

# Cherish Your Doubt

SATB, soloist, piano, opt. bass



Elizabeth Alexander

*Seafarer Press*

## Cherish Your Doubt

Words and Music by Elizabeth Alexander

Springtime without winter would enter with a yawn,  
And dawn without the night would be a tedium of light.  
Reunion follows parting, renewal follows death,  
And our songs of love have grown  
From the very seeds our doubt have sown.  
Without a doubt, our hearts and minds would never grow.  
Without a doubt, our dreams would have nowhere to go.  
Without a doubt, we'd never change the status quo.  
Yes, without a doubt, we'd be hanging on  
To notions that are better gone.  
Try to love the questions, those thorny, thorny questions.  
Trust your intuition, and cherish your doubt.

Cherish your doubt; don't throw it out.  
That's what true belief is about.  
With a faith both tempered and strong,  
Questioning only helps it along,  
Use your eyes and ears and hands and heart and mind,  
And what you find may change the world.  
So don't throw it out. Cherish your doubt.

Cherish your doubt; don't throw it out.  
Mighty oaks can weather a drought;  
Any faith worth taking to heart,  
Tested a bit, will not fall apart.  
Use your eyes and ears and hands and heart and mind,  
And what you find may change the world.  
So don't throw it out. Cherish your doubt.

Don't be afraid of what you'll find.  
Leave your darkest fears behind (and)

Cherish your doubt; don't throw it out.  
That's one thing you can't do without.  
When you walk that less-traveled route  
Suddenly new ideas may sprout.  
Use your eyes and ears and hands and heart and mind,  
And what you find may change the world.  
So don't throw it out. Cherish your doubt.

Call on your reason and compassion,  
Although it may not be in fashion.  
Don't be afraid of what you'll find.  
Leave your darkest fears behind.  
Cherish your doubt; don't you ever refuse it.  
You can move a whole mountain if you use it.

A different drummer you will hear when you cherish your doubt.  
You haven't anything to fear when you cherish your doubt.  
That's what true belief is about: Don't throw it out!

**Composer's Note:** One spring morning during my last year of college I attended a church service just outside of Wooster, Ohio. It was my first experience with what is now my chosen faith, Unitarian Universalism. The congregants sat in folding chairs in a circle in a barn while a soft-spoken layperson gave a thoughtful meditation entitled "Cherish Your Doubts," inspired by a writing by Robert T. Weston.

Years later I came upon Weston's writing again and wondered: What if a praise choir were to proclaim not only the awesome power of *faith*, but also that of its spiritual companion, *doubt*?

### *Cherish Your Doubts*

*Robert T. Weston*

*Cherish your doubts, for doubt is the handmaiden of truth.  
Doubt is the key to the door of knowledge; it is the servant  
of discovery.  
A belief which may not be questioned binds us to error, for  
there is incompleteness and imperfection in every belief.  
Doubt is the touchstone of truth; it is an acid which eats  
away the false.  
Let no man fear for the truth, that doubt may consume it; for  
doubt is a testing of belief.  
The truth stands boldly and unafraid; it is not shaken by the  
testing:  
For truth, if it be truth, arises from each testing stronger,  
more secure.  
He that would silence doubt is filled with fear; the house of  
his spirit is built on shifting sands.  
But he that fears not doubt, and knows its use, is founded on  
a rock.  
He shall walk in the light of growing knowledge; the work of  
his hands shall endure.  
Therefore let us not fear doubt, but let us rejoice in its help:  
It is to the wise as a staff to the blind; doubt is the  
handmaiden of truth.*

© by Robert T. Weston.

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# Cherish Your Doubt

SATB, soloist, piano, opt. bass \*

Elizabeth Alexander

(♩ = 80-84) Soulful, sincere

Piano

*p*

*In sections without pedal markings, trust your intuition.*

5

9

Solo

*p*

Spring - time with - out win - ter\_\_\_\_\_ would en - ter with a yawn\_\_\_\_\_ and

13

Solo

dawn with - out the night\_\_\_\_\_ would be a te - di - um\_\_\_\_\_ of light\_\_\_\_\_ Re -

17

Solo

*p*

u - nion fol - lows part - ing, re - new - al fol - lows death,\_\_\_\_\_ And our

*generously*

\* One or more soloists may *ad lib* freely, taking whatever liberties with rhythm, pitch and inflection they feel called to. Optional bass part may be downloaded at [www.seafarerpress.com/works/cherish-your-doubt](http://www.seafarerpress.com/works/cherish-your-doubt)

21 *mp*

Solo

songs of love\_\_\_\_\_ have grown\_\_\_\_\_ from the ver - y

*mp*

*Lead.* *Lead.*

25

Solo

seeds our doubt\_\_\_\_\_ has sown\_\_\_\_\_

*Lead.* *Lead.*

30

Solo

Our hearts and minds would ne - ver grow.\_\_\_\_\_

*mp*

S

With - out\_(t) a\_\_\_ doubt, With -

*mp*

A

With - out\_(t) a\_\_\_ doubt, With -

*mp*

T

With - out\_(t) a\_\_\_ doubt, With -

*mp*

B

With - out\_(t) a\_\_\_ doubt, With -

*mp*

*Lead.* *Lead.* *Lead.*

Solo *Our dreams would have no - where to go,*

S *out (t) a doubt, With -*

A *out (t) a doubt, With -*

T *out (t) a doubt, With -*

B *out (t) a doubt, With -*

*\* Red. Red. Red.*

Solo *We'd ne - ver change the sta - tus quo, Yes, with -*

S *out (t) a doubt,*

A *out (t) a doubt,*

T *out (t) a doubt,*

B *out (t) a doubt,*

*freely - ritardando mf a tempo //*

*Red. Red.*

Solo *p*  
 out a doubt we'd be hang - in' on to no - tions that are bet - ter gone...

S *p*  
 Ooo

A *p*  
 Ooo

T *p*  
 Ooo

B *p*  
 Ooo

*mp*  
 Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

Solo *mp* *passionately*  
 Try to love the ques - tions, Those

*mf*  
 Ped. Ped.

Solo  
 thorn - y, thorn - ny ques - tions,

*p*  
 Ped. Ped.

Solo *p* *warmly, intimately*  
 Trust your in - tu - i - tion, and

*p*  
 Ped. Ped.

60 **Very freely, ad lib. (Trust your intuition)**

Solo

cher - ish, Cher - ish your

65 (♩ = 126-138) **Joyfully, with determination**

Solo

doubt.

69 **mf**

S

1. Cher - ish your doubt, Don't throw it out, That's what true be -  
 2. Cher - ish your doubt, Don't throw it out, Might - y oaks can

A

1. Cher - ish your doubt, Don't throw it out, That's what true be -  
 2. Cher - ish your doubt, Don't throw it out, Might - y oaks can

T

1. Cher - ish your doubt, Don't throw it out, That's what true be -  
 2. Cher - ish your doubt, Don't throw it out, Might - y oaks can

B

1. [Sing tenor part for first 2 measures of 1st verse] That's what true be -  
 2. Oh, Cher-ish your doubt, Don't you know that might - y oaks can

72

S  
 lief is a - bout, With a faith\_\_ (th) both\_\_ (th) tem - pered and strong, —  
 wea - ther a drought, An - y truth\_\_ (th) worth\_\_ (th) tak - ing to heart, —

A  
 lief is a - bout, With a faith\_\_ (th) both\_\_ (th) tem - pered and strong, —  
 wea - ther a drought, An - y truth\_\_ (th) worth\_\_ (th) tak - ing to heart, —

T  
 lief is a - bout, With a faith\_\_ (th) both\_\_ (th) tem - pered and strong, —  
 wea - ther a drought, An - y truth\_\_ (th) worth\_\_ (th) tak - ing to heart, —

B  
 lief is a - bout, With a faith\_\_ (th) both\_\_ (th) tem - pered and strong, — you'll find that  
 wea - ther a drought, An - y truth\_\_ (th) worth\_\_ (th) tak - ing to heart, —

*Red. \* Red. \* Red. Red. Red. \**

75

S  
 ques - tion - ing on - - ly helps it a - long, — Use your  
 test - ed a bit\_\_ will not fall a - part, — *p lyrical*

A  
 ques - tion - ing on - - ly helps it a - long, — Use your  
 test - ed a bit\_\_ will not fall a - part, — *p lyrical*

T  
 ques - tion - ing on - - ly helps it a - long, — Use your  
 test - ed a bit\_\_ will not fall a - part, — *p lyrical*

B  
 ques - tion - ing - on - - ly helps it a - long, —  
 test - ed a bit\_\_ will not fall a - part, —

*Red. Red. Red. Red. Red. cantabile p Red.*

(♩ = ♩)  
*gently pulsing*

77

S eyes and ears and hands and heart and mind, \_\_\_\_\_ And

A eyes, ears, hands, heart and mind, \_\_\_\_\_ and mind, And

T eyes, ears, hands, heart and mind, \_\_\_\_\_ and mind, And

B \_\_\_\_\_ *p lyrical* And

Ped. Ped. Ped.

80

S what you learn may change the world, \_\_\_\_\_ *mf* So

A what you learn may change \_\_\_\_\_ the world, *mf* So

T what you learn may change the world, \_\_\_\_\_ *mf* So

B what you learn may change \_\_\_\_\_ the world, *mf* So

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

Opal Palmer Adisa, poet • Paul Adams, technological hero • Stephen Alexander, lyric consultant • Ginny Allen, Agile coach and friend • The great people at American Composers Forum • Yehuda Amichai, poet • A. R. Ammons, poet • Jennifer Anderson, conductor and composer advocate • Scott Bates, poet • Abbie Betinis, initiator of collaborative endeavors • Beth Norton, conductor and composer advocate • Dennis Blubaugh, more than just a music dealer • Michael deVernon Boblett, poet • Edna Busby, my first piano teacher • Ray Bradbury, writer • Augustin Cadena, translator • Norbert Capek, minister and advocate for religious freedom • Jessica Corbett, editor • David Cummings, poet • Philip Dacey, poet • Catherine Dalton, composer and serum partner • Emily Dickinson, poet • Evelyn Dudley, poet and caregiver • Rob Eller-Isaacs, minister and composer advocate • Ralph Waldo Emerson, philosopher and poet • Louise Erdrich, writer • David Allan Evans, poet • Sophia Lyon Fahs, writer • Richard M. Fewkes, minister and writer • Pasha Gertler, poet • Jack Gallagher, composer and teacher • Paul Gerike, proofreader • Jocelyn Hagen and Michael Hagan, founders of Graphite Marketplace • Steve Harper, just about everything • Steve Harkins, web designer • Edie Hill, composer and friend • Langston Hughes, poet • Margaret and George Heald, piano technician • Karel Husa, composer and teacher • David Ignatow, poet • Kabir, mystic • Linda Kachelmeier, composer and serum partner • Ruth Palmer, conductor and composer advocate • Joan Wolf Prefontaine, poet • Paul Rardin, conductor and composer advocate • Kalidasa, poet • Steve Kaul, recording engineer • Søren Kierkegaard, philosopher and poet • Dorothy Knost, piano teacher • Ben Krywosz, artistic director of Nautilus Music-Theater • Denise Levertov, poet • George Ella Lyon, poet • Jonathan Machen, vocalist • Dawna Markova, writer • Anne Matlack, conductor and composer advocate • Nancy Menk, composer advocate • Edna St. Vincent Millay, poet • Jane Ramseyer Miller, conductor, composer, social activist • Joe Mish, conductor and composer advocate • J. David Moore, composer • Gerald Rich, poet • Carl Sandburg, poet • friend • King Sigismund III, religious reformer • Ann Silsbee, composer, poet and friend • Simon Alexander-Adams, sounding board, fellow creative, and awesome son • Steven Stucky, composer and teacher • Rabindranath Tagore, poet • Sister Peronne Marie Thibert, teacher and writer • Oliver Alexander-Adams, unconventional thinker and light of my life • Howard Thurman, civil rights leader and writer • Everyone whose work supports the Association for Unitarian Universalist Music Ministries • Charles Varney, high school choral director • Anna Vonhuben, illustrator and graphic designer • Nancy White, poet • John Greenleaf Whittier, poet • Theodore Chickering Williams, poet • Daniel Winter, pianist and teacher • Nancy Wood, poet • Yehudi Wyner, composer and teacher

**A lot of hard work  
and creativity went  
into bringing this  
music to you...**



**...and some of it  
was even mine.**

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93 2. SOLO: *mp dolce*

T  
Cher - ish your\_ doubt.

Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped.

97 TUTTI: *pp marcato*

T  
Don't be a - fraid, Don't be a - fraid of what you'll

B  
*pp marcato*  
Don't be a - fraid, Don't be a - fraid of what you'll

Ped. \*

99

T  
find,

B  
find,

Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \*

101 *mp*

S Leave your dark - est fears and

A Leave your dark - est fears be - hind and

T Leave your fears and

B Leave your fears and

*mp*

Red. Red. Red. Red. Red.

103 *f*

S Cher - ish your doubt, Don't throw it out, That's one thing you

A Cher - ish your doubt, Don't throw it out, That's one thing you

T Cher - ish your doubt, Don't throw it out, That's one thing you

B Cher - ish your doubt, Don't throw it out, That's one thing you

*f*

\* Red. Red.

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**...and some of it  
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(♩ = ♩)  
 111 *gently pulsing*

S  
 eyes and ears and hands and heart and mind, \_\_\_\_\_ And

A  
 eyes, ears, hands, heart and mind, \_\_\_\_\_ and mind, And

T  
 eyes, ears, hands, heart and mind, \_\_\_\_\_ and mind, And

B  
 \_\_\_\_\_ *p lyrical*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ And

*ped.* *ped.* *ped.*

114

S  
 what you learn may change the world, \_\_\_\_\_ *mf*  
 So

A  
 what you learn may change \_\_\_\_\_ the world, *mf*  
 So

T  
 what you learn may change the world, \_\_\_\_\_ *mf*  
 So

B  
 what you learn may change \_\_\_\_\_ the world, *mf*  
 So

*ped.* *ped.* *ped.* *ped.* *ped.* *ped.* *ped.* *ped.* *ped.* *ped.*

**SING FOUR TIMES, WITH A DIFFERENT SOLOIST ON EACH REPEAT**

117 (♩ = ♩) *mf*

1st Solo  
Call on your rea - son and com - pas - sion,

2nd Solo  
*mf*  
Al - though it may not be in fash - ion.

3rd Solo  
*mf*  
Don't be a - fraid of what you'll find.

4th Solo  
*mf*  
Just leave your fears be - hind and

S  
don't throw it out!

A  
don't throw it out!

T  
don't throw it out!

B  
don't throw it out!

*Red.* \*

119 *f*

S Cher - ish your doubt, don't you e - ver re - fuse\_\_\_ it,

A *f*  
Cher - ish your doubt, don't you e - ver re - fuse\_\_\_ it,

T *f*  
Cher - ish your doubt, don't you e - ver re - fuse\_\_\_ it,

B *f*  
Cher - ish your doubt, don't you e - ver re - fuse\_\_\_ it,

*f*

Red. Red. Red. Red. Red.

121

S You can move a whole moun - tain if you use\_\_\_ it.

A You can move a whole moun - tain (n).

T You can move a whole moun - tain (n).

B You can move a whole moun - tain (n).

*f*

Red. Red. Red.

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131

S

A *mp*

T

B

A diff - 'rent drum - mer you will hear when you

cher-ish your doubt, cher-ish your doubt, cher-ish your doubt, cher-ish your doubt,

cher-ish your doubt, cher-ish your doubt, cher-ish your doubt, cher-ish your doubt,

(p)

135

S

A *pp* (match dynamics of lower voices)

T

B

TUTTI: *mp*

You have - n't a - ny - thing to fear when you

cher-ish your doubt, cher-ish your doubt, cher-ish your doubt, cher-ish your doubt,

cher-ish your doubt, cher-ish your doubt, cher-ish your doubt, cher-ish your doubt,

cher-ish your doubt, cher-ish your doubt, cher-ish your doubt, cher-ish your doubt,



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SAB • SEA-070-00  
SATB • SEA-070-01  
SSA • SEA-070-02  
TBB • SEA-062-03
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TTBB • SEA-062-02  
SSAA • SEA-062-04  
SATB, flute • SEA-062-05
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SSAA • SEA-058-00