



We Have a Choice

A Choose-Your-Own-Path Adapted for Digital Video Conferencing Applications

Music by Amy Gordon

Instrumentation: Treble Choir

Duration: 2-3 Minutes

The music and lyrics of **We Have a Choice** were composed as a reaction to the COVID-19 crisis. The piece explore aleatoric and performer-based textures that can be sung remotely through video conferencing platforms, such as Zoom, or in live settings. The text explores our ability to choose our own paths and reactions in every situation, hopefully ultimately choosing to embrace the story with love, joy, hope, and peace.

The piece alternates between mostly-unison chant-like textures and aleatoric branching textures, in which the performers may choose their own path.

This piece is suitable for any Treble-Voice Choir interested in exploring virtual singing and limited-aleatoric textures that give performers ownership of the material. The piece may be sung in virtual or live settings as circumstances allow.

TEXT

We have a choice.
In the beginning of the story, there's a choice.
We can choose to [*accept, ignore*] the call.

We might not know what the story is about.
It might be about
[*lovers uniting, dragons and castles,*
searching for treasure, or just everyday life].

And the story will continue on.

We have a choice.
In the middle of the story, there's a choice.
We can choose to
[*keep on going, give up and sit it out, give in to fear*].

We have a choice.
At the end of the story, there's a choice.
We will choose [*love, hope, joy, peace*].

In every story, we have a choice.

About the composer: Amy Gordon is an active composer, arranger, songwriter, and vocalist based in Los Angeles, CA. As a choral composer, she has worked with and been commissioned by numerous choirs, including being the composer-in-residence for Nova Vocal Ensemble. She has also scored numerous films and webcasts. She has a BA in Composition from Loyola Marymount University and a MM in Music Composition from California State University, Long Beach.

Score Directions

The conductor or leader should cue all entrances and cut-offs. After being cued for an entrance, the singers should sing the chant-like unison material with the provided rhythms but in a natural pace. Due to the latency inherent in the use of video conferencing applications, it is not yet possible to sing in real-time with no lag. Because of this, the singers do not have to be perfectly rhythmically aligned. In fact, the interesting textures that arise from small rhythmic differences due to latency should be embraced.

Empty measures with a fermata over the rest should last approximately 2 seconds and serve as a chance for all singers to end their previous phrase, compensating for any latency-based lag.

After each empty measure with a fermata rest, the conductor/leader should clearly cue the start of the next phrase, which is shown via an arrow pointing to the rehearsal mark. The singers should begin their phrase as soon as they see the conductor/leader give the entrance cue.

When given a chance, singers may choose which line they would like to sing. The singers will follow the dashed lines to their preferred choice and then return to the unison chant after each aleatoric section. Singers may choose different paths each time they sing the piece if desired. It is also not necessary to have all the choices chosen during every performance, if by chance all the singers choose the same choice or omit one of the options.

It may be ideal to conduct or lead this piece using the screen-share capability of many video conferencing platforms. If using screen-share to conduct, use the cursor to clearly point to the arrows for entrance cues and the empty measures for cutoffs.

We Have a Choice

Music and Text by Amy Gordon

Around ♩ = 106

Start when conductor cues eighth note rest. Each singer sings words rhythmically at their own natural pace, like a chant.

CONDUCTOR
CUES DOWNBEAT

①

mf

~2"
wait until everyone
has cut off

Treble Voices

We have a choice. In the be - gin - ning of the sto - ry, there's a choice.



②

Treb. Voices

We can choose to:

CHOICE #1
enter freely

ac - cept the call.

~2"
wait until everyone
has cut off

CHOICE #2
enter freely

ig - nore the call.

wait until everyone
has cut off

Choose #1, #2, #3, or #4

CHOICE #3
enter freely

ac - cept the call.

wait until everyone
has cut off

CHOICE #4
enter freely

ig - nore the call.

wait until everyone
has cut off



③

Treb. Voices

We might not know what the sto - ry is a - bout.

~2"
wait until everyone
has cut off

CHOICE #1
romantically
lov-ers u-nit-ing,

CHOICE #2
Strongly
search-ing for treas-ure,

CHOICE #3
theatrically
drag-ons and cas-tles,

CHOICE #4
straight-forward
or just e-'vry-day life.

Choose #1, #2, #3, or #4

It might be a-bout:

Treb. Voices

wait until everyone has cut off

5

And the sto - ry will con - ti - nue on.

wait until everyone has cut off

Treb. Voices

6

mf

We have a choice. In the mid - dle of the sto - ry, there's a choice.

wait until everyone has cut off

Treb. Voices

7

Choose #1, #2, #3, or #4

We can choose to:

CHOICE #1
enter freely and keep repeating
Keep on go - ing. repeat ~4x until conductor cues cutoff

CHOICE #2
enter freely after 2nd repeat and keep repeating
Give up and sit it out. repeat ~4x until conductor cues cutoff

CHOICE #3
enter freely and keep repeating
Keep on go - ing. repeat ~4x until conductor cues cutoff

CHOICE #4
enter freely after 2nd repeat and keep repeating
Give in to fear. repeat ~4x until conductor cues cutoff

Treb. Voices

We Have a Choice

6

8

Treb. Voices

We have a choice. At the end of the sto - ry, there's a choice.

~2"
wait until everyone
has cut off



CHOICE #2

wait until Choice #1
singers cut off

hope, —

CHOICE #3

wait until Choice #2
singers cut off

joy,

9

Treb. Voices

We will choose:

Choose #1,
#2, #3, or #4

CHOICE #1

love,

CHOICE #4

wait until Choice #3
singers cut off

peace.



CHOICE #4

wait until Choice #3
singers cut off

peace. —

Treb. Voices

~2"
wait until everyone
has cut off

We will choose:

Choose #1,
#2, #3, or #4

CHOICE #1

love,

CHOICE #3

wait until Choice #2
singers cut off

joy,

CHOICE #2

wait until Choice #1
singers cut off

hope, —

20-25"

CONDUCTOR
CUES CUTOFF

CHOICE #1
love, —
Continue repeating freely until conductor cues cutoff

CHOICE #3
joy,
enter freely
Continue repeating freely until cutoff

CHOICE #2
hope, —
enter freely
Pick top or bottom note
Continue repeating freely until conductor cues cutoff

CHOICE #4
peace.
enter freely
Continue repeating freely until cutoff

Treb. Voices
wait until everyone has cut off ~2" **11** *f* Choose #1, #2, #3, or #4
We will choose:

Treb. Voices
wait until everyone has cut off ~2" **12** *mp*
In e - 'vry sto - ry, we have a choice.