



Program Notes

Songbird is a popular song by Christine McVie. It first appeared on the 1977 Fleetwood Mac album *Rumours*, which was recorded in March 1976 in Zellerbach Auditorium on the U.C. Berkeley campus in California. (The Chamber Singers will perform there in July 2018 as part of the Golden Gate International Choir Festival.) This arrangement, by Ed Lojeski, is based on Eva Cassidy's recording, which was released in 1998 on her posthumous compilation album of the same name. Eva Cassidy (1963 – 1996) was an American vocalist and guitarist known for her interpretations of popular songs, jazz and blues. Although she had been honored by the Washington Area Music Association, she was virtually unknown outside her native Washington, D.C.

George Frederic Handel's oratorio, *Messiah*, enjoys such popularity that in many places it is performed as a sing-along. The audience members bring their own scores, then divide into sections and sing along with all of the choruses. There is usually an orchestra on stage with the conductor and soloists. We present one of the most beautiful arias from the oratorio, **He Shall Feed His Flock**.

Angels We Have Heard On High is a well-known French carol. For this arrangement, the harmonization was borrowed in part from a Vienna Boys' Choir recording and from the Pilgrim Hymnal. It is an excellent teaching piece for the development of part-singing, featuring three types of harmony: parallel thirds, contrary motion and counterpoint.

Victory With the Help Of God (The Story of Chanukah) is a lively, idiomatic setting of the story of Juda the Maccabee, the fight against the Syrian Army led by Antiochus, the liberation of the Temple in Jerusalem and the oil that miraculously lasted for eight nights.

One way in which we will continue for a third year our focus on community music making is to feature some of our choristers as composers. **Anything Is Possible** is a song written in a popular style by George Karacsonyi for his fifth grade final music project at Holland Hill School in Fairfield. His optimistic text is set to syncopated rhythms accompanied by piano and drum.

Oscar Peterson (1925 – 2007) was a Canadian jazz pianist and composer. He is considered one of the great jazz pianists, having played thousands of concerts worldwide in a career lasting more than sixty years. Recognized as one of Peterson's most significant compositions, **Hymn to Freedom** was written in 1962 and swiftly embraced by people the world over as an anthem of the Civil Rights Movement. For inspiration, Peterson drew upon various church renderings of Negro spirituals recalled from his childhood in Montreal. He aimed to maintain the unadorned, yet poignant quality of these early Baptist hymns while composing the beginning chorus of *Hymn to Freedom*. Upon its completion, Peterson turned to his collaborator Harriette Hamilton, who had been writing lyrics for original compositions for several years. According to Hamilton, "all the lyrics had to do was express in very simple language the hope for unity, peace and dignity for mankind. It was easy to write."



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Jingle Bells, one of the most famous American winter songs, was originally written for Thanksgiving! The author and composer was James Pierpont, who composed the song in 1857 for children celebrating his Boston Sunday School Thanksgiving. The song was so popular that it was repeated at Christmas.

Part of our Mission Statement is as follows: "The FCCC believes not only that all people can sing, but that all people need to sing, and is committed to promoting singing throughout our culture." Therefore, we now invite our audience to join the choir on our finale, **Jingle Bells**.

Jingle Bells

Dashing through the snow, in a one horse open sleigh

O'er the fields we go, laughing all the way.

Bells on bob tails ring, making spirits bright.

What fun it is to laugh and sing a sleighing song tonight.

Oh, jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way

Oh, what fun it is to ride in a one horse open sleigh.

Oh, jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way

Oh, what fun it is to ride in a one horse open sleigh.

A day or two ago, I thought I'd take a ride

And soon Miss Fanny Bright, was seated by my side.

The horse was lean and lank; Misfortune seemed his lot.

We got into a drifted bank and then we got upstot.

Oh, jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way

Oh, what fun it is to ride in a one horse open sleigh.

Oh, jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way

Oh, what fun it is to ride in a one horse open sleigh.



*The FCCC Board of Directors and Staff
wish you all the very best
of this joyous season.*

*Thank you for attending our program
and please join us again!!*

FCCC Music Staff

Jon Noyes – Music Director & Founder, Chamber Singers Conductor

Lisa Bettke – Chorale Conductor & Accompanist

Jacqueline Sugrue – Concert Choir Conductor

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Donna Beatty – Accompanist

Special Guest

Leslie Waddell - Flute

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Special Thanks

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FCCC is a member of Chorus America.

For audition and ticket information, please contact us at:



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SingFCCC.org

Fairfield County Children's Choir
23RD ANNUAL WINTER CONCERT

The Season of Joy!

**3:00pm Sunday
December 3, 2017**

Klein Memorial Auditorium
Bridgeport, CT

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Fairfield County Children's Choir

23RD ANNUAL WINTER CONCERT



3:00pm Sunday, December 3, 2017

Fairfield County Youth Choir

While By My Sheep17th Century Carol, arr. Noyes
Ave MariaBach/Gounod

Chorus

Beautiful DecemberAmy F. Bernon
Dormi, DormiItalian Carol, arr. Mary Goetze
Shiru L'Adonaiarr. David Neches

Chorale

Antiphonal Deck the HallGreg Gilpin
December Nights, December LightsEmily Crocker
Hanukkah NagilahLinda Spevacek

Concert Choir

HanukkahSuzanne Sherman Propp
Huron CarolJean de Brebeuf, arr. Paul Halley
Deck the Halls (*in 7/8*)arr. James McKelvy

Chamber Singers

In Paradisum— *from "Requiem"*Gabriel Faure
Veni, veni Emmanuelarr. Zoltan Kodaly
Wanting MemoriesYsaye M. Barnwell
SongbirdChristine McVie, arr. Lojeski

Combined Choirs & Guests

He Shall Feed His Flock— *from "Messiah"*G. F. Handel
Angels We Have Heard on HighFrench Carol, arr. Noyes
Victory With the Help Of GodRachelle Saltzman Waring
Anything Is PossibleGeorge Karacsonyi
Hymn to FreedomOscar Peterson, arr. Paul Read
Jingle BellsJames Pierpont



Program Notes

Welcome to the twenty-third annual Winter Concert of the Fairfield County Children's Choir!

While By My Sheep is a 17th century carol, set here for antiphonal choirs. The practice of positioning two or more groups in various places probably began at the Basilica of St. Mark in Venice in the 16th century. We hope to recreate that effect here at the Klein!

The sacred Latin text, **Ave Maria**, has inspired many composers to write in their most beautiful and sublime musical language. The most well known of the Marian prayers, it is primarily found as an antiphon for the Fourth Sunday in Advent, although it has other liturgical applications throughout the year, both devotional and penitential. The setting we perform today was originally published in 1853 as *Méditation sur le Premier Prélude de Piano de S. Bach*. The piece consists of a melody by the French Romantic composer Charles Gounod that he superimposed over an only very slightly changed version of the Prelude No. 1 in C major, BWV 846, from Book I of J.S. Bach's *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, written 137 years earlier.

*Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee,
Blessed art thou among women,
And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
Now and at the hour of our death. Amen.*

Beautiful December is a lullaby by Connecticut composer Amy F. Bernon, full of simple and stunning images: a garden awaiting the return of spring, snow as soft as lamb's wool and a sleepy child dreaming of songs that "rise on silken wings."

Dormi, Dormi (Sleep, sleep, my lovely child) is a traditional Italian carol. In this setting by Mary Goetze, this piece alternates between 6/8 and 2/4 and the structure is one of verse and chorus. There are three verses written in duple meter, followed by a bright and cheerful "Fa la la" chorus in triple meter.

Shiru L'Adonai is a well-known Hebrew blessing, which translates to "Sing to God a new song. Sing to God all the earth." This version, written by David Neches, is set in canon and is rhythmically interesting and exciting.

Antiphonal Deck the Hall is a lilting arrangement of an old Christmas favorite that was set to new music in a 6/8 original melody composed by Greg Gilpin. Joyful melodies are echoed from part to part (call and response) and a polyphonic "fa-la-la-la" sequence combined with a bell-like piano part all work together to create this cheery arrangement.

December Nights, December Lights describes the sights and sounds of a winter night. Worldwide, the recognition of the winter solstice varies from culture to culture. This composition, in a minor key, talks of holidays, festivals, gatherings and other celebrations. They often involve lights, such as candles, bonfires, and colorful lights.

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Hanukkah Nagilah features an original composition by Linda Spevacek that partners with the traditional Hebraic folk song, "Hava Nagilah."

Hanukkah was written by Suzanne Sherman Propp for her 4th and 5th grade Chorus from Green's Farms Elementary School in Westport, Connecticut. The song had its debut performance in 2012 with the adult choir of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Greater Bridgeport in Stratford, Connecticut, under the direction of Ellen Hardy (a former FCCC parent!).

The Huron Carol is considered to be Canada's oldest Christmas carol, written in 1643 by Jean de Brébeuf, a Jesuit missionary serving at Sainte-Marie among the Huron Native American people. The song's original Huron title, *Jesous Ahatonhia* (*Jesus, He is Born*), is indicative of the native language of the Huron or Wendat people living around Georgian Bay in the southern province of Ontario. Brébeuf based the hymn on the traditional French melody *Une Jeune Pucelle* (*A Young Maid*). The English text uses imagery that was familiar in the early 20th century and derived from Huron religious concepts. Altering the traditional nativity story, Jesus is born in a "lodge of broken bark" instead of a manger and visited by hunters and chiefs instead of wise men who bring "gifts of fox and beaver pelt" instead of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

In **Deck the Halls** (*in 7/8*), American composer James McKelvy has taken the traditional Deck the Halls melody and arranged it in 7/8 meter. The eighth notes are grouped into 2's and 3's, but the groupings change unexpectedly, creating irregular accents and syncopation. The metric twists and turns make this classic Christmas carol fresh and entertaining.

In Paradisum is the final movement from Gabriel Faure's *Requiem in D minor*, Op. 48. He composed the work in the late 1880s and revised it in the 1890s, finishing it in 1900. Its focus is on eternal rest and consolation. The Chamber Singers will perform the entire *Requiem* with the Greater Bridgeport Symphony under the baton of Eric Jacobsen on March 3, 2018 at the Klein!

*In paradisum deducant te angeli
In tuo adventu
Suscipiant te martyres
Et perducant te
In civitatem sanctam Jerusalem
Chorus angelorum te suscipiat
Et cum Lazaro quondam paupere
Aeternam habeas requiem.*

*May the angels lead you into paradise
May the martyrs receive you
In your coming
And may they guide you
Into the holy city, Jerusalem
May the chorus of angels receive you
And with Lazarus once poor
May you have eternal rest.*

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Veni, Veni, Emmanuel is a familiar hymn for Advent and Christmas. The text is a synthesis of a series of plainchant antiphons from the *Magnificat* at Vespers over the final days before Christmas. It is of ancient origin, dating back to at least the ninth century. The melody was first found in a 15th-century manuscript in the National Library of France. The hymn itself is much more recent. It first appeared in the 18th century in the *Psalterium Canticum Catholicarum* (Cologne 1710). The prominent Hungarian composer, Zoltan Kodaly (1882-1967), set this arrangement in 1943, juxtaposing the ancient text and melody with intriguingly complementary modern harmonies. With this performance we note the fiftieth year since his passing.

*Veni, veni, Emmanuel
captivum solve Israel,
qui gemit in exsilio,
privatus Dei Filio.
R: Gaude! Gaude! Emmanuel,
nascetur pro te Israel!*

*O come, O come Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.
R: Rejoice! Rejoice! O Israel,
to thee shall come Emmanuel!*

*Veni, O Jesse virgula,
ex hostis tuos unguia,
de specu tuos tartari
educ et antro barathri. R.*

*O come, Thou Rod of Jesse's stem,
from ev'ry foe deliver them
that trust Thy mighty power to save,
and give them vict'ry o'er the grave. R.*

*Veni, veni O Oriens,
solare nos adveniens,
noctis depelle nebulas,
dirasque mortis tenebras. R.*

*O come, Thou Dayspring from on high,
and cheer us by thy drawing nigh;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night
and death's dark shadow put to flight. R.*

*Veni, Clavis Davidica,
regna reclude caelica,
fac iter tutum superum,
et claude vias inferum. R.*

*O come, Thou Key of David, come,
and open wide our heav'nly home,
make safe the way that leads on high,
that we no more have cause to sigh. R.*

*Veni, veni, Adonai,
qui populo in Sinai
legem dedisti vertice
in maiestate gloriae. R.*

*O come, o come, Thou Lord of might,
who to thy tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times did give the law,
in cloud, and majesty, and awe. R.*

Wanting Memories explores the relationship between a parent and child, from the perspective of the child as a grown adult. The composer, Dr. Ysaye Maria Barnwell, is a singer, actress, teacher, choir director, community worker and health care professional. She is best known as a member of the internationally acclaimed a cappella quintet *Sweet Honey In The Rock*. She wrote *Wanting Memories* in 1990 after the passing of her father.