



# A Starry Sky

Saturday, December 18, 2021, 7:00 PM

# A STARRY SKY

UNA VOCIS SINGS MASKED THIS EVENING  
ON THE ADVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH.  
**WE REQUIRE EACH AUDIENCE MEMBER TO WEAR A MASK AS WELL.  
LET US SPREAD JOY RATHER THAN GERMS THIS EVENING!**

VENI, VENI EMMANUEL ED FRAZIER DAVIS

WHAT IS THIS LIGHT? ERIC WILLIAM BARNUM

ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH MATTHEW CULLOTON

THERE IS NO ROSE NORDKORCONNOR KOPPIN

JOSEPH TIMOTHY TAKACH

CAROL OF THE ANGELS ERIC WILLIAM BARNUM  
SOLOISTS: KYLIE HANSEN

CAROL OF THE BELLS NORDKOR ARR. PETER J. WILHOUSKY

SING JOY! NORDKOR ARR. MARK HAYES

HURON CAROL ARR. DALE WARLAND  
OBOE: SKYLER LEE

GOD'S MOTHER BE MATTHEW CULLOTON  
HARP: KRISTIN MAAHS

THREE NATIVITY CAROLS STEPHEN PAULUS  
HARP: KRISTIN MAAHS; OBOE: SKYLER LEE

IN THE BLEAK MIDWINTER ARR. ABBIE BETINIS  
SOLOISTS: KLAIRE DEVOS AND MATT GENDER  
HARP: KRISTIN MAAHS

STILL, STILL, STILL NORMAN LUBOFF  
HARP: KRISTIN MAAHS

COVER ART: Stock photo of a wooded evening under A STARRY SKY

# A STARRY SKY

## A LETTER FROM DENNIS

We're back! You're back! Tonight is our night. After two years audience, singers, composers, and lyricists are once again present to each other and participating in the celebration of this evening's music. We will all go home tonight satisfied that we've returned to some semblance of normalcy. You'll look up at the night sky and see the stars and appreciate both the passage of time and eternity.

Stars...for millennia humans have navigated by them and told stories about them. Two thousand years ago the baby Jesus was born under the Star of Bethlehem and three magi followed it to pay him homage. Tonight we sing under the same vault of heaven.

It's so easy to take talents and opportunities for granted; this time of separation has forced us to ponder what is really important. Community. Family. Coming together. Shared perspective. Music. I've always marveled at and felt pride that North Iowa is a region steeped in musical heritage, but until recently I hadn't thought to devote an entire concert to explore those gifts. Una Vocis prides itself on supporting emerging composers, but it was during this period of empty Thursday evenings, when we should have been rehearsing together, that my desire to celebrate the talents of Midwestern composers came to the fore.

And so our recording project, Prairie Christmas, was born. Initially we had planned to record our concert material in time to have CDs available for sale tonight, but that was not to be. After a year and a half of not singing together, we needed time to find our voices and our breath support. Our timeline for recording was overly optimistic, but we worked hard and it's paid off. I'm proud to present tonight's concert. I'm proud we are performing such amazing pieces composed by fellow Midwesterners. I'm grateful you've come to participate in the evening. Tonight my heart is full of appreciation and fellowship.

The compositions we're singing this evening speak to individual experiences of the eternal mysteries. From grappling with esoteric questions about the nature of God Incarnate to Joseph's uncertainty about how to parent a newborn, these are experiences that transcend a given era or locale. They are universal. And they have been posed and crafted by their composers, pondered and practiced by this evening's singers, and now await your experience and reception.

Putting together tonight's concert has been such a rewarding experience that we plan to focus on our fellow regional composers again for Christmas 2022. We are blessed with many gifted Midwestern composers from which to choose, and we treasure the opportunity to share them with you.

So this Christmas and next we are celebrating universal experiences and our shared Midwestern experience of them. Let's be thankful for those familiar, shared perspectives.

As you head home tonight, take a moment to gaze upon the starry sky.

Dennis Lee, Artistic Director  
Una Vocis Choral Ensemble

*Building on the musical heritage of North Iowa, the mission of Una Vocis Choral Ensemble is to cultivate and celebrate the connections among audience, singers, and composers. This diverse community entertains, educates, and uplifts through innovative programming and artistic distinction.*

# A STARRY SKY

PLEASE WEAR YOUR MASK AND SILENCE YOUR PHONE.

VENI, VENI EMMANUEL

ED FRAZIER DAVIS

The text of *Veni, Veni Emmanuel* (*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*) dates to at least the eighth century, a product of the monastic tradition; its author is lost to time. Known as the *O Antiphons* or *Advent Antiphons*, each antiphon (a short sentence sung or chanted before the recitation of a psalm or canticle) invokes the Messiah under one of his particular titles familiar from the writings of the prophet Isaiah. Then follows a petition for God's people that is relevant to the name under which the Messiah has been addressed; each antiphon concludes with the expectant cry of *Rejoice! Emmanuel approaches!* Traditionally, during the Octave before Christmas (December 17-23) the antiphon assigned to that day would be sung during Vespers immediately before the Magnificat. John. M. Neale's 1851 translation from the Latin is the most widely known English version.

Though the familiar melody *Veni Emmanuel* sounds as though it were a chant written specifically for this text, it was originally music for a Requiem Mass in a fifteenth-century French Franciscan Processional. Thomas Helmore (1811-1890) adapted this chant tune and published it in Part II of his *The Hymnal Noted* (1854). [Hymnary.org](http://Hymnary.org)

Originally from Chicago, Ed Frazier Davis (b. 1989) is an English-American composer, baritone, and conductor living and working in Kansas City, Missouri. He is the founder and director of the Institute for Choral Creativity, an organization dedicated to building composer-ensemble relationships and fostering the creation and appreciation of contemporary choral music. He is also Senior Composer-in-Residence for the William Baker Choral Foundation, a group of choirs in which our Melissa Shallberg (soprano) sang before moving to North Iowa.

"Described as 'at once deeply emotional and sublime' (*KC Arts Beat*) and lauded for its 'compelling, colourful orchestration' (*Musical Toronto*), Ed's music is polystylistic and draws from many eclectic influences, from Renaissance madrigals and Anglican church music to postminimalism and video game music. He has composed for a wide variety of media, but as an experienced singer he has a particularly strong affinity for writing for choirs." [efdavis.com](http://efdavis.com)

*Veni, veni Emmanuel!*  
*Captivum solve Israel,*  
*Qui gemit in exilio,*  
*Privatus Dei Filio.*

*Refrain:*  
*Gaude! Gaude! Emmanuel*  
*Nascetur pro te, Israel!*

*Veni, veni Adonai! [b]*  
*Qui populo in Sinai*  
*Legem dedisti vertice,*  
*In maiestate gloriae.*

*Veni o Jesse virgula!*  
*Ex hostis tuos ungula,*  
*De specu tuos tartari*  
*Educ, et antro barathri.*

O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here,  
Until the Son of God appear.

*Refrain:*  
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel*  
*Shall come to thee, O Israel.*

O come, o come, Thou Lord of might!  
Who to Thy tribes on Sinai's height,  
In ancient times did give the law  
In cloud and majesty and awe.

O come, Thou Rod of Jesse!  
Free Thine own from Satan's tyranny;  
From depths of hell Thy people save  
And give them vict'ry o'er the grave.

“Set to a rich and meaningful lyric spun by Charles Anthony Silvestri, *What is this light?* is filled with vibrant colors, tuneful lines, and rich harmonies. Commissioned by Tracy Ressiguie and Staley High School, this text and tune speak to feelings of the sacred holiday season in both a humble and expansive way, with chords and stylings that hint to the classic Midwest American choral tradition. It is a beautiful meditation on the wondrous paradox of the concept of incarnation and eternal love.” *graphitepublishing.com*

A conductor and composer, Eric William Barnum (b. 1979) seeks new ground in the choral field. Working with choirs of all kinds, his collaborative *leitmotif* endeavors to provide intensely meaningful experiences for singers and audiences. Barnum is currently the Director of Choral Activities at Drake University in Des Moines.

“Born in 1965 in Las Vegas, Charles Anthony Silvestri lives in Lawrence, Kansas, and teaches History at Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas. ‘Collaboration between composer and poet is magic,’ Silvestri argues. ‘It opens for the composer opportunities for organic and dynamic creation not possible with previously published poetry and gives the poet the thrill and responsibility that his words will be sung--not read--and will be heard attached to an emotional soundtrack. There’s magic and power in the marriage of words and music.’” *charlesanthonyilvestri.com*

What is this light that enlightens our darkness?  
 What is this joy that enjoins us to love?  
 How can infinity fit in such limits?  
 How can below welcome Heaven above?

What shall we do to prepare for his coming,  
 When all of our worship, our music, our arts  
 Fail, insufficient, to honor his glory?  
 All we need do is to open our hearts.

How can the power that opened the heavens,  
 Founded the earth and scattered the stars,  
 How can the author of all of creation  
 Deign to abide where we, miserable, are?

## ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH

## MATTHEW CULLOTON

This arrangement by Matthew Culloton (b. 1976) of the traditional French carol was premiered by his ensemble, The Singers -- Minnesota Choral Artists. Morningstar Music Publishers notes that “in a truly unique arrangement of this Christmas favorite on the tune *Gloria*, the composer establishes a motif with a repeated *Gloria* theme creating a rhythmic pulse that is prevalent throughout the piece.” An experienced and celebrated music educator, Culloton is also an adjunct faculty member at the University of Saint Thomas in St. Paul.

Keyte and Parrott, editors of *The Shorter New Oxford Book of Carols*, show eight verses to this French carol and note that they were sung as a conversation between the shepherds and a group of women. The English version traditionally includes only four verses, of which Culloton employs only the first three. The text makes clear, however, that two different groups are interacting. Shepherds sing the first verse and the women question them in the second; the singer of the third verse is ambiguous, but one can interpret this verse as being sung by both groups as an invitation for the listeners to join the shepherds and women as they visit Bethlehem to see and adore the Christ Child.

*Gloria!*

Angels we have heard on high,  
 sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
 and the mountains in reply,  
 echoing their joyous strains.

*Gloria!*

Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
 Why these joyous strains prolong?  
 What the gladsome tidings be  
 which inspire your heav'nly song?

*Gloria in excelsis Deo!*

Come to Bethlehem and see  
 him whose birth the angels sing;  
 come, adore on bended knee  
 Christ the Lord, the newborn King.

A medieval English poem in honor of the Virgin Mary, There Is No Rose has been set to music many times between the 15th century and today. In this text, the “rose” refers to Mary herself and celebrates her role in the Incarnation of the Savior. Originally, the text was in Middle English, so that “such virtue” was “swych vertu.” Koppin has shortened the original text, removing a few stanzas (verses) from the middle of the poem. The complete text includes short Latin interpolations after each verse, in the manner of the second verse and *res miranda*; Latin was the primary literary language of medieval England before Henry VIII declared himself head of the Church in England in 1536 and removed most Latin from the liturgy. This text’s earliest surviving source, a manuscript in Trinity College, Cambridge, dates from c. 1420, and it gives no clues as to the identity of the composer.

Connor Koppin (b. 1991) grew up in Mason City and is an award-winning composer and conductor of choral music. His music is known to be “exceptionally crafted” (*Melisma*) and is able to closely tie music and text. His compositional output consists primarily of choral music but also includes works for instrumental ensembles, film scores, and songwriting. He has written for ensembles such as The Wartburg Choir, Luther College Collegiate Chorale, Luther College Norsemen, and The Young New Yorkers’ Chorus. In 2014 his piece, “i carry your heart” was selected as repertoire for the Iowa All-State Chorus, and was previously performed at Carnegie Hall. Koppin currently lives in Des Moines, IA with his wife Chelsea and their two dogs Arvo and Ezra. He is a choral director at Valley High School in West Des Moines.

There is no rose of such virtue  
As is the rose that bare Jesu:  
Alleluia.

For in this rose contained was  
Heaven and earth in little space:  
*Res miranda.* (Marvelous things)

There is no rose of such virtue  
As is the rose that bare Jesu:  
Alleluia.

Leave we all this worldly mirth,  
And follow we this joyful birth:  
Alleluia. Amen.

## JOSEPH

## TIM TAKACH

“One character [in the Christmas story] most often overlooked is Joseph; he’s about to assume the role of father to a boy who is not his. The piece starts simply, on the offbeats, as if he hesitates. But as his thoughts turn to who this child is to become, the music shifts to major mode, and becomes warm and hopeful. When he experiences his rebirth, he gains confidence and strength, and his statements start on the downbeats.”

Takach (b. 1978) studied music composition at St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN, and has frequent national work as a composer-in-residence. He is a full-time composer and lives in Minneapolis with his wife and two sons.

a starry sky is in my arms  
I hear my breathing -- now not only mine  
each dawn is different now that you are here

sometimes I stare at you, sometimes I tremble  
I stand above you, my head a moon  
and you down there on the sweet straw

each dawn is different now that you are here

I hear my breathing, now not only mine

all my dreams for you, wondering  
who you might be, how far you may have come  
to be with us

each dawn is different now that you are here

sometimes I feel among waves too steep,  
my boat too small  
for these wide hands to have made

when I’ve been working, when the sun is low,  
I sink into the stream and lie there, pale as stone  
and still this burning that I feel  
so deep inside me

how are you mine, child?  
how are you ever mine?  
I am like a father  
I am like a father

so let the old Joseph die, the new be born  
hold high this lantern for the world to see --  
this child, this light, this saving one

a starry sky within my arms, oh heart  
each dawn is different now that you are here

Listen closely...the tune and text of *In dulci jubilo* is the source for the carol *Good Christian Men, Rejoice*.

This arrangement by Matthew Culloton (b. 1976) captures and augments its jaunty tune. *The Hymns and Carols of Christmas* ([http://www.hymnsandcarolsofchristmas.com/Hymns\\_and\\_Carols/Notes\\_On\\_Carols/in\\_dulci\\_jubilo.htm](http://www.hymnsandcarolsofchristmas.com/Hymns_and_Carols/Notes_On_Carols/in_dulci_jubilo.htm)) provides a fascinating backstory to this carol. "One night in 1328, the German mystic and Dominican monk Henrich Suso (or Seuse) had a vision in which he joined angels dancing as the angels sang to him. In Suso's biography (or perhaps autobiography) it was written:

"Now this same angel came up to the Servant [Suso] brightly, and said that God had sent him down to him, to bring him heavenly joys amid his sufferings; adding that he must cast off all his sorrows from his mind and bear them company, and that he must also dance with them in heavenly fashion. Then they drew the Servant by the hand into the dance, and the youth began a joyous song about the infant Jesus, which runs thus: *In dulci jubilo*, etc." (A fuller excerpt from Suso's biography can be found in the notes of Keyte and Parrott, *The New Oxford Book of Carols*.)

*In dulci jubilo* is one of the oldest and most familiar of the macaronic carols, songs that shift between Latin and the vernacular language of the composer, in this case, German; the song first appears in 1400 C.E. in *Codex 1305* in the Leipzig University Library.

Robert Lucas de Pearsall (1795-1856), who translated the German portions of the text into English, noted in January 1837: "The original melody employed, as a *Cantus firmus* [an existing melody used as the basis for a polyphonic composition], in [this] composition, is to be found in an old German book published in the year 1570 -- which, from its title and contents, appears to have contained the ritual of the Protestant congregations of Zweibrueken and Neuberg. Even there it is called 'a very ancient song (*uraltes Lied*) for Christmas-eve;' so that there can be no doubt that it is one of those old Roman Catholic melodies that Luther, on account of their beauty, retained in the Protestant service. It was formerly sung in the processions that took place on Christmas-eve, and is so still in those remote parts of Germany where people yet retain old customs. The words are rather remarkable, being written half in Latin and half in the upper German dialect....Of the melody there can be but one opinion; namely, that which in spite of religious animosity, secured it the approbation of the Protestant reformers, and that of the German people during many centuries." *hymnsandcarolsofchristmas.com*

Culloton wrote the arrangement of *Angels We Have Heard on High* (p. 3 of this program) and also an arrangement of *God's Mother Be*, which will be performed in the second half of tonight's concert. Culloton currently lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

<i>In dulci jubilo</i>	( <i>In sweet joy</i> )	<i>O Patris caritas!</i>	( <i>O love of the Father!</i> )
Let our homage show		<i>O Nati lenitas!</i>	( <i>O mercy of the Son!</i> )
Our heart's joy reclineth		Deeply were we stained	
<i>In praesepio,</i>	( <i>In a manger</i> )	<i>Per nostra crimina;</i>	( <i>Through our sins;</i> )
And like a bright star shineth		But thou hast gained	
<i>Matris in gremio.</i>	( <i>In [your] mother's lap.</i> )	<i>Coelorum gaudia!</i>	( <i>The joys of heaven!</i> )
<i>Alphaes et O[mega].</i>	( <i>Beginning and ending.</i> )		
<i>O Jesu parvule!</i>	( <i>O infant Jesus!</i> )	O that we were there.	
I yearn for thee alway!		<i>Ubi sunt gaudia,</i>	( <i>Where are joys,</i> )
Hear me, I beseech thee,		Where, if they be not there?	
<i>O Puer optime!</i>	( <i>O best of boys!</i> )	There are angels singing	
My pray'r let it reach thee,		<i>Nova cantica!</i>	( <i>New songs!</i> )
<i>O Princeps gloriae,</i>	( <i>O Prince of Glory</i> )	There the bells are ringing	
<i>Trahe me post te.</i>	( <i>Draw me after you [to heaven]</i> )	<i>In Regis curia.</i>	( <i>In the King's courts.</i> )
		O that we were there	
		<i>In dulci jubilo.</i>	( <i>In sweet joy.</i> )

## CAROL OF THE ANGELS

ERIC WILLIAM BARNUM

“With a both poignant and expansive lyric by renowned conductor and poet Robert Bode, *Carol of the Angels* explores the color and joy of the Christmas season without being overly sentimental or saccharine. Balancing both the sacred and secular elements of the holiday, the text and music synthesize to provide a panorama of sound and textures that will thrill audiences and challenge singers in the choir. It would be a fabulous closer to any winter or holiday program for the ambitious choir.” *Quotation from Graphite Publishing; incidentally, this publishing house is co-owned by composers Tim Takach and Jocelyn Hagen, husband and wife.*

*Carol of the Angels* is the creative collaboration between two current composers and conductors, Eric William Barnum and Robert Bode. In addition to composing, Bode (b. 1957) writes poetry. He is in his fourth year as Artistic Director of Choral Arts (Seattle); in addition, Bode is on the faculty at the Conservatory of Music and Dance at the University of Missouri at Kansas City. Una Vocis performed Barnum’s *What is this light?* earlier in this concert; Barnum’s biographical information appears on page 3 of this program. Barnum and Bode have melded their creative talents six times to date.

As we hurry to and fro  
With boxes rushing on  
I think I hear this time of year  
A certain steady song

*Ave Rex caelorum!*  
*Christus natus est!*

In cities bustling and in shops  
With festive patrons teeming  
I hear a thing, a whispering,  
Like angel voices, seeming

*Ave Rex caelorum!*  
*Christus natus est!*

I stop and listen quietly  
Inside earth’s music pounding  
Between the chords a space affords  
And I hear it sounding

*Ave Rex caelorum!*  
*Christus natus est!*

Its heaven’s music that I hear  
Rejoicing at a birth;  
It grows until it overflows  
And carols fill the earth.

*Ave Rex caelorum!*  
*Christus natus est!*

## NORDKOR

### CAROL OF THE BELLS

ARR. PETER WILHOUSKY

Written in 1914 by Ukrainian composer Mykola Leontovych (1877-1921), *Carol of the Bells* is based on the four-note ostinato folk theme, “Shchedryk.” The chant was associated with the celebration of the new year (*Shchedry vechir* means New Year’s eve in Ukrainian). In 1936, Peter J. Wilhousky (1902-1978), the director of the NBC Radio Orchestra, arranged it for his orchestra, setting its principal theme as a bell melody, and penned English words for it. The original folk song is a winter “luck song;” the lyrics tell of a swallow flying into a household to sing of wealth that will come with the following spring. Adolescent girls in Ukraine would sing this folk song while going house to house in celebration of the new year. As the girls sang the tune predicting good fortune, they were rewarded with baked goods or other treats. There is a Slavic legend that at midnight, when Jesus was born, all the bells on earth started to ring of their own accord. This legend appears to have been the inspiration for Wilhousky’s English lyrics. *from program notes of Phoenix Choral, December 2018*

Hark! how the bells, sweet silver bells,  
All seem to say, “throw cares away.”  
Christmas is here bringing good cheer,  
To young and old, meek and the bold.  
Ding, dong, ding, dong, that is their song,  
With joyful ring, all carolling.  
One seems to hear words of good cheer  
From ev’rywhere, filling the air.

Oh, how they pound, raising the sound,  
O’er hill and dale, telling their tale.  
Gaily they ring, while people sing,  
Songs of good cheer, Christmas is here!  
Merry, Merry, Merry, Merry Christmas!  
Merry, Merry, Merry, Merry Christmas!  
On, on they send, on without end,  
Their joyful tone to every home.

NORDKOR  
SING JOY

ARR. MARK HAYES

The always creative and award-winning Mark Hayes has crafted a Christmas medley of classic beauty, incorporating *Joy to the World*, *For Unto Us a Child Is Born* from *Messiah* and *O Come, All Ye Faithful*; this arrangement seamlessly transitions from one selection to the next.

Mark Hayes was born in Ladysmith, Wisconsin, in 1953. He was raised in a creative musical environment, beginning piano lessons at age ten and developing his improvisational skills at an early age. After receiving a bachelor's degree in piano performance magna cum laude from Baylor University in 1975, he entered a career in composing and arranging music. His compositions and arrangements are known for their unique American sound, drawing from such diverse musical styles such as gospel, jazz, pop, folk and classical. Mr. Hayes' personal catalog, totaling over 1,500 published works, includes work for solo voice, solo piano, multiple pianos, orchestra, jazz combo, small instrumental ensembles, and choruses of all kinds.

Whether concertizing on the other side of the globe or composing at his home in Kansas City, Missouri, Mark feels blessed to live out his mission "to create beautiful music for the world."

*Joy to the world....*

*For unto us a Child is born....*

*O come, all ye faithful....*

HURON CAROL

ARR. DALE WARLAND

Father Jean de Brébeuf, a Jesuit, lived among the Hurons in Canada for 23 years (1626-1649); his passion for languages was as great as his desire to bring the Gospel to the native peoples. Brébeuf wrote this Christmas carol in the Huron (also called Wyandot) language and set it to a traditional French melody. The theology of the original version suffers greatly in translation to English and the attempt to impose rhyme on the concepts. Some critics feel the English translation highlights the simplistic view adopted by many Europeans toward native peoples. The original Huron text, however, is a nuanced catechism lesson employing imagery that resonated with the Huron people, who kept the carol as a part of their culture even after Brébeuf was tortured and killed by members of a tribe warring with the Hurons. Father Brébeuf is the patron saint of Canada, and this carol the first Canadian Christmas carol.

'Twas in the moon of winter-time,  
when all the birds had fled,  
that mighty Gitchi Manitou  
sent angel choirs instead;  
Before their light the stars grew dim,  
And wond'ring hunters heard the hymn:  
Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born;  
*in excelsis, in excelsis gloria.*

Within a lodge of broken bark  
the tender Babe was found,  
a ragged robe of rabbit skin  
enwrapped his beauty round.  
But as the hunter braves drew nigh,  
The angel song rang loud and high:  
*in excelsis, in excelsis gloria.*

O children of the forest free,  
O sons of Manitou,  
The holy Child of earth and heav'n  
is born today for you.  
Come kneel before the radiant Boy,  
Who brings you beauty, peace, and joy.  
Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born,  
*in excelsis gloria.*

*I syng of a mayden* (sometimes titled *As Dewe in Aprille*) is a Middle English lyric poem or carol of the fifteenth century celebrating the Annunciation and the Virgin Birth of Jesus. The Catholic Church holds that Mary was conceived immaculately, without the taint of Original Sin that would make her unworthy to bear the Savior. Medieval Christianity held that once Mary had chosen to accept God's call, she conceived and gave birth without pain; this was viewed as a consequence of her continued status as a virgin.

Considered one of the most beautiful Medieval poems written in the vernacular, this text has inspired numerous composers of modern choral and vocal works, including Benjamin Britten and Matthew Culloton.  
*Culled from Wikipedia*

I sing of a maiden  
that is makeles; (matchless)  
King of all kings to her son  
she chose.

He came so still  
Where his mother lay.  
As dew in April that falleth  
on the spray.

He came also still  
Where his mother was,  
As dew in April that falleth  
on the grass.

Mother and maiden was never  
none but she;  
Well may such a lady  
God's mother be.

He came also still  
To his mother's bow'r,  
As dew in April that falleth

THREE NATIVITY CAROLS

STEPHEN PAULUS

The pieces Paulus selected to arrange for *Three Nativity Carols* are numbers 38, 39, and 40 in *The Oxford Book of Carols* (1928). Paulus (1949-2014), a favorite of the members of Una Vocis, arranged harp and oboe accompaniment for these carols, giving them an exotic, mystical aura. Hailed as a "bright, fluent inventor with a ready lyric gift" by *The New Yorker*, Stephen Paulus was one of his generation's most prolific and respected composers. Born in New Jersey, Paulus' family moved to Minnesota when he was two; he graduated from the University of Minnesota and made his personal and professional life in Minneapolis.

THE HOLLY AND THE IVY

Probably of pagan origins, given the references to Celtic pagan winter solstice symbols such as holly, ivy, and the running of the deer, this song was eventually absorbed into the Christian carol tradition, managing to survive even Oliver Cromwell's stern Puritan Commonwealth of the seventeenth century.

*The holly and the ivy,  
When they are both full grown,  
Of all the trees that are in the wood,  
The holly bears the crown:*

The holly bears a berry,  
As red as any blood,  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ,  
To do poor sinners good. *Chorus*

*Chorus: The rising of the sun  
and the running of the deer,  
The playing of the merry organ,  
Sweet singing in the choir.*

The holly bears a prickle,  
As sharp as any thorn,  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ  
On Christmas Day in the morn. *Chorus*

*The holly bears a blossom,  
As white as the lily flower,  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ,  
To be our sweet Saviour. Chorus*

The holly bears a bark,  
As bitter as any gall,  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ  
For to redeem us all: *Chorus*

## THIS ENDRIS NIGHT

Though *This Endris Night* as it is found in *The Oxford Book of Carols* (1928) has fifteen verses, Paulus trims his arrangement to verses 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, and 13. The OBC provides help with two arcane phrases in this fifteenth-century carol: *This endris night* – the other night, a few nights ago. *Ever among* – every now and then. Note that plurals and possessives in Old and Middle English were formed with an *-es* ending; the apostrophe first came into use in the early sixteenth century.

This endris night I saw a sight,  
A star as bright as day;  
And ever among, a maiden sung,  
“Lullay, by by, lullay,”

“Mary mother, I am thy child,  
Though I be laid in stall;  
For lords and dukes shall worship me,  
And so shall kinges all.”

This lovely lady sat and sung,  
And to her child did say:  
“My son, my brother, father, dear,  
Why liest thou in hay?”

“And in thy arm thou hold me warm,  
And keep me night and day,  
And if I weep and may not sleep,  
Thou sing, By by, lullay.”

The child then spake in his talking  
And to his mother said:  
“Yea, I am known as heaven-king,  
In crib though I be laid.”

## WONDER TIDINGS

Again Paulus trims the verses of the original carol as printed in *The Oxford Book of Carols* (1928), this time from four verses to three. Arcane vocabulary: *cure* – charge; *quaint* – strange, curiously wrought, dainty, graceful. One word NOT given by The OBC is *gan* in the first line of the fourth verse; we have discovered this word is an obsolete past tense for *gin*, which meant *to go*. So that line reads “That loveliest (of women) went to greet her child.”

This carol may have been used as a processional with the congregation singing the part of the chorus as a “messenger” dressed in robes and carrying a staff walked down the center aisle, stopping to sing the verses as he proceeded through the nave. *The Oxford Book of Carols*, 1928, p. 79

*Chorus:* What tidings bringest thou, messenger,  
Of Christes birth this jolly day?

*Chorus*

A babe is born of high nature,  
The Prince of peace that ever shall be;  
Of heav’n and earth he hath the cure:  
His lordship is eternity:  
Such wonder tidings ye may hear,  
That man is made now Goddes peer,  
Whom sin had made but fiendes prey.

That loveliest gan greet her child,  
“Hail, son! Hail, brother! Hail, father dear!  
“Hail daughter! Hail, sister! Hail, mother mild!”  
This hailing was of quaint mannere:  
Such wonder tidings ye may hear,  
That hailing was of such good cheer  
That mannes pain is turned to play.

*Chorus*

A babe is born, alleluia!  
A babe is born!

A wonder thing is now befall;  
That King that formed star and sun,  
Heaven and earth and angels all,  
Now in mankind is new begun:  
Such wonder tidings ye may hear,  
An infant now of but one year,  
That hath been ever and shall be ay.

“Christina Georgiana Rossetti (1830-1894)...[was the] author of three collections of mostly religious poetry and four devotional books[;] she came from a family steeped in the arts... Christina’s father, Gabriele Rossetti, was a professor of Italian at King’s College, London, living in exile in England. Her brothers, Dante Gabriel and William Michael, gave birth to a nineteenth-century art movement, the Pre-Raphaelites, for which the beautiful Christina often served as a model...for portraits of the Madonna...Her most famous hymns are the Christmas texts, *Love Came Down at Christmas* composed in 1885 and *In the Bleak Midwinter*, the latter first published as the poem *A Christmas Carol* in *Scribner’s Monthly* in January 1872. It first appeared as a hymn in *The English Hymnal* (1906), where it was paired to a tune by the...English composer Gustav Holst (1874-1934).” [umcdiscipleship.org/resources/history-of-hymns-in-the-bleak-midwinter](http://umcdiscipleship.org/resources/history-of-hymns-in-the-bleak-midwinter)

Abbie Betinis (b. 1980) alters the wording of the final three stanzas of her arrangement to fit her composition. The content of these verses are very much in line with Rossetti’s original poem. Betinis was born in Wisconsin, attended St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN, and makes her home in St. Paul. The grand niece of famed Christmas carol composer Alfred Burt, Abbie Burt Betinis is the third generation of the Burt family to compose and send an original carol to family and friends as part of her annual Christmas card. Each new Burt Family Carol has premiered on Minnesota Public Radio since she took up the tradition in 2001. *Wikipedia*

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan, earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone; snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow, in the bleak midwinter, long ago.	Angles and archangels may have thronged the air, Shepherds, bests and wise men may have gathered there, But only his mother in her tender bliss Blessed the new redeemer With a kiss.
--	--

Christ a homeless stranger, so the gospels say, cradled in a manger and a bed of hay; in the bleak midwinter, a stable place sufficed, Mary and her baby, Jesus Christ.	What can I give you, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb; If I were a wise man I would do my part; Yet what I can I give you: give my heart.
--	---



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# ARTISTIC LEADERSHIP

## DENNIS LEE, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Dennis Lee grew up in Mason City and graduated from NIACC with an associate's degree in pre-engineering and from Iowa State University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in vocal music performance. In addition to founding and directing Una Vocis, Dennis has served as Director of Music at First Presbyterian Church since 1997 during which time he produced and directed eight performances of Handel's *Messiah*. In 2007-2008 he served as an adjunct music faculty at Waldorf College directing Sangkor, the collegiate women's choir. Dennis has led several performances of choral works for the North Iowa Chapter of the American Guild of Organists and, in 1997, served as Music Director for the Mason City Community Theatre and Stebens Children's Theatre production of *Fiddler on the Roof*; in 2011, Dennis directed a Mason City Community Theatre production of *Amahl and the Night Visitors*.



Before moving back to Mason City in 1995, Dennis and his wife, Camille, lived in Seattle and sang with the Seattle Symphony Chorale. Dennis and Camille have two sons, Tristyn and Skyler. When not performing and directing music, Dennis enjoys singing, waterskiing, and spending time with his wife and sons.

Photo courtesy of D. Delperdang 2014



## MARY JANE CRAIL, ACCOMPANIST

Mary Jane Crail grew up in West Des Moines and studied piano with Lulu Anderson, who was Roger Williams' first piano teacher. Mary Jane accompanied in the vocal music department of Valley High School until her graduation in 1964. She majored in organ/church music at Drake University, studying with Russell Saunders, Arthur Poister, and Carl Staplin.

Mary Jane has served as organist at United Methodist churches in West Des Moines, Webster City, and Clear Lake, where she is in her 43st year. She has been conference organist for the UMC annual conferences, recitalist for the "Organists of Iowa" series at Iowa State University, and serviced as organist for the UMC bishop's installation. Mary Jane is a past Dean of the local

chapter of the American Guild of Organists and teaches private piano and organ.

Mary Jane lives in Clear Lake where she loves to read, compose, and watch golf "when there's time." Four grandchildren further brighten her life.

## GUEST INSTRUMENTALISTS

### KRISTIN MAAHS, HARP

Kristin Maahs performs extensively throughout Central Iowa. For over twenty years she has added a special touch to hundreds of weddings and community and corporate events with her music; Kristin also teaches harp at Iowa State University and Grinnell. As an active harpist she has performed with the Des Moines Metro Opera, the Des Moines Symphony, the Ames Children's Choirs, the Joffrey Ballet, the Irish band The Chieftains, and the Odyssey Trio; *A STARRY SKY* is Kristin's twelfth performance with Una Vocis.



### SKYLER LEE, OBOE

This is Skyler's eighth appearance with Una Vocis, the first as boy soloist in 2008 for the Bernstein *Chichester Psalms*. Skyler performed the role of Amahl with the MCCT production of *Amahl and the Night Visitors* in 2012, and the male lead in *Brigadoon* as a senior at Mason City High School. Skyler was a five year Opus singer and four year all-stater, and at Iowa State is a member of Iowa State Singers and Shy of a Dozen. He continues to study oboe with Dr. Amy Christiansen when time allows. Skyler is a senior at ISU majoring in vocal music performance.

# UNA VOCIS MEMBERS

PERFORMING IN TONIGHT'S CONCERT

DENNIS LEE, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

MARY JANE CRAIL, ACCOMPANIST

## SOPRANO

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Leah Groh  
Kylie Hansen  
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Jodi Korth  
Maria Meyer  
Melissa Shallberg

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Judy Delperdang  
Camille Lee  
Laurie Lichman  
Joan Murray  
George Riesen

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Mark Johnson  
Tristyn Lee  
Mark Pittman  
Anthony Riesen  
Bill Riesen  
Stan Sundberg

# NORDKOR MEMBERS

PERFORMING IN TONIGHT'S CONCERT

MELISSA SHALLBERG, DIRECTOR

Born and raised in North Iowa, Melissa Shallberg and family moved back to the area in 2011 and joined Una Vocis that autumn. Melissa holds a bachelor's degree in Music Education from Iowa State University and a master's degree in Vocal Pedagogy and Music Education from the University of Kansas. Melissa's years of teaching and familiarity with youth repertoire as well as her boundless energy and enthusiasm have successfully launched NordKor, the premiere non-school affiliated youth choir in our area. In addition to directing NordKor, Melissa teaches at Waldorf University in Forest City and serves as vocal coach for Una Vocis.

Clarke Beard  
Logan Borseth  
Abi Brinkley  
Cecelia Clark

Bergen Klaehn  
Brian Lollar  
Charlotte Lollar  
Alida Lundberg

Anna McCluskey  
Aaron Ostrander  
Kaylee Ostrander  
Zion Ondoma

Sydney Schilling  
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# UNA VOCIS PREMIERES

All are world premieres unless otherwise noted.  
\* Denotes works commissioned by Una Vocis Choral Ensemble.

2005 -- A Century of Choral Music  
*The Sixty-Seventh Psalm* -- Stephen Paulus

2008 -- Composers' Gift  
*enter no* -- Geoff Delperdang  
*your little voice* -- Geoff Delperdang  
*If I Forget Thee, O Jerusalem*  
(U.S. Premiere) -- Nimrod Borenstein  
*Idols* -- Nimrod Borenstein  
*The Voice of Melody* -- Nimrod Borenstein  
*Unresolve* -- William Backlin  
*As I Am* -- William Backlin  
*Fear Not, My Flock* -- Maedeane Sappenfield

2009 -- ICDA Guest Choir  
*A Fantasia of French Carols* -- Carl Staplin

2010 -- Out of the Depths  
*\*De Profundis Clamavi* -- William Backlin  
*Meteorological Madrigal* -- William Backlin

2011 -- ICDA Guest Choir  
*Etchings of Time* -- Ralph Kendrick

2012 -- Goodnight Moon  
*\*Goodnight Moon* -- Eric Whitacre

2012 -- Alleluia  
*Away in a Manger* -- Mary Jane Crail

2013 -- The Voices  
*In the palm of your hand* -- Britlin Lee Losee  
*The Silver Lining* -- Britlin Lee Losee  
*\*The Voices* (Iowa Premiere) -- Dale Warland

2014 -- We Will Be Glad!  
*\*Trust and Kindness* -- Alice Parker

2014 -- Emerging Sound  
*\*Heaven-Haven* -- Connor Koppin  
*A Clear Midnight* -- Michael Betz

2015 -- Nexus  
*\*Negative Spaces* -- Ola Gjeilo

2015 -- My Lord Has Come  
*Ave Maria* (SATB premiere) -- Britlin Lee Losee

2016 -- This Child, This Light  
*\*Joseph* -- Timothy Takach

2017 -- Eternal Bloom  
*\*Each Morning She Walks* -- Charles Anthony Silvestri

2019 -- Joy to the World!  
*If You Want* -- Nathan Elsbernd

2020 -- Una Vocis Online Fundraiser  
*\*Turning Twilight* -- Amelia Ouverson

2021 -- Frank Lloyd Wright celebration  
*\*To Build a Home* -- Amelia Ouverson

*Amelia Ouverson is Una Vocis Composer-in-Residence 2021*

We invite you to designate memorial or celebratory tributes to the Una Vocis Commissioning Fund. Your gift will support Una Vocis in fulfilling its goal to cultivate and celebrate the connections among audience, singers, and composers.

# MUSIC DEDICATIONS

One way the community can support Una Vocis is through the donation of music.

The selection of our repertoire is in the hands of Artistic Director, Dennis Lee.

Below is the list of dedications and donors for A STARRY SKY.

<i>Veni, Veni Emmanuel</i> Ed Frazier Davis	<i>Available for purchase</i>
<i>What is this light?</i> Eric William Barnum	<i>Available for purchase</i>
<i>Angels We Have Heard on High</i> Matthew Culloton	<i>Given in memory of David Wojcik</i> by the members of Una Vocis
<i>There Is No Rose</i> Connor Koppin	<i>Given in celebration of local composers</i> by Dennis & Camille Lee
<i>Joseph</i> Timothy Takach	<i>Purchased with donated funds of supporters</i> by Una Vocis Commissioning Fund
<i>In dulci jubilo</i> Matthew Culloton	<i>Available for purchase</i>
<i>Carol of the Angels</i> Eric William Barnum	<i>Available for purchase</i>
<i>Huron Carol</i> Arr. Dale Warland	<i>Given in celebration of music in our family</i> by Dennis & Camille Lee
<i>God's Mother Be</i> Matthew Culloton	<i>Given in the spirit of Christmas</i> by Tim & Laurie Lichman
<i>Three Nativity Carols</i> Stephen Paulus	<i>Given in celebration of the friends we meet through music</i> by Kerry Dolch Molln
<i>In the Bleak Midwinter</i> Arr. Abbie Betinis	<i>Available for purchase</i>
<i>Still, Still, Still</i> Norman Luboff	<i>Given in memory of Dee Leaman; she knew from the day he was</i> <i>born that Jay had the lungs to sing!</i> by Jay & Kris Leaman

## FOLLOW UNA VOCIS ON FACEBOOK!

We will continue to get the word out through traditional media sources, but you can get breaking news by LIKING Una Vocis on FACEBOOK. Scan our Facebook Quick Response Code (QR Code) with an app like RedLaser on your smart phone and LIKE Una Vocis to receive updates as they happen!



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**Trinity Lutheran Church** supports Una Vocis by providing rehearsal and storage space.

**Dennis and Camille Lee** design our posters, tickets, advertising, and program cover art.

**First Citizens Bank** posts concert information on their electronic sign boards.

**George Riesen** researches and writes the programs.

**The families of Una Vocis members** support the choir by encouraging our participation in singing.

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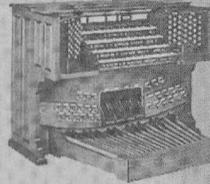
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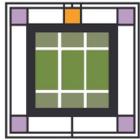
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