

The Beatitudes

for

SATB Choir, Handbell Choir and Organ

[or SATB Choir, Piano and Organ]

by

John Burge

— Handbell Part —



Musical score for Handbell Part, showing two staves (treble and bass clef) with notes and accidentals. The score includes a bracketed section labeled "[Optional]" under the bass staff.

Commissioned by Reverend Elizabeth Richards in 2015
for the Gaetz Memorial United Church Music Ministry, Red Deer, Alberta.

The Beatitudes

[Matthew 5:3-9]

Moderato ♩ = 76

John Burge

Handbell
Choir

Musical notation for measures 1-6. Treble clef, 3/4 time. Bass clef accompaniment. Dynamics: *p* [let ring].

Musical notation for measures 7-12. Treble clef, 3/4 time. Bass clef accompaniment. Dynamics: *cresc.*

Musical notation for measures 13-18. Treble clef, 3/4 time. Bass clef accompaniment. Dynamics: *mf*, *mp*, *mf*, *p*. Section marker **A**.

Musical notation for measures 19-24. Treble clef, 3/4 time. Bass clef accompaniment.

Musical notation for measures 25-30. Treble clef, 3/4 time. Bass clef accompaniment. Dynamics: *p (sub.)*. Section marker **B**.

32

mf

38

C

43

rit. **D** *a tempo*

p mp p mf mp f (sempre)

48

dim.

54

p **2**

E

62

p

68

73

F *accel.*

6 2

6 2

G **Faster** ♩ = 92

85

f *f*

for they shall see

89

rit.

Tempo primo ♩ = 76 H

93 *mp* *f* *mf*

più f

f

97 *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

101 I

f *p (sub.)*

106 *f* *rit.* *più f* *ff*

About this composition...

The Beatitudes, for choir, handbells and organ, is a setting of the seven very familiar lines from the Gospel of Mark that begin, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.” The work was commissioned by Reverend Elizabeth Richards for the Gaetz Memorial United Church Music Ministry in Red Deer, Alberta upon her retirement from the church in 2015. John Burge has known “Liz” for many years and was glad to have this opportunity to find a musical interpretation of these lines. The importance of the words required a text setting that is audibly straight-forward, often being heard in a dialogue arrangement between the female and male sections of the choir. The composition uses the bells to create an angelic-like aura around the words and with the addition of organ, builds to a triumphant climax at the end. It is also possible to perform this work by having the handbell parts played on the piano.

About the composer...

Dr. John Burge was born in Dryden, Ontario in 1961. He holds degrees in Composition and Theory from the University of Toronto and the University of British Columbia. Since 1987 he has been teaching at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, where he is a full professor and has served as Director of the School of Music. In 2013 he was awarded a Queen's University Excellence in Research Prize for his work as a composer and in 2014 was inducted into the Royal Society of Canada in the Humanities and Arts Division. A passionate advocate of Canadian music, he was a member of the executive council of the Canadian League of Composers for fourteen years, serving as President from 1998-2006, and since 2009 has been appointed to the board of directors of the SOCAN Foundation.

John Burge has written a large body of vocal, chamber, and orchestral compositions. He is particularly well known though, for his choral music, which has been performed by such choirs as The Elmer Iseler Singers, The BBC Singers, The Amabile Youth Choir, The Toronto Children's Chorus and The St. Louis Symphony Children's Choir. Many of these choral works have been published by Boosey and Hawkes. His composition, *Angels' Voices*, for choir and orchestra, received the 2006 Outstanding New Choral Composition Award from the Association of Canadian Choral Conductors and was performed in New York City's Carnegie Hall in 2005. His string orchestra work, *Flanders Fields' Reflections*, as recorded by Sinfonia Toronto on the Marquis Classics label, received the 2009 Juno Award for the best recording of a Canadian Classical Composition.

The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-9)

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven,
Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.
Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the people of God.

Duration: Approximately 5 minutes