

FV04 - I Am Happy - SATB divisi

# FORGOTTEN VOICES

I Am Happy

by Katie Kring

*text based on responses from  
Springfield Street Choir members*

# ABOUT THIS PIECE

I am grateful, I am learning,  
I'm a child of God  
I am kind and I'm outgoing  
I'm a child of God  
I am strong and I'm brave  
I'm a survivor  
I'm a good person  
I'm a member of the choir  
And I am happy  
A child of God  
Happy

I am awesome and I'm blessed  
A child of God  
I am confident and capable  
A child of God  
I am alive  
I am a warrior  
I am forgiven  
I am beautiful  
And I am happy  
A child of God  
Happy

I am happy, when I sing, despite everything  
Happy  
A child of God



This song was very much a surprise to me. After a Street Choir rehearsal in December of 2019, I asked all our singers to turn over their attendance slips and write “I am...” and then finish the sentence however they liked. I gave them no prompts or coaching, encouraged them to write whatever they wanted, didn't explain why I was asking, nothing that would bias the responses. And when I looked through the papers, I have to confess, I was shocked. Winter is a hard time to be homeless, tempers are short, everyone's tired and cranky. And I really expected a lot of answers along the lines of “I am forgotten” or something like that. I got one: “I am sad and depressed.” Instead, they were overwhelmingly positive. (There were also a few that were hilarious, like one that said “I am Ralph”... from a guy named Mike.)

I do not wish for anyone to overgeneralize from this song that homelessness is a bucket of laughs. It is not. It is crushingly traumatic in almost every aspect. But the awful baseline of day to day homeless life renders good experiences borderline-euphoric. And far be it for me to censor their honest responses because they were too positive for my agenda. I asked, they answered. After all, our friends had just done one of their very favorite things -- singing in the choir, in a place where they felt safe and loved. Thus, they indeed told the truth. In that moment, they were happy.

– Katie Kring



Katie Kring is a composer, writer-of-musicals, baker and alto. Katie's choral works and commissions are performed internationally and she has served as Springfield Chamber Chorus's Composer-in-Residence for several years. Her “At the Hour of Closing” was the winner of the 2019 MCDA Opus Award. She is particularly interested in creating work that empowers disadvantaged communities and is a passionate advocate for writing good parts for altos. Katie's musical theatre works include PEARL, ONWARD, FARMERS MARKET THE MUSICAL (about the time she got kicked out of the farmers' market -- twice!), IN THE SWIM and THINK BIG for the Monterey Bay Aquarium, and KELLY THE DESTROYER VS THE SPRINGFIELD COBRAS. Her first opera, SWEET LOUISA, is slated to premiere in 2022. Katie is the owner of Pickwick & Cherry, a bakery & cooking school, and an adjunct professor in the Missouri State University Music Department. In 2019, she founded the Springfield Street Choir, a choir made up of people experiencing homelessness and extreme poverty. She received her MFA in Musical Theatre Writing at NYU and her BFA in music at the University of Michigan, where she danced 25' up a tree and lived to tell about it.

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# Forgotten Voices

## I Am Happy

This text is compiled from the responses generated when the homeless members of the Springfield Street Choir were asked to complete the sentence "I am...."

music & text by Katie Krings

Warm (♩ = c. 72)

*mf*

Soprano  
I am grate-ful, I am learn-ing, I'm a child of God. I am kind and I'm out-go-ing, I'm a

Alto  
I am grate-ful, I am learn-ing, I'm a child of God. I am kind and I'm out-go-ing, I'm a

Tenor  
*mp*  
oh child of God oh

Bass  
*mp*  
oh child of God oh

Piano

Warm (♩ = c. 72)

5

S  
child of God. I am strong and I'm brave. I'm a sur-viv-or. I'm a good per-son, I'm a mem-ber of the choir and I am

A  
child of God. I am strong and I'm brave. I'm a sur-viv-or. I'm a good per-son, I'm a mem-ber of the choir and I am

T  
5  
8  
child of God Strong and brave sur - vi - vor good per - son in the choir

B  
5  
child of God Strong and brave sur - vi - vor good per - son in the choir

Pno.

# I Am Happy

2

10

S hap - py! I am hap - py! I am

A hap - py! I am hap - py! I am

T 8 ha - py a child of God hap - py a child of God!

B 10 hap - py a child of God hap - py a child of God!

Pno. 10

# Faster

14

S awe - some and I'm blessed, I'm a child of God. I am con - fi - dent and cap - a - ble, a

A awe - some and I'm blessed, I'm a child of God. I am con - fi - dent and cap - a - ble, a

T 8 14 awe - some and I'm blessed, I'm a child of God. I am con - fi - dent and cap - a - ble, a

B 14 awe - some and I'm blessed, I'm a child of God. I am con - fi - dent and cap - a - ble, a

Pno. 14

I Am Happy

17

S  
child of God I'm a - live I'm a live I am beau - ti - ful and I am

A  
child of God I'm a - live, I'm a live, I am for - giv - en beau - ti - ful and I am

T  
child of God I'm a - live, I'm a live, war - ri - or for - giv - en beau - ti - ful

B  
child of God I'm a - live, a live I am a war - ri - or I am beau - ti - ful and I am

Pno.

22

S  
hap - py! I am hap - py! I am

A  
hap - py I am hap - py! I am

T  
ha - py a child of God hap - py a child of God!

B  
ha - py a child of God hap - py a child of God!

Pno.

# I Am Happy

4

26

S hap - py

A hap - py

A ha hap - py

T hap - py

B Ha hap - py *f* am

B Hap - py I am

Pno.

30

S *f* I am hap - py I am hap - py I am hap - py when I sing de - spite ev - ry - thing!

A *f* am hap - py I am hap - py hap - py when I sing de - spite ev - ry - thing!

T hap - py I am hap - py I am hap - py I am hap - py when I sing de - spite ev - ry - thing!

B hap - py I am hap - py I am hap - py I am hap - py hap - py when I sing

Pno.

34

S

A

T

B

Pno.

*smfz*

*smfz*

*ff*

*ff*

Hap

py

Hap

I am

I am

I am hap

39

S

A

T

B

Pno.

*f*

*f*

*mf*

*mf*

*f*

I am

I am grate-ful, I am learn-ing, I'm a child of God. I am

I am

I am grate-ful, I am learn-ing, I'm a child of God. I am

py hap

py. Hap

# I Am Happy

6

44

S  
kind and I'm out - go - ing, I'm a child of God. — I am strong and I'm brave.

A  
kind and I'm out - go - ing, I'm a child of God. — I am strong and I'm brave. —

T  
py strong and I'm brave.

B  
py. strong and I'm brave.

Pno.

47

S  
I'm a sur - viv - or. I'm a good per - son, I'm a mem - ber of the choir and I am

A  
I'm a sur - viv - or. I'm a good per - son, I'm a mem - ber of the choir and I am

T  
I'm a sur - viv - or. I'm a good per - son, I'm a mem - ber of the choir and I am

B  
I'm a sur - viv - or. I'm a good per - son, I'm a mem - ber of the choir and I am

Pno.



I Am Happy

50 *ff*

Hap - py

S hap - py a child of God

A hap - py a child of God

T hap - py a child of God hap - py I am

B hap - py a child of God hap - py I am

Pno.

54

Hap - py

S Hap - py

A Hap - py

T hap - py a child of God

B hap - py a child of God

Pno.