

Commissioned by the West Virginia Vocal Music Association and premiered by the West Virginia All-State Chorus
on March 5, 2022 in Charleston, West Virginia, Dr. Scott Glysson, conductor

The Gift to be Free

based on the American Shaker song "Simple Gifts"
for SATB Chorus, Brass, Percussion, and Piano

Traditional
G. Walker, alt.

Gwyneth Walker

The Gift to be Free is an updated *revisiting* of the well-known Shaker song **Simple Gifts**. The original song expresses Shaker values of simplicity and humility ("to bow and to bend we will not be ashamed"). Reference is made to the Shaker love of dancing ("by turning, turning, we come 'round right"). This is a joyous song, either *a cappella* or with lively piano accompaniment.

A new verse is added, based on Shaker values: "to sing out right, with a voice of harmony, love and light." We are then reminded of our gifts – to be simple, and (very American), to be free!

With strength and energy (♩ = 120)

The musical score is arranged in a system with the following parts from top to bottom:

- *Trumpets in C (1 and 2 staves)
- Horn in F
- Trombone and Tuba
- Percussion (Tom-Tom, Tenor Drum, Bongo, Suspended Cymbal, Snare Drum)
- Soprano
- Alto
- Tenor
- Bass
- Piano

The score is in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The tempo is marked "With strength and energy" with a quarter note equal to 120 beats per minute. The music begins with a dynamic marking of *f* (forte). The vocal parts enter in the final measure of the system with the lyrics "'Tis the". The piano part features a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand.

*Parts for Bb Trumpets are also available

5 **A**

Tpts. 1 2

Hn.

Tbn. Tuba

Perc. **Tenor Drum**
f

S
gift to be sim - ple, 'tis the gift to be free, _____ 'Tis the gift to come down

A
gift to be sim - ple, 'tis the gift to be free, _____ 'Tis the gift to come down

T
gift to be sim - ple, 'tis the gift to be free, _____ 'Tis the gift to come down

B
gift to be sim - ple, 'tis the gift to be free, _____ 'Tis the gift to come down

A

Pno.

9 **B**

Tpts. 1 2

Hn.

Tbn. Tuba

Perc.

S
where we ought to be, _____ And when we find our - selves in the place just right, _____

A
where we ought to be, _____ And when we find our - selves in the place just right, _____

T
where we ought to be, _____ And when we find our - selves in the place just right, _____

B
where we ought to be, _____ And when we find our - selves in the place just right, _____

B

Pno.

23 D

Tpts. 1 2

Hn.

Tbn. Tuba

Perc. (Bongo)

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

Piano

f Open

f Open

f

f

bow and to bend we will not be a - shamed. To turn, turn will

we will not be a - shamed. To turn, turn will

we will not be a - shamed. To turn, turn will

D

27

Tpts. 1 2

Hn.

Tbn. Tuba

Perc. Tenor Drum

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

Piano

f

a2

B1

be our de - light, 'til by turn - ing, turn - ing we come 'round, come 'round,

be our de - light, be our de - light, 'til by turn - ing, turn - ing we come 'round, come 'round,

be our de - light, be our de - light, 'til by turn - ing, turn - ing we come 'round, come 'round,

62

Tpts. 1
2

Hn.

Tbn.
Tuba

Perc.

S

A

T
B

Pno.

right... with a voice of har - mo - ny, love and light,

right... with a voice of har - mo - ny, love and light,

har - mo - ny, love and light,

66 *acc.* **I** a tempo (♩ = 120)

Tpts. 1
2

Hn.

Tbn.
Tuba

Perc.

S

A

T
B

Pno.

love and light,

love and light,

love and light.

acc. **I** a tempo (♩ = 120)

Walker | *The Gift to be Free*

86

Tpts. 1 2

Hn.

Tbn. Tuba

Perc.

Susp. Cym.

S

A

T

B

Pno.

be in the val - ley of love and de - light.

be in the val - ley of love and de - light.

90 *rit. to end*

Tpts. 1 2

Hn.

Tbn. Tuba

Perc.

Tom-Tom

Bongo

Tenor Dr.

Tom-Tom

Susp. Cym.

ff very celebratory

ff very celebratory

S

A

T

B

Pno.

'Tis the gift to be sim - ple, 'tis the gift to be free!

'Tis the gift to be sim - ple, 'tis the gift to be free!