Fanfare Prelude on "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"

based on the hymn by Martin Luther composed by Jeffrey D. Waggoner



"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" was written by Martin Luther, an Augustinian monk who became the founder of the Lutheran Church. It is believed it was written in 1529, and was translated into English in 1853 by Frederick H. Hedge. It has been one of the musical "rallying cries" of the Protestant movement for over 400 years. If you are of my generation, you may remember the television program "Davey and Goliath," a stopmotion animation show about a young boy and his faithful dog, Goliath. It was produced by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and always ended with a brass rendition of the hymn. (Incidentally, the shows were made by Clokey Productions, who also created Gumby and his horse, Pokey!)

My maternal grandparents, Fred and Luetta Brindley, were deeply involved in St. John's Lutheran Church in Port Clinton, Ohio – the small town on the shore of Lake Erie where I was raised. My grandmother was director of the adult choir for many years, but I also remember her playing the piano to accompany the children's singing for the opening of Sunday School each week for all of us, before we went to our respective classrooms. My grandfather assisted with Holy Communion every month for many years as well. They were two of the most influential people of my life, and I considered it an honor to provide this small tribute to their lives and Christian faith.

The piece is a grade 3 work that was successfully performed by my own high school band in 2000. Instrumentation is traditional except for the addition of a "Pad bass" part. For information about the use of Pad bass, go to Stephen Melillo's web site at www.stormworld.com. Melillo is the originator of this concept as well as one of the finest composers of our time, and I recommend his music to you without reservation!

- Jeff Waggoner

JEFFREY D. WAGGONER is a high school band director in the western suburbs of Chicago. He holds degrees from the University of Toledo and Bowling Green State University. He has taught in the public schools for over 30 years and lives in Clarendon Hills, Illinois, with his wife and two attractive cats who crave attention.

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Dedicated to the memory of Fred and Luetta Brindley

Jeffrey D. Waggoner based on the hymn by Martin Luther



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