

The AGO Committee on New Music is pleased to announce the

# 2024 AGO/ECS PUBLISHING AWARD IN CHORAL COMPOSITION

*Nineteenth Biennial Competition*



## AWARD

- \$2,000 commission for a new work for SATB choir and organ
- Performance at the 2024 AGO National Convention in San Francisco, California
- Publication by ECS Publishing Group

## COMMISSION

Composers will propose a commission for a work for SATB choir and organ, utilizing all or part of the text of “Songs for the People” by Frances Ellen Watkins Harper. The piece should be between five and eight minutes in length, and the organ must play a significant role. There are no restrictions with regard to compositional style. The submitted proposal should reflect the composer’s compositional strength and interests. The work should be of the highest quality and suitable for concert and liturgical performance by moderate to advanced choirs.

## ELIGIBILITY

Composers of all ages are welcome to enter, and the applicant need not be a member of the American Guild of Organists. Previous winners of the AGO/ECS Publishing Award in Choral Composition may not enter. Prior organ composition experience is not necessary and will not hinder consideration of an application.

## APPLICATION MATERIALS AND DEADLINE

A completed online application has four parts  
(see [agohq.org/new-music-competitions-commissions](http://agohq.org/new-music-competitions-commissions)):

1. An application form.
2. A proposal for commission—not longer than two pages.  
The proposal should explain how the proposed commission would be useful to the AGO membership as well as provide insight into your creative thinking as a composer.
3. A one-page résumé.
4. Two sample scores, at least one of which must be less than three years old. One score must demonstrate command of writing for choir. The other must demonstrate command of writing for a keyboard instrument. You must also submit a corresponding sound file with each score.

All application materials must be submitted online on or before July 1, 2022. The winner of the commission will be announced on or before September 30, 2022.

## JUDGING AND COMMISSIONING GUIDELINES

A panel of professional composers and performers will evaluate all applications, selecting as a winner a composer who holds the highest potential for producing a lasting contribution to the choral repertoire, as well as one that is meaningful to the AGO membership. An advance payment of \$1,000 will be awarded at the time of commissioning. The remaining \$1,000 will be awarded upon receipt of an autographed copy of the completed score, due no later than June 30, 2023. If the commission is not completed on time, the commission advance must be repaid. Arrangements for publication of the winning composition will be made between the composer and ECS Publishing Group.

For more information, contact AGO Headquarters or visit the AGO website.  
2024 AGO/ECS Publishing Award in Choral Composition  
American Guild of Organists • [AGOHQ.org](http://AGOHQ.org)  
Tel: 212-870-2310 • Fax: 212-870-2163 • Email: [competitions@agohq.org](mailto:competitions@agohq.org)

## *Songs for the People*

By Frances Ellen Watkins Harper (1825–1911)

Let me make the songs for the people,  
Songs for the old and young;  
Songs to stir like a battle-cry  
Wherever they are sung.

Not for the clashing of sabres,  
For carnage nor for strife;  
But songs to thrill the hearts of men  
With more abundant life.

Let me make the songs for the weary,  
Amid life’s fever and fret,  
Till hearts shall relax their tension,  
And careworn brows forget.

Let me sing for little children,  
Before their footsteps stray,  
Sweet anthems of love and duty,  
To float o’er life’s highway.

I would sing for the poor and aged,  
When shadows dim their sight;  
Of the bright and restful mansions,  
Where there shall be no night.

Our world, so worn and weary,  
Needs music, pure and strong,  
To hush the jangle and discords  
Of sorrow, pain, and wrong.

Music to soothe all its sorrow,  
Till war and crime shall cease;  
And the hearts of men grown tender  
Girdle the world with peace.