

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH'S
CHRISTMAS CANTATA

FOR US A CHILD IS BORN
(UNS IST EIN KIND GEBOREN, BWV 142)
WITH UNIQUELY SET TRADITIONAL SELECTIONS OF THE SEASON



YORK COUNTY CHORAL SOCIETY

DECEMBER 4, 2016

GREETINGS FROM OUR YCCS PRESIDENT...

Dear York County Choral Society Friends,

Welcome! We are grateful for your support and we hope our music fills you with the gladsome spirit of this beautiful season.



Under Dr. Katherine Kinsey's direction, our Choral Society continues to grow into an artistically refined and diversified ensemble. Our group is made up of people from many different professions and walks of life. Our singers range in age from high school to retirement. Dr. Kinsey masterfully brings all of these voices together to create some of the most stunning music in our local area. We are extremely appreciative of our Artistic Director, the innovative and selfless members of the YCCS Board of Directors, our loyal patrons and especially the singers who comprise our choir!

We encourage you to consider joining our group as a patron or a singer. Please visit our website www.yorkcountychoralsociety.org for more information regarding membership and our upcoming fall concert!

Warmest regards,

Jennifer Buck

President, York County Choral Society

— Special Thanks —

The York County Choral Society wishes to thank Mr. Donald Piers, Director of Music, Westminster Presbyterian Church and his staff for their generous hospitality. The YCCS rehearses weekly in the WPC choir room and sanctuary. We have been accommodated in a variety of ways over the years and are entirely grateful for our association with this outstanding church.

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The York County Choral Society

presents

J. S. Bach's Christmas Cantata:

BWV 142 For Us a Child is Born

(Uns ist ein Kind geboren)

Organ Prelude

Adeste Fideles

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Angels We Have Heard On High

Christmas Cradle Song

Bring a Torch, Jeanette Isabella

Greg Reynolds, organist

Eric Thiman, arr.

Janet Linker, arr.

Dale Wood, arr.

Alfred Hollins

Keith Chapman

There is no Rose of Such Virtue

Kevin Memley

(b. 1971)

Veni, Veni, Emmanuel

(O Come, O Come Emmanuel)

Traditional Carol; A. Koepke, arr.

For Us a Child is Born

(Uns ist ein Kind geboren, BWV 142)

See the Program Notes for a complete translation

Johann Sebastian Bach

(1685 – 1750)

I. Sinfonia

II. Chorus: Uns ist ein Kind geboren

III. Aria (baritone): Dein Geburtstag ist erschienen

IV. Chorus: Ich will den Namen Gottes

V. Aria (tenor): Jesu, dir sei Dank

VI. Recitative (alto)

VII. Aria (alto): Jesu, dir sei Preis

VIII. Chorus: Alleluia

Aaron McKone, *baritone*; Tex Williams, *tenor*; Irene Pointon, *alto*

Personent Hodie

(On This Day Earth Shall Ring)

Traditional Carol; J. Rutter, arr.

Interlude

Ananda - Laurie Neal, violin; PJ Brunson, piano

York County Chamber Singers

Hodie Christus Natus Est

(Today Christ is Born)

Jan Piertersoon Sweelinck

(1562 – 1621)

Ave Maria

Kevin Memley

The York County Choral Society

Sing We Now of Christmas

Traditional Carol; M. Hayes, arr.

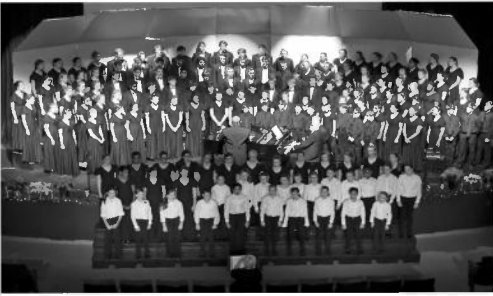
For Unto Us a Child is Born

(from Messiah)

George Frideric Handel

(1685 - 1759)

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Ananda Duo:

Laurie Neal, violin
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*Gayle Sawyer**, *Angel Thomason*

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Mary Beth Carr, Amy Cassidy, Zalandria Crosby,
Mary Ann Gomulinski, *Jessica Hall*, Katherine Hoegy,
Laura Jean McBurney, Amanda Mobley, *Irene Pointon**, Leigh Poole,
Lauren Romero, Sangwon Sohn, Marisa Taylor, Kat Wilson

Tenor :

John Arant†, *Bradley Brown*, *David Caines*, Jeff Culp†,
Chris Fischesser†, *Aaron McKone*, Don Moe, *Eric Roberts*,
George Sawyer, Jim Welsh, *Tex J. Williams**

Bass/Baritone :

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John Herndon, *Ralph Johnson*, Alex Jones, *Robert Jones*,
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* denotes section leader

† denotes founding member

italic font denotes Chamber Singers member

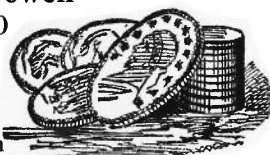
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Program Notes

There is No Rose of Such Virtue

Kevin Memley (b. 1971)

Kevin Memley is a highly regarded American contemporary composer who has received world-wide attention. He is in demand as a commissioned composer and has been prominently featured in national and regional conventions. His music is being performed by

some of our country's top performing ensembles, and he is known for his lush harmonies, creative use of cross rhythms, and frequent settings of ancient, liturgical texts. The ancient text of *There is No Rose of Such Virtue* has been set in Christmas carols since the 15th century. The work is sung in English with each verse concluding in Latin terminology that reiterates the overall meaning of the preceding phrase. Mary's womb is described as a small place that contains both heaven and earth. The Christ child represents the Holy Trinity, and the celebration of the angels and shepherds in the last verse encourages us to worship this heavenly miracle. Kevin Memley has composed a completely original



setting for this beautiful poem that skillfully contrasts the tenderness and power of the birth of Christ.

There is no rose of such virtue as is the rose that bare Jesu. *Alleluia*.
For in this rose contained was heaven and earth in little space.
Res miranda (marvelous thing)

By that rose we may well see there be one God in persons three.
Alleluia, res miranda, pares forma (of equal form)

The angels sangen the shepherds to
Gloria in excelsis Deo (Glory to God in the Highest).
Then leave we all this worldly mirth and follow we this joyous birth. *Alleluia*.

Veni, Veni, Emmanuel

Traditional carol, Allen Koepke, arr.

(O Come, O Come, Emmanuel)

O come, O come, Emmanuel is a wonderful carol that is recognized the world over. Its text and haunting melody (as we know it today) developed in separate historical periods. The text is believed to have been utilized as early as the 8th century as an antiphon (a sung portion of scripture) for Roman Catholic Advent services. Its melody however was discovered in Cologne, Germany by a Jesuit hymnographer in 1610. In the version that we perform today, the arranger, Allen Koepke, has interwoven this treasured carol with creative harmonic devices and a dense, imitative texture. Allen Koepke (1939 – 2012) was a prolific composer, conductor and music educator from Iowa. His original compositions and arrangements are known for their musically creative energy and powerful choral writing.

(Verse I: Sung in Latin and English)

O come, O come, Emmanuel and ransom captive Israel.
That mourns in lowly exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice, Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come desire of nations of like mind and bind in one the hearts of all mankind.
Bid thou our sad divisions cease, and be thyself our Prince of Peace!
Rejoice, Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

For Us a Child is Born (BWV 142) Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 - 1750)

Johann Sebastian Bach (commonly referred to as the Father of Western Music) was a highly prolific German composer, organ virtuoso and music educator in the Baroque period. He enriched the period's established compositional styles through his mastery of polyphonic/contrapuntal writing. His most renowned compositions include the *Brandenburg Concertos*, the *Goldberg Variations*, the Mass in B minor, two Passions, and over three hundred cantatas of which around two hundred survive. His music is revered for its technical command, artistic beauty, and intellectual depth. *Uns ist ein Kind geboren*, BWV 142 is one of the Baroque period's most famous cantatas for the Christmas season. While J. S. Bach is credited to be the composer of this work, it also has been said that his predecessor, Johann Kuhnau may have been its originator. A cantata is a multi-movement, sacred choral work that celebrates or commemorates important themes within the liturgical calendar (Advent, Lent and Easter) and includes an overture, several choruses, and solo arias.

For Us a Child Is Born is predominantly set in the key of A Minor and the relative keys of E Minor, C Major, F Major, and D Minor. The work is scored for woodwinds, strings, and continuo. It begins with a traditional *Sinfonia* (Overture) and continues with three choruses and three solo arias. The work, though centered in minor keys, contains fast-paced writing that stylistically typifies the Baroque period's use of melismatic, contrapuntal and imitative writing. It is approximately fourteen minutes in length and is a joy to experience. It will be performed in German (its original setting), and a translation is provided below.

I. Sinfonia

II. Chorus: *Uns ist ein Kind geboren*

For us a child is born; a son is born to save us.

III. Aria (baritone):

Dein Geburtstag ist erschienen:

Your birthday has appeared and so my duty requires that I should serve you, my Jesus, But I – a poor man- do not know at all what I might offer as a holy offering to please you, O God.

IV. Chorus: *Ich will den Namen Gottes*

I wish to praise God's name with a song and honor him highly with my gratitude.

V. Aria (tenor): *Jesu, dir sei Dank.*

Jesus thine be thanks unceasing and be always praised! For thy grace and sweetest pardon have fallen upon me - thou art my Savior dear!

VI. Recitative (alto)

Emmanuel, bestow thy grace and comfort; confirm my mind and faith so that I may love thee. Though I cannot praise thee duly in heart and hand as thy coming requires, Take what I offer thee, O Jesus.

VII. Aria (alto): *Jesu, dir sei Preis*

Jesus, thine be laud and honor for I am set free by thee! Nothing troubles my spirit now, since my loving heart is filled and comforted.

VIII. Chorale (Hymn): *Alleluia!*

Alleluia! All Praise be to God! This song we raise in rapture, love and wonder; For God this day gives us such joy that we shall praise his sweet name!



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Personent Hodie

Traditional Carol; John Rutter, arr.

(On this day earth shall ring)

Personent Hodie is a rousing, Finnish Christmas carol originally published in 1582 within a volume of 74 medieval songs entitled *Piae Cantiones*. A melody similar to the carol was discovered as early as 1360 in a German manuscript. The carol is in binary form (verse/refrain) and contains rhythmic repetitions of words or partial words making it lively and enjoyable. John Rutter has arranged the original carol for chorus within a lively, stylistic accompaniment. We will perform *Personent Hodie* in both its original Latin setting as well as in English.

(Verse 1, Sung in Latin and repeated in English): On this day earth shall ring with the song children sing to the Son, Christ the King born on earth to save us!
Him, the Father gave us.

Refrain 1: Conceived by the Virgin (*Et de virgineo ventre procreates*)

Refrain 1/repeat: (Sung in Latin) For that reason we exclaim: Glory to God in the Highest (*Ideo gloria in excelsis*)!

(Verse 2, Sung in Latin): His the doom, ours the mirth, when he came down to earth Bethlehem saw his birth: Ox and ass beside him, from the cold would hide him.

Refrain 3: The prince of hell loses spoils (*Perdite spolia princeps infernorum*).

(Verse 3, Sung in English): God's bright star o'er his head, Wise men three to him led; Kneel they low by his bed; lay their gifts before him, Praise him and adore him.

Refrain 3 (Sung in Latin): For that reason we exclaim:

Glory to God in the highest (*Ideo gloria in Excelsis*)!

(Verse 4, Sung in English and Latin): On this day angels sing; with their song earth shall ring praising Christ heaven's King

(Sung in Latin) Born on earth to save us; peace and love he gave us

(*Advenisti mundo: Laudes tibi fundo*)!

Refrain 4 (Sung in Latin): Glory to God in the highest (*Ideo gloria in excelsis*)!

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PJ & Laurie wish you a very Merry Christmas!



Hodie Christus Natus Est

Jan Pierterzoon Sweelinck (1562-1621)

Jan Pierterzoon Sweelinck was a late Renaissance/early Baroque composer from the Netherlands who produced wonderful choral works but also was highly recognized as being one of the first composers of organ literature. His choral music is considered intricate, high-energy in nature and loved the world over for its imitative textures and use of thematic materials heard in each vocal line. This *a cappella* motet (sacred polyphonic work) is set for three-part (divided) women's voices, tenor and bass, and it is considered to be one of his most famous works. It will be performed in Latin, and each section of the piece is preceded with the statement "Hodie Christus natus est." This statement is always heard within a lilting triple meter that is succeeded by a variety of choral and metric settings for each verse.

(Latin Translation:) Born today, born today! Christ the Lord! Noe (Noel)!
The savior has now appeared! Alleluia!

Born today! Earth listening hears the angels sing. For joy the Archangels shout: Noe!
Born today! Just men with gladness are saying Glory to God in the highest!
Noe, Alleluia, Noe!

Ave Maria

Kevin Memley

The Ave Maria text (Hail, Mary) is a traditional Catholic prayer of intercession to the Virgin Mary. The text is found in the New Testament Gospel of Luke and incorporates the Archangel Gabriel's announcement to Mary that she has been chosen to bear the Christ child. It also includes her cousin Elizabeth's celebratory reaction to this wondrous news. The prayer has been set to music countless times within all periods of history with its most famous setting being that of Franz Schubert. Kevin Memley (the composer of our program's first selection) has composed an unusually creative version of the Ave Maria. It begins with an ethereal *ostinato* of women's voices in cross rhythms over a chant-like melody found in the alto and tenor. The piece continues to feature these ideas but also includes rich, romantic/homophonic writing as it builds in intensity. Memley's use of cross rhythms and rich harmonic dissonance successfully relate the mysticism and power found within this beautiful prayer. The translation is provided.

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.

Sing We Now of Christmas

Traditional French Carol;
Mark Hayes, arr.

This lively carol is based on the original *Noël Nouvelet*, a traditional, late 15th century French Christmas carol. The carol was long ago translated into English as “Sing We Now of Christmas,” though the lyrics are somewhat different. Mark Hayes, the arranger of this piece, is known for his lively piano accompaniments and upbeat choral publications. The Christmas season is truly captured in this enjoyable selection.

For Unto Us a Child is Born

George Frideric Handel
(1685 – 1759)

The Christmas season is not complete without hearing some portion of Handel’s oratorio *Messiah*. We chose this movement as a thematic partner to the Bach cantata presented earlier in the program. Bach and Handel were the Baroque period’s most prolific and memorable composers. They were German contemporaries and two of music history’s most influential and treasured musicians. *Messiah*, Handel’s most famous oratorio (when performed in its entirety) is experienced in three musical sections. It relates the life of Christ from the Old Testament prophecy through the New Testament account of the crucifixion. One will easily recognize this famous movement from the work found in Part I (the “Christmas portion”), and we hope that you will embrace the spirit of the season through this celebratory conclusion to our program!

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Featured Performers

Greg Reynolds, organ

This is the second year we have been privileged to feature Greg Reynolds as our concert organist. Mr. Reynolds is currently the Music Director of Neely's Creek Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in Rock Hill, S.C., a position that he has held for 21 years. His responsibilities include directing the adult and youth music programs as well as directing handbell choirs. He also impressively spearheaded the installment of a 36 rank Æolion Skinner organ as part of his church's 2008 renovation project. In addition to his church position, he directs the Rock Hill Community Handbell Choir. He received a Bachelor of Music from Liberty University and a Master of Music in Organ Performance from Winthrop University. Mr. Reynolds is considered to be one of the region's most talented organists, and we are proud to feature him as a solo artist and ensemble accompanist in today's concert.

Aaron McKone, baritone

Aaron McKone is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Vocal Performance at Winthrop University where he studies with Professor Todd Geer in the Department of Music. He performs regularly in Winthrop's Opera program under the director of Dr. Jeffrey McEvoy and has been a singer and featured soloists in Winthrop's top performing ensembles (The Winthrop Chorale and Chamber Singers) under the director of Dr. Katherine Kinsey. Mr. McKone is a returning member of the YCCS and also sings in the YCCS Chamber Singers. He is from Rock Hill, S.C., and a graduate of Rock Hill High School.

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Tex J. Williams, *tenor*

Mr. Williams is the Director of Choral Activities at Northwestern High School (Rock Hill, S.C.). He holds a BME in choral music education and a MM in Choral Conducting from Winthrop University where he studied conducting with Dr. Kinsey, assisted with the direction of all choral ensembles in the Dept. of Music, and performed in all advanced ensembles. In addition to his work as a music educator, Mr. Williams is employed as the Director of Music at Trinity United Methodist Church in York, SC. He has sung with the YCCS Main Choir and Chamber Singers since 2012 and has been a regular, featured soloist with both ensembles. He also serves as the YCCS Tenor section leader.

Irene Pointon, *alto*

Mrs. Pointon's professional career has spanned a wide variety of ages, abilities and types of music. A native Pennsylvanian, she holds a BS in Music Education from Edinboro University (Pennsylvania) and a Master's degree from Winthrop University where she studied with Lorraine Gorrell. She is a choral director at Charlotte Latin School (Charlotte, N.C.) where she was awarded the coveted *Indulstrate Orbem* award in 2013. She is sought after as a choral clinician and adjudicator for various festivals and competitions in North and South Carolina. In previous years, Mrs. Pointon has sung with the Charlotte Oratorio Singers and Renaissance Singers of Charlotte in addition to the YCCS Main Choir and Chamber Singers. She participates in the music ministry at Grace Lutheran Church (Rock Hill) and was a chosen participant for the 2015 Oxford University Choral Institute. We also are privileged to have her as our Alto section leader.



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Ananda, acoustic instrumental duo

We are proud to feature violinist Laurie Neal and pianist PJ Brunson who comprise the accomplished instrumental duo *Ananda*. Their website (www.anadaduo.com) describes their music as “inspired, original instrumental compositions that stylistically merge Celtic, Classical, and New Age influences.” They regularly travel on an international basis as performance artists, most recently to the country of Ireland. PJ Brunson has long been a familiar face on the acoustic singer-songwriter scene. Her first love was the piano, and she was composing piano instrumentals long before taking up the guitar. Laurie Neal is an accomplished string instructor as well as performer. She regularly performs as an ensemble performer with the YCCS and the Westminster Presbyterian Church orchestra under the direction of Donald Piers.



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Sharon Courtney, *pianist*

Mrs. Courtney serves as the YCCS rehearsal accompanist. She comes from a strong musical background as the daughter of a music minister, and she began studying piano as a young child. As a student at Winthrop University, she was a piano student of Dr. Eugene Barban and vocally studied with Professor Jerry Helton. She also accompanied both graduate and undergraduate music students in Winthrop's Department of Music. Besides working with the YCCS, she accompanies the Northwestern High School choirs under the direction of Tex J. Williams and for over 30 years, she has been a staff accompanist for the Northside Baptist Church in Rock Hill, S.C.

Dr. Katherine S. Kinsey,

YCCS Artistic Director and Conductor

Dr. Katherine Kinsey serves as the Director of Choral Activities at Winthrop University. She is in her nineteenth year as a choral music faculty member where she directs the Winthrop Chorale and the Winthrop Chamber Singers. She teaches graduate and undergraduate choral conducting, instructs music education classes and supervises student teachers in choral music education. She was appointed the new Artistic Director and Conductor of the York County Choral Society in 2012. She holds a Master's degree of Music Education from UNC-Greensboro and a Doctorate of Musical Arts in conducting from the University of South Carolina. She began her teaching career in the Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools where she taught middle and high school choral music for thirteen years prior to her appointment at Winthrop and simultaneously worked with the Community School of the Arts teaching voice, piano, and music theory. In addition, she frequently serves as a clinician of choral festivals for both middle and high school singers, as an adjudicator for competitive choral events and works annually with public school choral and church music programs as a clinician/consultant offering guidance with regard to choral pedagogy and festival preparation. For years she has been professionally active in the South Carolina American Choral Directors Association having served in numerous state offices (including President) since 1997. She ultimately takes great pride in the impressive accomplishments of her former Winthrop University students who have become musical leaders and artists in public school music and higher education.

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