



The Conscience Pure

Three Quaker texts appropriate to the mid-winter season

for soprano voice and guitar

Nigel Morgan

This study score has been downloaded from the [website archive](#) of composer Nigel Morgan. The PDF file is solely for personal study, repertoire research or educational reference. It is not intended for use in public performance except in educational situations when an extract is required for illustration purposes.

Performance scores and parts are available from Tonality Systems Press in two formats: as standard printed and bound paper copies, and as PDF electronic masters carrying a special electronic license for an unlimited number of performances over an agreed period. For more information please e-mail [Tonality Systems Press](#).



The Conscience Pure

*Three Quaker texts appropriate
to the mid winter season*

for soprano voice and guitar

Nigel Morgan

About the music

The Quakers, known today as The Religious Society of Friends, have their origins in the Puritan sects of 17th century Britain. They hold to no creed, they have no liturgy or established doctrine, their religious services are meetings held in silence. What might be said to constitute a theology is a rich tradition of testimonial writing of personal experience; it is from this tradition three texts have been chosen, one from the late 17th century, one from the mid 19th and one from the 20th. The texts are linked by their association with the mid winter season when Quakers, who in earlier times did not recognize Christmas as a special day, nevertheless use the mid winter festival as an opportunity for meditation and reflection.

The Conscience Pure is taken from the words of the Quaker mystic Isaac Pennington (1616 – 1679) whose writings were published in 4 volumes in 1681. This text was found in a collection of intergenerational readings brought together for the Christmas Gatherings of Manasquan Meeting in New Jersey, USA.

The Joy of Giving is a short poem by John Greenleaf Whittier (1807 – 1892). Largely known today for his hymn tune *Dear Lord and Father of Mankind* he has claimed a place as one of the most prolific of Quaker writers to use poetry as a medium of testimony. Whittier was an ardent abolitionist who enjoyed much popular regard during his lifetime. His poetry is still the common currency of older Quakers who were often required to learn his inspirational verses at children's meeting. This is one of Whittier's shortest and best.

Music in the Heart is a benediction from *The Work of Christmas* by Dr Howard Thurman, a theologian and civil-rights leader. He was Dean of Theology at the University of Boston in 1940s. Although not by Quaker Thurman's poem looks at the aftermath of Christ's birth that those in the Religious Society of Friends have come to find inspirational and appropriate.

Performance Notes

The singer and guitarist might adopt a presentation and delivery that reflects something of the Quaker tradition. If appropriate and possible there could be a period of silence before and after each song. A performing score in portrait is available. This contains comprehensive fingering for the guitarist to realise the many resonant effects called for in the score.

The Conscience Pure

The main thing
is to keep the conscience pure:
Wait till the spirit leads.

Know and follow the guide,
receive from him the light
whereby to walk
and not take things for truths
because others see them as truths.

Keep the conscience pure:
Wait till the spirit makes them
Manifest,

nor run into worships,
duties or practices
because others are led that way.

The main thing
is to keep the conscience pure:
Wait till the spirit leads.

Isaac Pennington

The Joy of Giving

Somehow, not only for Christmas
But all the year through,
The joy that you give others
Is the joy that comes back to you.
And the more you spend in blessing
The poor and lonely and sad,
The more of your heart's possessing
Returns to you glad.

John Greenleaf Whittier

Music in the Heart

When the song of the angels is stilled
When the star in the sky is gone
When the kings and princes are home
When the shepherds are back with their flock
The work of Christmas begins:

To find the lost
To heal the broken
To feed the hungry
To release the prisoner
To rebuild the nations
To bring peace among brothers
To make music in the heart.

Howard Thurman

The Conscience Pure

with discernment ♩ = 50

Soprano

Guitar

4

The Main thing is to keep the con - science

Guitar

7

pure wait till the Spi - rit leads. Know and fo - llow the

Guitar

10

guide re - ceive from him the light where - by to

13

walk and not take things for truths be - cause

16

poco rit. a tempo

o - thers see them as truths. Keep the con - science

21

pure: Wait till the Spi - rit makes them ma - ni - fest

24

Nor run in - to wor - ships, du - ties, pra - cti - ces

27

be - cause o - thers are led that way. The main thing

30

is to keep the con - science pure wait till the Spi - rit leads.

33

CII

16

But all the year through the joy that you give o - thers is the

20

joy that comes back to you And the more you spend in

23

ble - ssing the poor and lone - ly and sad the

26

more of your heart's po - sse - ssing re - turns to you re - turns

29

to you glad. And the more you spend in

32

ble - ssing the poor and lone - ly and sad the

35

more of your heart's po - sse - ssing re - turns to you re - turns

38

to you glad.

Music in the Heart

with compassion ♩ = 50

Soprano

Guitar

When the song of

n to G
o to C

3

the an-gels is stilled

When the star in the sky is gone

6

When the kings and prin-ces are home

When the shep-herds are back

9

with their flocks

The work of Christ - mas be - gins: To

12

find the lost To heal the bro - ken To feed the hun - gry

15

To re - lease the pri - so - ner To re - build the nations to bring peace a - mong

18

bro - thers To make mu - sic in the heart

21

To make mu - sic in the

23

heart

VII

for Alice

Composed on St Lucy's Day 2011