

A photograph of a wooden boardwalk with a railing, leading through a misty forest. The boardwalk is made of dark wood and has a simple wooden railing. The forest is filled with tall, thin trees, and the mist is thick, creating a soft, ethereal atmosphere. The lighting is warm, suggesting a sunrise or sunset. The boardwalk curves to the right, leading the viewer's eye into the distance.

signum  
CLASSICS

# Finding Light

Meridian  
Irene Messoloras

# FINDING LIGHT

1	<b>Libera nos, salva nos</b> Will Gaunt, <i>bass</i>	John Sheppard	[3.39]
2	<b>Angelis suis deus</b>	Vytautas Miškinis	[3.26]
3	<b>Prayer</b> Grace Davidson, <i>soprano</i>	Hanna Havrylets	[4.30]
4	<b>Oculus Non Vidit</b>	Rihards Dubra	[3.51]
5	<b>Miserere, Op. 44: 11. Miserere nobis</b>	Henryk Mikolaj Gorecki	[3.26]
6	<b>Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom: No. 8, Alleluia (After Znamenny Chant)</b>	Benedict Sheehan	[1.24]
7	<b>The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace: 10. Agnus Dei</b>	Karl Jenkins	[4.11]
8	<b>Nú legg ég þér í lófa</b>	Thora Marteinsdottir	[2.47]
9	<b>Lighten our Darkness</b>	Alexander L'Estrange	[1.50]
10	<b>To Be Certain of the Dawn: Hymn to the Eternal Flame</b> Eleonore Cockerham, <i>soprano</i>	Stephen Paulus	[2.09]
11	<b>Alleluia</b>	Randal Thompson	[6.27]
12	<b>Ubi Caritas et amor</b>	Morton Lauridsen	[7.37]
	Total timings:		[45.19]

MERIDIAN  
IRENE MESSOLORAS

[www.signumrecords.com](http://www.signumrecords.com)

## Introduction

Choral music renews the old and steadies the new. Carrying sound across centuries, it has the ability to fill the present with beauty, hope, and faith. *Finding Light* illuminates this connection, bringing together early and contemporary works that open space for contemplation and renewal. Each piece offers its own lens on themes of mercy, love, and peace — drawing listeners into a shared journey of wonder and transcendence.

Our repertoire spans from Renaissance counterpoint to contemporary writing that marries meditative stillness with luminous sonorities. You'll hear the purity of Sheppard's *Libera nos* alongside the lush harmonies of Lauridsen's *Ubi Caritas* and Paulus' *Hymn to the Eternal Flame*. Composers like Sheehan, Thompson, and Dubra take single words or short texts and expand them into landscapes of color and resonance, while voices such as Jenkins, Górecki, and Havrylets shape their music as meditations that balance contemplation with urgency. Each piece, whether centuries old or newly written, becomes part of a larger journey — a search for light that moves us from shadow into radiance.

What draws all of these works together is their ability to move us inward and outward at the same time: inward, as we reflect on prayer, loss, and longing; outward, as we join in a shared act of expression that spans time, geography, and tradition.

My hope is that listeners will feel the same sense of connection we experienced in rehearsing and recording this music — a reminder that music invites us beyond the present moment, ever in pursuit of finding light and meaning.

© Irene Messoloras

### Programme notes

We begin with John Sheppard (c.1515–1558), *Libera nos, salva nos* as a six-voice setting of a Compline responsory whose text pleads, “Deliver us, save us.” The piece embodies themes of protection, rest, and eternal peace. Anchored by a slow-moving chant in the lower voices, the piece unfolds in luminous polyphony above, creating a sound world that feels at once meditative and urgent.

The theme of divine protection finds a powerful voice in Vytautas Miškinis’ *Angelis suis deus*. Miškinis (b. 1954), one of Lithuania’s leading choral composers, is celebrated for his luminous harmonic language and sensitive text setting. Drawing on Psalm 91, “He shall give His angels charge over thee,” the work surrounds the listener with flowing, overlapping lines that seem to hover in midair, evoking the presence of angels. Subtle dissonances resolve into radiant sonorities, creating music that feels both reassuring and transcendent—a contemporary expression of humanity’s timeless prayer for safety and peace.

Ukrainian composer Hanna Havrylets (1958–2022) wrote music rooted in spiritual and cultural identity, often marked by a profound sense of longing. *Prayer* is an intimate and haunting work

shaped by rich choral textures and a soprano solo that unfolds gently, like a yearning plea for mercy. Balancing vulnerability and resilience, it embodies prayer as both a personal cry and a collective plea. The final exchange between choir and soloist at the close of the piece leaves a profound impression of faith in the face of adversity.

Latvian composer Rihards Dubra (b. 1964) is widely recognized for choral music that combines luminous harmonies with a sense of mysticism. In *Oculus non vidit*, expansive melodic lines and shimmering clusters create an atmosphere of awe and mystery. The music avoids traditional resolution, instead suspending the listener in a timeless sound world that feels both searching and serene.

*Miserere mei* by Polish composer Henryk Górecki (1933–2010) was written in 1981 as a private protest against government violence in Bydgoszcz. While part of the larger *Miserere*, this movement stands fully on its own, built on the repeated invocation “have mercy on us”. Originally intended for a large a cappella choir, our performance draws the listener inward, where restraint and transparency reveal the work’s inner light. The music’s unyielding persistence becomes not only a shared cry for

mercy, but also a meditation on the vulnerable human spirit.

Benedict Sheehan’s *Alleluia*—heard in his *Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*—draws directly on Znamenny chant and is adapted with his own arranging details. A compact chant motive is traded among the voices, accumulating color and weight with each entry. The choral textures thicken, and the dynamic arc climbs to a clear, ringing cadence that crowns the single word—“Alleluia.”

Karl Jenkins’ *Agnus Dei* is part of *The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace*. The work was commissioned to mark the new millennium and dedicated to the victims of the 1998 Kosovo conflict. Conceived as a universal call for reconciliation, the larger work weaves together influence from both Western and non-Western traditions to underscore its message of peace. Within this framework, the *Agnus Dei* offers a moment of stillness and inward reflection. Its stepwise melodies and slowly unfolding harmonies evoke a mood that blends sorrow with solace.

Icelandic composer, Thora Marteinsdóttir’s *Nú legg ég bér í lófa* (“Now I lay in your palm”) is a tender offering of love and trust. The music begins delicately with the treble voices alone, their

clear lines suggesting intimacy and vulnerability. Gradually, the other vocal parts enter, layering warmth and depth until the full ensemble creates a radiant choral sonority. As the texture grows, there is a shared expression that feels both intimate and expansive in its devotion.

The theme of prayer as a plea for guidance and protection takes on a fresh voice in Alexander L’Estrange’s *Lighten our Darkness*. Setting the well-known evening collect from the *Book of Common Prayer*, L’Estrange weaves gentle dissonances with luminous harmonies to create a texture that evokes a sense of solemn grace.

Like Jenkins, whose work is written as a call for peace, Stephen Paulus’ *Hymn to the Eternal Flame*—from his Holocaust memorial oratorio *To Be Certain of the Dawn*—is music of remembrance and healing. A solo voice rises above Paulus’ homophonic choral texture, carrying the image of the eternal flame and reminding us of the human capacity to endure.

Composed in 1940, Randall Thompson’s *Alleluia* is one of the most beloved American choral works of the 20th century. Written not as a jubilant outpouring but as a meditative response to the outbreak of World War II, the piece transforms

a single word of praise into a quiet, prayerful meditation. Its unfolding lines build slowly in intensity before returning to hushed stillness, embodying a sense of reverence and restraint. In its simplicity, *Alleluia* conveys a profound spiritual depth, reminding us that prayer is often found not in triumph, but in stillness and reflection.

We close with *Ubi Caritas* by American composer Morten Lauridsen (b. 1943), one of the most influential living choral voices of our time. Written in 1993, the work draws on the flowing contours of the Latin chant, shaping long arching phrases enriched by suspensions that resolve with gentle warmth. Lauridsen achieves a luminous clarity that feels at once modern and timeless. Placed at the end of this album, *Ubi Caritas* serves as a quiet benediction—music of devotion, compassion, and peace.



## TEXTS

### 1 Libera nos, salva nos

Text: Antiphon

Libera nos, salva nos, justifica nos,  
O beata Trinitas.

### 2 Angelis suis Deus mandavit de te

Text: Psalm 91 (verse 11-12)

Angelis suis Deus mandavit de te,  
ut custodiant te in omnibus viis tuis.  
In manibus portabunt te,  
ne forte offendas ad lapidem pedem tuum.

### 3 Prayer

Text: Havrylets

#### Молитву до Пресвятої Богородиці

Пресвятая Богородице, вслухай нас.  
Пресвятая Богородице, будь нам заступницею.  
Всесильною Твоею рукою допоможи нам  
Перемогти ворогів, що напали на нас.

### 4 Oculus non vidit

Text: 1 Corinthians 2:9

Oculus non vidit, nec auris audivit,  
nec in cor hominis ascendit,  
quae praeparavit Deus his qui diligunt illum.

## TRANSLATIONS

*Free us, save us, defend us,  
O blessed Trinity.*

*God has given His angels charge over you,  
to guard you in all your ways.  
They will lift you up in their hands,  
lest you strike your foot against a stone.*

#### Prayer

*Holy Mother of God, hear us.  
Holy Mother of God, be our intercessor.  
Help us with your almighty hand  
Defeat the enemies who attack us.*

*No eye has seen, no ear has heard,  
nor has it entered into the heart of man, the things  
which God has prepared for those who love Him.*

### 5 Miserere nobis

From: Miserere, Op. 44

Miserere nobis

*Have mercy on us*

### 6 Alleluia

Alleluia

### 7 Agnus Dei

from The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,  
miserere nobis

*Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us*

### 8 Nú legg ég þér í lófa

Text: Jakob Jóhann Smári

Nú legg ég þér í lófa  
lítið blóm með fögrum draum.  
Viltu varðveita það í hjarta þínu,  
láta það vaxa með ást þinni,  
vernda það með lífi þínu.

*Now I place in your palm  
a small flower with a fair dream.  
Keep it in your heart,  
let it grow with your love,  
protect it with your life.*

9 **Lighten our Darkness**

Text: Thomas Cranmer (3rd Collect for Evensong)

Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord;  
and by thy great mercy defend us  
from all perils and dangers of this night;  
for the love of thy only Son, our Savior, Jesus  
Christ. Amen.

10 **Hymn to the Eternal Flame**

Text: Michael Dennis Browne

Every face is in you,  
Every voice,  
Every sorrow in you,  
Every pity,  
Every love, every memory,  
Woven into fire.

Every breath is in you,  
Every cry,  
Every longing in you,  
Every singing,  
Every hope, every healing,  
Woven into fire.

Every heart is in you,  
Every tongue,  
Every trembling in you,  
Every blessing,  
Every soul, every shining,  
Woven into fire.

11 **Alleluia**

Alleluia, Amen

12 **Ubi Caritas**

Text: Gregorian Antiphon

Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.  
Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor.  
Exultemus, et in ipso iucundemur.  
Timeamus, et amemus Deum vivum.  
Et ex corde diligamus nos sincero.

Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.  
Simul ergo cum in unum congregamur:  
Ne nos mente dividamur, caveamus.  
Cessent iurgia maligna, cessent lites.  
Et in medio nostri sit Christus Deus.

Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.  
Simul quoque cum beatis videamus,  
Glorianter vultum tuum, Christe Deus:  
Gaudium quod est immensum, atque probum,  
Saecula per infinita saeculorum. Amen.

*Where there are charity and love, God is there.  
We gather together in the love of Christ.  
Let us rejoice and be glad in Him.  
Let us fear and love the living God.  
And with a sincere heart, let us love each other.*

*Where there are charity and love, God is there.  
At the same time, we are gathered into one body,  
But we may be divided in mind, so beware.  
Cease your bad urges, cease strife,  
And into our midst will come Christ our God.*

*Where there are charity and love, God is there.  
At the same time, may we, with the saints, see  
The glory of your face, Christ our God:  
Joy that is immense and good,  
From centuries to infinite centuries. So be it.*



© Andrew Wilkinson

## MERIDIAN

### Soprano

Eleonore Cockerham  
 Eloise Irving  
 Laura Newey  
 Hilary Cronin  
 Midge Parry  
 Katie Trethewey

### Alto

Luthien Brackett  
 Hannah Cooke  
 Martha McLorinan  
 Lily Robson

### Tenor

Monty Charles  
 Oscar Golden Lee  
 Stephen Harrold  
 Toby Ward

### Bass

Dominic Felts  
 Will Gaunt  
 Tom Herring  
 Frederick Long  
 Tom Lowen

Meridian is a London-based professional chamber choir founded and directed by Irene Messoloras. With a sound defined by clarity, balance, and expressive depth, the ensemble brings together early and contemporary repertoire to create a richly contemplative musical experience. Meridian's members are drawn from outstanding ensemble backgrounds such as Tenebrae,

the Monteverdi Choir, and The Sixteen. This combination weaves together a broad variety of choral experience, giving the choir an exceptional range of vocal power and color. [meridianchoir.com](http://meridianchoir.com)



© Andrew Wilkinson



© Andrew Wilkinson

## IRENE MESSOLORAS

Irene Messoloras is an award-winning conductor dedicated to inspiring musicians and audiences through excellence in choral performance. Based in Southern California, she leads professional, university, and community ensembles on renowned stages worldwide.  
[irenemessoloras.com](http://irenemessoloras.com)

**2 Angelis suis deus**

Publisher: Carus Verlag

**3 Prayer**

Publisher: Walton Music

**4 Oculus Non Vidit**

Publisher: Musica Baltica Ltd

**5 Miserere, Op. 44: 11. Miserere nobis**

Publisher: Chester Music

**7 The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace: 10. Agnus Dei**

Publisher: Boosey and Hawkes

**9 Lighten our Darkness**

Publisher: Compact Music Services Ltd

**11 Alleluia**

Publisher: Schirmer E C Music Company Inc

**12 Ubi Caritas et amor**

Publisher: Faber Music

Text for **10** printed by permission.

Recorded 9 & 10 September 2024 at All Hallows Church, Savernake Road, London NW3

Producer – Matthew Bennett

Engineer – Tom Lewington

Mixed by – Mike Hatch

Cover Image – borchee via iStock

Design and Artwork – Woven Design [www.wovendesign.co.uk](http://www.wovendesign.co.uk)

© 2026 The copyright in this sound recording is owned by Signum Records Ltd

© 2026 The copyright in this CD booklet, notes and design is owned by Signum Records Ltd

Any unauthorised broadcasting, public performance, copying or re-recording of Signum Compact Discs constitutes an infringement of copyright and will render the infringer liable to an action by law. Licences for public performances or broadcasting may be obtained from Phonographic Performance Ltd. All rights reserved. No part of this booklet may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior permission from Signum Records Ltd.

SignumClassics, Signum Records Ltd., Suite 14, 21 Wadsworth Road, Perivale, Middlesex, UB6 7LQ, UK.

+44 (0) 20 8997 4000 E-mail: [info@signumrecords.com](mailto:info@signumrecords.com)

[www.signumrecords.com](http://www.signumrecords.com)



Available through most record stores and at [www.signumrecords.com](http://www.signumrecords.com) For more information call +44 (0) 20 8997 4000

SIGCD981