



August 7, 2019

Dear Students,

Congratulations on your successful audition and acceptance into the WSMA Middle Level State Honors Choir! I know this remarkable achievement is a direct testament to the many hours of practice you spent in preparation for your audition and to the outstanding instruction, motivation, and support you received along the way from your teachers, family, and friends.

I am thrilled to have the opportunity to make music with you very soon! Our program was inspired by the first piece on our concert, "Ritmo" by Dan Davison. It is a celebration of the *joy, peace, and hope* that music offers our lives and urgently calls *all people and all voices* to join together in song. This is one of our memorized selections: get ready to stomp and clap while singing in Spanish!

The rest of our concert explores each of the themes above. Triumphant *joy* infuses "Praise the Lord," a Baroque work by the same composer as the famous oratorio *Messiah*, which many of you have probably heard or sung. We will offer our audience meditations on *peace* with both a hushed Renaissance hymn in Latin and a poem about earthly love under the expansive heavens. *Hope* is a winged creature perched in the soul that "never stops - at all" in our next set with pieces by Kenney Potter and Andrea Ramsey.

We will also memorize the final two selections on our concert. Two South African songs featuring solos and movement will inspire *all people and all voices* to join in a friendly greeting and a tribal war call. Finally, we will close with one of the most exciting elements of our program, a *World Premiere* by Susan Brumfield, "By the Rivers of Babylon," featuring body percussion, two pianists, and other percussion instruments; we are the first choir to have the chance to perform this new arrangement!

Please see the attached rehearsal notes to prepare this challenging music before we combine together for the first time. By learning your part before you arrive and practicing singing from memory (where indicated), you will enable us to immediately begin taking this music to new heights of excellence and shaping the unique story we will tell our audience.

Again, you should be very proud, and I can't wait for our time together!

Dr. Trey Davis
Associate Director of Choral Studies
Louisiana State University