

SUMMIT CHORALE

Dr. Thomas Juneau, Artistic Director
David Maiullo, Accompanist

I Go ON

*Gawthrop - Sing Me to Heaven :: Erb - Shenandoah
Hairston - Poor Man Lazrus :: LaBarr - Under the Willow
Hogan - My Soul's Been Anchored*

FEATURING
MASS

by Leonard Bernstein

**Sun. October 26th
5:00pm**

**United Methodist Church of Summit
17 Kent Place Blvd.
Summit, NJ**



Made possible by funds from the Union County
Office of Cultural and Heritage Affairs, a partner
of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

www.summitchorale.org

SUMMIT CHORALE

Dr. Thomas Juneau, Artistic Director
David Maiullo, Accompanist

2025 - 2026 SEASON

SUMMITCHORALE.ORG

Sun.
Oct 26
@ 5pm

I GO ON BERNSTEIN MASS
GAWTHROP, ERB, HOGAN & MORE

United Methodist Church of Summit: 17 Kent Pl Blvd

Tue.
Nov 11
@ 7:30pm

VETERANS DAY
SING

Saint John's Lutheran Church: 587 Springfield Ave, Summit

VERDI
REQUIEM

Sun.
Dec 7
@ 5pm

PEACE ON EARTH

AMY BEACH - PEACE ON EARTH & RANDALL THOMPSON - FROSTIANA
& HOLIDAY FAVORITES

Presbyterian Church of Chatham Township: 240 Southern Blvd

Sat.
Feb 14
@ 7:30pm

a night at the opera

with

QUEEN

featuring
hits of the
70s & 80s!

Summit Knights of Columbus: 61 Harvard St

TBD
TBD
@TBD

SUMMIT CHORALE GALA

Lady Luck and the Golden Age of Broadway
featuring hits from Guys & Dolls

Sun.
May 17
@ 5pm

LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL

JOHN ADAMS OPERA CHORUSES: NIXON IN CHINA & DOCTOR ATOMIC
WILHOUSKY - BATTLE HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC :: PRICE - ABRAHAM LINCOLN WALKS AT MIDNIGHT
TWO PASSAGES FROM THOMPSON - TESTAMENT OF FREEDOM

Saint John's Lutheran Church: 587 Springfield Ave, Summit

Program

This concert is sponsored by The Union County Office of Cultural Affairs

Thomas Juneau, conductor

David Maiullo, piano

John Leister, percussion

Selections from *Mass*

Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Schwartz
ed. Doreen Rao

~ Hymn and Psalm: “A Simple Song”

~ Responsory: *Alleluia*

~ Chorale: “Almighty Father”

~ *Gloria tibi*

~ *Gloria in Excelsis*

~ Trope “Half of the People”

~ Credo: Trope: “I Believe in God”

~ Our Father

~ Sanctus

~ Agnus Dei

~ Pax: Communion “Secret Songs”

Michele Currenti, soprano

Adam Cromer, tenor

Christian Waugh, speaker

Brief Pause

Sing Me to Heaven

Daniel E. Gawthrop

Shenandoah

trad. American, arr. James Erb

My Soul’s Been Anchored in the Lord

trad. Spiritual, arr. Moses Hogan

Intermission

Program (cont'd)

This concert is sponsored by The Union County Office of Cultural Affairs

Thomas Juneau, conductor

David Maiullo, piano

John Leister, percussion

Oedipus Tex (S. 150)

An opera in one cathartic act

P.D.Q. Bach (1807-1742)?

ed. With pathos by

Professor Peter Schickele

1. Prologue (Chorus)

Recitative: “Well” (Narrator)

2. Aria with Chorus: “Howdy There” (Oedipus Tex)

Recitative: “And it Wasn’t Long” (Narrator)

3. Duet with Chorus: “My Heart” (Oedipus Tex and Billie Jo Casta)

Recitative: “But” (Narrator)

4. Aria: “You Murdered Your Father” (Madam Peep)

Recitative: “When Billie Jo Heard” (Narrator)

5. Aria with Chorus: “Goodbye” (Billie Jo Casta)

Recitative: “When Oedipus” (Narrator & Oedipus Tex)

6. Chorale and Finale (Soloists with Chorus)

Narrator and Trumpeteer..... Peter Wick

Oedipus Tex Adam Cromer

Billie Jo Casta..... Michele Currenti

Madame Peep..... Casandra LaMotte

Hilary Baboukis..... Melodica

Rakesh Babu Otamatone

Mary Lynne Nielsen Leader of the Outlaw Kazoo Gang

Please join us after the performance for a brief reception.

Summit Chorale

Thomas Juneau, Conductor

David Maiullo, Accompanist

SOPRANO

Carly DaSilva
Casandra LaMotte
Christine Beardslee
Deborah Booth
Dianne Ciccone
Fran Villaverde
Hedy Tukey
Janet Painter
Juliet Reiter-Gill
Kathy Parsons
Kristin Garrison
Lauren Klein-Juneau
Michele Currenti
Ritsuko Ando
Ruth Portela

ALTO

Beth Lohner
Debbie Saivetz
Hilary Baboukis
Jody Baboukis
Kathleen Diffley
Laura Gurcan
Lauren Porsch-Ortega
Maggie Reilly
Mary Barber
Mary Lynne Nielsen
Nancy Friedman
Paula Avioli
Rita Babu
Robin Taylor Roth

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Adam Cromer
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Bob White
Dan McCulloch
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Michael Baruffi
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Rakesh Babu
Sho Ando

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Thomas Juneau, *Ex-Officio*

Program Notes: *I Go On*

Summit Chorale

October 26, 2025

A Brief Note

Welcome, my friends, to another fantastic season with Summit Chorale! Thank you for joining us for today's concert. Our works this season focus on the upcoming semiquincentennial of the United States, and we begin this musical observance with the music of the best-known American musician of the 20th Century, Leonard Bernstein, and his work, *Mass*, which was written for the opening of the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington D.C. in 1971. I have included an outstanding summary of the work as written by the Leonard Bernstein Office at leonardbernstein.com. I encourage you to read the article and explore this treasure further.

The middle section of our concert today features three beautiful gems of mid-twentieth-century American choral music. The first is Daniel Gawthrop's setting of *Sing Me to Heaven*. This is followed by James Erb's lovely setting of *Shenandoah*, and we end this portion of the concert with Moses Hogan's exuberant *My Soul is Anchored in the Lord*.

To conclude our concert, the Chorale is taking a turn to the music of PDQ Bach, also known as Dr. Peter Schickele, who taught at Juilliard for many years and was a beloved staple of the NYC choral scene. Tonight's work, *Oedipus Tex*, is a parody of the story of Oedipus Rex. The work centers on Oedipus Tex, a cowboy and the brother of Oedipus Rex. Along the way, he shoots some strangers, solves a riddle by Big Foot, and settles down with the queen of the rodeo, Billie Joe Casta. Soon, a plague infests the town, and Madam Peep, the fortune-teller, explains that Oedipus Tex is the cause of all the trouble. In despair, Billie Joe hangs herself, and the repentant Tex gouges out his eyes with his wife's rhinestone barrettes. The action closes with the chorus singing "The Eyes of Texas Are Upon You." This work was commissioned by Dr. Betty Divine and the Houston Chamber Choir, hence references to some very "Houstonian humor", including drinking Pepsi. According to the score, the work was discovered in the Alamo, which is not in Houston.

We hope today's concert brings reflection, peacefulness, and laughter!

Thomas Juneau

Music Director, Summit Chorale

Mass by Leonard Bernstein



BACKGROUND

During his legendary tenure at the New York Philharmonic from 1958 to 1969, Leonard Bernstein composed only two major works, Symphony No. 3: *Kaddish* (1963) and *Chichester Psalms* (1965). He had dedicated *Kaddish* to the memory of John F. Kennedy shortly after his assassination, and when Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis asked Bernstein to compose a work for the 1971 inauguration of the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., he was eager to honor the occasion with a new, large-scale work because he knew he had always wanted "to compose a service of one sort or another." The son of Russian-Jewish parents, a social liberal, and lifelong human rights and political activist, Bernstein made a surprising choice: the Roman Catholic Mass. But instead of a straightforward, purely musical setting of the Latin liturgy, he created a broadly eclectic theatrical event by placing the 400-year-old religious rite into a tense, dramatic dialogue with music and lyrics of the 20th-century vernacular, using this dialectic to explore the crisis in faith and cultural breakdown of the post-Kennedy era.

By the late 1960s, the country had become polarized over U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War. A powerful anti-war movement swept the United States, fueled by outrage at the draft, the massive casualties, atrocities such as the My Lai Massacre, incursions into Laos and Cambodia, the imprisonment of conscientious objectors and activists, and in 1970, the Kent State student shootings. These turbulent times produced a restless youth culture that hungered for a trustworthy government and for spiritual authority that reflected their values. *MASS* gave them a voice. Months before the scheduled premiere, *MASS* was far from completion. Needing a collaborator, Bernstein asked the young composer-lyricist Stephen Schwartz to work with him on the text. Schwartz had recently proven his ability to transform religious stories and rituals into contemporary theater with *Godspell*, his 1971 hit musical based on the Gospel of St. Matthew. The two writers, both Jewish, had found spiritual common ground in Christian texts, hit it off, and worked briskly to meet the September deadline.

Bernstein and Schwartz envisioned *MASS* not as a concert piece, but as a fully staged, dramatic pageant. They mixed sacred and secular texts, using the traditional Latin liturgical sequence as the fundamental structure and inserting tropes in contemporary English that question and challenge the prescribed service, as well as meditations that demand time for reflection. They took the Tridentine Mass, a highly ritualized (pre-Vatican II) Catholic rite meant to be recited verbatim, and applied to it a very Jewish practice of debating and arguing with God. The result was a piece that powerfully communicated the confusion and cultural malaise of the early 1970s, questioning authority and advocating for peace.

In *MASS*, the ceremony is performed by a Celebrant accompanied by a formal choir, a boys' choir, acolytes, and musicians. His congregation of disaffected youth (the "Street Chorus") sings tropes that challenge the Church's formal ecclesiastical dogma. Congregants recite freshly composed letters that sharply take on issues of the day, giving voice to troubled times.

As the tension grows and the Celebrant's vestments become ever more elaborate, the skeptical, questioning congregants turn to him with ever more strident demands to heal their ills and bring peace to a violent world. In a climactic moment, overwhelmed by the burden of his authority, the Celebrant hurls the Eucharist to the floor and has a spiritual breakdown. The catharsis creates an opportunity for a return to the simple, pure faith with which he had begun the ritual (expressed in the opening "A Simple Song"). Though *MASS* challenges divine authority, exposing its contradictions and questioning religion's relevance to contemporary life, it ultimately reaffirms faith and hope in universal peace.

The eclecticism of *MASS*'s music reflects the multifaceted nature of Bernstein's career, with blues, rock, gospel, folk, Broadway, and jazz idioms appearing side by side with 12-tone serialism, symphonic marches, solemn hymns, Middle Eastern dances, orchestral meditations, and lush chorales, all united in a single dramatic event with recurring musical motifs. Bernstein uses the uninhibited tonal rock 'n' roll of the Street Chorus to challenge the dogmatic, atonal music of the Church; ultimately, the musical argument is resolved with a tonal chorale ("Almighty Father") sung by the entire company.

MASS premiered on September 8, 1971, at the inauguration of the Kennedy Center, directed by Gordon Davidson, conducted by Maurice Peress, and choreographed by Alvin Ailey. The performance was fully staged, with over 200 participants. The pit orchestra included strings, percussion, a concert organ, and a "rock" organ; all the other instrumentalists—brass, woodwinds, rock musicians—were on stage in costume and acted as members of the cast. The Street Chorus was made up of singers and dancers in contemporary dress, a 60-person robed choir filled the stage pews, and a complement of dancers costumed as acolytes assisted the Celebrant.

During his work on *MASS*, Bernstein consulted with Father Daniel Berrigan, a Catholic priest and anti-war activist who had been on the FBI's "10 Most-Wanted" list before being apprehended and imprisoned in the Federal Correctional Institution in Danbury, Connecticut. In the summer of 1971, as *MASS* approached its premiere, the FBI warned the White House that the piece's Latin text might contain coded anti-war messages and that Bernstein was mounting a plot "to embarrass the United States government." President Nixon was strongly advised by his chief of staff, H.R. Haldeman, not to attend and was conspicuously absent at the premiere. The line was merely "Dona nobis pacem" ('Grant us peace'), from the standard liturgical text.

Responses to the premiere of *MASS* covered the spectrum. The Roman Catholic Church did not approve—some cities canceled performances under pressure from their local Catholic churches—while other prominent clergy declared their support for the piece. Certain music critics disapproved of the mixing of genres, while others found the work to be inspired. For the most part, the audiences were deeply moved, experiencing firsthand the shared, communal journey of the composition.

Over the years, the ideas and dissent embodied in *MASS*, which were so threatening to the political and religious establishments in the volatile early-1970s, have become a more accepted part of spiritual and political discourse. *MASS* came full circle when, in 2000, Pope John Paul II requested a performance at the Vatican. Its radical mixing of musical styles, too, has also become less shocking and more accepted in the musical sphere. Time has revealed *MASS* to be a visionary piece that continues to be relevant and move audiences as it receives performances around the world.

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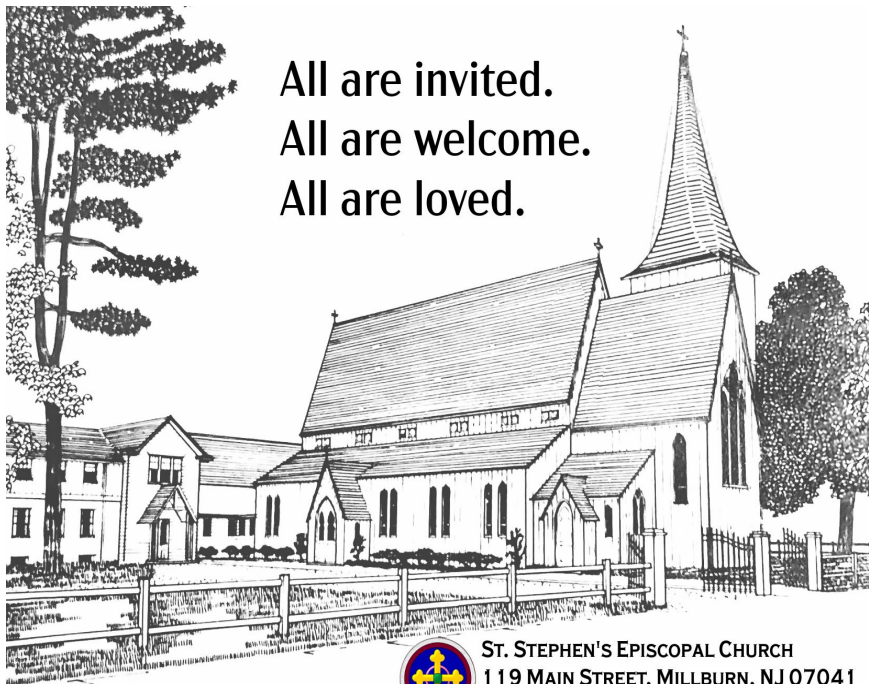
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