loving Friend.

— adapted from letters by Hannah Callowhill Penn written 1701-1726

II: A Virtuous Woman

Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar. She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms. She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy. She seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land. Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come. She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.

—Adapted from Proverbs 31:10-31 King James Version



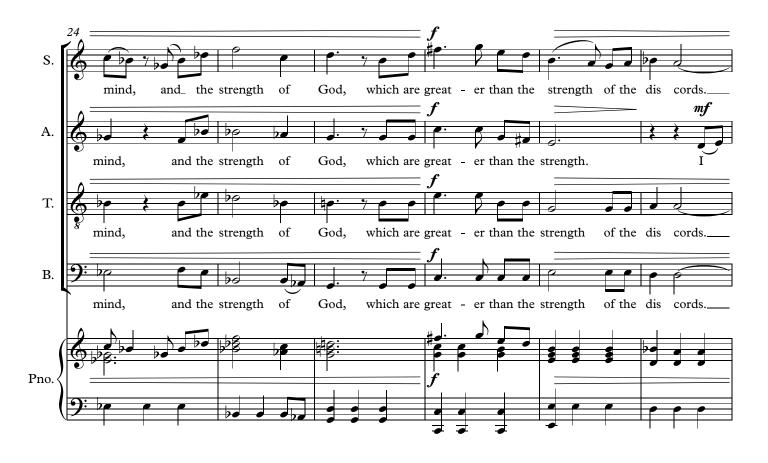
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I: My Loving Friends

























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II: A Virtuous Woman







