

[Program notes for **The Gift of Life**, by Pamela Grooms]

John Rutter was born in London in 1945 and received his first musical education as a chorister at Highgate School. He went on to study music at Clare College, Cambridge, where he wrote his first published compositions and conducted his first recording while still a student.

His compositional career has embraced both large and small-scale choral works, orchestral and instrumental pieces, a piano concerto, two children's operas, music for television, and specialist writing for such groups as the Philip Jones Brass Ensemble and the King's Singers. His larger choral works, *Gloria* (1974), *Requiem* (1985), *Magnificat* (1990), *Psalmfest* (1993) and *Mass of the Children* (2003) have been performed many times in Britain, North America, and a growing number of other countries. From 1975 to 1979 he was Director of Music at Clare College, whose choir he directed in a number of broadcasts and recordings.

After giving up the Clare post to allow more time for composition, he formed the Cambridge Singers as a professional chamber choir primarily dedicated to recording, and he now divides his time between composition and conducting. In 1996 the Archbishop of Canterbury conferred a Lambeth Doctorate of Music upon him in recognition of his contribution to church music. He was honored in the 2007 Queen's New Year Honours List, being awarded a CBE for services to music.

(www.johnrutter.com)

John Rutter's long-awaited new major work **The Gift of Life** is a six-movement choral celebration of the living earth, of creation, and of life itself, offering a kaleidoscope of moods from contemplative and prayerful to majestic and inspirational. The work premiered in Cambridge in April, 2016. This is the premier performance of this work in the St. Louis area.

The six movements represent different moods and emotions regarding the creation, beginning with the opening first movement, a joyous celebration of all living things. This movement is by far the largest of the six movements, and incorporates the entire orchestra expressing the many colors of sight and sound. The second movement, "The Tree of Life", is a meditative contemplation of words from the Collection of Joshua Smith of New Hampshire (1784). The third movement incorporates Renaissance texts of Lancelot Andrews (1555-1626) and J.Franck (1618-77) in a double choir setting. The effect highlights the ethereal nature of the text and the period of the original text. The fourth movement follows with an exuberant opening, expressing the greatness of the works of the Lord as stated in Psalm 104. Movements five and six bring the message of

creation to a close as a reflection for today's listener: Dr. Rutter sets his own words in a tender reminder that the gift of each day is precious, and that we have within us the power to find new possibilities, and bring new hope of peace to our world.

The Lindenwood Choirs

Pamela Grooms, Director of Choirs

Dr. Kenneth Jeffs, Men's Chorus Director

Paula Martin, Women's Choirs Director

Sopranos:

Taylor Bohlender

Emily Bynum

Rachel Clemens

Natalia Comte

Cierra Dalske

Erica DeCosta

Pamela Doody

Emily Friesen

Brianna Howard

Caylee McGlasson

Kirsten Muehlbauer

Sara Perren

Rachel Robinson

Elizabeth Smallwood

Kasey Smith

Abigail Stone

Lucie Switalski

Cassandra Thompson

Niaa Ward

Emily Whitener

Katelynn Wilson

Courtney Wingerter

Altos:

Madison Balint

Maya Bryant

Candice Coleman

Anise Glenn

Kayleigh Hecht

Charley Kell

Killion Lewis-Foot

Isabelle Martin

Marissa Meyer

Elizabeth Peters

Elizabeth Pulliam

Theresa Reifsteck

Hannah Schmickley

Laura Schulze

Amy Shapiro

Stefani Trimble
Rose Wellborn
Angela White

Tenors:

Logan Allison
Matt Ballentine
Raylon Bivins
Payton Capettini
Ryan Etheridge
Derick Featherston
Colburn Musser
Kyle Ostrowski
Anthony Pino
James Quiggins

Basses:

Spencer Collins
David Fernandez
Curtis Hechler
Christopher Hogan
Alex Johnson
Will Macarthy
Billy Richard
Cory Sharp
LaTeef Thornton
Logan Uzynski