



Chorale, Children's Choir & Guest Orchestra

Matthew Myers

Artistic Director

Alisa Toy

Assistant Director

Stephanie Sant

Children's Choir Conductor

Elena Panchenko

Chorale Pianist

Deborah Collins

Children's Choir Pianist

present

MY SPIRIT REJOICES

Guest Orchestra

I. "Allegro non molto" from *Concerto No. 4 in F Minor, Op. 8, RV 297, "Winter"*
Christiano Rodrigues, violin Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

Antonio Vivaldi is revered among the most prominent composers of the Baroque Era. Though a skilled violinist, he studied to be a priest and was ordained at age 25. He received a dispensation from celebrating Mass, likely due to asthma, and found work as master of violin at the Ospedale della Pietà, a Venetian orphanage for young women. The music school at the Ospedale became so famous for its high quality performances that some families feigned orphanacy for their daughters so that they could attend the school. He is often regarded as father of the concerto, a genre in which he wrote nearly 500 works. He cultivated virtuosity in violin performance and often had his students perform his new works. His most famous set of concerti is *The Four Seasons*, a group of four concerti that he composed around 1718-20 for the court chapel of nearby Mantua. Vivaldi's descriptive instrumental writing in these works led to the next century's development of program music, in which instrumental works told a narrative story. The fourth concerto of the set is *Winter*. Like the other three concertos, it is comprised of three movements in a fast-slow-fast configuration.

Chorale & Children's Choir

Climb to the Top of the Highest MountainCarolyn Jennings (b. 1936)

Carolyn Jennings is a professor emerita at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota, where she served many years in roles such as music department chair and associate dean of fine arts. She served as a church musician for three decades at St. John's Lutheran Church. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in music from the University of Iowa and her Master of Music degree from the University of Michigan. With her extensive background in church music and years as a professor at a religious institution, many of her compositions are accessible works for church and community choirs. "Climb to the Top of the Highest Mountain" incorporates an Advent text from Isaiah 40. Jennings passes the melody in different combinations, featuring a children's choir descant as well as upper voices and lower voices.

Climb to the top of the highest mountain,
Joyous tidings proclaim to the world,
Lift up your voice, Shout the good news:
Behold, your Lord comes to you.

He will feed his flock like a shepherd,
He will carry the lambs in his arms,
He will ever keep them safe from harm.
Behold, your Lord comes to you.

He who made the stars in the heaven,
He who fashioned the earth and the sea,
From time eternal, He was God,
The Alpha and Omega, He,
Behold, your lord!

He will come in power and glory,
He will rule with mercy and truth,
Hope of the nations, Light of all the world.

He will love the little children,
He will hold them in his arms.
Love him and trust him as a child,
Behold your Lord comes to you.

Chorale

O Magnum MysteriumTomás Luis de Victoria (c. 1548-1611)

Tomás Luis de Victoria is the most prominent Spanish Renaissance composer. He was born around 1548 in Ávila, where he sang as a choirboy in the cathedral choir. In 1565, he went to Rome, where he likely studied with Palestrina, the maestro di cappella at the Archbasilica of St. John Lateran and St. Peter's Basilica. He became a priest in 1574. Nearly all of his music is set to sacred texts in Latin, and it generally features equal-voiced imitative polyphony. His most famous motet, *O magnum mysterium*, stands among the most famous Renaissance works for the holiday season. Set in a minor mode, it juxtaposes the mystery of the birth of the Savior in a slow, restrained, and enigmatic opening theme with the joy of the festive Alleluia section in triple meter.

Sung in Latin

O magnum mysterium
et admirabile sacramentum,
ut animalia viderent Dominum natum
jacentem in praesepio.
O beata Virgo, cujus viscera meruerunt
portare Dominum Jesum Christum.
Alleluia!

English Translation

O great mystery
and wonderful sacrament,
that animals should see the new-born Lord
lying in a manger!
O blessed is the Virgin, whose womb
was worthy to bear Christ the Lord.
Alleluia!

VI. “Bogoroditse Devo” from *All-Night Vigil*.....Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)

Sergei Rachmaninoff was a Russian and American composer of the late Romantic era. He is known for the rich color and expression of his orchestral and piano music. He began learning piano at age four and studied piano and composition at the Moscow Conservatory. After the Russian Revolution, he moved to New York, which became his residence in 1918. He toured the United States and Europe as a pianist and maintained a summer home in Switzerland. Though a prolific performer for the last 25 years of his life, he only composed six works after he left Russia. He wrote his most famous choral work, the *All-Night Vigil*, in 1915. Set for an a cappella choir with divisi, the work features 15 movements of music from the Russian Orthodox All-Night Vigil service. Bogoroditse Devo, the sixth movement of the set, ends the Vespers portion of the service. While the beginning and end of the movement feature straightforward homophonic text setting, the middle of the work features a slow buildup of musical themes, with the altos’ melody appearing first, followed by a countermelody in the soprano and tenor parts and finally a dramatic crescendo from the bass section.

Sung in Church Slavonic

Bogoroditse Devo, raduisya,
Blagodatnaya Marie, Gospod’s Toboyu.
Blagoslovena Ty v zhenakh,
i blagosloven plod chreva Tvoeyego,
yako Spasa rodila esi dush nashikh.

English Translation

Rejoice, virgin mother of God,
Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you.
Blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the fruit of your womb,
for you have borne the Savior of our souls.

**VI. “Kuumba” from *Kwanzaa Songs*Zanaida Robles (b. 1979)
*Audience participation encouraged***

Zanaida Robles is a composer, vocalist, church musician, and choral conductor. She earned her bachelor’s degree in voice from California State University—Long Beach, her master’s degree in conducting from California State University—Northridge, and her doctorate in choral music from the University of Southern California. She leads a comprehensive music program at Neighborhood Unitarian Universalist Church in Pasadena, CA, and serves as director of choirs at Harvard-Westlake Upper School in Studio City, CA. Among her most famous choral compositions is *Kwanzaa Songs*, a set of a cappella works that each center on one of the principles of Kwanzaa. “Kuumba” focuses on the sixth principle of Kwanzaa: creativity. The work is comprised of a three-measure ostinato that repeats for the entirety of the work. A descant layer is added on top of the repeated pattern to create harmonic interest, and improvised solos add to the creative nature of the work. We invite the audience to join in singing the repeated pattern along with the Chorale.

Sung in Swahili
Kuumba.

English Translation
Creativity.

Children’s Choir

The Shepherd’s Spiritual.....Donald Moore (b. 1946)

This memorable melody came from a plainsong chant 1000 years ago. Predominantly minor, the harmonies change to major for a phrase in the chorus. The two flowing voice parts dovetail with one another and include just a bit of dissonance in several sections. It has become a holiday favorite.

There's a star in the east on Christmas morn.
Rise up, Shepherd and follow.
It led to the place where the baby was born.
Rise up, Shepherd and follow.

If you take good heed to the angel's words, Rise
up, Shepherd and follow.
You'll forget your flocks, you'll forget your
herds, Rise up, Shepherd and follow.

Rise up, Shepherd and follow. It is the star of
Bethlehem.

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel..... Michael Levi (b. 1945)

An upbeat, cheerful song based on an African-American spiritual that inspires us to dance, the Shepherd's Spiritual expresses the joy of the shepherds in the nativity story who saw a star and followed it to Bethlehem. Enjoy the excited calls of our soloists backed up by the choir's harmonic responses.

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, O come, Emmanuel O come thou dayspring
Come and cheer our spirits by thine advent here.
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And all dark shadows put to flight.

Chorale & Guest Orchestra

Magnificat in D Major, BWV 243.....Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Late Baroque composer **Johann Sebastian Bach** is widely regarded as one of the finest composers of all time. Born in Eisenach, Germany, to a very musical family, Bach was a prolific organist and harpsichordist. Though orphaned at age 10, he studied music with his skilled brothers before moving to Lüneburg to build his skills further. He held prominent church and court musician roles in Arnstadt, Mühlhausen, Weimar, and Köthen, and each of these roles ignited a new period in his compositional career. He became cantor in Leipzig in 1723, and he began to compose for the prominent Lutheran churches in the city as well as for the local university. He conducted church choirs and composed new cantatas nearly every Sunday for his first several years in the position. Bach had 17 children, 10 of whom survived to adulthood. Several became musicians themselves, including prominent composers like Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach and Johann Christian Bach.

He composed his *Magnificat* for Christmas Vespers in his first year in Leipzig. The *Magnificat* was the first sacred composition Bach composed in Latin; most of his sacred music is in the vernacular German language. The original performance of *Magnificat* was in Eb Major and featured four hymns that were added to the twelve movements which set the traditional text. He updated his *Magnificat* for another liturgical offering in 1733. In the new version, he removed the four hymns, expanded the instrumentation of some movements, and altered the key to D Major to make the work more accessible to the trumpet players. The first eleven movements of the *Magnificat* come from Luke 1:46-55, and the twelfth movement is the traditional doxology.

The work is composed in a loosely chiasitic or symmetrical design, with the outer movements I and XII showing much similarity to one another – indeed, the choir sings “sicut erat in principio” (as it was in the beginning) right as the music from the beginning of the work returns in the orchestration. These two outer movements and movement VII, which occurs about halfway through the piece, are the only ones to include the full orchestra and choir. The choir performs one additional movement in the first half of the work (“Omnes generationes”) and one additional movement in the latter half of the work (“Sicut locutus est”). The flutes are featured prominently in movement VI and movement IX, while oboes are featured prominently in movements III and X. The opening half includes a vocal duet, while the closing half includes a trio. This careful arrangement of movements with different voicing and instrumentation is typical of Bach’s compositional style. His highly meticulous composition extended not only to his expansive melodies and advanced harmonies but also the structural design of his pieces.

I. Magnificat anima mea

Sung in Latin

Magnificat anima mea Dominum.

English Translation

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,

II. Et exsultavit spiritus meus

Victoria Sundin, soprano

Et exsultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo.

My spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

III. Quia respexit

MaKenna Wagnon, soprano

Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae;
Ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent.

For He has looked with favor on His humble servant.

From this day I will be called blessed.

IV. Omnes generationes

Omnes generationes.

By all generations.

V. Quia fecit mihi magna

Brian Collins, baritone

Quia fecit mihi magna, qui potens est,
et sanctum nomen eius.

The Almighty has done great things for me,
and holy is His Name.

VI. Et misericordia

Lizzie Stedman, soprano

Darcy Howser, tenor

Et misericordia eius a progenie in progenies
timentibus eum.

He has mercy on those who fear Him in every generation.

VII. Fecit potentiam

Fecit potentiam in brachio suo;
dispersit superbos mente cordis sui.

He has shown the strength of his arm,
He has scattered the proud in their conceit.

VIII. Deposuit potentes

Carson Robison, tenor

Sung in Latin

Deposuit potentes de sede,
et exaltavit humiles.

English Translation

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones
and has lifted up the humble.

IX. Esurientes implevit bonis

Miranda Kling, alto

Esurientes implevit bonis
et divites dimisit inanes.

He has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich He has sent away empty.

X. Suscepit Israel

Alisa Toy, soprano

Ellen Grover-Fricks, soprano

Jill Freuden, alto

Suscepit Israel puerum suum, recordatus
misericordiae suae,

He has filled the hungry with good things, and
the rich He has sent away empty.

XI. Sicut locutus est

Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros,
Abraham et semini eius in saecula.

The promise He made to our fathers,
to Abraham and his children for ever.

XII. Gloria Patri

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto,
sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper: et in
Saecula saeculorum. Amen.


Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the
Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be
forever. Amen.

Chorale, Children's Choir, & Guest Orchestra

Night of SilenceDaniel Kantor (b. 1960)
arr. John Ferguson (b. 1941)

Audience participation encouraged

Daniel Kantor is a Minneapolis-based composer, graphic designer, and entrepreneurial studies professor. He received his bachelor's degree in music from the University of St. Thomas and his master's degree in liberal studies from Hamline University. Kantor's best known composition is "Night of Silence," which was arranged for SATB choir and orchestra by John Ferguson, who served as professor of organ and church music at St. Olaf College. "Night of Silence" is a partner song which combines a newly composed melody with the traditional holiday carol "Silent Night." The opening melody is first presented by the sopranos and altos for the first verse, then the tenors and basses for the second verse. In the third verse, the sopranos and altos continue singing the opening melody while the tenors, basses, and the children's choir perform "Silent Night" simultaneously. We invite the audience to join in singing "Silent Night" as we repeat this verse a final time.



Cold are the people, winter of life,
We tremble in shadows this cold endless night,
Frozen in the snow lie roses sleeping,
Flowers that will echo the sunrise,
Fire of hope is our only warmth,
Weary, its flame will be dying soon.

Voice in the distance, call in the night,
On wind you enfold us, you speak of the light,
Gentle on the ear you whisper softly,
Rumors of a dawn so embracing,
Breathless love awaits darkened souls,
Soon will we know of the morning.

Spirit among us, shine like the star,
Your light that guides shepherds and kings
from afar,
Shimmer in the sky so empty, lonely,
Rising in the warmth of your Son's love,
Star unknowing of night and day,
Spirit, we wait for your loving Son.

Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
Round 'yon Virgin Mother and Child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Audience is welcome to join on repeat:

Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
Round 'yon Virgin Mother and Child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.