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SINGERS  
*Choral Music Since 1964*

PRESENT

CHRISTMAS  
IN  
STORY AND SONG



St. Matthew's  
Episcopal Church  
Sunday, Dec. 7<sup>th</sup>, 2014

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December 2014 - A Message from the President To Our Supporters and Friends

Welcome to the 2014 - 2015 season of The Cantata Singers! Each season is another opportunity to provide the community with the kind of musical experience The Cantata Singers is dedicated to providing; High quality, free performances of great music for the entertainment of our audiences, and I look forward to another enjoyable season of great choral music!

Since you are reading this welcome letter in the program I also want to thank you for being with us today. I hope you enjoy the performance today as much as all the musicians and I enjoy performing in them. It seems I am not alone in describing why this group is such an important thing to me:

"Life seems to go on without effort when I am filled with music." (George Eliot, *The Mill on the Floss* <http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/tag/power-of-music>)

One of the most important parts of performing is the experiences of the audiences shared with us. Again, thank you for being part of The Cantata Singers.

There is a great deal that our audience members can do to support the group. You have already made the most important contribution by being part of this performance. We also ask our audiences to help spread the word to others in the community as we seek new audience members and funding to keep The Cantata Singers going.

- Please go to [www.cantatasingers.com](http://www.cantatasingers.com) for more information about us.
- Send an email to [cantatasingers@ymail.com](mailto:cantatasingers@ymail.com) to get on our mailing list.
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So, sit back, relax, and enjoy the performance and thank you for being a part of the Cantata Singers.

Sincerely, Bill Brodinski, President, The Cantata Singers

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## The Cantata Singers are:

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Ruth Bruning, (section leader), Susan B. Hartney, Cathy Hogan, Dottie Hoos, Kathy Lovell, Susan Nagle, Robin Fitzgerald, Joy McFarland, Jessica Malone, Jean Tedrick

### Alto

Phyllis Bishop, Loueda Bleiler, (section leader), Joan Cunnings, Veronica Marisa, Frances McLaren, Nancy Pangia, Jane Poliseo, Cora Range, Sally Davis, Martha Horton, Jean Papandrea, Pat Peters, Katie Vrabel

### Tenor

Bill Brodginiski, Tom McCloskey, Richard Perry, Michael Hartney, Gary Tucker, (section leader)

### Bass

Tony Ciccariello, Dave Rappleye, (section leader), David Rosplock, Mark A Wood, Stephen Nagle, Raymond Bulkley, Bob Tedrick, Joe Ponzi, David Mix

**Music Director** - Will Wickham, **Rehearsal Accompanist** - Frances McLaren

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# Cantata

## SINGERS

*Choral Music Since 1964*

### Upcoming Cantata Singer Events

Sunday, 4 January, 2015, 6 pm - Spring rehearsals

begin - Parish Hall at St. Matthew's Church, Horseheads

Sunday, 8 March, 2015, 3 pm - *Where Sacred Waters Divide* - Free Concert of all original music in collaboration with the music department at CCC

Thursday, 12 March, 2015, 12:30 pm - *Where Sacred Waters Divide*

School Day encore performance at CCC (Corning Community College)

Saturday, 11 April, 2015, 10 am - Young Performers Competition Audition

Sunday, 17 May, 2015, 4 pm - *A Choral Celebration of Life*, Free concert at Grace Episcopal Church, Elmira

Today's Program

**The Christmas Story** . . . . . Hugo Distler (1908-1942)

**I. Introduction:** "The people that walked in darkness"

**II. The Christmas Story**

Chorale: "Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming"

Chorale: "Isaiah 'twas foretold it"

Chorale: "O Savior, hear our pleading"

Chorale: "This Flower whose fragrance tender"

The Shepherds and the host of angels

Chorus of Angels: "Glory to God in the highest"

Chorus of Shepherds: "Let us go now"

Chorale: "At once the shepherds answered"

Chorus of Wise Men: "Where is the new-born King"

Chorus of Chief Priests and Scribes: "In Bethlehem"

Chorale: All thanks to God the Father:

Chorale: Now sing we all, so be it!"

**III. Final Chorus:** "For God So Loved the World"

Evangelist - Bill Brodginiski

Angel - Gary Tucker

Elizabeth - Kathy Lovell

Mary - Pat Peters

Herod - Ray Bulkley

Simeon - Joe Ponzi

**- - Intermission - -**

**The Nativity Madrigals** . . . . . Daniel Pinkham (1923-2006)

1. Guardian Owl

2. Get Up! Said Mary

3. What did the Baby Give the Kings?

4. How They Brought the Good News By Sea

5. After

Piano - Frances McLaren

**Praesepe** . . . . . Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887 - 1959)

Soli Altos - Phyllis Bishop, Loueda Bleiler

Sally Davis, Veronica Marisa

Jean Papandrea

**Carol of Joy** . . . . . Dan Forrest (1983 - )

Piano - Frances McLaren

**Mozart's Fa-la-la** . . . . . W. A. Mozart/arr. P. Kern

**Throw the Yule Log On, Uncle John** . . . PDQ Bach (P. Schickele)

**Good King Kong Looked Out** . . . . . PDQ Bach (P. Schickele)

**Carols to Sing** (*words next page*)

The Cantata Singers offer special thanks to Rev. Michael Hartney, the staff and people of the Episcopal Parishes of Schuyler County, Rev. Wanda Copeland, the staff and the people of St. Matthew's, Horseheads, for making our December 2014 performances possible.

## O Little Town of Bethlehem

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. O little town of Bethlehem,<br>How still we see thee lie;<br>Above thy deep and dreamless sleep<br>The silent stars go by.<br>Yet in thy dark streets shineth<br>The everlasting light;<br>The hopes and fears of all the years<br>Are met in thee tonight.  | 3. How silently, how silently<br>The wondrous gift is given!<br>So God imparts to human hearts<br>The blessings of His heav'n.<br>No ear may hear His coming,<br>But in the world of sin,<br>Where meek souls will receive<br>Him, still The dear Christ enters in. |
| 2. For Christ is born of Mary;<br>And gathered all above,<br>While mortals sleep, the angels keep<br>Their watch of wandering love.<br>O morning stars, together<br>Proclaim the holy birth;<br>And praises sing to God the King,<br>And peace to men on earth. | 4. O holy Child of Bethlehem,<br>Descend to us, we pray;<br>Cast out our sin, and enter in,<br>Be born in us today.<br>We hear the Christmas angels<br>The great glad tidings tell;<br>O come to us, abide with us,<br>Our Lord Emmanuel.                           |

## Silent Night

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Silent night! Holy night!<br>All is calm, All is bright,<br>Round yon virgin Mother and child,<br>Holy infant so tender and mild,<br>Sleep in heavenly peace,<br>Sleep in heavenly peace.      | 2. Silent night! Holy night!<br>Shepherds quake at the sight,<br>Glories stream from Heaven afar,<br>Heav'nly hosts sing Hallelujah,<br>Christ the Savior is born,<br>Christ the Savior is born. |
| 3. Silent night! Holy night!<br>Son of God, Love's pure light,<br>Radiant beams from thy holy face,<br>With the dawn of redeeming grace<br>Jesus, Lord at thy birth,<br>Jesus, Lord at thy birth. |  |

## Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

1. Hark! the herald angels sing. "Glory to the newborn King:  
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, Join the triumph of the skies;  
With angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"  
Hark! the herald angels sing. "Glory to the newborn King!"
2. Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the Everlasting Lord!  
Late in time behold Him come, Offspring of the Virgin's womb;  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; Hail th' Incarnate Deity,  
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.  
Hark! the herald angels sing. "Glory to the newborn King!"
3. Hail the heav'n born Prince of Peace! Hail the Son of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all He brings, Ris'n with healing in His wings.  
Mild He lays His glory by, Born that we no more may die,  
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them second birth.  
Hark! the herald angels sing. "Glory to the newborn King!"

## Program Notes

Music, as the universal language, speaks directly from the composer to the listener in the most basic, purely emotional terms possible. Choral music, then, has the power to deliver not only the emotional content imbued by the composer, but also the very story that sets that emotional reaction in motion. And what more universally recognized story is there in Western Civilization than the birth of Jesus Christ? And what a story to sing! To begin this Advent and Christmas season, we offer these distinctly different looks at this great story.

Hugo Distler set the original story as it appears in the Gospels in "The Christmas Story." Distler's music is based on the seemingly-as-old hymn tune "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming" that was already ancient when Michael Praetorius created his famous harmonization in 1609. The original tune winds through and around the settings of the Biblical texts. Listen for Distler's use of multiple rhythms, mixed meters and many voiced polyphony to paint a musical soundscape that clearly paints the action of the tale.

Poet Norma Farber offers a rather unique, sometimes humorous look at the Nativity in the poems that are the texts for Daniel Pinkham's "Nativity Madrigals." If there is even a shard of truth in the legend that animals can talk at midnight on Christmas Eve, these pieces are what the animal kingdom was buzzing about when the shepherds and wisemen were offering their gifts to the Child. Pinkham's harmonic language and angular melodies work superbly as the vehicle for Farber's fanciful texts.

16th century Brazilian missionary priest and poet José de Anchieta wrote of the birth of Christ in a way that could explain the humble birth of the great Savior to the indigeous people of late 1500's South America. Heitor Villa-Lobos sets these gentle, meaning-filled words in like manner, evoking the gentle nature of the missionary and the sweet peacefulness of the story in one flowing and beautiful setting of the original Latin text.

As you will surely hear, there is beauty, comfort, and a great deal of fun that can be found in the stories of so great a birth. Those stories, and the music that accompanies or carries them, continue to gladden and inspire even now, more than two millenia later. Perhaps the words of Eileen Berry, the poet responsible for inspiring Dan Forrest's "Carol of Joy" sum it up best: Oh, friendless world, to *you* is the song! All Heaven's joy to you may belong... To you, a Saviour is Born!"

Soli Deo Gloria! - - will wickham

## Texts and Translations

**I. Introduction** The people that walked in darkness have seen a light, a great light and over them that dwelled in land of darkness, hath the light shined. Unto us a Child is born, a Son is given and the government shall be upon His shoulder and He shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, ever Father, Prince of peace. Of the increase of His dominion and of His peace there shall be no end, from this time forever more.

## II. The Christmas Story

### 1) Chorale

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming,  
From tender stem hath sprung.  
Of Jesse's lineage coming,  
As men of old have sung;  
It came, a flow'ret bright,  
Amid the cold of winter,  
When half spent was the night.

### Recitative: Evangelist, Angel, & Mary

**2) Chorale** - Isaiah 'twas foretold it,  
The Rose I have in mind,  
With Mary we behold it,  
The virgin mother kind;  
Through God's holy and eternal will.  
She bore to men a Savior,  
At midnight calm and still.

### Recitative: Evangelist & Elizabeth

**3) Magnificat (Mary)** - My soul doth magnify God the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoic'd in God, my Savior. For He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden, for behold, from hence-forth all generations shall call me blessed. For He that is mighty hath done great things, unto me. He is mighty and Holy is His name. And His mercy is on them that fear Him.

*(accompanying chorale)* - O Savior, hear our pleading.

Thou gracious Child above.  
Through all they dreadful suff'ring,  
By thy great gift of love,  
From this sad vale of tears  
Bring Thou our souls to heaven,  
dispel our earthly fears.

### Recitative: Evangelist

### 4) Chorale

This Flower, whose fragrance tender  
With sweetness fills the air,  
Dispels with glorious splendor  
The darkness everywhere;  
True man, yet very God,  
From Sin and death He saves us,  
And lightens every load.

### Recitative: Evangelist & Angel

**5) Chorus** Glory to God in the highest.  
And peace on earth, to men of good will.

### Recitative: Evangelist

**6) Chorus** Let us go now even unto  
Bethlehem and see this thing which  
is come to pass. Which the Lord  
hath made known unto us.

### Recitative: Evangelist

### 7) Chorale

At once the shepherds answered and hastened on their way.  
They found the lovely Christ Child with Mary meek and mild.  
On high the angels sang their praise to God the Father  
Upon his heav'nly throne.

**Recitative: Evangelist**

**8) Chorus** Where is the newborn King of the Jews?  
We have seen a brightly shining star in the Eastern land!  
And we are coming to worship Him.

**Recitative: Evangelist**

**9) Chorus** In Bethlehem, in Judaea

**Recitative: Evangelist & Herod**

**10) Chorale**

All thanks to God the Father,  
to God the Holy Ghost  
Who by a human mother  
made His dear Son our Host  
We pray by that sweet Progeny  
Deliver us from all evil  
From sinning set us free.

**Recitative: Evangelist & Simeon**

**11) Chorale**

Now sing we all, So be it!  
Amen, so shall it be.  
Our hopes, bound in one Spirit,  
All find their end in Thee.  
O Jesus, grant our prayer,  
To praise Thee in Thy glory  
And in Thy glory share.

**III. Final Chorus** For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son so that all men on Him believing should never perish. Amen

**Nativity Madrigals**

**Guardian Owl**

Company coming by night,  
Who are you? Whoo?  
I live here. I have the right  
To know what's new.  
Have you come in fear, in flight?  
Is the hang of your life askew?  
Then welcome, come so far,  
So much ado.  
I guard the stable a star

is pointing to.  
Enter, the door's ajar,  
To fit the fullest of you.  
Go in, I'll check you off.  
You're overdue.  
Don't push or pinch or shove  
For a better view.  
Just say your name with love  
When I ask, Who are you? Whoo?

**Get Up! Said Mary**

Get up! Said Mary to the three grown  
Men on their knees.  
And since her child was newly born,  
They rose, somewhat stiff, to please  
The serious mother, who  
Was shooing off assorted nosy  
Animals, Shoo! Shoo!  
That sniffed her infant's toes.  
Sh! (with severity) It's too much

Commotion for so small  
A thing. Let him breath. Don't touch!  
Oh what a frightening stableful!  
Go now, all of you. Let me raise him  
As one among others, a regular  
Boy. Thanks for your praise,  
And what you say about a star.  
I mean, these first few days:  
Don't make me look too far.

**What Did the Baby Give the Kings?**

What did the Baby give the Kings?  
Three things:  
Firstly, a promise, as of every birth  
That freshens earth,  
Like dawn which hints anew

That what was dreamed may yet  
come true.  
Then hope,  
As when you're thrown a rope  
Or nearly drowning in a tidal wave.



This gift as well the Baby gave.  
Lastly, a laugh like rising sun  
Before the day has quite begun,  
So still a mirth, a note  
So quiet in the throat  
Of morning Kings could only guess  
At all its shining tunefulness  
Amazed, as monarchs are

Who bring their royal wealth from  
far,  
The Kings turned back with gifts so  
rare,  
So right,  
They hovered in the homeward air  
Like early light.

### **How They Brought the Good News by Sea**

Fish of the sea couldn't come  
Not over dry ground.  
They loitered in sight of the Holy Land,  
And listened for word from Bethlehem.  
Close as they dared, whales swam,  
Trying not to cough.  
Dolphins surmounted the vaults of surf.  
Starfish hushed the spitting foam.  
Deep denizens left their gloom  
For the surface, this once.  
The shallows uncovered half their fins.  
Freshwater gills left lake and stream.  
Crabs took a chance or a whim  
To climb the shale  
With crooked claw and jagged shell.  
They hustled back when they heard of Him.  
They took the word to the tide -  
Which was going out.  
Minnow told plaice, plaice told pout.  
Hear all about it! News! They cried.

### **After**

After the taming, after  
The manger moment, the Baby  
The bowing down, the gifts,  
The gathering round for one  
Last look- thereafter when kings  
Go home and shepherds tend  
Again their flocks and stars  
Resume their usual course -  
Oh then let creatures leave

According to their kind,  
Lion fierce and serpent  
Fanged and boar a brute  
Undaunted by that stable  
Pause: the wild of world  
Natural still, still  
A glory like a birth.

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### **Praesepe (Poet - Padre Jose de Anchieta (1563)**

But meanwhile it is delightful to think about the origins of so great a birth  
and the city of the newborn God:  
the house that has welcomed God,  
the palace (that welcomed) the Christ  
the soft pillow that has provided a bed for the infant  
the attendants who assisted the holy mother.

The melodious songs that resounded for the little boy:  
He is born in Bethlehem, beneath the roof of an old house:

Naked the earth, naked the newborn it receives.

A manger is his bed;

Here (there is) an ox, here a slow-moving ass,  
Here the silent old man hovers near the face of the little boy.

His gracious mother rejoices;

the tiny baby from his tender little mouth utters a cry; the heavens  
resound with melody unheard.

### **Carol of Joy**

Poem by Eileen Berry

Green leaves all fallen,  
withered and dry;  
Brief sunset fading,  
dim winter sky.

Lengthening shadows,  
Dark closing in...

Then, through the stillness,  
carols begin!

Oh fallen world, to you is the song

Death holds you fast  
and night tarries long.

Jesus is born, your curse to  
destroy!

Sweet to your ears, a carol of Joy!

Pale moon ascending,  
solemn and slow;

Cold barren hillside,  
shrouded in snow;

Deep, empty valley  
veiled by the night;

Hear angel music—  
hopeful and bright!

Oh fearful world,  
to you is the song

Peace with your God,

and pardon for wrong!

Tidings for sinners,  
burdened and bound—

A carol of joy!

A Saviour is found!

Earth wrapped in sorrow,  
lift up your eyes!

Thrill to the chorus  
filling the skies!

Look up sad hearted  
witness God's love!

Join in the carol  
swelling above!

Oh friendless world,  
to you is the song!

All Heaven's joy  
to you may belong!

You who are lonely,  
laden, forlorn

Now unto you,  
A Saviour is born!

*Merry Christmas*

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March 8, 3 pm or March 12, 12:30 pm, at Corning Community College - *Where Sacred Waters Divide*, a collaboration with the music department at CCC  
May 17, 4 pm, Grace Episcopal Church, Elmira - *A Choral Celebration of Life* featuring the music of Chemung County native Dan Forrest



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...is an annual competition sponsored by The Cantata Singers of Elmira for the purpose of providing local youth between the ages of 15 - 20 the opportunity to further develop and showcase their musical talents, and to encourage and promote the love and continued performance of live classical music in the Southern Tier.

Who is eligible? Accomplished musicians between the ages of 15-20. Vocal or instrumental solo and ensemble entries will be accepted.

Any classical composition is acceptable for performance, encompassing all art music from Renaissance to the present.

Competition Winner: The winning student will receive a cash scholarship, and the opportunity to perform their winning piece at the May 2015 Cantata Singers' concert in Elmira.

Submit completed applications to [cantatasingers@ymail.com](mailto:cantatasingers@ymail.com) or by USPS to Cantata Singers, PO Box 952, Elmira, NY 14902

Applications are available at [cantatasingers.com/young-performers-competition/](http://cantatasingers.com/young-performers-competition/) - All contestants must preregister.

Auditions will take place on April 11, 2015 at 1st Presbyterian Church, Clinton St., Elmira, NY



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We'll be starting again at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, 408 S. Main St., Horseheads on Sunday, Jan. 4, at 6 pm.



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