

...we clasp the hands of those who go before us,
and the hands of those who come after us;
we enter the little circle of each other's arms,
and the larger circle of lovers
whose hands are joined in a dance,
and the larger circle of all creatures,
passing in and out of life,
who move also in a dance,
to a music so subtle and vast
that no ear hears it
except in fragments.

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Duration: 3:45

We Clasp the Hands was written for the Aurora Chorus of Portland, Oregon, to celebrate the group as a welcoming and empowering community as well as marking their 25th Anniversary. I am indebted to Artistic Director Joan Szymko for finding the perfect text; it is excerpted from Wendell Berry's poetic essay "Healing," found in his volume *What Are People For?*