



in the
Atrium

Art Song

MAY 24, 2021

William Potts, Tenor Julia Brown, Piano

Sure on this Shining Night

James Agee (1909-1955)
Samuel Barber (1910-1981)

Sure on this shining night of starmade shadows round,
Kindness must watch for me this side the ground.

The late year lies down the north. All is healed, all is health
High summer holds the earth. Hearts all whole.

Sure on this shining night I weep for wonder
Wandering far alone of shadows on the stars.

Night

Annie Dillard (b.1945)

"You do not have to sit outside in the dark. If, however, you want to look at the stars, you will find that darkness is necessary."



I have more than I prayed for

Luci Shaw (b.1928)

I prayed to God for songs and laughter. He gave me tears instead.

I prayed for life in valleys green, full of harvest rich.

He led me through deserts arid and heights where snow alone could feel at home.

I prayed for sun, lots of dancing, and sparkling rivers to sail upon.

He gave me night, quite dark, starless, and thirst to guide me through its waste.

But now I know that I was foolish, for I have more than I prayed for.

I have the Son for bridegroom.

The music of his voice is a valley green, and river sparkling on which I sail.

My soul is dancing, dancing with endless joy in the dark night he shares with me.



An unknown Puritan many years before had written something similar in a poem entitled, *"The Valley of Vision"*, which includes this line: *"Let me learn by paradox/that the way down/is the way up..."* The poem ends:

Lord, in the daytime stars can be seen from deepest wells,
and the deeper the wells the brighter thy stars shine.

Let me find thy light in my darkness,

thy life in my death,

thy joy in my sorrow,

thy grace in my sin,

thy riches in my poverty,

thy glory in my valley.

As with the shepherds in the field, may we find His light in our darkness...



MAYFLOWER

Congregational Church

ART SONG IN THE ATRIUM is a virtual series, designed to offer music and poetry, images and scripture readings as aids to personal devotions and a time of meditation.

The series features singers from Mayflower's Chancel Choir and, beginning February 22, will also feature the beautiful Bösendorfer piano acquired in the fall of 2020, housed in the warm, vibrant acoustics of our Atrium.

We are grateful to the many generous donors who contributed to the purchase of our new piano, which allows for projects such as this one to come to life.

[MayflowerChurch.org](https://www.mayflowerchurch.org)

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