

***Spivey Hall Children's Choir Program***  
*Christmas Concert Program Notes, Texts, and Translations*  
December 2024



***Spivey Hall Children's Choir***

***Processional and Wolcum Yole! from A Ceremony of Carols***

**Benjamin Britten**

Britten composed *A Ceremony of Carols* in 1942 during his sea voyage from Britain to the United States during World War II. Drawing on texts from medieval carols, he combined ancient traditions with his distinctive modern style to invoke the spirit of the Christmas season in this eleven-movement work, now central to the Christmas choral repertoire.

Based on the Gregorian chant *Hodie Christus natus est*, the opening ***Processional*** is both reverent and festive, setting the tone for the entire composition with a sense of anticipation and celebration.

Translation:

*Today Christ is born;  
Today the Saviour has appeared;  
Today the angels sing,  
The archangels rejoice;  
Today the righteous rejoice, saying,  
Glory to God in the highest, Alleluia!*

***Wolcum Yole!*** follows as the exuberant and lively second movement that warmly welcomes the Yule season with a joyous proclamation.

*Wolcum, Wolcum, Wolcum be thou hevenè king,  
Wolcum Yole! Wolcum, born in one morning,  
Wolcum for whom we sall sing!*

*Wolcum be ye, Stevene and Jon,  
Wolcum, Innocentes every one,  
Wolcum, Thomas marter one,  
Wolcum be ye, good Newe Yere,  
Wolcum, Twelfth Day both in fere,  
Wolcum, seintes lefe and dere,  
Wolcum Yole, Wolcum Yole, Wolcum!  
Candelmesse, Quene of bliss,  
Wolcum bothe to more and lesse.  
Wolcum, Wolcum, Wolcum be ye that are here,  
Wolcum Yole, Wolcum alle and make good cheer,  
Wolcum alle another yere, Wolcum Yole, Wolcum!*

### ***Stars Are for Those Who Lift Their Eyes***

**Pauline Delmonte**

Delmonte's setting of Melcena Burns Denny's poem "Stars Are for Those Who Lift Their Eyes" is a cherished tradition at Spivey. The poem resonates with a well-known painting by Norman Rockwell from 1957 known as *Lift Up Thine Eyes*, in which Rockwell depicts New Yorkers with drooping shoulders and downcast eyes as they pass by Saint Thomas Church. They are so preoccupied with their path that they overlook the beauty above them. It serves as a lovely reminder for everyone all year long, and especially at Christmas.

*Stars are for those who lift their eyes.  
We stand on a cloudless night and look up at a million stars so distant, and so bright.  
I wonder if the towering trees and mountain, tall and white,  
Are reaching up, as our thoughts do, toward God, who gave us light.  
We sing our thankfulness to God! The million stars proclaim  
The wonder of creation and the glory of His name,  
The wonder of creation and the glory of His name!  
If stormy clouds should hide the stars, no fearful thought is mine.  
Far beyond all earthly storms the stars, the heavenly stars still shine!  
Stars are for those who lift their eyes.*

### ***The Sleigh (á la Russe)***

**Richard Kountz**

**Arranged by W. Riegger**

Composed in 1926 and often performed during the holiday season, ***The Sleigh*** captures the lively spirit and joyous atmosphere of a traditional Russian sleigh ride. With its spirited rhythms, vivid imagery, and engaging melody, ***The Sleigh*** transports listeners to a winter wonderland, evoking the thrill and merriment of dashing through the snow.

*Lightly flying o'er the snow, with a hey, ha ha,  
With sleighbells ringing, gaily singing merrily we go.  
All the world a blanket white, of snow so cold, and crisp and light,  
With sharp winds blowing, we are going onward through the night.  
Hey...a...o...la!*

*Lightly flying o'er the snow, with a hey, ha ha,  
With sleighbells ringing, gaily singing, merrily we go.  
Ho Halo! Merrily on we go.  
Hah-ha-ha Hy-ah-ha-ha*



## *Spivey Hall Young Artists*

### *Caroling, Caroling*

**Wihla Hutson & Alfred S. Burt**

**Arranged by Hawley Ades**

*Caroling, Caroling* is one of the beloved pieces from the Alfred Burt Carols, a series of Christmas songs created by Burt, often featuring lyrics by Hutson, and commonly arranged by different artists. The tradition started with Alfred Burt's father, who wrote a new carol every year to include in the family's Christmas card. After Alfred completed his music education, his father passed the tradition on to him, and he kept it alive for many years.

*Caroling, caroling, now we go;  
Christmas bells are ringing!  
Caroling, caroling, through the snow;  
Christmas bells are ringing!*

*Joyous voices sweet and clear  
Sing the sad of heart to cheer.  
Ding, dong, ding, dong,  
Christmas bells are ringing!*

*Caroling, caroling, near and far;  
Christmas bells are ringing.  
Following, following, yonder star;  
Christmas bells are ringing!*

*Sing we now this happy morn  
"Lo, the King of Heaven is born!"  
Ding, dong, ding, dong,  
Christmas bells are ringing!*

*Caroling, caroling, through the town;  
Christmas bells are ringing!  
Caroling, caroling up and down;  
Christmas bells are ringing!*

*Mark ye well the song we sing,  
Gladsome tidings now we bring.  
Ding, dong, ding, dong,  
Christmas bells are ringing!*

### ***On to Bethlehem Town***

#### **William Krape**

A vibrant and engaging choral piece, ***On to Bethlehem Town*** captures the excitement and reverence of the journey to Bethlehem, where the nativity story unfolds. Krape's music is characterized by its compound meter, minor modality, and expressive melody.

*On to Bethlehem town;  
Join the crowd and travel down;  
Down the road that leads us to the cradle.  
Come all who are able.  
Come, come to the stable with hearts full of love, as we kneel and pray.  
Come and see the Child  
With his mother Mary mild;  
Come along and worship at the cradle.*

*There we'll see the Boy,  
Hearts aglow with boundless joy,  
With the everlasting Word.  
We will bow before Him.  
Come, come and adore Him bringing gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.*

### ***Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening***

#### **Vera Kistler**

***Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening*** is a choral setting of the famous poem by Robert Frost, composed by Vera Kistler. Written in 1922, this poem is one of Robert Frost's most well-known works. It describes a traveler who stops to admire the beauty of a snowy forest before continuing his journey. The poem's themes include the allure of nature, the conflict between duty and desire, and the peaceful, almost hypnotic quality of a snowy evening.

*Whose woods these are I think I know.  
His house is in the village though;  
He will not see me stopping here  
To watch his woods fill up with snow.*

*My little horse must think it queer  
To stop without a farmhouse near  
Between the woods and frozen lake  
The darkest evening of the year.*

*He gives his harness bells a shake  
To ask if there is some mistake.  
The only other sound's the sweep  
Of easy wind and downy flake.*

*The woods are lovely, dark and deep,  
But I have promises to keep,  
And miles to go before I sleep,  
And miles to go before I sleep.*

### ***Hine Ma Tov***

**Arranged by Allan E. Naplan**

***Hine Ma Tov*** is a traditional Hebrew song, often sung to Psalm 133:1, which translates to "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" The piece is beloved for its simple, joyful melody and its message of peace and togetherness. This song is frequently performed in both religious and secular settings due to its uplifting and universal message. The arrangement by Naplan enhances the traditional melody with thoughtful harmonizations and dynamic contrasts, making it accessible and enjoyable for choirs of varying skill levels.

*How good it is for all of us to join together in song.  
Let our voices raise with songs of praise that we'll sing the whole day long.*

## ***Audience Sing-along***

### ***Hark! The Herald Angels Sing***

**Words by Charles Wesley**

**Music by Felix Mendelssohn**

**Verse 3 arranged by David Willcocks**

*Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born King.  
Peace on earth, and mercy mild; God and sinners reconciled."  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, Join the triumph of the skies.  
With angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem."  
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born King."*

*Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord:  
Late in time behold Him come, Offspring of a virgin's womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, Hail th' incarnate Deity!  
Pleased as man with man to dwell, Jesus our Immanuel.  
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born King."*

*Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of righteousness!  
Light and life to all He brings, Ris'n with healing in His wings:  
Mild He lays His glory by, Born that man no more may die.  
Born to raise the sons of earth; Born to give them second birth.  
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born King."*





## *Spivey Hall Tour Choir*

***Gaudete from Piae Cantiones***

**16th-century Latin Hymn**

**Arranged by Michael Neaum**

*Gaudete*, a sacred Christmas carol believed to have originated in the 16th century, was included in the *Piae Cantiones*, a compilation of Finnish/Swedish sacred songs released in 1582. Although the verses did not have music notation, the familiar melody was derived from older liturgical sources. The Latin lyrics of the song are characteristic of medieval praise songs, featuring a consistent structure of four-line stanzas with a two-line refrain preceding each stanza, reminiscent of the traditional English carol format known as the burden. Carols during this period covered a wide range of topics, with common themes revolving around the Virgin Mary, the Saints, or Yuletide celebrations.

Refrain: *Be joyful! Sing with joy!*  
*Born is the Savior from the Virgin Mary's womb: Be joyful!*

*At this time of holy grace, for which we were yearning,  
in devotion let us sing, hymns of joy returning.*

*God is made a man today; nature lies in wonder.  
Christ the King renews the world that was put asunder.*

*Fastened was Ezekiel's gate, yet he entered through it;  
so the light the world has found, bringing mercy to it.*

*Therefore let us all rejoice, singing to acclaim Him.  
Here we greet and bless the Lord, and our King we name Him.*

English Translation by Carol Anne Perry Lagemann

## ***Lux Aeterna***

### **Michelle Rouché**

A radiant and evocative piece, *Lux Aeterna* expresses the essence of its Latin name, meaning “eternal light,” by exploring themes such as hope, peace, and transcendence. The composition is known for its lush harmonies, soaring melodies, and ability to imitate light using sound making it a unique auditory experience.

*May eternal light shine on them, Lord, with your saints forever, for you are good.  
Give them eternal rest, Lord, and may light perpetual shine upon them, for you are good.*

English Translation: Anonymous

## ***This Little Babe from A Ceremony of Carols***

### **Benjamin Britten**

The seventh movement from Britten’s *A Ceremony of Carols*, *This Little Babe* represents a powerful continuation of the introspective poems that came before it by showcasing the remarkable transformation occurring in Jesus’ life: from a vulnerable infant to the Master of the Universe, destined to vanquish or “plunder Satan’s domain.” Filled with military imagery, the poem depicts Christ as the commanding leader guiding us, his followers, into the universal battle, while the music provides a compelling, ominous accompaniment, with masterful harp-like effects and a tightly woven canon.

*This little babe so few days old  
Is come to rifle Satan's fold;  
All hell doth at his presence quake  
Though he himself for cold do shake;  
For in this weak unarmed wise  
The gates of hell he will surprise*

*With tears he fights and wins the field  
His naked breast stands for a shield  
His battering shot are babish cries  
His arrows looks of weeping eyes  
His martial ensigns Cold and Need  
And feeble flesh his warrior's steed*

*His camp is pitched in a stall  
His bulwark but a broken wall;  
The crib his trench, haystalks his stakes  
Of shepherds he his muster makes  
And thus as sure his foe to wound  
The angels' trumps a larum sound*

*My soul with Christ  
Join thou in fight;  
Stick to the tents  
That he hath pight*

*Within his crib  
Is surest ward;  
This little Babe  
Will by thy guard  
If thou wilt foil thy*

*Foes with joy, then  
Flit not from this  
Heavenly boy!*

### ***Here We Come A-Caroling***

#### **Traditional Carol**

#### **Arranged by Kirby Shaw**

Also known as *Here We Come A-Wassailing*, ***Here We Come A-Caroling*** is a traditional Christmas carol that has been enjoyed for centuries. This beloved carol celebrates the festive spirit of the holiday season, with its origins rooted in the old English custom of wassailing, where groups of carolers would go door to door singing and offering good cheer in exchange for wassail, a warm drink. Kirby Shaw's calypso inspired arrangement of this classic carol brings a fresh and lively interpretation to an old classic.

*Oh, here we come a-caroling,  
Among the leaves so green,  
Here we come a wand'ring,  
So fair to be seen.*

*Love and joy come to you,  
And to you glad Christmas too  
And God bless you and send you a Happy New Year,  
And God send you a Happy New Year.*

*God bless the master of this house,  
Likewise the mistress too;  
And all the little children  
That 'round the table go.*

### ***The First Noel***

#### **English Carol**

#### **Arranged by Dan Forrest**

Program notes by Stacey Garratt

***The First Noel*** originates from the Cornish region of western England and dates to the 1820s. It draws inspiration from the nativity story found in the Gospel of Luke, with additional references to the Star of Bethlehem from the Gospel of Matthew. During the early 1800s, the term "Noel" was beginning to gain popularity as a synonym for Christmas. By the late 1820s, Webster's Dictionary officially recognized "Noel" in the English language as a term referring to a joyful shout or a Christmas song.

*The first Noel 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.*

#### ***Refrain***

*Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,  
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.*

*Then let us all with one accord  
Sing praises to our heav'nly Lord;  
That hath made Heav'n and earth of naught,  
And with His blood mankind hath bought.*

***Children, Go Where I Send Thee***  
**Traditional African American Spiritual**  
**Kevin Phillip Johnson**

Although *Children, Go Where I Send Thee* was officially printed in 1936, its roots can be dated back to the 17th or 18th centuries as a traditional African-American spiritual song. This cumulative song follows a progression similar to *The Twelve Days of Christmas*, with each verse adding to the narrative.

From the arranger, Kevin Phillip Johnson:

This Negro Spiritual was made popular by the Golden Gate Quartet in the 1930s. Willie T. Johnson, the lead singer of the group, was my father. Like him, I use rhythm in exciting new ways to deliver Negro Spirituals to contemporary audiences. The text of this spiritual has been interpreted in many different ways over the years. Here's a popular interpretation of the text. One for the little bitty baby born, born, born in Bethlehem: This refers to the infant Jesus. Two for Paul and Silas: This verse honors Paula and Silas who went on many missionary journeys to spread the teachings of Christ. Three for the Hebrew children: The three Hebrew children could be Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Four for the four that stood at the door: Many people interpret the four to be the four writers of the Gospel books – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, though the does not explain the part about standing at the door. Five for the gospel preachers: The five are Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Peter. Paul is already mentioned above, in line two. Six for the six that never got fixed: Could this mean the sinners who never change their ways? Seven for the seven that went up to heaven: The seven in heaven could be the seven stars in Ursa Major of the sevenfold spirit of God or the seven early Christian churches or the seven stars in the right hand of Christ mentioned in the Revelation. Eight for the eight that stood at the gate: This could refer to the eight people who entered Noah's ark (Noah, his wife, their three sons and their wives). Nine for the nine that dressed so fine: This could refer to the nine orders of Angels in heaven. Ten for the ten commandments: This refers to the ten commandments given to Moses.

Children, go where I send thee! How shall I send thee?  
I gonna send thee one by one. One for the little bitty baby  
Wrapped in a swaddlin' clothin' layed down in a manger that's  
Born! Born! Born! Born in Bethlehem.

Children, go where I send thee! How shall I send thee?  
I gonna send thee two by two, two for Paul and Silas,  
One for the little bitty baby, wrapped in a swaddlin' clothin'  
Layed down in a manger that's Born! Born! Born! Born in Bethlehem.

Children, go where I send thee! How shall I send thee?  
I gonna send thee ten by ten, ten for the ten commandments.  
Nine for the nine that dressed so fine, eight for the eight that stood at the gate,  
Seven for the seven that went up to heaven, six for the six that never got fixed,  
Five for the gospel preachers, four for the four that stood at the door,  
Three for the Hebrew chillen' two for Paul and Silas,  
One for the little bitty baby, wrapped in a swaddlin' clothin'

Layed down in a manger that's Born! Born! Born! Born in Bethlehem.

Story that I'm writin' seed to sow is never endin'  
Everlastin' to everlasting and you know it's on to heaven,  
You get the God message in the aim is a lesson  
And quit the instant messin and the messages are festerin'.  
Softening our hearts and it's reachin' all the people.  
We do this in the streets and underneath the steeple.  
Rather talk the talk but the young ones walk the walk.  
They are crawlin in the dark buy my voice it is the torch.  
Drink the milk eat the meat fallin' at the Savior's feet.  
The sinner take a peek ev-rybody take a peek at the  
Heart of the matter He's the King of the Kings.  
Married to the church I got the Lord of the rings.  
Gold streets where I'm dancin', father got mansions, beauty in God imagine.  
What do you fathom? You heard this story to grow.  
Hey! So it's time to go! Hey! Hey! You heard this story to grow.  
Love and light so it's time to go!

Born to us a child is born and the government will be on his shoulders.  
And they will call Him Wonderful Counselor Almighty God! Everlasting Father!  
Children, go where I send thee! How shall I send thee?

## Audience Sing-along

### *O Come, All Ye Faithful*

**English words: Frederick Oakley**

**Music attributed to John Francis Wade**

**Arranged by David Willcocks**

*O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!  
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!  
Come and behold him, born the King of angels.*

Refrain:

*O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him,  
Christ the Lord!*

*Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,  
sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above!  
Glory to God, /all glory in the highest: [Refrain]*

*Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;  
Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n!  
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: [Refrain]*



## *Spivey Hall Children's Choir*

### *Tomorrow Shall be My Dancing Day*

**John Rutter**

*Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day* is a vibrant and expressive choral piece arranged by the renowned British composer and conductor John Rutter. Based on a traditional English carol, this arrangement evokes the joy and exuberance of the Christmas season. The carol's text, which dates to the 16th century, tells the story of Christ's birth and life (in His own voice) in a series of dance-like refrains, metaphorically portraying Christ's life as a dance. Rutter's arrangement, with its lively rhythms and bright harmonies, brings this ancient text to life in a contemporary choral setting.

*Tomorrow shall be my dancing day  
I would my true love did so chance  
To see the legend of my play  
To call my true love to my dance  
Sing "oh, my love"  
"Oh my love, my love, my love"  
This have I done for my true love*

*Then was I born of a virgin pure  
Of her I took fleshly substance  
Thus was I knit to a man's nature  
To call my true love to my dance  
Sing "oh, my love"  
"Oh my love, my love, my love"  
This have I done for my true love*

*In a manger laid, and wrapped I was  
So very poor, this was my chance  
Betwixt an ox and a silly poor ass  
To call my true love to my dance  
Sing "oh, my love"  
"Oh my love, my love, my love"  
This have I done for my true love*

### *Cantemos a María*

**Traditional**

**Juan Tony Guzmán (b. 1959)**

*Cantemos a María* is a popular *villancico* (or Christmas carol) from the Dominican Republic in the style of the *merengue*, the Dominican national dance. The *villancico*, a musical and poetic form of Spanish origin common throughout Latin America, is characterized by its simple melodies and gentle cross-rhythms and is often accompanied by traditional instruments. Juan Tony Guzmán's lively setting of *Cantemos a María* has accompanying parts for piano, guira, tambura as well as hand claps.

*Refrain:*

*O come, let us sing, O let us sing to Mary,  
for a child is born on this night of joy!*

*Glory to God, may there be peace on Earth,*

*and may love prevail among people of good will.*

*Shepherds are proclaiming the baby is born,  
the baby is born and now it's Christmas Day.*

*From the East they travelled, three Magi bearing gifts,  
to praise and to honour him, the child who's born today.*

*May peace be with you and with all warring nations.  
May peace be with all people on this Christmas Day.*

English Translation by Fr. R. Dotseth and D. Raney

## Combined Choirs

***We Need a Little Christmas***

**Jerry Herman**

**Arranged by Judy Mason**

A lively and heartwarming song originally composed by Jerry Herman for the 1966 Broadway musical *Mame*, ***We Need a Little Christmas*** conveys the urgency and excitement of bringing Christmas cheer into our lives, even in challenging times. This choral arrangement by Judy Mason (our beloved former accompanist) adds a rich and festive dimension to this beloved holiday classic, making it a favorite choice for Spivey Christmas concerts for many years.

*Haul out the holly  
Put up the tree before my spirit falls again  
Fill up the stocking  
I may be rushing things, but deck the halls again now  
For we need a little Christmas, right this very minute  
Candles in the window, carols at the spinet  
Yes, we need a little Christmas, right this very minute  
Hasn't snowed a single flurry, but Santa dear we're in a hurry  
Climb down the chimney  
Turn on the brightest string of lights I've ever seen  
Slice up the fruit cake  
It's time we've hung some tinsel on the evergreen bough  
For I've grown a little leaner, grown a little colder  
Grown a little sadder, grown a little older  
And I need a little angel sitting on my shoulder  
Need a little Christmas now  
For we need a little music, need a little laughter  
Need a little singing ringing through the rafter  
And we need a little snappy, happy ever after  
We need a little Christmas now*



## Spivey Hall Children's Choir Program Mission Statement

The Spivey Hall Children's Choir Program is committed to offering a world class music program within a caring and encouraging environment, while enriching the lives of individuals and making a positive difference in our community and beyond.

Through exceptional choral training and performance opportunities, we inspire teamwork, professionalism, creativity, and artistic excellence. We foster exemplary character and a lifelong passion for music.

### Core Values:

**Musical Excellence:** We offer high-quality instruction along with expert-level vocal technique, musicianship, professionalism, and aural and visual music literacy.

**Exemplary Character:** We encourage teamwork, responsibility, accountability, confidence, and empathy in our singers.

**Supportive Environment:** Fellow choir members are encouraging. Caring directors see the best in each student and seek to develop tomorrow's leaders. We welcome and celebrate students of all ethnicities and backgrounds.

**Collaborative Opportunities:** Our singers enjoy collaborations with other artists; performance opportunities in exceptional venues; and regional, national, and international travel opportunities.

**Community Engagement:** We seek to support music educators in our surrounding community and make our community a better place by educating its youth as well as performing at community functions.



2024-2025 Seniors