

Christmas Concert 2006
Do You Hear What I Hear?

Choir files in from the side door and sits.

Narration:

How still the bells in steeples stand
Till, swollen with the sky,
They leap upon their silver feet
In frantic melody! - Emily Dickinson

For centuries the bells of churches in every land have rung warning and announcement. Church bells would ring for an hour before midnight on Christmas Eve as if to warn the powers of darkness of the approaching birth of the Savior. Then, right at midnight, they would change to a joyous pealing, ringing out the announcement, "Christ is born!"

In 1913 Helen Keller wrote: Hear, oh, hear! The Christmas bells are ringing peal upon peal, chime upon chime! Full and clear they ring, and the air quivers with joy. What is the burden of their music as it floats far and wide? Awake! Awake! it says. A great Change is coming -- peace upon earth, good-will to all men.

Then ring all the bells on earth! 'Tis Christmas Day in the morning of brotherhood. Ring man's great joy from pole to pole, from sea to sea! Tug with mighty arms at the bell rope that the sound may ring out full and far and long! Light the world's Christmas tree with stars. Heap offerings upon its mighty branches. **Choir Stand here** : Bring the Yule-log to the world-fireplace. Deck the world-house with holly and mistletoe and proclaim everywhere the Christmas of the human race!

Song - Caroling, Caroling – Choir Stays Standing

Narration:

*What can I give Him,
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 can I give Him?
Give my heart.* - (Christina Georgina Rossetti)

The Star Carol – Choir Sit and David goes to Organ

Narration

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

The holly bears a prickle as sharp as any thorn
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ on Christmas Day in the morn

The holly bears a bark as bitter as any gall;
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ for to redeem us all.

O the rising of the sun
And the running of the deer
The playing of the merry organ
Sweet singing of the choir

The Holly and the Ivy – **Organ Solo – David leaves organ and joins choir**

Narration: Luke 2: 7-9

7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. – **Choir Stands here**

9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

Amen – **Men Sit, Change Conductors**

Narration:

Luke 2: 10-14

10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

12 And this *shall be* a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

On This Still Silent Night, - **Women remain Standing – Men stand on Q**

Narration:

“Where is he that is born king of the Jews? **Men Stand here** For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. – Matthew 2:2

Do You Hear What I Hear?, -**Choir Sit**
Cello Solo – What Child is This? – **Choir Stand on Q**

Narration:

In A Child's Christmas in Wales, Dylan Thomas writes: There were church bells, too."
"... in the bat-black, snow-white belfries, tugged by bishops and storks. And they rang their tidings over the bandaged town, over the frozen foam of the powder and ice-cream hills, over the crackling sea. It seemed that all the churches boomed for joy **Choir Stands Here** under my window; and the weathercocks crew for Christmas, on our fence."

Carol of the Bells,
Some Children See Him,
Praise to the Lord – **Choir Sit**

Narration:

In Charles Dickens *A Christmas Carol* the ghost of Jacob Marley cries at a trembling Ebenezer Scrooge: "Business! Mankind was my business. The common welfare was my business; charity, mercy, forbearance, and benevolence, were all my business. The dealings of my trade were but a drop of water in the comprehensive ocean of my business!"
This eloquent expression of our grand human purpose, suggests that it is our inner thoughts, our motives, our priorities, which make our lives empty or full. What we are in our whole being is so much grander than anything we can measure by surface values. In Goethe's words, "We are shaped and fashioned by what we love." As we decorate trees, squeak out our carols to the neighbors, eat too much rich food, labor over our yearly letter, rush madly from store to store and party to party (Breathe) let us remember that our lives have a fullness and a richness that this season can only decorate. **Choir Stands Here** Let the child within find the wonder of the season. It is beginning to look a lot like Christmas.

It's Beginning to Look A Lot Like Christmas – **Choir Sit, - and Ensemble Assembles**

Narration: We thought that _____, and
_____ might get a chuckle out of this next section by (c)Harvey Ehrlich,
1992

SANTA DEALS WITH POLITICAL CORRECTNESS

'Twas the night before Christmas and Santa's a wreck...
How to live in a world that's politically correct?
His workers no longer would answer to "Elves",
"Vertically Challenged" they were calling themselves.
And labor conditions at the North Pole
Were alleged by the union to stifle the soul.
Four reindeer had vanished, without much propriety,
Released to the wilds by the Humane Society.
And equal employment had made it quite clear
That Santa had better not use just reindeer.

So Dancer and Donner, Comet and Cupid,
Were replaced with 4 pigs, and you know that looked stupid!
The runners had been removed from his sleigh;
The ruts were termed dangerous by the E.P.A.
And people had started to call for the cops

When they heard sled noises on their roof-tops.
Second-hand smoke from his pipe had his workers quite frightened.
His fur trimmed red suit was called "Unenlightened."
And as for the gifts, why, he'd ne'er had a notion
That making a choice could cause so much commotion.
Nothing of leather, nothing of fur,
Which meant nothing for him. And nothing for her.
Nothing that might be construed to pollute.
Nothing to aim. Nothing to shoot.
Nothing that clamored or made lots of noise.
Nothing for just girls. Or just for the boys.
Nothing that claimed to be gender specific.
Nothing that's warlike or non-pacific.
No candy or sweets...they were bad for the tooth.
Nothing that seemed to embellish a truth.
And fairy tales, while not yet forbidden,
Were like Ken and Barbie, better off hidden.
For they raised the hackles of those psychological
Who claimed the only good gift was one ecological.
No baseball, no football...someone could get hurt;
Besides, playing sports exposed kids to dirt.

Dolls were said to be sexist, and should be passe;
And Nintendo would rot your entire brain away.
So Santa just stood there, disheveled, perplexed;
He just could not figure out what to do next.
He tried to be merry, tried to be gay,
But you've got to be careful with that word today.
His sack was quite empty, limp to the ground;
Nothing fully acceptable was to be found.
Something special was needed, a gift that he might
Give to all without angering the left or the right.
A gift that would satisfy, with no indecision,
Each group of people, every religion;
Every ethnicity, every hue,
Everyone, everywhere...even you.
So here is that gift, it's price beyond worth...
"May you and your loved ones enjoy peace on earth."

Cool Yule – Ensemble, **Ensemble Disassembles**

Narration: And then there is the mom and dad version:
...When All Through the House

Tw'as the night before Christmas
when all through the house
I searched for the tools to hand
to my spouse
Instructions were studied and we
were inspired,

in hopes we could manage "Some
Assembly Required."

The children were quiet (not asleep)
in their beds,
while Dad and I faced the evening
with dread:

a kitchen, two bikes, Barbie's town
house to boot!

And, thanks to Grandpa, a train
with a toot!

We opened the boxes, my heart skipped
a beat-

let no parts be missing or parts
incomplete!

Too late for last-minute returns
or replacement;
if we can't get it right, it goes
in the basement!

When what to my worrying eyes
should appear

but 50 sheets of directions, concise,
but not clear,

with each part numbered and every
slot named,

so if we failed, only we could be blamed.

More rapid than eagles the parts then
fell out,

all over the carpet they were
scattered about.

"Now bolt it! Now twist it! Attach it
right there!

Slide on the seats, and staple the stair!

Hammer the shelves, and nail
to the stand."

"Honey," said hubby, "you just glued
my hand."

And then in a twinkling, I knew
for a fact

that all the toy dealers had indeed
made a pact

to keep parents busy all Christmas
Eve night

with "assembly required" till morning's
first light.

We spoke not a word, but kept bent at
our work,

till our eyes, they went bleary; our
fingers all hurt.

The coffee went cold and the night,
it wore thin

before we attached the last rod
and last pin.
Then laying the tools away in the chest,
we fell into bed for a well-deserved rest.
But I said to my husband just before
I passed out,
"This will be the best Christmas,
without any doubt.
Tomorrow we'll cheer, let the
holiday ring,
and not have to run to the store for a thing!
We did it! We did it! The toys are all set
for the perfect, most perfect, Christmas, I bet!"
Then off to dreamland and sweet repose
I gratefully went, though I suppose
there's something to say for those self-deluded-
I'd forgotten that BATTERIES are never included!

Sleigh Ride – Michelle and Eric,
Most Wonderful Time of The Year – Rebecca

Narration:

It is indeed the most wonderful time of the year. It is fitting that at the end of each year, we celebrate the Baby Jesus' birth, reflect upon our childhood and close out another year. Times change, years speed by; but Christmas continues sacred. It is through giving, rather than getting, that the spirit of Christ enters our lives. God still speaks. He prompts. He guides. He blesses. He gives.

God is ever mindful of those who need, who seek, who trust, who pray, and who listen when He speaks. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). God's gift becomes our blessing. May every heart open wide and welcome Him—Christmas day and always.

Hear, oh, hear! The Christmas bells are ringing peal upon peal, chime upon chime! Full and clear they ring, and the air quivers with joy. What is the burden of their music as it floats far and wide? Awake! Awake! it says. A great Change is coming -- peace upon earth, good-will to all men.

Choir Stands Here. We from the Sugar Hill Choir of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, wish all of you, a very merry Christmas. May all your days be merry and bright.

White Christmas
Choral Fantasy