

English Seminar Choir Winter concert December 2025 lyrics

In the stillness

Sally Beamish (1956-)

In the stillness of a church
Where candles glow,
In the softness of a fall
Of fresh white snow,

In the brightness of the stars
That shine this night,
In the calmness of a pool
Of healing light,

In the clearness of a choir
That softly sings,
In the oneness of a hush
Of angels' wings,

In the mildness of a night
By stable bare,
In the quietness of a lull
Near cradle fair,

There's a patience as we wait
For a new morn,
And the presence of a child
Soon to be born.

poem by Katrina Shepherd

Once in Royal David's city* **H.J. Gauntlett (1805-1876)*

Once in royal David's city
stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby
in a manger for His bed:
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little Child.

He came down to earth from heaven
who is God and Lord of all,
and His shelter was a stable,
and His cradle was a stall:
with the poor, and meek, and lowly,
lived on earth our Savior holy.

Sure on this shining night

Morten Lauridsen (1943-)

Sure on this shining night
Of starmade shadows round,
Kindness must watch for me
This side the ground.

The late year lies down the north.
All is healed, all is health.
High summer holds the earth.
Hearts all whole.

Sure on this shining night
I weep for wonder
Wandering far alone
Of shadows on the stars.

O Radiant Dawn

James Macmillan (1959-)

O Radiant Dawn,
Splendour of eternal Light, Sun of Justice:
Come, shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.
Isaiah had prophesied,
The people who walked in darkness have seen the great light
upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone.
Amen.

The seal lullaby

Eric Whitacre (1970-)

Oh! Hush thee, my baby, the night is behind us,
And black are the waters that sparkled so green.
The moon, o'er the combers, looks downward to find us,
At rest in the hollows that rustle between.

Where billow meets billow, then soft be thy pillow,
Oh weary wee flipperling, curl at thy ease!
The storm shall not wake thee, nor shark overtake thee,
Asleep in the arms of the slow swinging seas!

A Ceremony of Carols

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

1. Procession

Hodie Christus natus est:
Hodie Salvator apparuit:
Hodie in terra canunt angeli:
Laetantur archangeli:
Hodie exsultant justi dicentes:
Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

2. Wolcum Yole!

Wolcum, Wolcum,
Wolcum be thou hevenè king,
Wolcum Yole!
Wolcum, born in one morning,
Wolcum for whom we sall sing!
Wolcum be ye, Stevene and Jon,
Wolcum, Innocentes every one,
Wolcum, Thomas marter one,
Wolcum be ye, good Newe Yere,
Wolcum, Twelfthe Day both in fere,
Wolcum, seintes lefe and dere,
Wolcum Yole, Wolcum Yole,
Wolcum! Candelmesse, Quene of bliss,
Wolcum bothe to more and lesse.
Wolcum, Wolcum,
Wolcum be ye that are here,
Wolcum Yole,
Wolcum alle and make good cheer,
Wolcum alle another yere,
Wolcum Yole, Wolcum!

3. There is no Rose

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 werlde mirth, and follow we this joyful birth.

Transeamus, transeamus, transeamus.
Alleluia, res miranda, pares forma, gaudeamus,
Transeamus, transeamus, transeamus.

4. That Yongë Childe and Balulalow

That yongë child when it gan weep with song she lulled him asleep:
That was so sweet a melody it passèd alle minstrelsy.
The nightingalë sang also: Her song is hoarse . . . and nought thereto:
Whoso attendeth to her song and leaveth the first . . . then doth he wrong. . . .
O my deare hert, young Jesu sweit, Prepare thy creddil in my spreit,
And I sall rock thee to my hert, And never mair from thee depart.
But I sall praise thee evermoir With sanges sweit unto thy gloir;
The knees of my hert sall I bow, And sing that richt Balulalow.

5. As Dew in Aprille

I sing of a maiden that is makèles:
King of all kings to her son she ches.
He came also stille there his moder was
As dew in Aprille that falleth on the grass.
He came also stille to his moder's bour
As dew in Aprille that falleth on the flour.
He came also stille there his moder lay
As dew in Aprille that falleth on the spray.
Moder and maiden was never none but she:
Well may such a lady Goddes moder be.

6. This Little Babe

This little Babe so few days old, is come to rifle Satan's fold;
All hell doth at his presence quake, though he himself for cold do shake;
For in this weak unarmed wise the gates of hell he will surprise.
With tears he fights and wins the field, His naked breast stands for a shield;
His battering shot are babish cries, His arrows looks of weeping eyes,
His martial ensigns Cold and Need, and feeble Flesh his warrior's steed.
His camp is pitched in a stall, His bulwark but a broken wall;
The crib his trench, haystalks his stakes; of shepherds he his muster makes;
And thus, as sure his foe to wound, the angels' trumps alarum sound.
My soul, with Christ join thou in fight; stick to the tents that he hath pight.
Within his crib is surest ward; this little Babe will be thy guard.
If thou wilt foil thy foes with joy, then flit not from this heavenly Boy.

7. Interlude

8. In Freezing Winter Night

Behold, a silly tender babe, in freezing winter night,
In homely manger trembling lies. Alas, a piteous sight!
The inns are full; no man will yield this little pilgrim bed.
But forced he is with silly beasts in crib to shroud his head.
This stable is a Prince's court, this crib his chair of State;
The beasts are parcel of his pomp, the wooden dish his plate.
The persons in that poor attire his royal liveries wear;
The Prince himself is come from heaven; this pomp is prized there.
With joy approach, O Christian wight, do homage to thy King,
And highly praise his humble pomp, wich he from Heaven doth bring.

9. Spring Carol

Pleasure it is to hear iwis, the Birdes sing,
The deer in the dale, the sheep in the vale, the corn springing.
God's purveyance for sustenance, It is for man, it is for man.
Then we always to give him praise, And thank him than.

10. Deo Gracias

Deo gracias! Deo gracias!
Adam lay ibounden, bounden in a bond;
Four thousand winter thought he not to long.
Deo gracias! Deo gracias!
And all was for an appil, an appil that he tok,
As clerkes finden written in their book.
Deo gracias! Deo gracias!
Ne had the appil take ben, the appil take ben,
Ne hadde never our lady a ben hevene quene.
Blessed be the time that appil take was.
Therefore we moun singen.
Deo gracias! Deo gracias! Deo gracias! Deo gracias!

11. Recessional

Hodie Christus natus est: Hodie Salvator apparuit:
Hodie in terra canunt angeli: Laetantur archangeli:
Hodie exsultant justi dicentes: Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!