

# A Christmas Offering

A Musical Telling of the  
Shepherds' Story  
Songs of Hope and Sharing

PRESENTED BY

The Chamber Chorale  
of Fredericksburg

DIRECTED BY

Mary-Hannah Klontz

Saturday, December 10, 2016

3:00 pm & 7:30 pm

The Presbyterian Church in  
Fredericksburg, VA  
810 Princess Anne Street

*The Chamber Chorale of Fredericksburg*



# THE CHAMBER CHORALE OF FREDERICKSBURG PERSONNEL

Mary-Hannah Klontz, **Director**  
Logan Fellenstein, **Guest Conductor**  
Karen Clotfelter, **Accompanist**  
Roy Smith, **Cello**  
Cheryl Mahoney, **Organ**

## Sopranos/Altos

Beth Bullock | Jennifer Eaton | Logan Fellenstein  
Alyssa Irby | Bonnie Johnson | Anne Knowlton  
Ruth Kochenour | Cheryl Mahoney | Hannah Massey  
Amy Miller | Laura Roberts\* | Rachel Rochte  
Autumn Ross\* | Judy Segaar | Karen Stone

## Tenors/Basses

Richard Abel III | Darrell Cooper | Jim Corrow  
Larry Crosswell | Joe Eveler\* | John Irby | Paul Klontz  
Jeff Massey | Walter Personius | Justin Smith | Roy Smith  
Jeremy Vaughn\* | David Way | Ken Wayne | Sean Wilson

\*SECTION LEADER

## Concert Volunteers

Debbie Taylor | Margaret Bridges  
Ushers from Stafford High School

## Board of Directors

<b>President</b>	Ruth Kochenour
<b>Vice President</b>	Jim Corrow
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<b>Librarian</b>	Hannah Massey
<b>Ex-Officio</b>	Mary-Hannah Klontz

## AS THE SHEPHERDS WERE ABIDING

*Alone in the night on a dark hill with pines around me, spicy and still,  
And a heaven full of stars over my head, white and topaz and misty red;*

*Myriads with beating hearts of fire that aeons cannot vex or tire; Up  
the dome of heaven like a great hill, I watch them marching, stately and  
still, And I know that I am honored to be witness of so much majesty.*

~ Sara Teasdale

Stars .....Ēriks Ešēnvalds

Justin Smith, Narrator

*Luke 2:8-9 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby,  
keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared  
to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were  
terrified.*

Messiah.....G. F. Handel (1685-1759)

**No. 10 For Behold Darkness Shall Cover the Earth**

**No. 11 The People That Walked in Darkness**

Joe Eveler, bass (3:00pm) John Irby, bass (7:30pm)

*Luke 2:10-11 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you  
good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the  
town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the  
Lord.*

**No. 20 He Shall Feed His Flock**

Logan Fellenstein, Alto and Amy Miller, Soprano

*Luke 2:12 This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in  
cloths and lying in a manger."*

The Little Drummer Boy.....Katherine K. Davis (1892-1980)

*Luke 2:13-14 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared  
with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest  
heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."*

Messiah.....G. F. Handel (1685-1759)

**Nos. 14-16 There Were Shepherds Abiding in Their Field**

Autumn Ross, Soprano

**No. 17 Glory to God**

*Luke 2:15-16 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the  
shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this  
thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." So they  
hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in  
the manger.*

**Star Carol**.....John Rutter  
Logan Fellenstein, Guest Conductor

*Luke 2: 17-18 When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.*

**Messiah**.....G. F. Handel (1685-1759)

**No. 3 Every Valley Shall Be Exalted**

Larry Crosswell, Tenor

**No. 4 And the Glory of the Lord**

*Luke 2: 19. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.*

*Sure on this shining night of star made shadows round, Kindness must watch for me this side the ground. The late year lies down the north. All is healed, all is health. High summer holds the earth. Hearts all whole. Sure on this shining night I weep for wonder wand'ring far alone Of shadows on the stars.*  
~James Agee

**Sure on this Shining Night**.....Morten Lauridsen

~ INTERMISSION ~

### GIFTS TO SHARE

Offering Music.....Cheryl Mahoney, organ  
Free will offering to benefit the **Fredericksburg Regional Food Bank**

**Good King Wenceslas**.....Finnish carol, arr. Ruth Elaine Schram

**Christmas Can Can** .....Walter Chase  
Larry Crosswell, Tenor

**White Christmas** .....Irving Berlin (1888-1989), arr. Audrey Snyder  
Cheryl Mahoney, Soprano and Alyssa Irby, Alto  
Beth Bullock, Autumn Ross, Jennifer Eaton, Hannah Massey,  
Laura Roberts, Rachel Rochte, Judy Segaar, Karen Stone

**The Hope of Christmas**.....Ann Hampton Callaway; arr. E. Lojeski  
Rachel Rochte, Soprano and Laura Roberts, Alto

**El Cielo Canta de Alegria** .....Pablo Sosa, arr. R. Bergs

**This Christmastide (Jessye's Carol)**.....Donald Fraser

**Carol Sing**

The First Noel | Silent Night | We Three Kings | Joy to the World

**True Light**.....Keith Hampton

## DIRECTOR'S NOTES...

In the tradition of a Lessons and Carols service, our concert illuminates the Christmas story through music, some familiar and some new. In the first half, we explore the light that pierces the dark night as we imagine it from the perspective of the unsuspecting shepherds. In the second half, we explore what is in the heart during this season; generosity, kindness, joy and a touch of laughter to help deal with any holiday stress!

Latvian composer, Ēriks Ešenvalds is a bright new star in the world of choral composers. The Guardian wrote that, "His rich, sonorous choral writing is in almost permanent ecstasy, with sopranos sailing over great waves of cluster chords, a colouristic vision ..." In alto Karen Stone's words, "I was out getting the paper with the dog around 5 am and it was simply beautiful; the first really cold, crisp winter morning! The stars were all very shimmery and bright and you could hear the angels singing in the peacefulness. That is the picture we paint - in my mind - when we sing **Stars**. We make the sound shimmer when we sing, like the stars this morning. Gives me goose bumps! I wish we could perform it outside under a sky as full of stars as this morning's was!"

**Messiah**, the most famous oratorio by George Frederic Handel, was premiered April 13, 1742 as a Lenten entertainment with a small chamber chorus and soloists from within the group. It was never performed in a church during Handel's lifetime. The tradition of performing it at Christmas was begun in Great Britain in 1791 and continued by the Boston Handel and Haydn Society in 1818.

**The Little Drummer Boy** was written by American composer, Katherine K. Davis, recorded in 1951 by the Trapp Family Singers and in 1958 by the Harry Simeone Chorale. Davis studied at Wellesley and the New England Conservatory of Music, and was granted an honorary Doctorate from Stetson University.

**Star Carol** was composed as a simple tune with the refrain able to be learned and memorized by children in a matter of minutes. The piece is originally scored for choir, joined by children and a small orchestra. The use of varied instrumentation is echoed in the choir through stylistic variance and juxtaposition among the choral voices and differing phrases. Through the piece, the listener is urged to join the musicians on a journey to Bethlehem as excited whispers grow to emphatic proclamations regarding Christ's birth. "Hurry to Bethlehem!"

The lyrics of **Sure on This Shining Night** are from the poem of the same title by James Agee, published in his 1943 book, "Permit Me Voyage." Another famous setting of the poem is by Samuel Barber. Musicologist, Nick Strimple says, Lauridsen is "the only American composer in history who can be called a mystic, whose probing, serene work contains an elusive and indefinable ingredient which leaves the impression that all the questions have been answered." Jeremy Vaughn, tenor, describes the impact of this work: "In the full gamut of choral works, some pieces are of course more impactful than others. I think for myself and many others, a great number of Lauridsen pieces fall at the top of that list. And for pieces like that, it can be difficult to get through the song without emotions compromising your efforts. It's a good thing we rehearsed it as often as we have because it has given me a chance to acclimate

to how it affects me, which has made it possible to focus on performing it well rather than focus too much on fighting the emotional impact of the piece that would easily distract from doing the piece justice. Of course there's no wringing the emotional impact out of us completely, but who of us would want that?"

The tune for **Good King Wenceslas** originated in Finland in the 1500's and was given English lyrics by John Mason Neale in 1853. King Wenceslas was King of Bohemia in the 10<sup>th</sup> century and is the patron Saint of the Czech Republic. The song tells of the legend of the generous king, and references St. Stephen's Day, celebrated on December 26<sup>th</sup>.

**The Christmas Can-Can** was written by a member of the male a cappella group, Straight No Chaser. It is a tongue-in-cheek parody of several Christmas songs and the Infernal Galop, written by Jacques Offenbach. The can-can was a music hall dance with high kicks popular in France in the 1840's, and most often danced to the Offenbach tune. The Radio City Rockettes are famous for this dance, here in the U.S.

Irving Berlin's **White Christmas** was first heard on the radio December 25, 1941, eighteen days after the attack on Pearl Harbor. As troops deployed to fight in WWII, "White Christmas" became a strong reminder of home. It was Bing Crosby's most requested song when he performed overseas. He hated performing it though, because it always made his listeners sad. Despite that, the soldiers clamored for it and would not let Crosby cut it from the show. We hope our rendition will bring smiles, not tears, as it bops along in doo-wop style.

Ann Hampton Callaway wrote and recorded **The Hope of Christmas**, which was nominated for a Grammy Award as Song of the Year. Ann is known for her philanthropic concerts to benefit disaster victims. The song urges us to keep the hope of Christmas alive long after the carols fade away.

**"El Cielo Canta Alegría"** is a worship song from Argentina that has become popular in the United States. Tenor, Justin Smith, lived in Argentina and coached the chorale in the Argentinian pronunciation of the Spanish lyrics.

El cielo canta alegría, Aleluya! Porque a tu vida y la mía las une el amor de Dios	Heaven is singing for joy, Alleluia! Because in your life and mine Are one in the love of god Alleluia!
Aleluya!, aleluya! Aleluya!, aleluya!	Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
El cielo canta alegría, Aleluya! Porque en tu vida y la mía brilla la gloria de Dios	Heaven is singing for joy Alleluia! Because in your life and mine Shines the glory of God
El cielo canta alegría, Aleluya! Porque tu vida y la mía proclamarán al Señor	Heaven is singing for joy Alleluia! Because in your life and mine Will proclaim the Lord Alleluia!

**This Christmastide**, lyrics by Jane McCullough and music by British-born Donald Fraser, was written for soprano Jessye Norman, who first performed it in 1987. It moves from gentle lullaby to grand celebration to grateful prayer throughout the seven verses.



The **Chamber Chorale of Fredericksburg**, founded in 1988, is dedicated to performing fine choral music for the Fredericksburg community. This select ensemble has been noted for its beautifully blended tone, wide dynamic range, highly expressive singing, and extraordinarily diverse repertoire, including works by many living composers. The Chorale has commissioned and premiered several works by Virginia composers. In addition to the regular season, the Chorale is frequently featured at area events. They are proud to be celebrating their 28<sup>th</sup> concert season! Some highlights of past seasons have included appearances with the University of Mary Washington Philharmonic, collaboration with local bluegrass musicians, and many memorable performances at Gari Melchers' historic home and art studio, Belmont. And this season they are proud to be appearing with the Rappahannock POPS Orchestra.



**Mary-Hannah Klontz** is Musical Director of the Chamber Chorale of Fredericksburg. She received a Bachelor of Music Education in French Horn, Piano and Voice from the University of Akron, a Master of Music in French Horn Performance from the Eastman School of Music and a Doctor of Musical Arts Degree in Choral Conducting from George Mason University. Her dissertation, "The Heart and Mind of Arnold Schoenberg's *De Profundis*," has been nominated for the national Julius Hereford Research Award.

Dr. Klontz teaches in the Arlington Virginia Public Schools and enjoys guest conducting honor choirs and composing. Her composition, "Point Me to the Stars," is published in the Henry Leck Creating Artistry Series with Hal Leonard Publishing. She is a Creative Motion Master Teacher on the faculty of the annual Windswept Summer Music Conference which will be held at Randolph-Macon University in July 2017. Mary-Hannah credits Creative Motion for her musical foundation.