



VESPERS

2024

NORTHFIELD MOUNT HERMON



EMMANUEL CHURCH
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

PROGRAM



Prelude

“Winter,” from “The Four Seasons”

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

i. Allegro non molto

ii. Largo

Chamber Orchestra

Caleb Chung '26, Zane Hong '27,

Clara Hwang '27, violins

Vivaldi's most famous instrumental work, “The Four Seasons” is a series of four concertos for the violin. They were written for and performed by his students at the Ospedale della Pietà in Venice, a home for orphaned girls.

In these works, Vivaldi used vivid word painting to inspire as complete a sound world as possible. The first movement of “Winter” paints a scene of desolate cold and chattering teeth, while the slow movement moves the scene to a cozy fire inside, with pizzicato raindrops falling outside.



*This program has been funded
through the generosity of John Pflug '56
and the Pflug Concert Fund and of the
Sheila Heffernon Endowed Music Fund.*

Introit

“Veni Emmanuel”

Plainchant

Arranged by Sheila Heffernon (b.1954)

Concert Choir

Max Weicheng Wang '25, soloist, NMH afternoon performance

Rigel Velez '25, soloist, NMH evening performance

Henry Castillo '25, soloist, Boston performance

James Wareham '26, chimes

Processional

“Sing We Noel”

19th-century French carol

Arranged by Harvey B. Gaul (1881–1945)

Dost thou remember the prophet of old,
Who that most wondrous story told,
How of a virgin pure and mild
Should be born a perfect child?
The seer spake true the virgin so fair
A son from heaven doth declare.
Sing we Noel, Noel, Noel.
Angels praise God in glorious strain,
Mortals take up the glad refrain.
Bright in the East, fair shining Star,
Thou lead'st the wise men from afar.

'Tis here He lies! Rejoice! Rejoice!
 In praise lift up a sounding voice!
 Sing we Noel, Noel, Noel.
 Now let Hosannas ring o'er all the earth,
 Proclaim the infant Jesus' birth!
 Spread the glad tidings of a Saviour found,
 With joy let ev'ry heart abound.
 Our Lord is born! Green garlands bring.
 We'll crown the newborn infant King!
 Sing we Noel, Noel, Noel.

Words of Welcome

Brian Hargrove, Head of School

"A Babe Is Born," Op. 55

William Mathias (1934-1992)

NMH Singers

As with many of today's vocal selections, this piece uses text from very early sacred music. "Veni Creator Spiritus" is a hymn written in the ninth century, while "O Lux Beata Trinitas" dates to circa 350. The interweaving of ancient and contemporary musical elements enlivens this joyful and celebratory work.

"The Rose"

Ola Gjeilo (b. 1978)

Chamber Orchestra and Concert Choir

The Virgin Mary is often symbolized as a rose, representing mystical beauty and the rose's sometimes miraculous ability to grow in rocky, barren soil. The text is by Christina Rossetti, an English Romantic poet, who is famous for two other Christmas carols: "In the Bleak Midwinter" and "Love Came Down at Christmas." Norwegian composer Ola Gjeilo beautifully captures this poem's poignancy with atmospheric harmonies and unexpected dissonances.

The lily has a smooth stalk,
 Will never hurt your hand;
 But the rose upon her brier
 Is lady of the land.

There's sweetness in an apple tree,
 And profit in the corn;
 But lady of all beauty
 Is a rose upon a thorn.

When with moss and honey
 She tips her bending brier,
 And half unfolds her glowing heart,
 She sets the world on fire.

"Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silent"

Arranged by Caitlin Foster (b. 1975)

Tune from Picardy, France

Select Treble Ensemble

"Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence" is a fourth-century Greek text from the Liturgy of St. James. It's known as the "Cherubic Hymn" and evokes a solemn majesty. At the start, the lower two parts accompany the melody with a drone, harkening back to early ways of creating harmony. While the arranger uses old compositional techniques, there are brief moments when you can hear contemporary dissonances that resonate with our modern sensibilities.

Readings: A Jewish prayer for peace and an Islamic prayer for peace

Mohammed Khalid Mohammed Al Salhi '25, NMH afternoon performance
 Shai Lipton-Ferguson '25, NMH evening performance
 Jasper Neff '25, Boston performance

"The First Noel"

The first Noel the angel did say
 Was to certain poor shepherds
 In fields as they lay;
 In fields where they
 Lay tending their sheep
 On a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain
 Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel
 Born is the King of Israel

They looked up and saw a star
 Shining in the east, beyond them far;
 And to the earth it gave great light,
 And so it continued both day and night.

Refrain

And by the light of that same star
 Three wise men came from country far;
 To seek for a king was their intent,
 And to follow the star wherever it went.

Refrain

Then let us all with one accord
 Sing praises to our heav'nly Lord;
 That hath made Heav'n and earth of naught,
 And with His blood mankind hath bought.

Refrain

“Concerto for Bassoon,” RV. 484

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

ii. Andante

Fiona Cutchins '25, bassoon

The bassoon was utilized as a solo instrument by many baroque composers: Handel, Telemann, and Vivaldi, to name a few. Its rich and stately tone made it a great match for concertos accompanied by strings and harpsichord. In this selection, we hear Vivaldi's masterful, mournful melodic writing over his typical pristine harmonic progressions.

“Estampie Natalis”

Vaclav Nelhybel (1919-1996)

Chamber Orchestra and Concert Choir

Henry Castillo '25, piccolo

Oliver Newman '27, Charlotte Relyea-Strawn '26, Christie Wang '25, percussion

Klaus Erdos '25, Skylar Hezhen Tian '25, Keona Burch '25,

Rigel Velez '25, soloists

An estampie is a medieval dance. In this piece, you'll hear strong accents and quick switches between pulses of two and three, which create rhythmic buoyancy. The melodies in this piece use the Dorian scale, codified by the Byzantine church in the early ninth century. Nelhybel, a contemporary composer, tips his hat to the past by showcasing these musical elements.

Readings: A Buddhist prayer for peace and a Hindu prayer for peace

Max Weichung Wang '25, NMH afternoon performance

Rachel Huynh '25, NMH evening performance

Charlotte Relyea-Strawn '26, Boston performance

From “A Ceremony of Carols,” Op. 28

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

“Procession”

“Wolcum Yole!”

“There Is No Rose”

“This Little Babe”

Select Treble Ensemble and NMH Singers

These movements bring us on a journey through different aspects of the Christmas story. The opening “Processional” is a Gregorian chant celebrating the birth of Christ. “Wolcum Yole!,” sung in Middle English, celebrates the many feast days of the winter season. “There Is No Rose” is a prayer-like meditation on the miracle of Mary. As in earlier pieces on the program, it uses macaronic language, switching back and forth between English and Latin. The set ends with a musical depiction of the Baby Jesus battling Satan, and asks, “On whose side would you like to be?”

Troika, from “Lieutenant Kijé”

Segei Prokofiev (1891-1953)

Arranged by Wieloszynski

Prokofiev wrote this troika for the film “Lieutenant Kijé” in 1934. A troika is a Russian sleigh drawn by three horses harnessed side by side. These iconic sleighs are capable of achieving great speed and often result in feelings of exhilaration for their riders.

Reading: Luke 2:1-14 from “The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language,” by Eugene H. Peterson

Brian Hargrove, NMH performances

Gillian Wiles '25, Boston performance

“Children, Go Where I Send Thee”

Traditional spiritual

Arranged by Kevin Phillip Johnson

Concert Choir

Emily Chen '25, Henry Castillo '25, soloists

Nielsen Kasser '25, Cameron Phillip '25, Ron Smith, djembes

This piece was made famous by the all-Black vocal group The Golden Gate Jubilee Quartet, formed in 1934. The arranger of the version we sing today is the son of the group's lead singer, Willie T. Johnson. While there are many ancestors of this biblical counting song found in both Yiddish and English traditions, groups like the Golden Gate changed the lyrics to include imprisoned biblical figures, which reflected their African American experience.

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

Angels we have heard on high

Sweetly singing o'er the plains

And the mountain in reply

Echoing their joyous strains.

Gloria, in excelsis Deo

Gloria, in excelsis Deo

Shepherds, why this jubilee?

Why your joyous strains prolong?

What the gladsome tidings be

Which inspire your heav'nly song?

Gloria, in excelsis Deo

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.
Gloria, in excelsis Deo
Gloria, in excelsis Deo

Reading: A Prayer by Bishop Deon K. Johnson

Eliza Jessan '26, NMH afternoon performance
Grace Huang '26, NMH evening performance
Aurora Tianxin Song '26, Boston performance

“Jul, Jul, Strålande Jul”

Gustaf Nordquist (1886-1949)
Translation by Michael Lowry

Select Treble Ensemble

*This carol’s beautiful poetry is evocative of the land and the people of Sweden
but also speaks to all of us who live in a world where peace and destruction
exist side by side.*

Christmas, Christmas, glorious Christmas:
shine over white forests,
heavenly crowns with sparkling lights,
glimmering arcs in the houses of God,
hymns that are sung throughout the ages,
eternal longing for light and peace!
Christmas, Christmas, glorious Christmas,
shine over white forests!

Come, come, blessed Christmas:
lower your white wings,
over the battlefield’s blood and cry,
over the breaths from the bosoms of men,
over the loved ones who’ve gone to their rest,
over the daybreak of newborn life!
Come, come, blessed Christmas:
lower your white wings!

“Agnus Dei”

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

From Missa Brevis in G, K.49

Chamber Orchestra and Concert Choir

*Mozart composed this short mass when he was 12 years old. The “Agnus Dei” is
translated as “Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy
on us” and includes the final text “dona nobis pacem,” or “grant us peace.” You
will hear the music turn from slow and serious to dancing and joyful.*



Closing Reflection

The Rev. Lee-Ellen Strawn, chaplain

“Adeste Fidelis”

Adeste fideles; laeti triumphantes
Venite, venite in Bethlehem,
Natum videte, Regem angelorum:
Venite adoremus, Dominum.

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him, born the King of angels;
O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heav’n above;
Glory to God, in the highest:
O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning,
Jesus to Thee, be glory giv’n.
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

“Stille Nacht”

Franz Grüber (1787–1863)

Text by Joseph Mohr (1792–1848)

The Concert Choir

Soloists:

Keona Burch '25, NMH afternoon performance
Hezhen Skylar Tian '25, NMH evening performance
Sara Carrion '25, Boston performance

Postlude

Organ, Craig K. Sandford



Concert Choir

Alexandra Ludwig, director; Craig K. Sandford, accompanist
Hezhen Skylar Tian '25, Max Wang '25, Aurora Song '26, managers

SOPRANO

Macy Anhalt '26
Patience Beasley '25
Arabella Chong '27
Kaitlin Cooper-Ellis '27
Charlotte Helgeson '28
Angelina Marakaeva '26*
Liann Mejia '28*
Charlotte Relyea-Strawn '26+
Amelia Sabetti '27+
McKenzie Sherer '28+
Aurora Song '26*
Lucy Sylvester '27
Hezhen Skylar Tian '25*
Coco Wang '26+
Clair Ward#
Gillian Wiles '25+

ALTO

Keona Burch '25*
Sara Carrion '25*
Emily Chen '25
Tabatha Collins#
Klaus Erdos '25*
Sarah Keator '26*

Isabella Li '28
Claire Melican '25
Jasper Neff '25
Andrea Orsini '28
Mia Pace '25
Esmé Robinson '26
Avery Schneider '25
Gabrielle Sogg '27
Devin Troy '25
Audrey Yeung '28

TENOR

Jennifer Keator#
Frank Nguyen '28
Tin Tin Nguyen '25
Rei Yang '28

BASS

Henry Castillo '25+
Anthony McNamara '26+
Henry Ormont '26+
Tim Relyea#
Rigel Velez '25
Max Wang '25

*Select Treble Ensemble

+NMH Singer

#NMH staff/faculty

Chamber Orchestra

Steven Bathory-Peeler, director

VIOLIN

Caleb Chung '26, concertmaster
Eavan Connelly '27
Zane Hong '27, principal 2nd
Clara Hwang '27
Oliver Newman '27
Charlotte Relyea-Strawn '26
William Silvester '26

VIOLA

Christie Wang '25, principal

HEAD USHERS

Wendy Young, 3:30 pm;
Steve Allison P'19, '21, '23,
6:30 pm

USHERS

Ivy Bu '26
Anna Chechile '26
Niayla Curley '26
Abigail Georges '26
Avery McGowan '26
Jane Namusisi '26
Ruby Neutra '26
Kiki Wang '26

CELLO

David Zhang '27
Sam Zhong '26, principal

BASS

Jamie MacDonald

BASSOON

Fiona Cutchins '25

HARPSICHORD

Craig Sandford

CANDLE LIGHTERS

Sophie Cohen '25
Alex Cope '25
Klaus Erdos '25
Liam Foehl '25
Lydia Foote '25
Phoebe Garrett '25
Brooke Hindinger '25
Rachel Huynh '25





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