



Program Notes

Tantum ergo comprises the last two verses of the Eucharistic hymn *Pange lingua* by Thomas Aquinas (13th century), a hymn for the procession of Corpus Christi also sung for the procession to the altar of repose on Maundy Thursday. These two verses are often sung separately from the complete hymn and were set to music by many composers. We present the beautiful setting by Gabriel Faure.

*Therefore so great a Sacrament
Let us fall down and worship,
And let the old law
Give way to a new rite,
And let faith stand forward
To make good the defects of sense.
To the Father and the Son
Be praise and joy,
Health, honour and virtue
And blessing,
And to him proceeding from both
Be equal praise. Amen*

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming is a German hymn first printed in 1582, with the familiar Renaissance style harmonization written in 1609 by German composer Michael Praetorius. Penned anonymously under the title *“Es ist ein Ros entsprungen,”* the hymn has been used by both Catholics and Protestants, with the focus of the song being Mary or Jesus, respectively.

*Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming, as men of old have sung.
It came, a floweret bright, amid the cold of winter,
When half spent was the night.*

*Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the Rose I have in mind;
With Mary we behold it, the virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright, she bore to men a Savior,
When half spent was the night.*

Pitakhta, A Song for Hanukah by Baruch J. Cohon is a spirited setting of Psalm 30. Rabbi Cohon is also a musician, cantor, author and television writer/producer. The FCCC has performed his *Hanerot Hallelu* many times!

*It is time for gladness, take off your sadness
Wrap my spirit in joy!*

Home is the debut single and coronation song from American Idol winner Phillip Phillips. The song was co-written by Drew Pearson and Greg Holden in a style some refer to as folk rock and others as alternate folk. Critics have praised the song unanimously. *American Songwriter* said that the



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song "has all the elements of a current hit: British folksiness, anthemic marching-band-ness, rootsy sing-along." *EW Music Mix* gave the song an A- and likened it to Mumford & Sons and Fleet Foxes.

Angels We Have Heard On High is a well-known French carol. For this arrangement, the harmonization was borrowed in part from a Vienna Boy's 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.

Rollo Dilworth, FCCC's guest composer and conductor for Spring 2016, has skillfully arranged **Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow**, a beloved African-American spiritual with a Christmas text. "Scholars have noted two possible factual errors in the text. Historically, it was actually the three wise men (not the shepherds) who were led to follow a star that would have likely been located in the Western sky (not the East). More important than the text itself is the spirit behind the words and its potential symbolism. Consistent with other African-American spirituals, the concept of 'following a star' was likely secret code language for an escape plan that included following the North Star to freedom. Given that the text makes references to shepherds caring for their flocks, the arranger has chosen to develop this setting in a time signature more commonly associated with a pastorale (6/8). The 6/8 meter allows the arrangement to 'lilt' in a quasi-gospel style."

Lee Kesselman has been Director of Choral Activities at the College of DuPage since 1981. He is a pianist, clinician, adjudicator and music director for opera and musical theater. Kesselman provides the following notes: "Robert Burns (1759-1796) penned the words to this famous song using an old Scots tune. While the song has become one of the most familiar in our culture, oft used for ushering in the new year, it remains a heartfelt air, extolling enduring friendship and waxing nostalgic over the passage of time. Born in Alloway to poor farmer parents, Burns became Scotland's most famous poet, loved and revered for his songs and satires. Burns himself spoke the language of Ayrshire and the language of **"Auld Lang Syne"** (The Days of Long Ago) carries a most beautiful color when pronounced in Scots."

*Should auld acquaintance be forgot, And never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And days of o' lang syne [days of long ago]
For auld lang syne my dear, For auld lang syne;
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet, For auld lang syne.
We twa hae run about the braes [hillsides],
And pou'd the gowans [pulled the daisies] fine,
But we've wander'ed mony a weary foot Sin auld lang syne. / For auld ...
And here's a hand my trusty fiere [chum], And gie's a hand o' thine,
And we'll tak a right gude willie-waught [swig]
For auld lang syne! / For auld ...*



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A Charlie Brown Christmas has been presented annually for holiday programming since it first aired on CBS in 1965. In addition to the show's critical acclaim, receiving a Peabody and Emmy award, the album was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame in 2007. This eclectic mix of music is a fusion of new and traditional Christmas songs that include jazz settings by the "Vince Gauraldi Trio." In addition to their arrangement of *Greensleeves* and their original songs *Limus and Lucy* and *Skating*, the trio also wrote **Christmas Time is Here**. This song was sung by a treble choir and is a wonderful addition for tonight's program. *Christmas Time is Here* has remained one of the most popular songs of the holiday season.

*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!!

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Lisa Bettke – Chorale Conductor & Accompanist
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Many thanks to Robert Grosshart for his photography.

For audition and ticket information, please contact us at:



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Fairfield County Children's Choir
Jon Noyes, Music Director & Founder presents

Ring in the New!

WINTER CONCERT

**3:00pm Sunday
December 6, 2015**

**Klein Memorial Auditorium
Bridgeport, CT**

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Fairfield County Children's Choir

Jon Noyes, Music Director & Founder presents

21st Annual Winter Concert

Ring in the New!

Sunday, December 6, 2015 3:00pm
The Klein Memorial Auditorium • Bridgeport, CT

Fairfield County Youth Choir

For Unto Us a Child is Born *from Messiah*G.F. Handel
The Little Drummer BoyHarry Simeone

Chorus

A La Nanita Nanaarr. David Eddleman
Walking in the AirHoward Blake, arr. Audrey Snyder
Esa EinaiShlomo Carlebach, arr. Noyes

Chorale

Somewhere in My MemoryLeslie Bricusse, John Williams,
from Home Alone arr. Snyder
HalleluyahTraditional Jewish Folk Music, arr. Jay L. Beck
Will You Be Ready?Mark Patterson

Concert Choir

PsalliteMichael Praetorius, arr. Robinson
There is Faint MusicDan Forrest
Ose Shalomarr. John Leavitt
Holly Jolly ChristmasJohnny Marks, arr. Harry Simeone

Chamber Singers

Tantum Ergo Gabriel Faure
Lo, How a Rose E'er BloomingGerman 16th Century
Pitakhta Baruch J. Cohon
HomeHolden/Pearson, arr. Billingsley

Combined Choirs

Angels We Have Heard on High French Carol, arr. Noyes
Rise Up, Shepherd, and FollowSpiritual, arr. Rollo Dilworth
Auld Lang SyneScottish Folk Song, arr. Lee R. Kesselman
Christmas Time is HereMendelson/Guaraldi, arr. Zegree



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Today's concert is dedicated to the memory of Dorothy Straub Genualdi, FCCC Board member, musician, educator, mentor, author, leader and so much more. Her "legacy is that of an extraordinary musician who devoted her career to enriching the lives of thousands upon thousands as an educator and performer."

Welcome to the twenty-first annual Winter Concert of the Fairfield County Children's Choir! Our theme, "Ring In The New," signifies the start of our third decade of making music and reflects the program for today's concert which features repertoire that is new to the FCCC (with the exception of *Angels We Have Heard on High*). From masterpieces such as *For Unto Us a Child is Born* from Handel's "Messiah," Faure's *Tantum Ergo* and Praetorius' *Psallite*, to holiday favorites and popular songs such as *Home* by Phillip Phillips, sung by 300 amazing young singers, today's program promises to be exciting and enjoyable!

We begin with **For Unto Us a Child is Born** from Handel's *Messiah*, an oratorio which includes texts from both the Old Testament prophets and the New Testament. Handel began work on the music for *Messiah* in 1741 and completed the entire piece a mere three weeks later. *Messiah* was premiered on April 13, 1742 in Dublin, Ireland. Drawing on the text of Isaiah 9:6, *For Unto Us a Child is Born* rejoices in Isaiah's prophetic words foretelling the birth of the awaited Messiah. The music includes the opening fugue theme, extended melismas, a stately dotted rhythmic motive and powerful chordal sections.

The Little Drummer Boy was originally known as *Carol of the Drum*, written by Katherine Davis in 1941. It became enormously popular upon the release of recordings by the Trapp Family Singers and the Harry Simeone Chorale in 1955 and 1958, respectively. Since then, there have been countless versions released; the most popular being the Bing Crosby/David Bowie arrangement first performed in 1977. This song captures the spirit of the season with its simple message: it is not what you have to give, but rather, the sincerity with which you give. In this case, it was a little boy who had no material gift to give, but was able to present his talent - *"I played my best for him... then he smiled at me."*

The traditional Spanish Christmas carol, **A la Nanita Nana**, is a lullaby to the baby Jesus perhaps dating back to the 18th century. The English lyrics were developed by Norman Luboff. This carol combines a tender lullaby over melody and rhythms of popular Latin authenticity. The piece starts in minor and changes to major halfway through, a common feature of certain Spanish folksongs. In 2006, a version of the song was recorded by a quartet known as The Cheetah Girls, accompanied by the Mexican singer Belinda for the album *The Cheetah Girls*. The song was used in the soundtrack to the film as well. The words translate to:

*Sleep, sleep my little Jesus,
May peace attend Thee, may peace attend Thee.
To the world, little Savior;
new hope thou'rt bringing.
All the world, little Savior, Thy praises singing,
God's angels hov'ring o'er Thee chant alleluia.*



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Walking in the Air was written by Howard Blake for the 1982 animated film *The Snowman*, originally a children's picture book without words by Raymond Briggs published in 1978. The book was then adapted into an animated television special which debuted in Britain. It was nominated for an Academy Award and its showings have since become an annual event. The song is performed in the film by chorister Peter Auty when the boy and the snowman fly to the North Pole, using the music as the theme song for their journey. The song was covered three years later by Welsh chorister Aled Jones in a single which reached number 5 in the UK charts.

Esa Einai was written by Shlomo Carlebach (1925-1994), a Jewish rabbi, religious teacher, composer and singer who was known as "The Singing Rabbi." In a career that spanned 40 years, he composed thousands of melodies and recorded more than 25 albums that continue to have widespread popularity and appeal. The text is from Psalm 121: 1 – 2. The arrangement includes a newly composed descant.

*I will lift up my eyes to the mountains.
From where does my help come?
My help comes from the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.*

Somewhere In My Memory was featured in the 1990 film, *Home Alone*. This Oscar-nominated number was penned by John Williams in collaboration with lyricist Leslie Bricusse. The beautiful melody was originally written to "run alongside the film". It can be heard in numerous sections of the film, either in full length or fragments and formed the backbone of the film's soundtrack.

Halleluyah utilizes a Jewish folk song as a jubilant chant of praise - a chorus for exuberant singing and rejoicing in a union of glorifying sound. The cries of exclamation in the middle and closing sections serve to contrast sound and silence (shirah means singing and reenah means rejoicing).

From the highly acclaimed Christian children's musical, *Light of the World, Will You Be Ready?* begins with the words of prophecy from Isaiah and then asks, "Will you be ready for the Light?" The second part helps to accent the syncopated rhythms that propel the anthem forward. The dynamic contrasts and the challenging text throughout create an audience-pleaser!

Psallite, by composer Michael Praetorius, is an exceptional arrangement by Russell Robinson of this Renaissance Carol. With contrasts in language and texture, the original Praetorius setting incorporates a great deal of variety for such a relatively short work. Regarding the language, or rather languages, Praetorius uses a "Macronic" setting, which means to have more than one language in a piece. Specifically, he sets this carol to both Latin text (traditional Liturgical text) and his vernacular German. The parts of the song that command us to sing "*Psallite*" are in Latin, while the setting of the simple manger scene "*Ein kleines Kindelein*" are in German. In addition to the change in language for these lyrics, Praetorius also changes the compositional texture.



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In the opening call for everyone to sing to our Lord, "*Psallite unigenito*," we are treated to an imitative style with one melody echoed in many voices. This seems to be a clear illustration of many voices coming together to sing one song. Then, when the text changes to images of the manger scene, the language changes to German, "*Ein kleines Kindelein*," and we all sing simultaneously "all the lovely angels...sing to him sweetly." With all of the compositional elements incorporated into this classic Carol, it is little wonder that it is still so popular today.

*Psallite unigenito Christo Dei Filio!
Psallite Redemptori Domino,
puerulo, jacenti in praesepio.*

*Sing to Christ the only begotten Son of God.
Sing to the Redeemer, our Lord,
The child lying in the manger.*

*Ein kleines Kindelein liegt in dem Krippelein;
Alle liebe Engelein diene dem Kindelein,
Und singen ihm fein.*

*A little child lies in the small crib;
All the lovely angels serve the child
and sing to him sweetly.*

There is Faint Music, by Dan Forrest with words by Nancy Buckley, is a newer work composed for the holiday season. It is a wonderfully descriptive musical setting of a mother using lullabies to "hush her baby's sighs." Throughout the piece, the lyrics depict images of a "shelter from the winter storm... a straw-lined manger, safe and warm," that highlight the powerful gesture of a mother comforting her newborn baby.

Translated as "*The One who makes peace in the heavens, (may) he make peace for us*," **Ose Shalom** delivers a message of peace that is timely for the holiday season. John Leavitt's arrangement of this prayer is a blend of old and new. Traditionally sung or chanted, Leavitt's setting begins with a modern homophonic or "chordal" introduction before using a more chant-like melody for the text. This, coupled with the characteristic use of a minor mode, allows this more modern setting to retain a familiar sound that is fitting for this ancient text.

A prolific composer of Christmas songs like, *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree* and *Silver and Gold*, Johnny Marks has been responsible for many of the most memorable holiday hits. He originally wrote **A Holly Jolly Christmas** in the early 1960's prior to using it as part of his soundtrack to the 1964 animated Holiday classic *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*. Since the famous recording by Burl Ives in the 1965 album, *Have a Holly Jolly Christmas*, has become one of the most popular Christmas songs ever written, with a recent ranking of #5 on the Billboard Top 100 Holiday chart in 2011.