

A Child Is Born In Bethlehem

for Randall DeBruyn, friend and mentor

Based on *Puer natus in Bethlehem*;
translated by Owen Alstott

Barney Walker

INTRO *With great freedom* (♩ = ca. 108)

Organ *mp*

Ped.

The organ introduction consists of two staves. The right hand plays a series of chords and single notes in a descending sequence, while the left hand provides a steady accompaniment of chords and single notes. The tempo is marked as ca. 108 beats per minute.

VERSE 1 Unison

Soprano *mp*

Alto

1. A child is born in Beth-le-hem, al-le-lu-ia! Re-joyce and sing, Je-ru-sa-lem,

Tenor

Bass *mp*

The verse begins with a unison vocal line for Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The lyrics are: "1. A child is born in Beth-le-hem, al-le-lu-ia! Re-joyce and sing, Je-ru-sa-lem,". The organ accompaniment is marked *mp*.

1. al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia! Son of God and Prince of Peace.

1. O come, let us a-dore.

The vocal lines continue with the lyrics: "1. al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia! Son of God and Prince of Peace." and "1. O come, let us a-dore." The organ accompaniment continues with a simple harmonic accompaniment, marked *mp*.

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VERSE 2

mp

2. The vir - gin moth - er bore a son, al - le - lu - ia!

mp

This system contains the first two lines of music. The top line is a vocal line in G major with a key signature of one flat (F major) and a common time signature. It begins with a whole rest followed by a half note G4, then a series of quarter notes: A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. The bottom line is a piano accompaniment line, starting with a whole rest followed by a half note G3, then a series of quarter notes: A3, B3, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3. The piano accompaniment consists of a simple harmonic accompaniment with a bass line of quarter notes and a treble line of chords.

2. A child di - vine yet with us one, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

This system contains the third and fourth lines of music. The vocal line continues with quarter notes: D4, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3. The piano accompaniment continues with quarter notes: B2, A2, G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1.

2. Son of God and Prince of Peace.

This system contains the fifth and sixth lines of music. The vocal line continues with quarter notes: G1, F1, E1, D1, C1, B0, A0, G0, F0, E0, D0, C0. The piano accompaniment continues with quarter notes: B0, A0, G0, F0, E0, D0, C0, B0, A0, G0, F0, E0, D0, C0.

2. O come, let us a - dore.

mp

Ped.

This system contains the seventh and eighth lines of music. The vocal line continues with quarter notes: C0, B0, A0, G0, F0, E0, D0, C0. The piano accompaniment continues with quarter notes: B0, A0, G0, F0, E0, D0, C0, B0, A0, G0, F0, E0, D0, C0. The system ends with a piano accompaniment flourish consisting of a series of chords in the right hand and a melodic line in the left hand.

VERSE 3

mf

3. The an - gels sing to shep - herds near, al - le - lu - ia!

mf

3. The song that earth so longed to hear, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

3. Son of God and Prince of Peace. O come, let us a - dore.

mf

Ped.

VERSE 4

Descant *f*

4. Al - le, _____ al - le - lu - ia.

f

4. Let trum - pet sound and cym - bals ring, al - le - lu - ia!

f

f

4. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

4. Let all on earth in glad - ness sing, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

4. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. *NB*

4. Son of God and Prince of Peace. O come, let us a - dore.

Slower (♩ = ca. 72)
mp

4. O come, let us a - dore.
mp

rit. *mp*

The musical score consists of three systems. The first system features a vocal line with lyrics and a piano accompaniment. The second system continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The third system includes a tempo change to 'Slower' and a dynamic marking of 'mp', followed by further piano accompaniment with a 'rit.' marking.

Composer Notes

This work, like its companion piece, “Behold, Before Our Wondering Eyes” (Edition 20062), is a mini-discourse on the history of chant. Verse 1 is an example of plain chant; verse 2 adds the interval of the fourth and the octave of parallel organum; verse 3 demonstrates triadic harmony with the addition of the third (*fauxbourdon*); and verse 4 is an example of free harmony, more prevalent in modern chant settings. The concluding few measures are an open fifth simplification of the contrary motion Renaissance fanfare used in the organ interludes of this piece.

Musicians approaching this piece should listen to the recording or other recordings of chant and attempt to duplicate the feel of the music. Chant is sung by phrase, not by meter; let the text be your guide.


—Barney Walker

Preview


Assembly Edition

A CHILD IS BORN IN BETHLEHEM


Barney Walker



<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A child is born in Beth - le - hem, 2. The vir - gin moth - er bore a son, 3. The an - gels sing to shep - herds near, 4. Let trum - pet sound and cym - bals ring, 	}	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> al - le - lu - ia! 	}	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Re - joi - ce A child The song Let all
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<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. and sing Je - ru - sa - lem, 2. di - vine yet with us one, 3. that earth so longed to hear, 4. on earth in glad - ness sing, 	}	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
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1-4. Son of God and Prince of Peace. O come, let us a - dore.

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