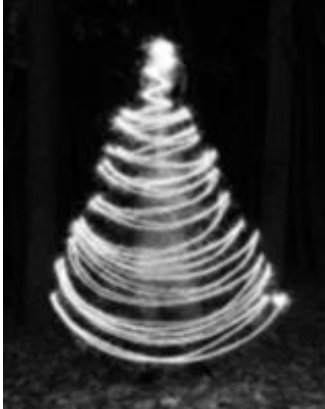

Benjamin Britten

A CEREMONY OF CAROLS



and other Christmas Songs

Glen Eira City Choir
and the Choral Studio *Harmony* Children's Choir

Saturday 7 December 2024 at 2:30pm

Conductor: Elena Varsharvskya

Organist: Christopher Cook

Soloist: Lisa Robinson

Harpist: Kartia Mestrovic

PROGRAM

CHOIRS AND AUDIENCE – All sing!

Hark! the herald angels sing

GLEN EIRA CITY CHOIR

The Three Kings – Peter Cornelius (1824 – 1874) arr. Ivor Atkins

Soloist: John Dunham

The Shepherds' Farewell from L'Enfance du Christ

(The childhood of Christ) Op.25 – Hector Berlioz (1803– 1869)

CHOIRS AND AUDIENCE

Away in a manger

v.1 – Children only, v.2 – Choir only, v. 3 – All sing!

HARMONY CHILDREN'S CHOIR

Carol of the stars – Boyle

Ave Maria – Robert Schumann (1810- 1856)

Patapan – Trad. French Carol

LISA ROBNISON

O Holy Night (*Cantique de Noël*) – Adolphe Adam (1803–1856)

GLEN EIRA CITY CHOIR

A Ceremony of Carols – Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)

CHOIRS AND AUDIENCE – All sing!

O come all ye faithful

Glen Eira City Choir is a SATB non-auditioned choir that was established in 1946. We are a voluntary not-for-profit organisation, and a member of the Australian National Choral Association (ANCA). We usually perform two to three concerts per year. The first is normally a major choral work, the second comprising lighter music from operas and musicals, and the third is our Christmas concert. Our life members are: Jane Elton Brown OAM and Hazel Wilson.

Elena Varshavskaya, conductor, graduated from Moscow State P. I. Tchaikovsky Conservatory with Honors in 2002 majoring in choral conducting. While studying at the conservatory, she was a member of the Moscow Conservatory Chamber Choir and participated in international choral music competitions and festivals, both in Russia and abroad touring Italy, Germany, Austria and Poland. In 2002 Elena was the Artistic Director and Conductor of the Chamber Choir "Lad" which successfully toured Greece, Germany and Finland and received gold and silver awards at the 5th International Johannes Brahms Choir Competition, Wernigerode, Germany in 2005. In 2006 she started working in the Russian Radio and Television Big Academic Choir as a singer and an assistant to the Artistic Director. In 2011 Elena became Musical Director of Bendigo Chorale where she directed and conducted many concerts for the choir in Bendigo, Echuca and Melbourne and participated in projects with David Kram (More Than Opera) and Victorian Opera. In 2020 Elena joined the Glen Eira City Choir as a Musical Director. Elena has conducted the Glen Eira City Choir for Vivaldi's *Gloria*, Rheinberger's *Stabat Mater*, Haydn's *Missa Brevis Sancti Joannis de Deo*, and Karl Jenkins' *Requiem*. She has introduced new works by Rutter, Langlais, Lauridsen and Gershwin to the choir repertoire. She also leads the Choral Studio *Harmony* Children's Choir.

Christopher Cook graduated in piano and organ from the Queensland Conservatorium of Music and has worked in the music and education professions variously as teacher, performer, accompanist, conductor, musical director and concert producer, and examiner for tertiary institutions, ANZCA and the AMEB. He has performed in the UK and Europe, and all states of Australia as organ soloist. In addition to pro bono and free-lance activities, Christopher is a piano tutor at Haileybury College, an organ tutor for the University of Melbourne and Director of Music at St John's Church, Toorak. He is a Director of the Organ Historical Trust of Australia (ohta.org.au) and the Australian and New Zealand College of Organists (anzco.org).

Lisa Robinson, lyric soprano, began her formal musical studies at age 14. A series of scholarships enabled her to complete her tertiary education at prestigious Australian educational facilities. Lisa has been the recipient of well over 100 prizes, awards, and scholarships and has studied and performed throughout Australia and Europe. In 2007 Lisa moved to the UK and performed leading roles with The Royal Opera House, English Touring Opera, Longborough Festival Opera, Iford Arts, Opera Della Luna, Stanley Hall Opera, London Festival Opera and the Gilbert & Sullivan Company. In 2011 Lisa Robinson made her debut at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, as Nella in *Gianni Schicchi*, in the Gramophone Award winning production of *Il Trittico*, conducted by Antonio Pappano and directed by Richard Jones. Critics have described her voice as 'sheer auditory bliss', 'rich', 'melting', 'world-class' and her operatic performances as 'superb', 'exceptional' and 'outstanding'.

Katia Mestrovic, harpist, started playing harp at the age of 8 with Xanya Mamunya (student of Alice Chalifoux). Since then, she has been a student of Alice Giles AM, graduating from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music in 2022 with High Distinction. She was a semi-finalist in The Dutch World Harp Competition (2024); won third place in the BASEL International Harp Competition (2023); was awarded the Quinquin foundation scholarship for young talents in classical music (2021-2022), the William and Marie Souter Encouragement Award for aspiring concert stage instrumentalists (2018-2020), and the Bachelor of Music Scholarship for excellence (2017).

COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CAROLS

HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING – *All sing! (children, choir and audience)*

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 th' angelic host proclaim,
'Christ is born in Bethlehem'.
3. Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
risen with healing in his wings;
mild he lays his glory by,
born that man no more may die,
born to raise the sons of earth,
born to give them second birth. [Refrain]

Refrain: Hark! the herald angels sing
glory to the newborn King.

Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788) and others;
Tune: MENDELSSOHN (51171); CC1

2. Christ, by highest heav'n adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come
offspring of a virgin's womb:
Veiled in flesh the God-head see,
hail th' incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel. [Refrain]

AWAY IN A MANGER

Children only

1. Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

Choir only

2. The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
and stay by my side till morning is nigh.

All sing! (children, choir and audience)

3. Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay
close by me for ever, and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
and fit us for heaven, to live with thee there.

Words, anon.
Tune: CRADLE SONG; CC1

O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL (ADESTE FIDELIS) – *All sing! (children, choir and audience)*

1. 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:
6. Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above;
glory to God In the highest: [Refrain]
3. See how the shepherds, summoned to his cradle,
leaving their flocks, draw nigh with lowly fear;
we too will thither bend our joyful footsteps:
[Refrain]
7. Yea, Lord we greet thee, born this happy morning.
Jesu, to thee be glory given;
word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:
[Refrain]

Tr. F. Oakeley, W.T. Brooke and others;
Tune: ADESTE FIDELES; CC1 v1,3,6,7

Glen Eira City Choir

Sopranos: Judy Aldridge, Helen Bryce, Halina Dymek, Pam Jordan, Deborah Polites, Sue Polites, Margaret Reimer, Margaret Ricardo, Betty Spencer, Annie Sweeney, Julia Williams.

Altos: Angela Alomes, Iris Felsted, Christine Gamble, Caroline Giles, Alison Groh, Denise Grocke, Rosemary Harmer, Irene Havryluk-Davies, Kathy Hope, Valerie McDonald, Karina Nadtochii, Barbara Overbury, Penny Paton, Annette Robinson, Hazel Wilson.

Tenors: Stuart Allen, John Dunham, Alex Hovey, Colin Nicholson, Jeremy Paton.

Basses: John Barrett, Paul Butler, Noel Fabri, Geoff Peters, Stephen Rabach, Bill Raper, Dougal Richardson.

Choral Studio *Harmony* Children's Choir

Aleksandr Dokumentov, Andrei Fateev, Aleksandr Fateev, Maxim Levin, Alisa Levin, Erik Poliak, Akiva Kenner, Kai Polak, Laura Rodin, Shoshana Tesler, Reina Tran, Ivana Tyapkin, Sasha Tyapkin, Mirabella Tyapkin, Alisha Vagisarova, Keira Zemskova

**The Glen Eira City Choir is very grateful for the generous donations
given by choir members and members of the audience
in support of today's concert.**

The Glen Eira City Choir also extends its thanks and appreciation to:

- Elena Varsharvskaya (Conductor)
 - Berta Brozgul (Rehearsal accompanist)
 - David Southwick MP
(State Member for Caulfield)
 - Glen Eira City Council
 - St Andrew's Anglican Church, Brighton
 - Golden Days Radio
 - Buxton Real Estate
 - Marshall White Real Estate
-



Glen Eira City Choir welcomes new members

Rehearsals are held on Mondays 7:45-9:30pm
at St Andrews Church, 228 New St, Brighton

Enquiries: admin@gleneiracitychoir.org.au

www.gleneiracitychoir.org.au

facebook.com/gleneiracitychoir

Thank you for joining us today!

Our concerts in 2025 are:

BEST OF BRITISH (with Bendigo Chorale)

Come with us on a journey
through the best of British music –
a cappella songs, folk songs, Rutter, Jenkins,
Britten, Elgar, Parry and more!

Saturday 31 May 2025 – Bendigo

Saturday 14 June 2025 – Brighton

CHRISTMAS CONCERT 2025

Join us for our end of year concert
with the opportunity to join in singing
well known carols.

Saturday 29 November 2025 – Brighton

**If you would like to be added to our mailing list please email:
admin@gleneiracitychoir.org.au**

Notes, Texts & Translations

A Ceremony of Carols, Op. 28, 1943, by Benjamin Britten

One of the most famous choral works for choir and harp, *A Ceremony of Carols* was drafted by Benjamin Britten in 1942 on board ship while crossing the Atlantic, heading home to England from the United States. During a landing at Halifax, Nova Scotia, Britten purchased a book of poetry,

The English Galaxy of Shorter Poems, and here found the texts of medieval and Renaissance poetry, that were to become *A Ceremony of Carols*. He first conceived the piece for women's voices and it was women who first sang it in Norwich, England on December 5, 1942. Britten added a few more movements and in 1943 published the work for "trebles." Framed by the plainchant 'Hodie Christus natus est' (Today Christ is born), the *Ceremony* contains ten short interior movements of stunning contrast.

1. Procession

Hodie Christus natus es:
hodie Salvator apparuit:
hodie in terra canunt angeli,
laetantur archangeli:
hodie exsultant iusti dicentes:
gloria in excelsis Deo. Alleluia!

Today Christ is born:
today the Saviour has appeared;
today the angels sing,
and the archangels rejoice;
today the righteous rejoice, saying,
glory to God in the highest. 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, Twelfth Day both in fere,
Wolcum, seintes lefe and dere,
Wolcum Yole, Wolcum Yole, Wolcum!

Welcome, Welcome,
Welcome to you, our heavenly King,
Welcome Yule!
Welcome, you who was born one morning,
Welcome, for you we shall sing!
Welcome to you, Steven and John,
Welcome all innocent children,
Welcome, Thomas, the martyred one,
Welcome, good new year,
Welcome Twelfth Day, both in fear . . .
Welcome Saints left and dear.
Welcome Yule, welcome Yule, Welcome!

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!

Candle Mass, Queen of bliss,
Welcome both to more and less.
Welcome, Welcome,
Welcome you that are here, Welcome Yule,
Welcome all and make good cheer.
Welcome all another year,
Welcome Yule, Welcome!

- Anon. 14th c.

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 werldly mirth,
and follow we this joyful birth.
Transeamus, Trasneamus, Tanseamus!

- Anon. 14th c.

There is no rose of such virtue
as is the rose that bore Jesus.
Alleluia.

For inside the Rose
were heaven and earth in a single, little space.
Miraculous thing.

By that rose, we now may see,
there is one God in persons three.
Created in the parent's image.

The angels sang to the shepherds:
glory on high, glory to God in the highest.
Let us rejoice.

Leave we all this wordly mirth,
and follow we this joyful birth.
Let us cross over!

4a That yongë child

That yongë child when it gan weep
with song she lulled him asleep:
that was so sweet a melody
it passed 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.

- Anon. 14th c.

When that young child began to weep
with song, she lulled him to sleep
it was such a sweet melody,
it was so very merry.

The nightingale sang also,
but her song was hoarse, it was not the same:
whoever listens to the nightingale's song
instead of Mary's, does wrong.

4b. Balulalow

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.

- James, John & Robert Wedderburn, (1548), 1561

O love of my heart, young Jesus sweet,
prepare your place in my heart,
and I shall rock thee with great love,
and I shall never leave your side.

I shall praise you forever,
with sweet songs of your glory
the knees of my heart shall I bow
and sing the right 'Lullaby'.

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.

I sing of a maiden that is matchless,
her son was the King of all Kings.

From his mother he came to us quietly
as April dew that falls on the grass.

As his mother's labor was painless and quiet,
as April dew that falls on the grass.

He came also stille there his moder lay,
as dew in Aprille that falleth on the spray.

Moder and mayden was never none but she:
well may such a lady Goddes moder be.

- *Anon. c. 1400*

As his mother lay there, he came quietly,
as April dew that falls on the flower branches.

Never was there such a mother and maiden;
how fitting that this be God's mother.

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.

- *Robert Southwell (1561?-1595)*

This little Babe so few days old
has come to rifle Satan's fold.

All hell quakes at his presence,
though he himself shivers.

For in this weak, unarmed guise
he will surprise the very gates of Hell!

With tears he fights and wins the field,
his naked breast stands for a shield;

His shots are his cries,
his arrows, the looks of his weeping eyes.

His martial ensigns are cold and need,
and his feeble flesh, his warrior's steed.

His camp is pitched in a stall,
his bulwark is a broken wall;

The crib is his trench, haystalks are his stakes,
of shepherds, he enlists the troops.

And sure of wounding the foe,
the angels sound the trumpets alarm.

My soul joins Christ in the fight,
stay by the tents that he has pitched;

Within his crib is sure protection
the little babe will be your guard;

If Christ can foil your foes with joy,
stay near the heavenly boy.

7. Interlude (Harp solo)

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.

Behold, a helpless 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 is he with silly beasts
in crib to shroud his head.

continued overleaf

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 heav'n;
this pomp is prized there.

With joy approach, O Christian wight,
do homage to thy King,
And highly praise his humble pomp,
which he from Heav'n doth bring.

- Robert Southwell (1561?-1595)

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 being,
do homage to thy King,
and highly praise his humble pomp,
which he from heaven doth bring.

9. Spring Carol

Pleasure it is to hear the birds sing,
the deer in the dale, the sheep in the vale,
the corn springing.

God's purveyance for sustenance. It is for man.
Then we always to him give praise,
and thank him than

- William Cornysh (14??-1523)

It is always a pleasure to hear the birds sing,
to see the deer in the dale, the sheep in the vale,
the corn springing from the earth.

God supplies sustenance for us all.
Then we should always give him praise
and give him thanks.

10. Deo Gracias

Deo gracias!
Adam lay ibounden, bounden in a bond;
four thousand winter thought he not too long.

Deo gracias!
And all was for an appil, an appil that he tok,
as clerkes finden written in their book.

Deo gracias!
Ne had the appil takè ben, the appil takè ben,
ne haddè never our lady a ben hevenè quene.

Blessèd be the time that appil takè was.
Therefore we moun singen.
Deo gracias!

- Anon. 15th c.

Thanks be to God!
Adam was bound in sin for four thousand years,
though he thought this not too long.

Thanks be to God!
It was all for an apple that he took,
as clerics find written in their books.

Thanks be to God!
Had the apple never been taken,
Our Lady would never have been heavenly queen.

Blessed be the time the apple was taken.
Therefore we must sing:
Thanks be to God!

11. Recession

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!

Today Christ is born;
today the Savior has appeared.
today the angels sing on earth;
the archangels rejoice.
today the righteous exult, saying:
Glory to God on high!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!