

The Notables



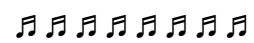
The Notables
Not just another pretty choir

presents

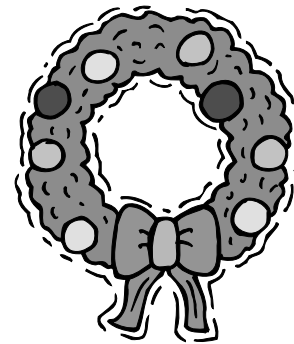
A Merry Little Christmas

El Segundo United Methodist Church

December 8, 2006



Paula Kelley, Director
Susan Leilua, Accompanist



Program Notes

Glory to God in the Highest, with new words by J. Paul Williams, and music by Benjamin Harlan, was written in 1990. The refrain is the canticle of the angels to the shepherds as mentioned in Luke 2:14. The bridge tells the Christmas story. It ends with one stanza of “O come, all ye faithful”.

A Manger Carol is a setting of words written by Michael Cockett in 1973. The music was written in 1985 for the choirs of Bethany United Methodist Church in Bethesda, Maryland.

Silent Night, Holy Night is probably the most popular Christmas song of all time. On December 24, 1818, in the small Austrian village of Oberndorf, Joseph Mohr, the assistant priest at the parish had a six-stanza poem, which he had written two years earlier, and handed it over to Franz Gruber, the acting organist, who that day wrote a suitable tune. The two of them performed it at the Christmas mass that evening, accompanied by guitar, and with choir. The song was well received, and it soon spread throughout Germany. It reached New York by 1839. The translation of the first two stanzas in this version is by Bishop John Freeman Young, from around 1876; the translation of the last stanza is anonymous. This arrangement is by David Schwoebel.

Bell Carol of the Kings combines two popular Christmas carols, “We Three Kings” and the Ukrainian “Carol of the Bells”.

Rev. John Henry Hopkins, Jr. (1820-91) was instructor in church music at General Seminary in New York City. He wrote both words and music to a song he titled “Three Kings of Orient” for a pageant at the seminary. There are five stanzas with a common refrain. Each of the three middle stanzas was intended to be sung by a soloist representing one of the three kings. This arrangement only uses the first, second, and last stanzas.

In 1916, Mykola Dmytrovich Leontovych (1877-1921), perhaps Ukraine’s best-known composer, wrote a winter well-wishing song called *Shchedryk*, which tells the story of a swallow flying into a house to proclaim a bountiful new year. (Contrary to popular belief, the song was not originally connected with the legend of all the bells on earth ringing at midnight, at the moment of the birth of Christ.) Twenty years later Peter J. Wilhousky (1902-1978) in the United States arranged the tune and wrote English words for what he titled “Carol of the Bells”, because the main melody reminded him of the ringing of bells. In 1947, Mary L. Hohman wrote a new and decidedly more sacred lyric for the tune. This arrangement uses the first few words of Hohman’s lyric, and most of Wilhousky’s.

Program

Glory to God in the Highest	Benjamin Harlan
A Manger Carol	Douglas Mears
Silent Night, Holy Night	arr. David Schwoebel
Bell Carol of the Kings	arr. Philip Kern
Do You Hear What I Hear?	arr. Harry Simeone
Mistletoe	Phyllis Aleta Wolfe
The Twelve Days Till Christmas	Chuck Turner
Mister Santa	Pat Ballard
Paula Kelley, Pamela Wrona, Sue Brennan, Colleen Okida	
I've Got My Love to Keep Me Warm	arr. Ed Lojeski
Melissa Albers, soprano solo	
Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas	arr. Anita Kerr
Fanfares and Processional for the Feast of Christmas	arr. Roy Ringwald

Do You Hear What I Hear? is a novelty song from 1962 by Noel Regney and Gloria Shayne telling a modern “legend” of the Christmas event. It has been recorded by many artists, from Perry Como to Whitney Houston. This arrangement is by Harry Simeone.

Another novelty song, this from a child’s view of a particular seasonal custom is **Mistletoe**, from 1989 by Phyllis Aleta Wolfe. It has, for many years, been a “Notables” favorite.

The Bible does not mention the date of Jesus’ birth, but the early Christians began observing festivals of Christ’s nativity. January 6 was observed in Egypt from as early as the 2nd century. In Rome in the 4th century, the date of December 25 was chosen, perhaps to override a pagan feast observed on or around that day. The two feasts were reconciled by counting from the 25th as the 12 days of Christmas. In the middle ages, it was declared to be a time of peace when warfare was not allowed. (Christmas truces were observed as late as World War I.) A version of the song “The Twelve Days of Christmas” is known from as early as the 13th century. Various symbolic meanings have been attached to the twelve gifts. And many parodies have been made of the song. We present yet another parody, **The Twelve Days Till Christmas**, written by Chuck Turner, in its second live performance.

Pat Ballard wrote the words and music to “Mister Sandman” in 1954. The song was recorded by The Chordettes and reached #1 on the Billboard charts that year. It was covered by Emmylou Harris, Dolly Parton, and Linda Ronstadt, among others, and became Chet Atkins first hit. Ballard later wrote the lyric to **Mister Santa** as well.

I’ve Got My Love to Keep Me Warm is a 2000 arrangement by Ed Lojeski of three songs having nothing to do with Christmas, but instead are “cold weather” songs.

“I’ve Got My Love to Keep Me Warm” was written by Irving Berlin for the 1936 film *On the Avenue*.

“Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow!” has become a popular seasonal song since it was released in 1945 with words by Sammy Cahn and music by Jule Styne.

“Button Up Your Overcoat” was written by B. G. DeSylva, Lew Brown, and Ray Henderson for the 1929 Broadway show *Follow Thru*.

Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas first appeared in the 1944 film *Meet Me in St Louis*, where it was sung by Judy Garland to 6-year-old Margaret O’Brien, at what was looking like their last Christmas before they would move to New York. The original version was so melancholy that Miss

Garland refused to sing it, so the songwriters Hugh Martin and Ralph Blane rewrote it. The current version is altered from the film version and was made famous by Frank Sinatra. This jazzy arrangement is by Anita Kerr, and contains snatches of several other seasonal songs.

Fanfares and Processional For the Feast of Christmas, arranged in 1984 by Roy Ringwald, is a collection of four traditional Christmas hymns.

In 1739 Charles Wesley published “Hark! how all the welkin rings/Glory to the King of kings” as one of his *Hymns and Sacred Poems*. This hymn was later adapted by others as “Hark! the Herald Angels Sing”. The tune was adapted from Felix Mendelssohn’s 1840 “Festival Song”, written to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Johann Gutenberg and his printing press. Mendelssohn thought that the tune should never be adapted for sacred music.

“Joy to the World” was written by Dr Isaac Watts as part 2 of his “imitation” of Psalm 98, and was originally titled “The Messiah’s Coming and Kingdom”, published in 1719 in *Psalms of David, Imitated in the Language of the New Testament*. The tune is by the American composer Lowell Mason (1792-1872). It was long thought to be by Handel, from *Messiah*, because the opening four notes are the same as the choruses “Glory to God” and “Lift up your heads”, and the refrain sounds like some of the orchestra part in “Comfort ye”.

“From Heav’n on High I Come to You” is a translation of a Christmas hymn by Martin Luther, originally *Vom himmel hoch da komm ich her*, which Luther wrote as an entertainment for his family on Christmas Eve, possibly in 1534. The first part would be sung by a man dressed as an angel, and the rest would be sung by children as the people’s response. The first stanza (the only one included in this arrangement) is from an older song. Part of an early translation of this carol appears as “Balulalow” in Benjamin Britten’s *A Ceremony of Carols*. The tune is also used at the close of Part II of J. S. Bach’s *Christmas Oratorio*.

“O Come, All Ye Faithful” is a translation of the Latin hymn *Adeste fideles*, written (probably) by John Francis Wade, a catholic exile from England, in 1743. It was translated into English around 1840. The verses do not rhyme and are not of consistent length, yet both the Latin and English versions are quite poetic.



The Notables

Soprano

Melissa Albers
Janine Anderson
Diana Brownson
Donna Stogryn
Pamela Wrona

Alto

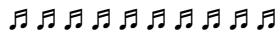
Nancy Brennan
Sue Brennan
Sharon Cascadden
Patty Jarvis-Bennett
Colleen Okida

Tenor

Jerry Bennett
Doug Carlson
Ed Fletcher
Bob Miller
Roy Okida

Bass

David Ellings
Nick Hrobak
Howard Korman
Tony McQuilkin

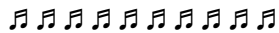


Upcoming Performances by The Notables

Tree Lighting Service

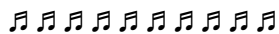
St Michael the Archangel Church
El Segundo

December 13, 2006
6:00 p.m.



On the Web:

www.thenotables.org



☞ Best wishes for a happy and blessed holiday season!

