

# May This Be a Working Alleluia

Children's choir, SATB and piano,  
with optional parts for flute and 2 trumpets



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Elizabeth Alexander

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## May This Be a Working Alleluia

As we celebrate the bounty we've been given this hour,  
May this be a grateful alleluia.  
For this day and this bread, for each seed and each flow'r,  
May this be a grateful alleluia.  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.  
Let this be our prayer as we greet each moment openly:  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,  
May this be a grateful alleluia.

As the change we wish to see becomes the change that we make,  
May this be a working alleluia.  
Though we may not succeed, that's a chance we will take.  
May this be a working alleluia.  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.  
Let this be our prayer as we greet each moment openly:  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,  
May this be a working alleluia.

As we work to make this world a more compassionate place,  
May this be a healing alleluia.  
Bridging painful divides, bearing comfort and grace,  
May this be a healing alleluia.  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.  
Let this be our prayer as we greet each moment openly:  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,  
May this be a healing alleluia.

As the love of God is offered to the world through our hands,  
May this be a joyful alleluia.  
As the broken is mended and justice expands,  
May this be a joyful alleluia.  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.  
Let this be our prayer as we greet each moment openly:  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

May this be a joyful alleluia,  
May this be a grateful alleluia,  
May this be a healing alleluia,  
May this be a working alleluia.

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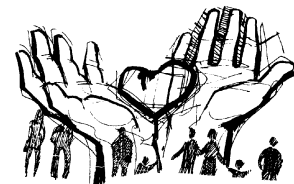
*This thought-provoking lyric celebrates the progression from Gratitude to Work — then to Healing — and finally to our shared Joy. Opening with a simple unison line sung by the children and building to an irrepressible outpouring of alleluias, this song may be performed with piano accompaniment alone, or with the addition of flute and two trumpets.*

Growing up in the Carolinas and Appalachian Ohio, **Elizabeth Alexander** gained her first love of language and music from her parents, a minister and a piano teacher. These twin passions are reflected in her catalogue of over 100 choral and vocal works, which have been performed by thousands of choirs and received over 20 national and international awards.



Her composition teachers have included Jack Gallagher at The College of Wooster, and Steven Stucky, Yehudi Wyner and Karel Husa at Cornell University, where she received her doctorate in music composition. A recent McKnight Composition Fellow, Elizabeth lives in St. Paul, Minnesota, where she teaches little fingers to play, shamelessly encourages her teenagers' jokes, and tends her garden during the three month period in Minnesota that is not winter.

She believes she has the best job in the world.



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Performers who wish to perform *May This Be a Working Alleluia* with the optional auxiliary instruments may download flute and trumpet parts at [www.elizabethalexander.com](http://www.elizabethalexander.com).

Commissioned by Faith Partners \*

# May This Be a Working Alleluia

for children's choir, SATB choir and piano,  
with optional flute and 2 B $\flat$  trumpets

Elizabeth Alexander

(♩ = 108-112)

Musical score for Children, SATB choir, Flute, 2 B $\flat$  Trumpets, and Piano. The score is in 4/4 time and G major. The Children, SATB, and 2 B $\flat$  Tr. parts are currently silent. The Flute part begins with a melodic line starting on a whole rest, followed by a series of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The Piano part begins with a melodic line starting on a whole rest, followed by a series of eighth notes: G3, A3, B3, C4, B3, A3, G3. The piano part is marked *p*.

Musical score for Flute and Piano. The Flute part continues with a melodic line starting on a whole rest, followed by a series of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The Piano part continues with a melodic line starting on a whole rest, followed by a series of eighth notes: G3, A3, B3, C4, B3, A3, G3. The piano part is marked *p*.

Musical score for Children and Flute. The Children part begins with a melodic line starting on a whole rest, followed by a series of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The Flute part continues with a melodic line starting on a whole rest, followed by a series of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The piano part continues with a melodic line starting on a whole rest, followed by a series of eighth notes: G3, A3, B3, C4, B3, A3, G3. The piano part is marked *p*.

As we ce - le - brate the boun - ty we've been giv - en this hour, —

\* Faith Partners is underwritten by the American Composers Forum with funds provided by The Otto Bremer Foundation.  
This song was premiered by the choirs of Watertown, Minnesota at the city's Community Thanksgiving Eve Service.

11  
Children

May this be a grate-ful al - le - lu - ia, For this day and this bread, for each

14  
Children

seed and each flow'r, May this be a grate-ful al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu -

17  
Children

- ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le, al - le, al - le - lu - ia.

21  
Children

Let this be our pray'r as we greet each mo - ment o - pen - ly:

24

Children

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu -



27

Children

- ia, May this be a grate-ful al - le - lu - ia.



30

S

A

Tr.

*mp* As the

*mp* As the

*mp* 2.

Opal Palmer Adisa, poet ◦ Margaret & George Alexander, parents ◦ Yehuda Amichai, poet ◦ Bjorn Arneson, generous web designer ◦ Scott Bates, poet ◦ Abbie Betinis, composer/colleague ◦ Dennis Blubaugh, music dealer ◦ Michael deVernon Boblett, poet ◦ Ray Bradbury, writer ◦ Norbert Capek, visionary ◦ e. e. cummings, poet ◦ Philip Dacey, poet ◦ Emily Dickinson, poet ◦ Evelyn Dudley, poet ◦ Rob Eller-Isaacs, minister/writer ◦ Sophia Lyon Fahs, writer ◦ Richard M. Fewkes, writer ◦ Peshia Gertler, poet ◦ Richard S. Gilbert, minister/writer ◦ Jack Gallagher, composer/teacher ◦ Paul Gerike, proofreader ◦ Steve Harper, technical advisor ◦ Steve Hawkins, generous web designer ◦ Edie Hill, composer/colleague ◦ Langston Hughes, poet ◦ Mark Humphrey, piano technician ◦ Karel Husa, composer/teacher ◦ Kalidasa, poet ◦ Garrison Keillor, storyteller ◦ Denise Levertov, poet ◦ George Ella Lyon, poet ◦ Jonathan Machen, artist ◦ Edna St. Vincent Millay, poet ◦ J. David Moore, composer/colleague ◦ Joan Wolf Prefontaine, poet ◦ Gerald Rich, poet ◦ Carl Sandburg, poet ◦ King Sigismund III, religious reformer ◦ Steven Stucky, composer/teacher ◦ Rabindranath Tagore, poet ◦ Howard Thurman, civil rights leader/writer ◦ John Greenleaf Whittier, poet ◦ Theodore Tuckering Williams, poet ◦ Daniel Winter, pianist/teacher ◦ Nancy Wood, poet ◦ Yehudi Wyner, composer/teacher ◦ Paul Adams, technical advisor ◦ Opal Palmer Adisa, poet ◦ Margaret & George Alexander, parents ◦ Yehuda Amichai, poet ◦ Bjorn Arneson, generous web designer ◦ Scott Bates, poet ◦ Abbie Betinis, composer/colleague ◦ Dennis Blubaugh, music dealer ◦ Michael deVernon Boblett, poet ◦ Ray Bradbury, writer ◦ Norbert Capek, visionary ◦ e. e. cummings, poet ◦ Philip Dacey, poet ◦ Emily Dickinson, poet ◦ Evelyn Dudley, poet ◦ Rob Eller-Isaacs, minister/writer ◦ Sophia Lyon Fahs, writer ◦ Richard M. Fewkes, writer ◦ Peshia Gertler, poet ◦ Jack Gallagher, composer/teacher ◦ Paul Gerike, proofreader ◦ Steve Harper, technical advisor ◦ Steve Hawkins, generous web designer ◦ Edie Hill, composer/colleague ◦ Langston Hughes, poet ◦ Mark Humphrey, piano technician ◦ Karel Husa, composer/teacher ◦ Kalidasa, poet ◦ Garrison Keillor, storyteller ◦ Denise Levertov, poet ◦ George Ella Lyon, poet ◦ Jonathan Machen, artist ◦ Edna St. Vincent Millay, poet ◦ J. David Moore, composer/colleague ◦ Joan Wolf Prefontaine, poet ◦ Gerald Rich, poet ◦ Carl Sandburg, poet ◦ King

**A LOT OF HARD WORK & CREATIVITY WENT INTO BRINGING THIS MUSIC TO YOU...**



**...AND SOME OF IT WAS EVEN MINE.**

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39

S May this be a work - ing al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, *mp*

A May this be a work-ing al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, *mp*

T May this be a work - ing al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - *mp*

B May this be a work-ing al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - *mp*

Tr.



42

S al - le - lu - ia, al - le, al - le - lu - ia, \_\_\_\_\_

A al - le - lu - ia, al - le, al - le - lu - ia, \_\_\_\_\_

T - ia, al - le, al - le, al - le - lu - ia. \_\_\_\_\_

B - ia, al - le, al - le, al - le - lu - ia. \_\_\_\_\_

45 *mp*

Children Let this be our pray'r as we greet each mo - ment o - pen - ly:—

*pp*

S

*pp*

A

*pp*

T

*pp*

B



48 *mp*

S Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu -

*mp*

A Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu -

*mp*

T Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia,

*mp*

B Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia,



51

S  
- ia, \_\_\_\_\_ May this be a work-ing al - le - lu - ia.\_\_\_\_

A  
- ia, \_\_\_\_\_ May this be a work-ing al - le - lu - ia.\_\_\_\_

T  
Al - le - lu - ia, May this be a work-ing al - le - lu - ia.\_\_\_\_

B  
Al - le - lu - ia, May this be a work-ing al - le - lu - ia.\_\_\_\_

Fl.  
*mp*



54

Fl.  
*mf*

Tr.  
*mp*

*Alternate piano part, if performed without auxiliary instruments:*

Opal Palmer Adisa, poet ◦ Margaret & George Alexander, parents ◦ Yehuda Amichai, poet ◦ Bjorn Arneson, generous web designer ◦ Scott Bates, poet ◦ Abbie Betinis, composer/colleague ◦ Dennis Blubaugh, music dealer ◦ Michael deVernon Boblett, poet ◦ Ray Bradbury, writer ◦ Norbert Capek, visionary ◦ e. e. cummings, poet ◦ Philip Dacey, poet ◦ Emily Dickinson, poet ◦ Evelyn Dudley, poet ◦ Rob Eller-Isaacs, minister/writer ◦ Sophia Lyon Fahs, writer ◦ Richard M. Fewkes, writer ◦ Peshua Gertler, poet ◦ Richard S. Gilbert, minister/writer ◦ Jack Gallagher, composer/teacher ◦ Paul Gerike, proofreader ◦ Steve Harper, technical advisor ◦ Steve Hawkins, generous web designer ◦ Edie Hill, composer/colleague ◦ Langston Hughes, poet ◦ Mark Humphrey, piano technician ◦ Karel Husa, composer/teacher ◦ Kalidasa, poet ◦ Garrison Keillor, storyteller ◦ Denise Levertov, poet ◦ George Ella Lyon, poet ◦ Jonathan Machen, artist ◦ Edna St. Vincent Millay, poet ◦ J. David Moore, composer/colleague ◦ Joan Wolf Prefontaine, poet ◦ Gerald Rich, poet ◦ Carl Sandburg, poet ◦ King Sigismund III, religious reformer ◦ Steven Stucky, composer/teacher ◦ Rabindranath Tagore, poet ◦ Howard Thurman, civil rights leader/writer ◦ John Greenleaf Whittier, poet ◦ Theodore Tilton, pianist/teacher ◦ Daniel Winter, pianist/teacher ◦ Nancy Wood, poet ◦ Yehudi Wyner, composer/teacher ◦ Paul Adams, technical advisor ◦ Opal Palmer Adisa, poet ◦ Margaret & George Alexander, parents ◦ Yehuda Amichai, poet ◦ Bjorn Arneson, generous web designer ◦ Scott Bates, poet ◦ Abbie Betinis, composer/colleague ◦ Dennis Blubaugh, music dealer ◦ Michael deVernon Boblett, poet ◦ Ray Bradbury, writer ◦ Norbert Capek, visionary ◦ e. e. cummings, poet ◦ Philip Dacey, poet ◦ Emily Dickinson, poet ◦ Evelyn Dudley, poet ◦ Rob Eller-Isaacs, minister/writer ◦ Sophia Lyon Fahs, writer ◦ Richard M. Fewkes, writer ◦ Peshua Gertler, poet ◦ Richard S. Gilbert, minister/writer ◦ Jack Gallagher, composer/teacher ◦ Paul Gerike, proofreader ◦ Steve Harper, technical advisor ◦ Steve Hawkins, generous web designer ◦ Edie Hill, composer/colleague ◦ Langston Hughes, poet ◦ Mark Humphrey, piano technician ◦ Karel Husa, composer/teacher ◦ Kalidasa, poet ◦ Garrison Keillor, storyteller ◦ Denise Levertov, poet ◦ George Ella Lyon, poet ◦ Jonathan Machen, artist ◦ Edna St. Vincent Millay, poet ◦ J. David Moore, composer/colleague ◦ Joan Wolf Prefontaine, poet ◦ Gerald Rich, poet ◦ Carl Sandburg, poet ◦ King

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64

S  
- lu - ia, —

A  
- lu - ia, —

T  
*p warmly*  
Bridg-ing pain - ful di - vides, bear - ing com - fort and grace,

B  
*p warmly*  
Bridg-ing pain - ful di - vides, bear - ing com - fort and grace,



67

Children  
*mp*  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu -

S  
May this be a heal-ing al - le - lu - ia, — *p* Al - le - lu - ia,

A  
May this be a heal-ing al - le - lu - ia, — *p* Al - le - lu - ia,

T  
Al - le - lu - ia, —

B  
Al - le - lu - ia, —

Fl.  
*mp*

If performed without flute, play cue-sized notes instead of normal-sized notes:

70

Children

ia, al - le, al - le, al - le - lu - ia.

S

Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le, al - le - lu - ia,

A

Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le, al - le - lu - ia,



73

**C** *mf*

Children

Let this be our pray'r as we greet each mo - ment,

*mp*

S

Let this be our pray'r as we greet each mo - ment,

*mp*

A

Let this be our pray'r as we greet each mo - ment,

*mp*

75

S Al - - - le - lu - - - ia,

A Al - - - le - lu - - - ia,

T *mf* Let this be our pray'r as we greet each mo - ment,

B *mf* Let this be our pray'r as we greet each mo - ment,

Fl. *mf*



77

Children Let this be our pray'r as we greet each mo - ment

S *mf* Let this be our pray'r as we greet each mo - ment

A *mf* Let this be our pray'r as we greet each mo - ment

T Let this be our pray'r as we greet each mo - ment

B Let this be our pray'r as we greet each mo - ment

79

Children  
 o - pen - ly,

S  
 o - pen - ly, *warmly* Al - le - lu -

A  
 o - pen - ly, *warmly* Al - le - lu -

T  
 o - pen - ly,

B  
 o - pen - ly,



81

S  
 ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu -

A  
 ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu -

T  
*warmly*  
 Al - le, al - - le - lu - - ia,

B  
 - - - -

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92

S  
-lu - ia, As the bro - ken is mend - ed, and jus - tice ex - pands, *f*

A  
-lu - ia, As the bro - ken is mend - ed, and jus - tice ex - pands, *f*

T  
-lu - ia, As the bro - ken is mend - ed, and jus - tice ex - pands, *f*

B  
-lu - ia, As the bro - ken is mend - ed, and jus - tice ex - pands, *f*

Fl. *mf*

Tr.



95 *nondiv.* *mf*

S May this be a joy - ful al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu -

A May this be a joy - ful al - le - lu - - ia, Al - le - lu -

T May this be a joy - ful al - le - lu - - ia,

B *nondiv.* May this be a joy - ful al - le - lu - ia,

Fl.

Tr.

*mf*



97 *mf*

S - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu -

A - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu -

T *mf* Al - - le, al - - - le - lu - - -

B *mf* Al - - le, al - - le - - lu - - -

100

S  
ia, \_\_\_\_\_ Let this be our pray'r as we greet each mo - ment,

A  
ia, \_\_\_\_\_ Let this be our pray'r as we greet each mo - ment,

T  
ia. Let this be our pray'r as we greet each mo - ment,

B  
ia. Let this be our pray'r as we greet each mo - ment,



Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

103

S  
Let this be our pray'r as we greet\_

A  
Let this be our pray'r as we greet\_

T  
Let this be our pray'r as we greet each mo - ment, greet each

B  
Let this be our pray'r as we greet each mo - ment, greet each

Let this be our pray'r as we greet each mo - ment, greet each



Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

106

S — each mo - ment o - pen - ly: \_\_\_\_\_

A — each mo - ment o - pen - ly: \_\_\_\_\_

T mo - ment o - pen - ly, \_\_\_\_\_ *mp* Al - le - lu -

B mo - ment o - pen - ly, \_\_\_\_\_ *mp* Al - le - lu -

mo - ment o - pen - ly, \_\_\_\_\_ *mp* Al - le - lu -



**E** Solo or Tutti:

109

S *mp* Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le, al - le, al - le - lu, \_\_\_\_\_

A \_\_\_\_\_ *mp* Al - le - lu -

T - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, \_\_\_\_\_

B - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, \_\_\_\_\_

*mp*

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**...AND SOME OF IT WAS EVEN MINE.**

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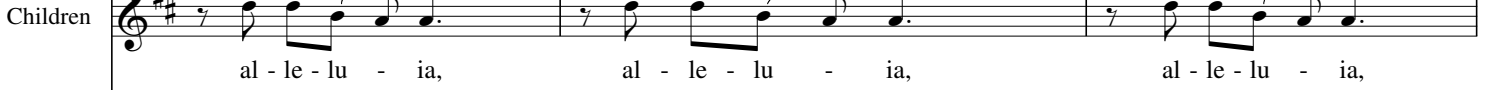
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120

Children 

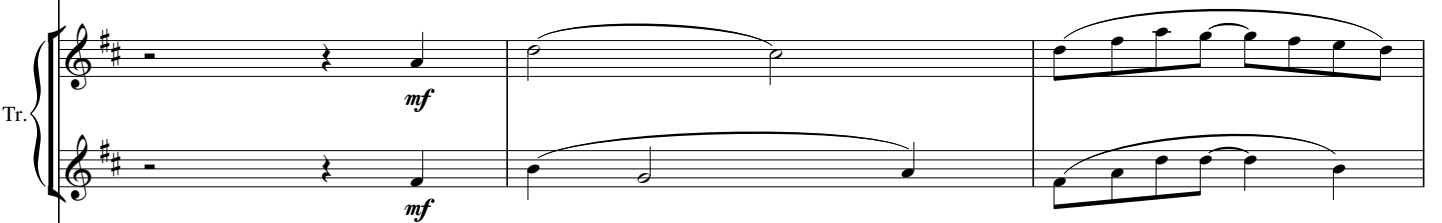
S 

A 

T 

B 

Fl. 

Tr. 



123

S *f*  
May this\_ be a joy - ful al - le - lu - ia,\_\_\_\_\_

A *f*  
\_ May this\_ be a joy - ful al - le - lu - ia,\_\_\_\_\_

T *mf*  
Al - le - lu -

B *mf*  
Al - le - lu -

Fl.

Tr.

*f* *mf*



127

S *mp*  
Al - le - lu - ia,\_\_\_\_\_

A *mp*  
Al - le - lu - ia,\_\_\_\_\_

T *mp*  
- ia,\_\_\_\_\_

B *mp*  
- ia,\_\_\_\_\_

*mp* *p*

130 **poco rit.** *p*

Children *p* May this be a heal - ing al - le -

T *p* May this be a grate-ful al - le - lu - ia.\_\_\_\_

B *p* May this be a grate-ful al - le - lu - ia.\_\_\_\_

**rallentando**

133 *pp*

Children - lu - ia.\_\_\_\_ *pp* May this be a work-ing al - le - lu - ia.\_\_\_\_

S *pp* May this be a work-ing al - le - lu - ia.\_\_\_\_

A *pp* May this be a work-ing al - le - lu - ia.\_\_\_\_

T *pp* May this be a work-ing al - le - lu - ia.\_\_\_\_

B *pp* May this be a work-ing al - le - lu - ia.\_\_\_\_

Fl. *p*