

Faith in America Review

Review of "Faith in America: The Story of Our Nation's Songbook" by Kate Hoover

"Faith in America" was the final show in the Waterville Playshop season was performed at Zion Lutheran Church, May 19-22. This wonderful patriotic show was both written and conceived by Matt Zwyer in honor of the veterans of all wars and true patriots of America. The show provided a remarkable lesson in America's military history, as well as highlighting some of our most important nation's moments both sorrowful and proud. This fantastic show included many of America's favorite standards, traditional hymns, and new classics for the audience to become entranced with throughout the 1 ½ hour program.

The amazing arrangements of songs filled the air, such as "National Anthem", mash up of "Danny Boy/Raised Up", gospel hymn "Precious Lord, Take My Hand", and a rousing "Armed Forces Medley". The historical connections between the musical pieces gracefully reminded the audience of the purpose of the music that also paralleled what was occurring in the U.S at that point in history. Some of the exceptional acting highlights included monologues from notable Presidents and American icons, such as Abraham Lincoln, John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King Jr., and George W. Bush. The cast wore many hats figuratively and literally throughout the show to illustrate the time period in which the piece embodied, as well as used well-choreographed movement to embody the military action and the beauty of solemn historical moments to remember.

This patriotic history lesson on faith in resilience and in America was a beautiful, fitting love letter to all Veterans and hopeful Americans living in the midst of our nation's struggles. The set was very tasteful, beautiful patriotic backdrop reminiscent of a classy Fourth of July celebration. The music and musicians shined as much as the fabulous chorus beaming while singing from one gorgeous song to the next.

To mention the individual notable soloists and actors would lengthen this article beyond acceptable length, although, two special moments in the show must be highlighted. The September 11th Tribute was an incredible illustration of the loss of the fateful day in American History by both lovely vocalist Cyndy Brookover ("Little Did You Know You Kissed a Hero") and Karen Wiggins who portrayed a grieving wife folding the laundry of her recently deceased hero. This was an extremely realistic and amazing touching moment of remembrance. My favorite moment of the entire program

was the “Armed Forces Medley”, in which the veterans of each branch were invited to stand during their branch's song. If you witnessed this awesome culminating tribute, you would have also had each proud patriotic song ringing in your ear, as well as the memory of the resilient veterans standing proudly while their branch was paid tribute to. Matt Zwyer and the cast should be commended for their hard work, talent, and heart that they put into this incredible show.