Christmas Canticles

Introduction *Fantasia on Greensleeves* Arr. Michael Coe

Reading Isaiah 40: 3-11

A voice cries out:
“In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,
    make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be lifted up,
    and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
    and the rough places a plain.
Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
    and all people shall see it together,
    for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”

A voice says, “Cry out!”
    And I said, “What shall I cry?”
All people are grass,
    their constancy is like the flower of the field.
The grass withers, the flower fades,
    when the breath of the Lord blows upon it;
    surely the people are grass.
The grass withers, the flower fades;
    but the word of our God will stand forever.
Get you up to a high mountain,
    O Zion, herald of good tidings;
lift up your voice with strength,
    O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,
    lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah,
    “Here is your God!”
See, the Lord God comes with might,
    and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
    and his recompense before him.
He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
    he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
    and gently lead the mother sheep.

 [*The Yearning*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tCUw45rYzDY) Courtney/Boersma

Reading John 1:1-9

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

 [*Advent Acclamation*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uWsMNOUR6xo) Arr. Nordmeyer

Reading Luke 2: 1-7

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

 [*A Weary Couple*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DSaqFxno6Xo) Arr. Alonso

Reading Luke 2:8-14

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see−I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people:

to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

 [*Et In Terra Pax*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xYHI8-Y3C8U) Purifoy

Reading Luke 2: 15-20

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.  When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them.  But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.  The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

 [*Christ’s Lullaby*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZK5pSQEzhKA) Arr. De Silva

Offertory *Now is Born the Divine Christ Child* Arr. McChesney

Reading

*(Ann Weems has been called “The Presbyterian Poet Laureate.” This poem,*

 *from her collection,* Kneeling in Bethlehem*, is a reflection on what it means for Christmas to come now, a reminder that our hope is not just in the remembrance of Christmas, but in the KEEPING of Christmas.)*

 *Christmas Comes* by Ann Weems

Christmas comes every time we see God in other persons.
The human and the holy meet in Bethlehem

 or in Times Square,
 for Christmas comes like a golden storm on its way
          to Jerusalem—
  determinedly, inevitably…
Even now it comes
 in the face of hatred and warring—
 no atrocity too terrible to stop it,
 no Herod strong enough,
 no hurt deep enough,
 no curse shocking enough,
 no disaster shattering enough.

For someone on earth will see the star,
          someone will hear the angel voices,
          someone will run to Bethlehem,
          someone will know peace and goodwill:
          the Christ will be born!

 [*I Saw Three Ships*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ffRJRz4I6nA) Arr. Larson

**Vocalists and Instrumentalists**

**Guest Instrumentalists:**

Violin - Ahnika Emery

 Violin - Sarah Katherine Kelley

 Viola - Holly Taylor

 Cello - Cayley Koch

 Flute - Laura Seifried

 Piano - Sean Cator

**Joyful Ringers:**

Director - Jackie Owen

Beth Ann McClelland

Millie Smidt

Jennifer Treasure

Judy Riekse

Kent Ford

Pat Farrell

Judy Ross

Laura Senich

Virginia Bouchard

John Pearson

Rob Gold

**Chancel Choir:**

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| Sopranos -  Becky Yarbrough Cheri Weaver Virginia Bouchard Jennifer Neel (Soloist) Rosalie Lawson  | Altos -  Barbara Neel Pat Farrell Jean Smith Esther Wade Amy Trawick Beth Ann McClelland  |
| Tenors -  Rob Gold John Machado Dave Retherford Greg Suess | Basses -  Dave Lincoln Jim Lawson (Narrator) Jim Drinkard |

Director - Scott Seifried