

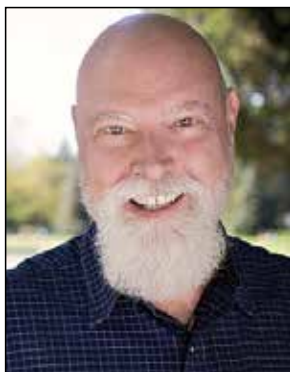
Orpheus Pagan Chamber Choir

A RITE OF REMEMBRANCE

As candles are lit, we are between the worlds...



Orpheus Pagan Chamber Choir exists to broaden the greater community's understanding of Pagan beliefs and influences through innovative choral experiences. The singers in Orpheus follow Earth-based spiritual traditions or are Pagan-friendly. We explore the Pagan presence in traditional choral music, the emerging new Pagan choral repertoire, and more.



Andrew Adams, *Founder & Music Director*, has been music director of numerous churches and temples in the New York and Los Angeles metropolitan areas. As a professional singer, has appeared with the New York Philharmonic, Opera Ensemble of New York, the St. Thomas Choir, Los Angeles Master Chorale, Spoleto Festival USA, Festival dei Due Mondi, Italy; and in concert and recital in the US and Germany. As a soloist with the Westminster Choir, he performed frequently with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Vienna Philharmonic, and others under Zubin Mehta, Riccardo Muti, Kurt Masur, and Robert Shaw. Mr. Adams holds two graduate degrees from Westminster Choir College, is a published composer/arranger, and maintains a private voice studio in Denver.



Molly Moran, *pianist*, has received praise as “a musician and pianist of uncommon insight and versatility” with an “intuitive grasp of the intentions of her colleagues.” Molly Moran is one of the Front Range’s most sought-after collaborative pianists. Since graduating with honors from the University of Denver’s Lamont School of Music, Molly has performed with several of Colorado’s orchestras, chamber groups, and choirs. She is the preferred partner of some of the finest singers in Colorado.

We believe that the innovative choral experience that is Orpheus builds a diverse community and enriches lives. Your support makes this possible.

Donate here:



Special thanks to Michael Davida for creating and providing the Visual Design of tonight's Altar Space and Graveyard.



A RITE OF REMEMBRANCE

Conductor: Andrew Adams

Pianist: Molly Moran | ASL Interpretation: Tofer Breüer

Saturday, November 1st, 2025

The Althea Center for Engaged Spirituality, Denver, CO

Welcome to the Orpheus Rite of Remembrance.

Thank you for joining us in this solemn occasion.

Here are some things you need to know:

Please observe sacred silence when you enter the hall, and both before and during the Rite.

Before or after the Rite, you may light candles, write in the Book of Remembrance, and place photos and other memorabilia on the Remembrance Altar.

On the altar are tea lights for you to use. Please take one for each loved one you are remembering. After lighting, you may place them on the gravesite or on the main altar, using the provided saucers.

A Book of Remembrance rests on the lectern; you are invited to write whatever you wish about your loved one(s).

After the Rite, the book's pages will be ritually burned, and all remaining candles will be extinguished and later re-lit to finish their burning down.

A reception follows the Rite in the Dining Hall to the right of the gravesites.



As candles are lit

Music: Andrew Adams (b. 1955); Lyrics: Anon

As candles are lit, we are between the worlds.
We are beyond the bounds of time.
Where Night and Day,
Birth and Death,
Joy and Sorrow
Meet as one.

READING: NÄNIE (ELEGY)

Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805)

Nänie

Music: Johannes Brahms (1893–1897); Lyrics: F. Schiller

Auch das Schöne muß sterben! Das Menschen und Götter bezwinget,
Nicht die eherne Brust rührt es des stygischen Zeus.
Einmal nur erweichte die Liebe den Schattenbeherrscher,
Und an der Schwelle noch, streng, rief er zurück sein Geschenk.
Nicht stillt Aphrodite dem schönen Knaben die Wunde,
Die in den zierlichen Leib grausam der Eber geritzt.
Nicht errettet den göttlichen Held die unsterbliche Mutter,
Wann er, am skäischen Tor fallend, sein Schicksal erfüllt.
Aber sie steigt aus dem Meer mit allen Töchtern des Nereus,
Und die Klage hebt an um den verherrlichten Sohn.
Siehe, da weinen die Götter, es weinen die Göttinnen alle,
Daß das Schöne vergeht, daß das Vollkommene stirbt.
Auch ein Klaglied zu sein im Mund der Geliebten, ist herrlich,
Denn das Gemeine geht klanglos zum Orkus hinab.

Even the beautiful must die! Death, which vanquishes both men and gods,
Moves not the steely heart of Hades, the Stygian Zeus.
Only once did love make the Lord of Shadows relent,
and just when Orpheus was at the threshold,
Hades sternly rescinded his gift of life from Eurydice.
Neither does Aphrodite bind the beautiful Adonis' wound,
his graceful body was so gruesomely gashed by the boar.
Neither does the immortal mother, Thetis, save the god-like hero, Achilles,
when at Troy's gate he fell dead, fulfilling his fate.
But she rises up from the sea with all the daughters of Nereus,
and they lift up a song of lament for her glorious son.
See: The gods weep; all the goddesses weep,
Because the beautiful must perish, that the perfect dies.
Yet, a song of lament on the lips of our loved ones is glorious;
Because the mundane go unsung to the Underworld.

READING: A Litany for Sitting with the Unjustly Killed

Melissa Hill (2017)

Famine Song

Lyrics and Music: VIDA (2004); arr: Matthew Culloton

Ease my spirit, ease my soul,
please free my hands from this barren soil.
Ease my mother, ease my child,
earth and sky be reconciled.

Out of heat, under sun,
comes the hunger to ev'ry one.
Famine's teeth, famine's claw
on the sands of Africa.

Rain...

Rain...

Weave, my mother, weave, my child,
Weave your baskets of rushes wild.

Weave, my mother, weave, my child,
Weave your baskets of rushes wild.

Eye for Eye

Music and Lyrics: Shawn Kirchner (b. 1970)~with debt to Gandhi and Jesus

Eye for eye and the world goes blind)
And how deep the darkness, and the light nowhere to find.
Life for life and the killing goes on
And how deep the darkness, like a night without a dawn.

Hate feeds hate in a bitter feast
And how deep the darkness;
turns humankind into a hungry beast.
Gives us light, that we may see.

READING: For the Fallen

Laurence Binyon (1869–1943)

Empty Chairs at Empty Tables (from *Les Misérables*)

Music: Claude-Michel Schönberg (b. 1944)
Lyrics: Alain Boublil and Herbert Kretzmer (1980)

There's a grief that can't be spoken
There's a pain goes on and on
Empty chairs at empty tables
Now my friends are dead and gone

From the table in the corner
They could see a world reborn
And they rose with voices ringing
And I can hear them now!

Here they talked of revolution
Here it was they lit the flame
Here they sang about tomorrow
And tomorrow never came

The very words that they had sung
Became their last communion
On this lonely barricade
At dawn

Oh my friends, my friends forgive me
That I live and you are gone
There's a grief that can't be spoken
There's a pain goes on and on

Phantom faces at the window
Phantom shadows on the floor
Empty chairs at empty tables
Where my friends will meet no more

Vimy Ridge

Early in the morning, the cold snow falling down,
Easter of 1917
My love climbed out from the tunnels underground
and stepped to no-man's land in between.

His last night was spent in the ground of the French land
with thousands of men, he did wait.
He laid down his head upon the barrel of his gun,
a dark and cruel symbol of his fate.

Oh, my love can't touch you now
or calm the fear that's building deep within.
Oh, the terror you must have felt
waiting below the hill at Vimy Ridge.

An overpowering thunder from the creeping barrage
left no room for thoughts within their minds.
Forty pounds loaded down, the horror lingered on
imprinted in their memories for all time.

Oh, my love can't touch you now
or calm the fear you're feeling deep within.
Oh, the terror you must have felt,
fighting on the hill at Vimy Ridge.

Oh my friends, my friends
Don't ask me what your sacrifice was for
Empty chairs at empty tables
Where my friends will sing no more

Music and Lyrics: Lizzy Hoyt (2023); arr: Keith Sinclair

A hard thump on his chest stopped time in its tracks,
his lucky streak had come and now had passed.
Ahead lay the fury, behind was a different scene
a quiet kingdom of death and casualties.

He lay waiting for the stretcher bearer to come
the cold wind froze the clothes to his body.
Disbelief came over him "This couldn't really be
for I am now a young man still with dreams!"

Oh, my love can't touch you now
or calm the fear you're feeling deep within.
Oh, the terror you must have felt
dying on the hill at Vimy Ridge.

Early in the morning, the cold snow falling down
Easter of 1917,
My love climbed out from the tunnels underground
and stepped to no-man's land in between.



After the War

Music and Lyrics: Paul Gross and David Keeley (2014); arr. Mark Sirett (b. 1952)

After the guns are silent, after your wounds have healed,
After those crosses been planted in all those fields,
After that long boat ride all the way across the sea.
And after this train carries thee.

Refrain

I will love you after the war.
I'll love you for always for evermore.
I will love you after the war,
Forever, for always, and more.

After your boots dried and the tobacco's all but gone,
Along with the postcards I've carried under my arm,
After I remember all the words I couldn't say,
And after this long night fades away.

Refrain

After this blackbird lifts up from off your chest,
And after your soul takes its final rest,
"My love, please forgive me. I did not mean to die.
And love, place two pennies o'er my eyes."

Refrain

READING: A Prayer

Anonymous

Holding the Light

Music: B.E. Boykin (b. 1989); Lyrics: Stuart Kestenbuam (b. 1952)

Gather up whatever is
glittering in the gutter,
whatever has tumbled
in the waves or fallen
in flames out of the sky,

for it's not only our
hearts that are broken,
but the heart
of the world as well.
Stitch it back together.

Make a place where
the day speaks to the night
and the earth speaks to the sky.
Whether we created Gods
or Gods created us

it all comes down to this:
In our imperfect world
we are meant to repair
and stitch together
what beauty there is, stitch it
with compassion and wire.

See how everything
we have made gathers
the light inside itself
and overflows?
A blessing.



READING: A Litany of Remembrance

from the Gates of Heaven

Think on Me

Music and Lyrics: Alicia Ann, Lady John Scott (1810-1900)

When I no more behold thee, think on me.
By all thine eyes have told thee, think on me.
When hearts are lightest, when eyes are brightest,
When griefs are slightest, think on me.

In all thine hours of gladness, think on me.
If e'er I soothed thy sadness, think on me.

When foes are by thee, when woes are nigh thee,
When friends all fly thee, think on me.

When thou hast none to cheer thee, think on me.
When no fond heart is near thee, think on me.
When lonely sighing o'er pleasure flying,
When hope is dying, think on me.

READING: Hymn for the Hurting

Amanda Gorman (b. 1998)

You Do Not Walk Alone

Music: E. Hagenberg (2019); Lyrics: Trad. Irish

May you see the light on the path ahead
when the road you walk is dark.
May you always hear even in your hour of sorrow,
the gentle singing of the lark.

When times are hard
may hardness never turn your heart to stone.
May you always remember when the shadows fall—
You do not walk alone.





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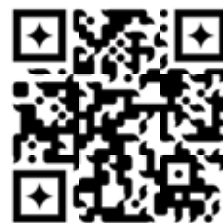


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