

commissioned for the 2026 ACDA Western Region Conference, San Jose, CA

A Golden Thread Will Find You

SATB Voices and Piano

Words: Ben McClendon, Ph.D

Music: Kira Zeeman Rugen, D.M.A.

Briskly flowing, hopeful ♩ = 85

The musical score is written for SATB voices and piano. It begins with a piano introduction marked *p* (piano) and tempo *Briskly flowing, hopeful* at 85 beats per minute. The piano part features a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The vocal lines enter at measure 3, with the Soprano part starting with the lyrics "When you". The piano accompaniment continues throughout the vocal phrases. The lyrics are: "When you hold out your hand to a stranger, a sin - gle thread is wo - ven. When you". The score includes first and second endings for the piano part, indicated by numbers 1 and 2 above the notes.

JG2846

© Copyright 2026 by Gentry Publications. Administered worldwide by the Fred Bock Publishing Group. All rights reserved. Made in U.S.A. www.GentryPublications.com

9 10

stop to lis - ten to an - oth - er,

add Altos

11 *p* 12

you are both un - bur - dened. _____ When you

13 14

speak a - loud your grat - i - tude, _____ when you

add Tenors *p*

15 16 *mp*

swing wide your gates, _____ when you
add Bases *mp*

mp

17 18

add a chair to the ta - ble, _____
ta - ble, the

mp

19 20 *mf*

_____ a gold - en
mf
ta - ble, _____

mf

21 thread

22

23 *mf* be - comes a stream

24 *mf* be - comes a

25 jour - ney, wide riv - er to

26 be - comes a jour - ney, wide riv - er to

Detailed description: This page of a musical score contains six systems of music. Each system includes a vocal line (treble clef), a piano accompaniment (treble and bass clefs), and lyrics. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 8/8. Measure 21 shows the vocal line with a long note for the word 'thread'. Measure 22 continues this note. Measure 23 begins the phrase 'be - comes a stream' with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. Measure 24 continues 'be - comes a'. Measure 25 continues 'jour - ney, wide riv - er to'. Measure 26 continues 'be - comes a jour - ney, wide riv - er to'. The piano accompaniment features a consistent eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a more varied bass line.

27 calm - est seas, 28

29 *f* a tap - es - 30 *mf*

31 try that count - less hu - man 32

calm - est seas, a tap - es - try that count - less hu - man

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of four systems of staves. The first system (measures 27-28) shows the vocal line with lyrics 'calm - est seas,' and a piano accompaniment. The second system (measures 29-30) features a vocal line with lyrics 'a tap - es -' and dynamic markings *f* and *mf*. The piano accompaniment includes a *f* dynamic marking. The third system (measures 31-32) has a vocal line with lyrics 'try that count - less hu - man' and a piano accompaniment. The score is in a key with two flats and a 4/4 time signature.

33 hands still weave, *mp*

hands still weave, that

35 *p* 36 37 *mf*

that hu - man hands still weave. *mf*

hu - man hands still weave. When

38 *mf* 39 40

crack light - ning Oo

storms of fear crack light - ning and harsh words thun - der in your

41 42 43

you doubt your.

brain and you doubt your heart can handle the

44 45 46

heart Oo

hurt a-long the way, one hand reach-es to an-

47 48

weaves an-oth-er

oth-er,

49 50 51 *f* Opt. descant

a gold - en

thread: _____ a gold - en

52 53 54

thread, _____

thread, _____ a

55 a gold - en thread. 56 57

gold - en thread.

58

This section contains three systems of music. The first system is a vocal line in treble clef with lyrics 'a gold - en thread.' and measure numbers 55, 56, and 57. The second system is a piano accompaniment in treble clef with lyrics 'gold - en thread.' and measure number 58. The third system is a piano accompaniment in bass clef. The piano part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the right hand and a more melodic line in the left hand.

58 rit. 59 a tempo 60

with warmth and tenderness
a tempo
p

How do we get to the

p

with warmth and tenderness
a tempo
p

This section contains three systems of music. The first system is a vocal line in treble clef with measure numbers 58, 59, and 60. The second system is a piano accompaniment in treble clef with lyrics 'How do we get to the' and dynamic markings 'with warmth and tenderness', 'a tempo', and '*p*'. The third system is a piano accompaniment in bass clef with dynamic markings 'with warmth and tenderness', 'a tempo', and '*p*'. The piano part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the right hand and a more melodic line in the left hand.

61 62 63 64

world turned gold from the simple threads we

This block contains the first system of music, measures 61 through 64. It features a vocal line with lyrics, a bass line, and a piano accompaniment. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "world turned gold from the simple threads we".

65 66 67

S. weave? One hand

A. weave, we weave? One hand

T. weave, we weave? One hand

B. weave, we weave? One hand

This block contains the second system of music, measures 65 through 67. It features four vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "weave? One hand" for Soprano, "weave, we weave? One hand" for Alto, "weave, we weave? One hand" for Tenor, and "weave, we weave? One hand" for Bass. The piano accompaniment continues with a rhythmic pattern.

68 69 70

S. reach - es to an - oth - er to an -

A. reach - es to an - oth - er, to an - oth - er,

T. reach - es to an - oth - er, to an - oth - er,

B. reach - es to an - oth - er,

71 72 73

S. oth - er...

A. threads un - end - ing be - yond the

T. threads un - end - ing be - yond the

B. threads un - end - ing be - yond the

74 75 *mf* 76 *mf* *accel.* A little faster, with intensity ♩ = 95

S. How - ev - er hard the

A. seas. How - ev - er hard the

T. seas. How - ev - er hard the

B. seas. How - ev - er hard the

A little faster, with intensity ♩ = 95

p *mf* *accel.*

77 78

trav - els, dark the

79 80

night, don't des - pair: my hand is

81 82

reach - ing, and an - oth - er

f

83 84

gold - en thread will

85 *ff*
find you, and an-oth - er

86 *ff*

87 gold - en thread will

88 *ff*

89 *mf*
find you where you

90 *mf*

91 let your 92

let where you let your kind - ness, your

mf

where you let where you let your

93 94

kind - ness guide

kind - ness guide

95 96

you, where you

you, where you

p

p

Slowing and unhurried to the end

97 *p* 98

where you let your kind - ness —
let your kind - ness — guide you,

This system contains measures 97 and 98. It features a vocal line with lyrics, a bass line, and a piano accompaniment. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). Measure 97 starts with a whole rest in the vocal line. Measure 98 begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The piano accompaniment consists of eighth-note patterns in both hands.

99 *pp* 100

guide you, — where you let your
pp

This system contains measures 99 and 100. The vocal line continues with lyrics. The piano accompaniment continues with eighth-note patterns. A piano (*pp*) dynamic marking is present above measure 100.

101 *molto rit.* 102 103 *ppp*

kind - ness — guide you. *ppp*

This system contains measures 101, 102, and 103. The vocal line concludes with the lyrics. The piano accompaniment features a *molto rit.* (ritardando) marking and ends with a *ppp* (pianissimo) dynamic marking. The piano part includes a fermata over the final chord.

Program Notes*

In 1986, Robert Fulghum published the book "All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten." The best-selling book quickly became a success because of its simple yet profound messages. Filled with whimsical quips about life, the book included such gems as "Share everything," "Play Fair," "Put things back where you found them," and "Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody." Or even funny reminders like "Warm cookies and cold milk are good for you" or simply "Flush." Robert Fulghum's clever juxtaposition of the "Kindergarten Credo" with the adult version of creating a civilized society continues to resonate today.

This sentiment is echoed in the commission for the Western Division ACDA Conference in San Jose, titled "A Tapestry of Voices." Dr. Ben McClendon's text, "A Golden Thread Will Find You," serves as a powerful reminder that we are the Golden Thread that weaves love and kindness through our tapestry of humanity. When we choose to reach out our hand and open our gates wide, we chart a path that countless humans have taken, where kindness guides our actions and words.

*Note to directors: The tempo of this piece should adhere to the brisk metronome marking, while maintaining a flowing texture in the piano. The long phrases in the choral parts are best served by keeping the tempo fast, allowing the pianist to facilitate fluid and light articulations.

Approximate Length: 5:00 minutes

A Golden Thread Will Find You

Text: Dr. Ben McClendon

When you hold out your hand to a stranger,
a single thread is woven. When you stop
to listen to another, you are both unburdened.
When you speak aloud your gratitude,
when you swing wide your gates,
when you add a chair to the table, a golden thread

becomes a stream becomes a journey,
wide river to calmest seas, a tapestry
that countless human hands still weave.

When storms of fear crack lightning
and harsh words thunder in your brain
and you doubt your heart can handle
the hurt along the way, one hand reaches
to another, weaves another thread: a golden thread.

How do we get to the world turned gold
from the simple threads we weave?
One hand reaches to another to another...
threads unending beyond the seas.

However hard the travels, dark the night,
don't despair: my hand is reaching,
and another golden thread will find you
where you let your kindness guide you.



Kira Zeeman Rugen, Composer

Dr. Kira Zeeman Rugen is a composer, singer, conductor, and educator. She is the artistic director of Solis - Choir of the Sun, a professional choir founded in 2011, and the Director of Choral and Vocal Studies at Scottsdale Community College.

As a composer, notable performances and premieres include the Vancouver Youth Choir, Phoenix Children's Chorus, Chandler Children's Chorus, Northwestern Oklahoma State University Singers, UC Boulder Symphonic Chorale, and the Phoenix Chorale. Her film scores have won over fifty awards at film festivals worldwide. She has prepared choirs for the Eagles, The Chieftains, Andrea Bocelli, Final Fantasy, Zelda, and Game of Thrones.

Kira has performed as a soprano and soloist at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Durham Norvis Early Music, Korea's Incheon International Choral Festival, with Anúna in Ireland, Japan, and China, and with the Phoenix Chorale on Grammy Award-winning albums. Kira earned a BA in Music, studying Vocal Performance and Choral Conducting from Weber State University, an MM in Choral Education, and a Doctorate in Choral Conducting at Arizona State University.

02057374 Gold Thread SATB JG2846



1 96288 38310 9



Gentry Publications.com

EXCLUSIVELY DISTRIBUTED BY
HAL•LEONARD®