

The Emmaus Chorale

15 August 2022



Dear Singers:

The last couple of weeks have been busy as we prepare for our upcoming season!

Nancy Keeler, our marketing lead, arranged for us to have a booth at the Emmaus Farmers' Market, to recruit new singers and to publicize our September 18 fundraiser. We have a spiffy new, blue feather flag! *Thanks, Nancy!* She's also drafted press releases, we've distributed posters and emailed many local churches with similar messages. I appreciate your spreading the word too, inviting singers to join us & friends to attend our concerts!

Suzanne Seem has been our point person with both Faith Church and East Penn Neighbors Helping Neighbors for the Hymn Sing & Ice Cream Social. Suzanne has also prepared the individual music folders for everyone to have on Aug. 29. *Yea, Suzanne!*

And thanks to Louise Schaefer's heroic efforts, the website has been updated & you are receiving this email blast!

Benjamin Britten's A Ceremony of Carols was the first major work I sang with my college glee club; it has remained one of my favorites. I have several recordings of it, and, for me, the Advent Season doesn't begin until I've listened to it...usually singing along by myself in the car. So, I'm excited that Janet has selected two of these Carols for us to sing! I hope these are among your favorites too. Janet also has engaged a young harpist to join us! More about him below.

I won't say exactly when I was in college, but it was a time of revived interest in early and medieval music and miracle plays...not when they originally were written! Britten's 1942 composition is based on early religious poems written in Latin, Middle and Early Modern English. Originally scored for a treble chorus plus harp accompaniment, Britten later scored the Carols for SATB choruses.

Here's a bit of background information on these two Carols:

The text of the early 15th century **There is no Rose** is a mixture of vernacular English and Latin and often is attributed to John Dunstable from the time of Henry VII's founding of Trinity College and its chapel at Cambridge.

The Emmaus Chorale

There is no rose of such vertu
As is the rose that bare Jesu.
Alleluia, Alleluia,
For in this rose containèd was
Heaven and earth in litel space,
Res miranda, Res miranda.

By that rose we may well see
There be one God in persons three,
Pares forma, pares forma.
The aungels sungen the shepherds to:
Gloria in excelsis, gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gaudeamus, gaudeamus.

Leave we all this worldly mirth,
and follow we this joyful birth.
Transeamus, Transeamus, Transeamus.
Alleluia, Res miranda, Pares forma, Gaudeamus,
Transeamus.

Alleluia – originally Hebrew *halālūyāh* praise ye Jehovah, then Greek *allēlouia*, included in Latin texts and introduced Middle English ~12th c.; **Res miranda** – miraculous thing; **Pares forma** – equal in form; **Gloria in excelsis** – Glory on high to God; **Gaudeamus** – Let us rejoice; **Transeamus** – Let us turn (from earth to heaven)

The **Deo Gracias** (Thanks be to God) is the rousing last carol in Britten's Ceremony, preceding the Recessional. It recalls the fall of humankind, based on Genesis 3, but with a 'happy ending.' Several early theologians (St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, and later, St. Thomas Aquinas) celebrated "Blessèd be the time That appil takè was" because it ultimately led to Christ's crucifixion and the redemption of all. Britten has set an emphatic, syncopated, staccato, and resounding finale of thanks to God!

Deo gracias! Deo gracias!
Adam lay i-bounden, bounden in a bond;
Four thousand winter thought he not too long.

Deo gracias! Deo gracias!
And all was for an appil, an appil that he tok,
As clerkès finden written in their book.

Deo gracias! Deo gracias!
Ne had the appil takè ben, the appil takè ben
Ne haddè never our lady a ben hevenè quene.

Blessèd be the time that appil takè was.
Therefore we moun singen.
Deo gracias!

The Emmaus Chorale

Benjamin Reber will be our guest harpist for our Christmas concert! He has performed in a variety of programs directed by Janet over the past three years. Although Benjamin has been playing the harp for just over five years he considers it his favorite and “the most divine instrument [he has] been blessed to experience.” (He plays *nine* other instruments!!) In addition, Benjamin is part of the worship team at his home church and has begun composing music. We’re excited to have this talented young man join us for our Christmas concert.

Looking forward to seeing you all on August 29th, 7pm, at Faith Presbyterian, Emmaus!!

Lynda