

Joanna Forbes L'Estrange

Give us grace
(A prayer of Jane Austen)

SSA (unacc.)

andagio

Give us grace (*A prayer of Jane Austen*)

When I was commissioned to write a piece for a concert on International Women's Day 2018, a hundred years after women (though not all of them) got the vote in the UK, I wanted to set a text written by a woman and which expressed something of the ongoing campaign for equal rights and opportunities. Jane Austen's beautiful and powerful prayer *On each return of the night* struck a chord with me as soon as I read it; I was particularly taken with the relevance and poignancy of the opening line *Give us grace, Almighty Father, so to pray as to deserve to be heard*.

The song is inspired by gospel style and should be sung with plenty of expression and with a rock-solid pulse. Above all, the words should be clear and as speech-like as possible. Sing it as if you mean it and you can't go wrong!

Joanna Forbes L'Estrange

Commissioned by Patrick Craig for *Aurora Nova*
First performed by *Aurora Nova* on International Women's Day, 8th March 2018
at St James's Church, Piccadilly, London UK

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Dedicated to Patrick Craig & Aurora Nova who gave the first performance on International Women's Day, 8th March 2018

Give us grace

(A prayer of Jane Austen)

Words based on the prayer
On each return of the night
by Jane Austen (1775-1817) with additional
words by Joanna Forbes L'Estrange

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Gospel style (simple, with minimal vibrato) ♩ = c. 72

SOPRANO 1 *mf*
Give us grace, Al-migh-ty Fa-ther, so to pray, — as to de-serve to be heard this and

SOPRANO 2 *mf*
— as to de-serve to be heard this and

ALTO
—

4
ev - 'ry day, — to ad - dress Thee with our hearts as we sing_

ev - 'ry day, — to ad - dress Thee with our hearts as we sing_

mf
to ad - dress Thee with our hearts as we sing_

6
— this with our lips, Give us grace, Al - migh - ty Fa - ther, so to pray.

p
— this with our lips, Give us grace, Al - migh - ty Fa - ther, so to pray.

p
— this with our lips, Give us grace, Al - migh - ty Fa - ther, so to pray.

VERSE 1

8

1. *più f* *mp* *mf cresc.*

Thou art ev-'ry-where pre-sent, from Thee no se-cret can be hid.. May the know-

più f *mp* *mf cresc.*

Thou art ev-'ry-where pre-sent, from Thee no se-cret can be hid.. May the know-

più f *mp* *mf cresc.*

Thou art ev-'ry-where pre-sent, from Thee no se-cret can be hid.. May the know-

11

mp

- ledge of this teach us to fix our thoughts on Thee. With re-v'rence and de-vo-tion__ that we

mp

- ledge of this teach us to fix our thoughts on Thee. With re-v'rence and de-vo-tion__ that we

mp

- ledge of this teach us to fix our thoughts on Thee. With re-v'rence and de-vo-tion__ that we

14

p *mf*

pray__ not in vain. Give us grace, Al-migh-ty Fa - ther, so to pray. Give us

p

pray__ not in vain. Give us grace, Al-migh-ty Fa - ther, so to pray.

p

pray not in vain. Give us grace, Al-migh-ty Fa - ther, so to pray.

17 **VERSE 2**
più f

Give us a thank-ful sense of the bles-sings in which we live, and of the

più f

Give us a thank-ful sense of the bles-sings in which we live; and of the

più f

Give us a thank-ful sense of the bles-sings in which we live; and of the

20

ma-ny, ma - ny com - forts of our lot; that we may not de-serve to lose them

ma-ny, ma - ny com - forts of our lot; that we may not de-serve to lose them

ma-ny, ma - ny com - forts of our lot; that we may not de-serve to lose them

A tempo ♩ = c. 72

23 **poco rit.** **mf**

by dis-con - tent or in - dif-fer-ence. This we pray. Give us

by dis-con - tent or in - dif-fer-ence. this we pray.

by dis-con - tent or in - dif-fer-ence. this we pray.

FINAL REFRAIN

26

grace, Al-migh-ty Fa - ther, so to pray, as to de - serve to be heard this and

as to de - serve to be heard this and

mf

29

ev - 'ry day, to ad - dress Thee with our hearts as we sing this with our

ev - 'ry day, to ad - dress Thee with our hearts as we sing this with our

to ad - dress Thee with our hearts as we sing this with our

cresc.

poco rit.

32

lips, Give us grace, Al-migh-ty Fa - ther, so to pray

lips, Give us grace, Al-migh-ty Fa - ther, so to pray

lips, Give us grace, Al-migh-ty Fa - ther, so to pray

A touch slower

mp

poco rit.

* small notes are optional; for example, if you are singing just one to a part, they can be left out

Joanna Forbes L'Estrange (b.1971) was born in North Wales and grew up in Surrey. She studied music at Oxford University and began composing and arranging as soprano and Musical Director of the five-time Grammy award-winning a cappella group *The Swingle Singers* with whom she toured the world for seven years. Her compositional style is influenced by a love of close harmony vocal groups and jazz. She has received commissions from *The King's Singers*, *The Military Wives Choirs*, *SingUp*, *Finchley Children's Music Group*, *Aurora Nova* and the *National Youth Choirs of Great Britain* as well as from choral societies, chamber choirs and schools. In collaboration with her husband, Alexander L'Estrange, she writes songs (for his popular series of large-scale community choral works) and church anthems (recorded by *Tenebrae* on their *On Eagles' Wings* CD); their set of carols for upper voices and piano, *The Twyford Carols*, is published by Faber Music. Joanna's congregational setting of the mass, *The St Helen's Service*, was published by the RSCM on International Women's Day 2018.

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photographer: Susan Porter-Thomas

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