

A CLASSICAL CHRISTMAS

HANDEL, BACH, CORELLI, BERLIOZ, AND MORE



Sunday, December 20, 2015
CHURCH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

CELEBRATING OUR 5TH SEASON



December 20, 2015

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our second performance of the 2015-16 season. We are delighted to be presenting an uplifting program of Christmas music carefully selected and prepared for your enjoyment. Works include more than 15 pieces from the liturgy, from the concert hall, and from carols and hymns. Be sure to see Millard Dunn's insightful program notes toward the back of this program.

In past seasons we have concentrated on Handel's *Messiah* for our Christmas concert. This time we have created *A Classical Christmas*, a robust program of time-honored masterworks from Handel (e.g. excerpts from *Messiah*), Bach, Corelli, and Berlioz as well as some exciting newer additions to the repertoire by Morten Lauridsen, René Clausen, and William Mathias. The chorus and orchestra are excited to bring you a program that should prove to be exhilarating for the entire family.

This new format for our Christmas program is especially meaningful because it is the first Christmas performance in our new home at Church of the Holy Spirit. This wonderful setting has been beautifully decorated for the season and gives us the perfect atmosphere for letting these choral masterpieces be part of your Christmas. We hope today's performance will be a meaningful experience for reflection, thanks, and hope for the future.

Merry Christmas,

Matt Lindblom
President

Mark Walker
Artistic Director



The Kentucky Arts Council, the state arts agency, provides operating support to Louisville Master Chorale with state tax dollars and federal funding from the National Endowment for the Arts.



Church of the Holy Spirit is wheelchair accessible. Large print programs available at door.

Unauthorized photographs, video, or other recordings of this concert are strictly forbidden.

A CLASSICAL CHRISTMAS

Audience Note: Please refrain from applause except at the 10 minute Interval midway through the concert and at the end. This will enable us to keep the length of the concert under 90 minutes.

SINFONIA from <i>Cantata 29</i> Phillip Brisson, organ soloist	Johann Sebastian Bach
AND THE GLORY OF THE LORD from <i>Messiah</i>	George Frederick Handel
SWEET WAS THE SONG Bill Coleman, soloist	René Clausen
CHRISTMAS CONCERTO I, Opus 6 Number 8 <i>Vivace-Grave-Allegro</i>	Archangelo Corelli
ADAM LAY YBOUNDED	Frank Boles
FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN from <i>Messiah</i>	G.F. Handel
CHRISTMAS CONCERTO II <i>Adagio-Allegro-Adagio</i>	Corelli
HODIE CHRISTUS NATUS EST	Jan Sweelinck
TWO CAROL FANTASIES The First Nowell Joy to the World	Mack Wilberg
Interval (10 minutes)	
A BABE IS BORN, <i>Opus 55</i>	William Mathias
THE SHEPHERDS' FAREWELL from <i>The Infant Christ</i> , Opus 25	Hector Berlioz
CHRISTMAS CONCERTO III <i>Vivace-Allegro</i>	Corelli
O MAGNUM MYSTERIUM	Morten Lauridsen
CHRISTMAS CONCERTO IV <i>Largo</i>	Corelli
IN THE BLEAK MIDWINTER Mary Wilson-Redden and Adam Seibert, soloists	Harold Darke
SAY, WHERE IS HE BORN – THERE SHALL A STAR FROM JACOB COME FORTH from <i>Christus</i> Bill Coleman, Alexander Redden, and William Shauf - soloists	Felix Mendelssohn
AVE MARIA Jasmine Davis – soloist	J.S. Bach – Charles Gounod
A SYMPHONY OF CAROLS	Randol Alan Bass
HALLELUJAH from <i>Messiah</i>	G.F. Handel

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PRE-CONCERT PROGRAM



Dr. John R. Hale is the Director of Liberal Studies and Adjunct Professor of Archaeology at the University of Louisville. Dr. Hale is a graduate of Yale University, with a Ph.D. from the University of Cambridge, and is a distinguished instructor and author. His many awards include the Panhellenic Teacher of the Year Award and the Delphi Center Award.

Many know Dr. Hale for his popular preconcert programs with the Louisville Bach Society before its dissolution in 2011. The Louisville Master Chorale is extremely pleased that he has been able to take time from a very busy schedule to sing in some recent performances and that he is able to present our pre-concert program today. His engaging style and commanding knowledge are respected and appreciated by concertgoers throughout our community.

TEXTS

HANDEL | AND THE GLORY OF THE LORD

(from Messiah, Number 4)

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.
(Isaiah 40: 5)

CLAUSEN | SWEET WAS THE SONG

Sweet was the song that Mary sang,
When she to Bethlehem came,
And was delivered of a Son,
Christ Jesus was his name.
Sing lullaby, lulla, lulla lullaby

Sweet little baby, Jesus child,
How still and peacefully you lie,
How could you know your Father's will
Christ Jesus born to die.
Sing lullaby, lulla, lulla lullaby

(2nd verse by Frankie Clausen)

BOLES | ADAM LAY YBOUNDEN

Adam lay ybounden,
Bounden in a bond;
Four thousand winter
Thought he not too long.
And all was for an apple,
An apple that he took,
As clerkës finden
Written In their book.
Ne had the apple taken been,

The apple taken been,
Ne had never Our Lady
A-been heaven's queen.
Blessed be the time
That apple taken was.
Therefore we moun singen
Deo gratias!

HANDEL | FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN

(from *Messiah*, Number 12)

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.
(*Isaiah 9: 6*)

SWEELINCK | HODIE CHRISTUS NATUS EST

Hodie Christus natus est,
Hodie Salvator apparuit,
Hodie in terra canunt Angeli.
laetantur Archangeli
Hodie exsultant justi, dicentes:
Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Alleluia.

Today Christ is born,
Today the Savior appeared,
Today on Earth the Angels sing.
Archangels rejoice:
Today the righteous rejoice, saying:
Glory to God in the highest.
Alleluia.

WILBERG | TWO CAROL FANTASIES

The First Nowell

The first Nowell the angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay:
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell
Born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the East beyond them far,
And to the earth it gave great light,

And so it continued both day and night.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell
Born is the King of Israel.
Then let us all with one accord
Sing praises to our heavenly Lord
That hath made heaven and earth of naught,
And with his blood mankind has bought.

[Chorus]
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel.

Joy to the World

Joy to the World! The Lord is come;
Let earth receive her King!
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And Heaven and nature sing,
And Heaven and nature sing,
And Heaven, and Heaven, and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders, of His love.

MATHIAS | A BABE IS BORN

A babe is born all of a may,
To bring salvation unto us.
To him we sing both night and day.
Veni Creator Spiritus.
[Come, Creator Spirit]

At Bethlehem, that blessed place,
The child of bliss now born he was;
And him to serve God give us grace,
O lux beata Trinitas.
[O Trinity of blessed light]

There came three kings out of the East,
To worship the King that is so free,
With gold and myrrh and frankincense,
A solis ortus cardine.
[from the rising of the sun]

The angels came down with one cry,
A fair song that night sung they
In worship of that child:
Gloria tibi Domine.
[Glory to thee, O Lord]
Noel!

– 15th century

BERLIOZ | THE SHEPHERDS' FAREWELL

(from *The Infant Christ*, Op. 25)

Thou must leave Thy lowly dwelling,
The humble crib, the stable bare,
Babe, all mortal babes excelling,
Content our earthly lot to share.
Loving father, Loving mother,
Shelter Thee with tender care!

Blessed Jesus, we implore Thee
With humble love and holy fear,
In the land that lies before Thee,
Forget not us who linger here!
May the shepherd's lowly calling,
Ever to Thy heart be dear!

Blest are ye beyond all measure,
Thou happy father, mother mild!
Guard ye well your heav'nly treasure,
The Prince of Peace, The Holy Child!
God go with you, God protect you,
Guide you safely through the wild!

Lauridsen | O MAGNUM MYSTERIUM

O magnum mysterium
et admirabile sacramentum,
ut animalia viderent Dominum natum
jacentem in praesepio!
O Beata Virgo, cujus viscera meruerunt
portare Dominum Christum.
Alleluia!

O great mystery
and wonderful sacrament,
that animals should see the new-born Lord
lying in a manger!
O blessed is the Virgin, whose womb was worthy
to bear Christ the Lord.
Alleluia!

DARKE | IN THE BLEAK MIDWINTER

In the bleak mid-winter
Frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron,
Water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
Snow on snow,
In the bleak mid-winter
Long ago.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold him
Nor earth sustain;
Heaven and earth shall flee away
When he comes to reign :
In the bleak mid-winter
A stable place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty
Jesus Christ.

Enough for Him, whom cherubim
Worship night and day,
A breastful of milk
And a mangerful of hay;
Enough for Him, whom angels
Fall down before,
The ox and ass and camel
Which adore.

What can I give him,
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb,
If I were a Wise Man
I would do my part,—
Yet what I can I give him,
Give my heart.

Christina Rossetti (Before 1872)

MENDELSSOHN (from *Christus*) | SAY, WHERE IS HE BORN – THERE SHALL A STAR FROM JACOB COME FORTH

Soprano

When Jesus our Lord was born in Bethlehem, in
the land of Judea; behold, from the east to the city
of Jerusalem there came wise men and said:

Trio: tenor, two basses

Say, where is he born, the king of Judea? For we
have seen his star, and are come to adore him.

Chorus

There shall a star from Jacob come forth and a
Sceptre from Israel rise up and dash in pieces
princes and nations.

How brightly beams the morning star!
With sudden radiance from afar
With light and comfort glowing!
Thy Word, Jesus, inly feeds us,
Rightly leads us,
Life bestowing.
Praise, oh praise such love o'erflowing.

BACH/GOUNOD | AVE MARIA

Ave Maria
Gratia plena
Dominus tecum
Benedicta tu in mulieribus
Et benedictus fructus
Ventris tui, Jesus

Hail Mary
Full of grace
The Lord is with thee
Blessed art thou among women
And blessed is the fruit
Of thy womb, Jesus.

Sancta Maria, Sancta Maria
Maria, ora pro nobis
Nobis peccatoribus
Nunc et in ora
Mortis nostrae
Amen.

Holy Mary, Holy Mary
Mary, pray for us
Us sinners
Now and in the hour
Of our death
Amen.

BASS | A SYMPHONY OF CAROLS

The Carols in the order of their
appearance:
Chanticleer (English)
Pat-a-pan (French [Burgundian])
Fum fum fum (Spanish)
Stille Nacht (German)
Still Still Still (German)
Adeste Fidelis (Latin/English)

All this night shrill chanticleer,
Day's proclaiming trumpeter,
Claps his wings and loudly cries,
Mortals, mortals, wake and rise!
See a wonder Heav'n is under;
From the earth is ris'n a Sun
Shines all night, though day be done.

Wake, O earth, wake ev'ry thing,
Wake and hear the joy I bring;
Joy, for this night
Heav'n and ev'ry twinkling light,
All amazing, Still stand gazing,
Angels, pow'rs, and all that be,
Wake and joy this Sun to see.

Guillô, pran ton tamborin;
Toi, pran tai fleûte, Rôbin!
Au son de cés instruman,
Turelurelu, patapatapan,
Au son de cés instruman
Je diron Noei gaiman.

C' éto lai môde autrefoi
De loué le Roi dé rois,
Au son de cés instruman,
Turelurelu, patapatapan,
Au son de cés instruman,
Ai nos an fau faire autan.

God and man are now become
more at one than fife and drum.
Let the joyous tune play on!
As the instruments you play,
We will sing, this Christmas day.

Veinticinco de diciembre,
Fum, fum, fum.
Veinticinco de diciembre,
Fum, fum, fum.
Nacido ha por nuestro amor,
El Niño Dios, el Niño Dios;
Hoy de la Virgen María
En esta noche tan fría.
Fum, fum, fum.

Pajaritos de los bosques,
Fum, fum, fum!
Pajaritos de los bosques,
Fum, fum, fum!
Vuestros hijos de coral
Abandonad, abandonad,
Y formad un muelle nido
A Jesús recién nacido,
Fum, fum, fum!

Little stars up in the heavens,
Fum, fum, fum!
Little stars up in the heavens,
Fum, fum, fum!
If you see the Baby cry
O, do not sigh, O, do not sigh,
Rather lighten up the sky,
With Heaven's beams of
radiant brightness,
Fum, fum, fum!

Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht,
Alles schläft; einsam wacht
Nur das traute hochheilige Paar.
Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar,
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh!
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh!

Still, still, still,
Weil's Kindlein schlafen will.
Maria tut es niedersingen
Ihre keusche Brust darbringen
Still, still, still,
Weil's Kindlein schlafen will.

Sleep, sleep, sleep
He lies in slumber deep
While angel hosts from heav'n
come winging,
Sweetest songs of joy are singing,
Sleep, sleep, sleep,
He lies in slumber deep.

Ergo qui natus die hodierna,
Jesu, Jesu, tibi sit glória!
Patris aeterni, Verbum caro factum:
Veníte adoremus,
Veníte adoremus
Veníte adoremus Dóminum

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be glory given!
Word of the Father, now in
flesh appearing!

O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.

Adeste fideles, læti triumphantes,
Venite, venite in Bethlehem.
Natum videte
Regem angelorum:
Venite adoremus
Dominum.

Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of Heaven above!
Gloria in excelsis Deo
Venite adoremus
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

HANDEL | HALLELUJAH

(from *Messiah*, Number 44)

Hallelujah: for the Lord God
Omnipotent reigneth.
(*Revelation 19: 6*)

The kingdom of this world is
become the kingdom of
our Lord, and of His Christ; and
He shall reign for ever
and ever. (*Revelation 11: 15*)

King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.
(*Revelation 19: 16*)

Hallelujah!

ARTISTIC LEADERSHIP



MARK WALKER, Louisville Master Chorale's Conductor and Artistic Director, has extensive experience in Choral Conducting, Organ Performance, Choral Music Education, and Liturgical Church Music. He currently serves as Organist and Director of Music at Church of the Holy Spirit in Louisville. He has served parishes in Kentucky, Tennessee, Texas, and North Carolina and has taught in schools in Kentucky and North Carolina. Walker previously served as Assistant Conductor for the Louisville Bach Society. Walker holds a Bachelor's Degree in Music from Western Kentucky University and a Master's Degree in Organ Performance from East Carolina University.

His conducting experience with extended choral-orchestral works includes compositions by Bach, Handel, Mozart, Vivaldi, Pergolesi and contemporary composers Rutter and Lauridsen. As an organ recitalist, Walker has performed extensively throughout the Eastern and Southern U.S. He regularly serves as conductor and organist for various Diocesan events in Louisville, and during the summer of 2011 served as both choral conductor and guest organ recitalist for the National Associations of Pastoral Musicians Conference. He also served as Dean of the Louisville Chapter of the American Guild of Organists in 2011-12.



PHILIP BRISSON, Louisville Master Chorale's Associate and Accompanist, is Director of Music and Organist at the Cathedral of the Assumption in downtown Louisville, the country's oldest inland Catholic cathedral in continuous use. In addition to leading the Cathedral's traditional worship, he manages the Cathedral's Kelty Endowed Concert Series and has led the Cathedral Choirs in this country and on concert tours in Europe. Prior to his work with the LMC, he was Chorusmaster for the Kentucky Opera and prepared choruses for performances of works ranging from Verdi to Floyd. As a teacher, Dr. Brisson has served on the faculties of Bellarmine University and Indiana University Southeast. Brisson has a BM in Organ Performance from the Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College, CUNY, a Master's Degree in Sacred Music from Westminster Choir College and a Doctorate in Organ Performance from the Eastman School of Music.

As an organ soloist, he has given recitals in 35 states and has appeared with the Louisville Orchestra as guest soloist. Brisson is active in the American Guild of Organists and also founded the concert artist cooperative EastWestOrganists.com, which represents several prominent young American organists.



JACK GRIFFIN is Concertmaster and Production Manager with the Louisville Master Chorale. He has held the Principal Viola position with the Louisville Orchestra since 1984, having joined the Orchestra during high school. He received his Bachelor's Degree from the University of Louisville and has also studied at The Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music and Indiana University.

Griffin owns Commonwealth Musicians which provides ensembles such as string quartets, jazz ensembles and other musicians for functions such as weddings and corporate events.

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SOLOISTS



MARY WILSON-REDDEN, *soprano*, has been a featured performer in the Louisville area for over 20 years. In addition to serving as resident soloist with the Louisville Bach Society, she has performed with groups including the Louisville Youth Choir, the Bellarmine Schola Cantorum, Kentucky Opera and the Louisville Chorus. She has toured internationally with the Stephen Foster Story and the Louisville Vocal Project. A graduate of Western Kentucky University with a Bachelor's Degree in Music Performance, she is a soloist with the Choir of Calvary Episcopal Church.



JASMINE DAVIS, *soprano*, received her Masters degree in vocal performance from the University of Louisville in 2012 where she studied with Edith Davis Tidwell. While at the University of Louisville she performed full roles that included Beatrice from Berlioz's *Beatrice et Benedict* and Fiordiligi from Mozart's *Così fan tutte*. As a Kentucky Opera Studio Artist for the 2011-2012 season, Jasmine covered main stage roles in Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* and in Bizet's *Carmen*. She maintains a studio of over twenty voice students in Louisville.



WILLIAM COLEMAN, *tenor*, has performed extensively in the Louisville area in a variety of ensembles including the Cardinal Singers, the Choral Arts Society, the Louisville Bach Society, and the Louisville Chorus. Highlights include performances as soloist in Mozart's *Requiem* and Schubert's *Mass in C* with the University of Louisville Honor Choir, Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, *B-Minor Mass* and Monteverdi's *Vespers* with the Choral Arts Society of Louisville, and Boccherini's *Stabat Mater* with Louisville's period instrument ensemble Bourbon Baroque. He attended the University of Louisville.



ADAM SEIBERT, *tenor*, is a graduate of Northern Kentucky University where he received a Bachelor of Music degree in Vocal Performance. He was featured as a Young Artist at SongFest located in Los Angeles, CA and has worked with several renowned vocal coaches including Martin Katz, Margo Garrett, and Graham Johnson. He has performed with various ensembles and opera productions in his native greater Cincinnati and abroad. He serves as an assistant conductor for the Cincinnati Metropolitan Orchestra.



ALEXANDER REDDEN, *baritone*, is a veteran soloist in and around the greater Louisville area. He has been featured as a soloist with the Louisville Bach Society, Kentucky Opera, Louisville Vocal Project, Louisville Chorus, Louisville Youth Choir, Bellarmine University, the Youth Performing Arts School Choirs, Calvary Episcopal Church and the Stephen Foster Story. He toured Italy with the Louisville Vocal Project, performing concerts in many historic venues including St Peter's Basilica in the Vatican. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Music from Western Kentucky University.



WILLIAM SHAU, *bass*, holds a Bachelors degree in Music Education (Voice) from Susquehanna University. He has been a section leader and soloist in the Senior Choir and Evensong Choir of St. Francis in the Fields Episcopal Church for 30 years. He has sung with numerous choirs and choral organizations including the Long Island Choral Society, Choral Arts Society of St Francis in the Fields and the Louisville Master Chorale. He has been a frequent performer with the Kentucky Opera, both as a chorus member and *comprimario* artist.



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Nancy J. Wright
Ruth J. Wright

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Theresa Bauer
Ruby Bevan
Marsha Busey
Marilyn Cross
Anne-Karrick Deetsch
Carole Dunn
Barbara Ellis
Christine Hendrick
Carolyn Makk
Julie Nichelson
Nancy Nikfarjam
Miriam Pittenger
Naomi Scheirich
Katelyn Smith
Tamara Stewart
Barbara Stein
Christie Rice Tompkins

TENOR

Alex Brackett
Bill Coleman
George DeChurch
Millard Dunn
Stephen Ellis
Ian Hooper
Robert Powell
Gregg Rochman
Adam Seibert
Jonathan Smith
Wesley Thomas
Matthew Williams

BASS

Robert Adelberg
Louie Bailey
Daniel Blankenship
John Erb
John R. Hale
Frederick Klotter
Rob Lane
Alan Luger
Laurence Pittenger
Alexander Redden
Hans Sander
William Schauf
Joe Scheirich

ORCHESTRA

VIOLIN I

Jack Griffin
Ray Weaver
Patti Sisson
Scott Moore
Becca Neeley

VIOLIN II

Elisa Spalding
Leslie Heinzen
Julianne Gunn

VIOLA

Laura De St Croix
Josh Mallman

CELLO

Felix Borges
Yoonie Choi

DOUBLE BASS

Patti Docs

HARP

Louisa Woodson

FLUTE

Amy Ensel
Tony Watson

OBOE

Katherine Alberts
James Hardaway

CLARINET

Matt Nelson

BASSOON

Eve Witt

FRENCH HORN

Colin Dorman

TRUMPET

Stacy Simpson
Erika Howard

TROMBONE

Brett Shuster

PERCUSSION

John Harris
Michael Launius

ORGAN

Philip Brisson

HARPSICHORD

Philip Brisson

PROGRAM NOTES

BACH | SINFONIA FROM CANTATA 29

The “Sinfonia,” the opening movement, of Bach’s Cantata 29 (BWV 29, 1731) is, in fact, the prelude of his Partita Number 3 for solo violin (1720) re-orchestrated for three trumpets, two oboes, strings, timpani, continuo, and solo organ. Why so many instruments? Cantata 29 was written in 1731 for a church service that was to be part of the ceremonies installing the town council of Leipzig. Obviously Bach felt that when you install a town council, you don’t think small.

The cantata was performed again, presumably for the same, or at least similar, ceremonial occasions in 1739 and 1749.

HANDEL | MESSIAH

When George Frideric Handel first came to England in 1710 on leave of absence from the employ of the younger brother of the Elector of Hanover, it was as a composer of Italian style operas, which were immediately successful. When in 1714 the Elector of Hanover became George the 1st of England, Handel considered himself, in effect, a made man. He became a naturalized English subject in 1727. But then, in 1728, John Gay’s *The Beggar’s Opera* opened and the English taste in musical theater changed almost overnight. He was unable to find an audience for his Italian operas, he went bankrupt, and eventually he turned to a different sort of theater altogether: oratorios. He died a wealthy man.

His most successful oratorio is, of course, *Messiah*, which he wrote between August 22nd and September 14th, 1741, and premiered in Dublin on April 13, 1742. Why Dublin? Nobody seems to know for certain, but it seems to have something to do with the politics of the Duke of Devonshire, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. To the English, Ireland was a joke, the backwater of backwaters. But the Irish loved *Messiah*, more than the English of London, at least when it premiered there. Richard Lockett, in *Handel’s Messiah: a Celebration* (New York and London, 1992) points out the historical irony that “Handel’s greatest work was first performed, first acclaimed, and first made part of a standard repertoire” in Ireland.

We will sing two choruses from Part I: the first chorus of the piece, “And the Glory of the Lord,” and the chorus which is—thematically at least—most appropriate for the Christmas season: “For Unto Us a Child is Born.” Lockett points out, for those of us who are not scholars of Handel’s life and music, that Handel, like Bach, could recycle music. He first wrote the music of “For Unto Us a Child is Born” as a *duetto da camera*, a chamber duet in Italian for two sopranos who have anything but childbirth on their minds: “*No, di voi non vo’ fidarmi, / cieco Amor, crudel Beltà. / Troppo siete menzognere, / lusinghiere Deità...*” In English: “No, I do not want to trust you, / blind Love, cruel Beauty. / You lie too much, / like blandishing gods...” In *Messiah* this music is absolutely transformed.

We will finish our selections from *Messiah* with the much beloved “Hallelujah” Chorus, of which an 18th century critic said, “[It is] truly striking and sublime [...] by the most perfect conduct it rises by degrees to the utmost pitch of sublimity and pathos, till music exhausts her utmost powers...”

I don’t know anyone who could have said it better.

CLAUSEN | SWEET WAS THE SONG

Both René Clausen and Wikipedia call the words for “Sweet Was the Song” traditional. The earliest source of the words seems to be William Ballet’s Lute Book, a late 16th or early 17th century manuscript, now in the library of Trinity College Dublin and consisting primarily of lute tablature for dance and ballad tunes popular during the reign of Elizabeth I. René Clausen (b. 1953) sets a slightly different version of the first stanza to what he calls an “Old English Tune.” He created this arrangement “for [his daughter] Katie, upon the occasion of her birth.” Clausen’s wife, Fankie, wrote a second verse for her husband to include in the piece.

CORELLI | CHRISTMAS CONCERTO I

(Opus 6 Number 8)

Arcangelo Corelli’s *Christmas Concerto* is the eighth concerto grosso of twelve in his Opus 6. It is called a “Christmas Concerto” because “*Fatto per la note di natale*” is written at the top of the score. It is scored for two solo violins, a solo ‘cello, and strings (1st and 2nd violin, viola, and bass). It is in six movements, none of them particularly long. The last movement is a Pastorale, marked *largo*, and as such joins the Christmas tradition of evoking the shepherds in the fields, much like Handel’s “Pastoral Symphony” in the *Messiah*. According to Wikipedia, “Its composition date is uncertain, but there is a record of Corelli having performed a Christmas concerto in 1690...” We will punctuate our concert with movements from this concerto.

BOLES | ADAM LAY YBOUNDEN

The text of “Adam Lay Ybounden” is preserved in the British Museum, manuscript Sloane 2593. Sir Hans Sloane (1660-1753) had amassed a collection of thousands of manuscript volumes, and after his death an Act of Parliament purchased all of these volumes and established the British Museum to house them. The manuscripts covered a wide range of topics from medicine to magic and religion. Some of the lyrics in manuscript 2593 from this collection were printed by Joseph Ritson in 1790. More of them, including “Adam Lay Ybounden” were made available to a wider audience in Thomas Wright’s *Songs and Carols Printed from a Manuscript in the Sloane Collection in the British Museum* (London, 1836). The title of a later edition (1861) identifies the source as a “Manuscript in the British Museum of the Fifteenth Century.” It is clear that these lyrics were intended to be sung. Wright (1861) explains the opening image in his notes: ‘Adam was supposed to have remained in bonds, with the other patriarchs, in the *limbus patrum*, from the time of his death till the crucifixion of the Saviour.’

Frank W. Boles (b. 1955) has been organist and director of music at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Indianapolis since 1979. He has composed several works for choir. His setting of “Adam Lay Ybounden” is probably his best known work.

SWEELINCK | HODIE CHRISTUS NATUS EST

“Hodie Christus natus est” is the antiphon to the Magnificat, which it follows naturally in the sequence of the Christmas narrative. It was set by many composers in the 16th and 17th centuries, but one of the best known and best loved is from Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck’s *Cantiones Sacrae* of 1619. In 1577 Sweelinck followed his father as organist at the Oude Kerk in Amsterdam, a post which he kept for the rest of his life. There is no evidence that Sweelinck left Amsterdam for more than a few days, and that he travelled no farther than perhaps Antwerp. His *Cantiones Sacrae* were published in Antwerp two years before his death and contain almost all of his sacred works in Latin.

WILBERG | TWO CAROL FANTASIES

Mack Wilberg (b. 1955) was born in Orangeville, Utah, and grew up in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. After finishing his LDS mission in South Korea, he enrolled in Brigham Young University and graduated with a bachelor’s degree in music in 1979. He did graduate work at the University of Southern California, earning first a master’s degree and then his PhD. He taught at BYU, created and toured with the American Piano Quartet, and, since March of 2008 has been music director of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. He is perhaps best known for his energetic and very moving arrangements of familiar hymns, carols, and folksongs. We will sing two of them.

Of “The First Nowell,” *The [Episcopal] Hymnal 1982 Companion* offers: “Much loved and widely used [it] can be identified as being truly folk in its origins.” *The Oxford Book of Carols* (1928) insists that it “cannot be later than the seventeenth century.” The 1982 Episcopal Hymnal calls the hymn tune an “English carol, 17th cent.” but interestingly assigns the words to the 18th century. The words and tune together as we have them first appeared in William Sandys’s *Christmas Carols, Ancient and Modern* (London, 1833). Apparently the fact that the second musical phrase repeats, almost exactly, the first musical phrase, and that both phrases as well as the refrain end on the third of the tonic chord rather than the tonic note itself, has caused some scholars to suggest that perhaps the tune we sing today was at one time a soprano descant over another melody sung in the tenor line, and several melodies have been suggested. But the carol as we sing it is in fact “much loved and widely used,” so only the scholars seem to be concerned about this possibility. Wilberg gives us an arrangement that is harmonically rich, allows the tenors to sing the last full statement of the theme, and then resolves the issue of the ending in his own graceful and entirely satisfying way.

When the paraphrase by Isaac Watts (1674-1748) of the last six verses of psalm 98 appeared in an 1871 hymnal as “Joy to the World,” they were set to the hymn tune “Richmond” (“Hark! The Glad Sound,” #72 in the *Advent* section of the 1982 Episcopal Hymnal, and “Awake, arise, lift up your voice” [#212, an *Easter* hymn]). The tune works—the rising arpeggio in the first bar appropriate for both Christmas and Easter. But the hymn did not become really popular until the American Lowell Mason (1792-1872) took the opening measures of Handel’s “Lift Up Your Heads” from *Messiah* and created the hymn tune “Antioch,” to which “Joy to the World” is now sung around the world. Wilberg’s arrangement, particularly his orchestral accompaniment, is gloriously joyful.

MATHIAS | A BABE IS BORN

The text of “A Babe Is Born” is also found in the British Museum Sloane manuscript 2593, and is printed in Wright (1861). Like “Adam lay ybounden” (and many other lyrics from the 15th century) it is macaronic; that is, it includes text in both English and Latin. Sometimes the introduction of Latin into an English text was for comic effect, particularly in the very popular Mystery Plays, but in the carols it serves to elevate the sense of celebration, of exaltation.

William Mathias (1934-1992) was a prolific Welsh composer, a member of The Elizabethan Madrigal Singers, and a professor at Bangor University in Wales.

BERLIOZ | THE SHEPHERDS’ FAREWELL

(from *L’Enfance du Christ Op. 25*)

By 1850, Hector Berlioz (1803-1869) was the bad boy among musicians in Paris, his music either admired or hated (or both), in spite of his winning the Prix de Rome in 1830. He had just finished, among other outrageous compositions, his *Te Deum* (1849), before that his *Symphonie Fantastique* (1830), his *Requiem* (1837), and *The Damnation of Faust* (1846). The reviews were not good. Some even abandoned themselves to sarcasm: from Otto Jahn, for example, “There is no other God but Berlioz and Liszt is his prophet.” According to John Burk and Jacques Barzun, it is not surprising, then, that at what Berlioz felt was a boring soirée he began to jot down some notes for “an andantino in four parts for the organ.” His friend the architect Louis Duc saw what he was doing and asked him to write something down in his notebook. As he began to do this, Berlioz had a vision of the shepherds saying goodbye to the Holy Family as they left Bethlehem for Egypt. “I’m going to put your name on this,” Berlioz said. Duc replied, in effect, “Nobody will believe you. Everybody knows I’m not a musician.” So Berlioz created, ad hoc, a 17th century composer named Pierre Ducré, music master of Sainte-Chapelle in Paris, and a recently discovered 17th century manuscript of his music. Only one critic, Leon Kreutzer, noticed there were “frequent modulations” which seemed out of character for the period. But believing it was a piece by an unknown 17th century master, the critics loved it. Duc had asked Berlioz for “a certain character of primitive, pastoral mysticism,” and Berlioz delivered. Later, Berlioz built his three-part oratorio *L’Enfance du Christ* around this piece. But the most famous part of that oratorio, by far, is the “Shepherds’ Farewell.”

LAURIDSEN | O MAGNUM MYSTERIUM

“O Magnum Mysterium” is one of the nine responsories for Matins on Christmas day. Like the “Hodie Christus natus est,” “O Magnum Mysterium” has been set by many 16th and 17th century composers, among them William Byrd (1543-1623), Giovanni Gabrieli (c.1537-1612), Tomás Luis de Victoria (c.1548-1611), and Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (c.1525-1594). When, in 1993, president of the Los Angeles Master Chorale Marshall Rutter commissioned Morten Lauridsen to write a piece for the Master Chorale’s 1994 Christmas concert, Lauridsen set out to write a piece that would become “a deeply felt religious statement, at once uncomplicated and unadorned yet powerful and transformative in its effect upon the listener.” He continues, in an essay he published in the Wall Street Journal in 2009, that he wanted to reference “the constant purity of sacred music found in High Renaissance polyphony...”

but that he also wanted to honor the suffering of the Virgin Mary who would have to endure “the horror and sorrow of [her son’s] death on the cross.” He did this with a single note, a “dissonant appoggiatura G-sharp” in the Alto line at the word “Virgo.” You have to listen very carefully.

Near the end of the documentary film *Shining Night: a Portrait of Composer Morten Lauridsen* (Song Without Borders, 2012), Lauridsen tells of a member of the Los Angeles Master Chorale who, on a trip to New York, had gone to visit Ground Zero. “And as she approached, she heard a choir singing ‘O Magnum Mysterium.’” A choir from Maine, who had felt a need to come to that place, and to sing this piece.

DARKE | IN THE BLEAK MIDWINTER

“In the Bleak Midwinter” was written by Christina Rossetti (1830-1894) sometime before 1872. It was first published under the title “A Christmas Carol” in *Scribner’s Monthly* (January, 1872), then in her *Poems* (1891), and in *The Poetical Works of Christina Georgina Rossetti* edited by her brother William Michael Rossetti in 1904. That volume adds “In the bleak mid-winter” as a subtitle (and by which name it may have come to be known). In *The Poetical Works* it appears in a section called “Devotional Poems.” It was first published as a hymn in the English Hymnal (1906) with the hymn tune “Granham,” written by Gustav Holst specifically for this text.

After Holst, the best known setting is by Harold Darke (1888-1976). According to Wikipedia, Darke’s setting “is often sung at the service of Nine Lessons and Carols at King’s College, Cambridge, and at similar services around the world.”

MENDELSSOHN (FROM *CHRISTUS*) | SAY, WHERE IS HE BORN – THERE SHALL A STAR FROM JACOB COME FORTH

Felix Mendelssohn’s second great oratorio, *Elijah*, premiered at the Birmingham music festival on Wednesday, August 26th, 1846. Mendelssohn (1809-1847) would die just a year and two months later (November 4th, 1847). He continued to revise *Elijah* throughout the last year of his life. In 1848 the scholar Otto Jahn pointed out that while he was working on *Elijah* Mendelssohn was also working on a third oratorio. When Mendelssohn’s brother Paul examined the unfinished manuscript after Felix’s death, it had no title, and he gave it the label *Christus*. It is possible that the manuscript was part of another unfinished project Mendelssohn was working on, but it has come down to us as *Christus*. Otto Jahn was convinced that Mendelssohn conceived of *Elijah* and the unfinished piece as a “complementary whole, so that...the prophet of the Old Testament was to precede Christ.” Mendelssohn’s biographer R. Larry Todd suggests that the best evidence for this is the chorus “Es wird ein Stern aus Jakob aufgeh’n” (“There Shall a Star from Jacob Come Forth”) in which we hear “a radiant Eb major that recalls the prominence of that tonality in the first part of *Elijah*.” Todd goes on to point out that while the text of the chorus comes from the Old Testament (Numbers 24), Mendelssohn ends the chorus with a chorale that will clearly

“promote a Protestant reading of the text,” a setting of “Philipp Nicolai’s famous 1599 hymn *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern* (“How Brightly Gleams the morning star”),” a hymn that Bach used in his cantata (BWV 1) of the same name to celebrate the Annunciation. All of his life Mendelssohn had lived in two worlds, one the Jewish heritage of his family, including his famous grandfather Moses Mendelssohn who was a strong advocate for religious tolerance, and the other the Christian faith he had grown up in. R. Larry Todd suggests that the image of the star in Mendelssohn’s *Christus*, “captured in shimmering string tremolos,” links both the Old and New Testaments. It would have made his grandfather very proud.

BACH/GOUNOD | AVE MARIA

The story of the Bach/Gounod “Ave Maria” is well known: Gounod’s future father-in-law heard him improvising a melody over Bach’s Prelude No. 1 in C major, rushed into the room to write down the improvisation, and then a few days later surprised his future son-in-law with a performance of the piece by an ensemble of violin, piano, and small choir. It may not have been a surprise, of course: Gounod may have been one of the performers. In any case Gounod published the piece (with no text) as “Méditation sur le Premier Prélude de Sebastian Bach,” then added the words of a poem by Lamartine. Gounod changed them to the words of the Ave Maria after the mother of one of his students objected to the Lamartine poem.

The Harvard Dictionary of Music (2nd edition, 1969) is not kind to the piece, which it calls, “a lamentable piece by Gounod in which Bach’s C-major Prelude from *The Well-Tempered Clavier* (vol. i) is misused as a harmonic background for a highly sentimental melody.”

In spite of what the *Harvard Dictionary* says, the “Ave Maria” may well have become Gounod’s best known piece during his lifetime, and its popularity today suggests that over the years many would not have agreed, many would still not agree, with that patronizing opinion.

BASS | A SYMPHONY OF CAROLS

Randol Alan Bass (b. 1953) is a conductor, a composer, and an arranger. Like John Williams, the composer to whom he dedicates this *Symphony of Carols*, Bass creates surprises time after time that make us sit up and pay attention. He begins with a carol that might make us think of Shakespeare (*Hamlet*, I.i.158–164). He gives us familiar carols in languages we might not know (Burgundian French, for example). He begins our most familiar carol, not with the first verse, in English, but with the *sixth* verse, the last, in its original Latin. And he sets every carol in a different key. In fact, Bass sets almost every verse of every carol in a different key, which takes us on an exciting and, musically, a continually surprising journey through this traditional music of Christmas.

Program notes by Millard Dunn.

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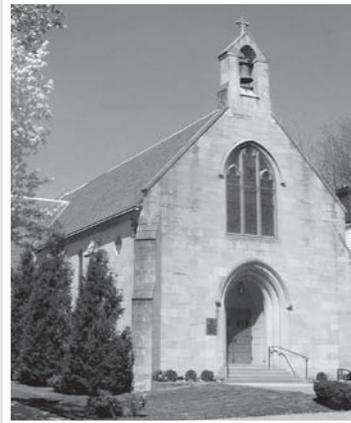
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