

David Cameron

**THE
GIFT OF LIGHT**

AN ADVENT CANTATA

for

S.A.T.B. SOLI,
CHORUS, AND PIANO

The Gift of Light

Composer's note

The Gift of Light was commissioned by the Pro Arte Society of Kingston. The text is from three sources: three of the traditional Advent antiphons (*O Sapientia*, *O Radix Jesse*, and *O Oriens*); the English scholar and ecclesiastic Alcuin, or Albinus, who served at the court of Charlemagne; and from the first chapter of the Gospel according to St. John. The translations from St. John are a composite, drawn mainly from the New English Bible and the Authorised Version, with elements here and there from other translations.

Those who know my short mass *Missa Bicinia* will recognize extensive allusions to its Kyrie. In part these indicate that no better setting of these words occurred to me when I was writing this cantata, but they have another purpose as well. When Shelagh Leach, Librarian of the Pro Arte Singers, first spoke to me about this cantata, she said kind things about the *Missa Bicinia*. The use of material from that mass is therefore meant as a compliment to Shelagh, who is a longtime and much valued friend and colleague.

Myths of light and darkness hold a deep place in the human soul. For the orthodox Christian they may be transfigured by their association with the incarnation, but for all of us they still retain some of the feeling of Tolkien's work: the darkness is inhabited by horrors not quite unimaginable, and the splendour of light excels the sun.

Music's province is really not philosophy, but feeling; and these ancient writers, however serious their final ends, valued dramatic imagery for its power to engage the feelings of the reader. They write of eternal things not just piously or cerebrally, but with passion, and reverence, and a rolling grandeur of language that can almost be tasted. I hope that the performance of this piece can capture some of their vividness; and with it, the energy and fun of good storytelling.

David Cameron

Kingston, November 1986.

With this re-engraving and editing, *The Gift of Light* is presented once again. I have made very few changes, merely some adjustment to phrase marks, and a very few alterations to expressive directions. It may need to be said, as Brian Jackson remarked when he was preparing the first performance in 1986, that despite its occasional post-Hindemithian dissonance, this is a romantic work. It should be sung and played with a strong sense of vocal line and pianistic and choral drama.

I could not write this music in 2015; too many things have changed in how we listen and perform. But it does, I think, present an authentic vision of these ancient texts, from the musician I was thirty years ago. And in it I celebrate the memory of Shelagh Leach, whose kind words inspired it.

David Cameron, February 2015

The Gift of Light

Andante (♩ = c. 100)

5 David Cameron

The musical score is divided into three systems. The first system features a piano accompaniment with a bass line and a treble line. The tempo is marked 'Andante' with a metronome marking of ♩ = c. 100. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The piano part begins with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic and includes markings for 'Yield somewhat' and 'a tempo'. The second system introduces the vocal parts. The Soprano/Alto part is marked *p* and the Tenor/Bass part is marked *p*. The lyrics are: 'Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, Ky - ri - e e - lei - son,'. The piano accompaniment continues with a piano (*pp*) dynamic. The third system continues the vocal parts with the lyrics: 'lei - son, Ky - ri - e - lei - son.' and 'Ky - ri - e e - lei - son.'. The piano accompaniment includes a *cresc.* marking. The score concludes with a final measure in 4/4 time.

The Gift of Light

mf Chri - ste e - lei - son, *mp* 15 Chri - ste e - lei - son,
mf Chri - ste e - lei - son, *mp* Chri - ste e - le - i - son,

f Chri - ste e - lei - son, e - lei - son. *ten.* 20
f Chri - ste e - lei - son, e - lei - son. *ten.*

p *pp* *mp*

The Gift of Light

25 *mp* (Gradually gaining energy)

Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, Ky - ri - e -

p (Gaining energy)

lei - son, Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, Ky - ri - e -

30 *rit. e dim.* *ten.* *p*

lei - son, Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, Ky - ri - e -

ten. *p*

lei - son, Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, Ky - ri - e -

35 *pp*

lei - son, Ky - ri - e -

pp

lei - son, Ky - ri - e -

45

— whose reach is bound - less,

— whose reach is bound - less,

— whose reach is bound - less, *f* who or - ders all things

— whose reach is bound - less, *f* who or - ders all things

mf *cresc.*

50

f who or - ders all things might - i - ly, *div.*

who or - ders might - i - ly,

might - i - ly, might - i - ly, might - i - ly

might - i - ly, might - i - ly, might - i - ly, *ten.*

65 *cresc.*

pru - dence; come and de - li - ver
pru - dence; come and de - li - ver us, come and de -
e - lei - son, *mf* Ky - ri -
pru - dence; come and de - liv - ver us, de - li - ver us,
cresc.
mf 70
us, come and de - li - ver us, Ky - ri -
li - ver, de - li - ver us, *f* Come and teach us the
e - lei - son. *f* Come and de -
- ver us, *f* come and teach us the

mf 70
us, come and de - li - ver us, Ky - ri -
li - ver, de - li - ver us, *f* Come and teach us the
e - lei - son. *f* Come and de -
- ver us, *f* come and teach us the
cresc.

mp 75

e, Ky - ri - e - lei - son.

way of pru - dence;

li - ver us, *mp* Ky - ri - e - lei - son. *f* Come and de -

way of pru - dence; come and de - li - ver

dim. *p* *cresc.*

f 80

Come and de - li - ver

f come and de - li - ver us,

li - ver us, come, come and de - li - ver

us, come de - li - ver

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score for 'The Gift of Light'. It features four systems of music. The first system includes vocal staves for Soprano (S), Alto (A), and Tenor/Bass (T/B) and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: 'e, Ky - ri - e - lei - son. way of pru - dence; li - ver us, Ky - ri - e - lei - son. Come and de - way of pru - dence; come and de - li - ver'. The piano part has markings for *dim.*, *p*, and *cresc.*. The second system continues the vocal parts with lyrics: 'Come and de - li - ver', 'come and de - li - ver us,', and 'li - ver us, come, come and de - li - ver'. The piano part continues with *f* dynamics. The third system continues the vocal parts with lyrics: 'us, come de - li - ver'. The piano part continues with *f* dynamics. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, slurs, and dynamic markings.

us, de - li - - - ver us, and
de - - - li - - - ver us.
us, de - li - ver us and
us, de - - - li - ver us.

The first system consists of four vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The vocal parts are in G major. The piano accompaniment features a descending line in the right hand and a steady bass line in the left hand.

85 *rall.*
tar-ry not.

TENOR SOLO *mf* Quasi recitativo (c. 72 - ♩)

rall.
tar-ry not. In the be - gin - ning was the Word,

The second system begins with a piano introduction marked 'rall.' and 'tar-ry not.' in 4/4 time. It then transitions to a tenor solo section marked 'TENOR SOLO' and 'Quasi recitativo (c. 72 - ♩)'. The solo begins with a triplet of eighth notes marked 'mf' and 'rall.', followed by the lyrics 'In the be - gin - ning was the Word,'. The piano accompaniment is mostly silent during the solo.

rall. *ten.* *ten.* ,

mf *p espress.*

The third system continues the piano accompaniment. It features a 'rall.' section with 'ten.' (tenuto) markings. The music then moves to a section marked 'mf' and 'p espress.' (piano espressivo). The piano part concludes with a final chord and a fermata.

90

and the Word was with God, and the Word

95

ALTO/MEZZO SOLO

mp

was God. through Him

100

mf

all things were made, with-out Him

f *rall.* *a tempo* *mf* SOPRANO SOLO

no - thing was made that has been made: in

105 *freely* *a tempo* *mf* *cresc.* TUTTI

Him was life, and the life was the light of men: and the light

ALTOS TUTTI

TENORS TUTTI

BASSES TUTTI

And the light shines on, And the light shines on in the

The Gift of Light

shines on in the dark - ness, and the dark - - -

shines in the dark - ness, and the

shines in the dark - ness, and the dark - - -

dark - - - - ness, and the

3 *rall.* *ten.* *p*

div. *ten.* *p*

ten. *p*

ten. *p*

dim. e rall. *ten.* *p*

- ness has ne-ver mas - tered it. Bright - ness of the

dark - ness has ne-ver mas-tered it. Bright - ness of the

- ness has ne-ver mas - tered it. Bright - ness of the

dark - ness has ne - ver mas-tered it. Bright - ness of the

110 *a tempo* *f*

dim. *ppp* *mp*

BASSES *div.* *f*
(Bass I only)
(Bass II)

The Gift of Light

ff e - ter - nal, *f* and Sun of right - eous - ness, —

light *ff* e - ter - nal, *f* and Sun of right - eous - - - -

light, light e - ter - nal and Sun of right - eous - ness, —

ff the light e - ter - nal, and Sun — of right - eous - ness, Come and en - ligh - ten

mf

f that sit in dark - ness, come and en -

- - - - - Come — and en - ligh - ten them that —

8 Come and en - ligh - ten them that sit in dark - ness, come;

them that sit — in dark - ness. Come and en - ligh - ten

120

ligh - ten them that sit _____ in dark - ness, _____ and in the
 _____ sit in dark - ness, in dark - ness,
 8 come and en - ligh - ten them that sit in dark - ness, _____ and in the
 them that sit, _____ that sit in dark - ness,

rall.

sha - dow _____ of death.
 and in the sha - dow of death. TENOR SOLO
 sha - dow _____ of death. There was a man sent from God whose name was
 BASS SOLO
 and in the sha - dow of death.

rall.

p

125

8 John. *cresc.* *f* but he was sent to bear wit - ness to the light,
 He__ was not that light, *cresc.* *f* but he was sent, but he was sent _____ to bear wit -

cresc. *f*

SOPRANO SOLO 130

ALTO/MEZZO SOLO

mf the true light _____ which en-ligh-tens all of us was e-ven then
mf the true light _____ which en - ligh-tens us was e-ven then,
 to the light; *mf* the true light was
 ness to the light, *mf* the true light which en-ligh-tens us was

p *cresc.*

The Gift of Light

f *com - ing in-to the world.* *mp* **TUTTI** 135 *He was in the world,*

f *was com - ing to the world.* *mp* **TUTTI** *He was in the world,* *cresc. poco a poco*

8 *e - ven then com-ing in-to the world.* *mp* **TUTTI** *He was in the world,* *cresc. poco a poco* *and the world was*

f *e - ven then com - ing in-to the world.* *mp* **TUTTI** *He was in the world,* *cresc. poco a poco* *and the world was*

mf *pp*

cresc. poco a poco *ff*

and the world was made by Him, *ff* *and the*

cresc. poco a poco *ff*

and the world was made by Him, *ff* *and the*

8 *made by Him,* *Ky - ri - e - lei - son,*

made by Him

cres. poco a poco *f*

140 *mf*

world knew Him not! He came un - to his own, —

meno f *mf*

world knew Him not! Ky - ri - e — e - lei - son, un - to his

ff *ff* *mf*

the world knew Him not! He came un - to his own,

mf

the world knew Him not! un - to his

ff *dim.*

ff

and his own — re - ceiv'd Him not!

ff *mf*

own and his own — re - ceiv'd Him not! Ky - ri - e — e - lei - son.

his own — re - ceived Him not!

mf

own, his own — re - ceived Him not! Ky - ri - e — e - lei - son.

f

The Gift of Light

145

TUTTI

f

rall.

3

ALTO/MEZZO SOLO

mf cresc.

TUTTI

f

power to be-come the child-ren of

3

But to all who re-ceived him gave he power,

TUTTI

f

power to be-come the child-ren of

3

power to be-come child-ren of

3

TUTTI

f

power to be-come the child-ren of

3

rall.

3

150

f

God;

the Word was made

God;

and the Word was made

God;

The Word was made flesh and dwelt a-mong us, made

div.

God;

and the Word wasa made flesh and dwelt a - mong us, made

160 *p* *rall.*

— be-got - ten of the Fa - ther, full of grace and truth.

got - ten of the Fa - ther, full of grace, grace and truth.

got - ten of the Fa - ther, full of grace and truth.

— be-got - ten of the Fa - ther, full of grace, grace and truth.

con moto 165 *f*

E - ter - nal Fa - ther of

E - ter - nal Fa - ther of

E - ter - nal Fa - ther of

E - ter - nal Fa - ther of

con moto *mp* *mf*

170

light, shine — thou in our hearts!

light, shine thou in our hearts!

light, shine thou in our hearts!

light, shine thou in our hearts!

Detailed description: This block contains the vocal parts for the first system. It features four staves: Soprano (top), Alto, Tenor, and Bass (bottom). Each staff has the lyrics 'light, shine — thou in our hearts!' or 'light, shine thou in our hearts!'. The music is in 3/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The Soprano part has a melisma on 'hearts!'. The Alto and Tenor parts have a melisma on 'hearts!'. The Bass part has a melisma on 'hearts!'. The time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4 and back to 3/4.

f *mp*

Detailed description: This block contains the piano accompaniment for the first system. It features two staves: Treble and Bass. The music is in 3/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The Treble staff has a melisma on 'hearts!' with a dynamic marking of *f* (forte) and *mp* (mezzo-piano). The Bass staff has a melisma on 'hearts!' with a dynamic marking of *p* (piano). The time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4 and back to 3/4.

175

mf E - ter - nal Good - - - ness, de -

mf E - ter - nal Good - - - ness, de -

mf E - ter - nal Good - - - ness, de - liv - er us, de -

mf E - ter - nal Good - - - ness, de - liv - er us,

Detailed description: This block contains the vocal parts for the second system. It features four staves: Soprano (top), Alto, Tenor, and Bass (bottom). Each staff has the lyrics 'E - ter - nal Good - - - ness, de -' or 'E - ter - nal Good - - - ness, de - liv - er us, de -'. The music is in 3/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The Soprano part has a melisma on 'ness, de -'. The Alto part has a melisma on 'ness, de -'. The Tenor part has a melisma on 'ness, de - liv - er us, de -'. The Bass part has a melisma on 'ness, de - liv - er us, de -'. The time signature changes from 3/4 to 5/4 and back to 4/4.

Detailed description: This block contains the piano accompaniment for the second system. It features two staves: Treble and Bass. The music is in 3/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The Treble staff has a melisma on 'ness, de -' with a dynamic marking of *mf* (mezzo-forte). The Bass staff has a melisma on 'ness, de -' with a dynamic marking of *mf* (mezzo-forte). The time signature changes from 3/4 to 5/4 and back to 4/4.

The Gift of Light

liv - er us from all that is ev - il.

liv - er us from all that is ev - il.

8 liv - er us from all that is ev - il.

us from all that is ev - il.

p (background) *f* *cresc.* *mp* *Meno mosso* (c. 76 -)

180

f *mf*

O Wis - dom, com-ing

f *mf*

O Wis - dom, com-ing

f

O Wis - dom,

f

O Wis - dom,

cresc. *f*

The Gift of Light

cresc. 3 185 *ff* *rall.*
forth from the mouth of the Most High! Wis-dom, whose reach is bound - less,
cresc. 3 *ff* *rall.*
mf *cresc.* *ff* *rall.*
com-ing forth from the Most High! Wis-dom, whose reach is bound - less,
mf *cresc.* *ff* *rall.*
com-ing forth from the Most High! Wis-dom, whose reach is bound - less,

p *ten.* 190 *p*
dis - perse our fool-ish dark - ness, our fool-ish dark-ness.
p *ten.* *p*
dis - perse our fool-ish dark - ness, our fool-ish dark - ness.
p *ten.* *p*
dis-perse our fool-ish dark - ness, our fool-ish dark-ness.
p *ten.* *pp*

Gently (♩ = c. 72)

mp E - ter - nal com - pas - sion, e - ter - nal, *dim. poco a poco*

mp E - ter - nal com - pas - sion, E - ter - nal com -

Gently (♩ = c. 72)

p

195

dim. poco a poco

Tempo primo

sion, do thou have mer - cy up - on - our weak - ness - es.

- sion, do thou have mer - cy up - on - our weak - ness - es.

do thou have mer - cy up - on - our weak - ness - es.

pas - sion, have mer - cy up - on - our weak - ness - es.

Tempo primo

mp

200

Musical score for measures 200-204. The score is in 3/4 time and features four vocal staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: Ky - ri - e e - Ky - ri - e e - Ky - ri - e e - Ky - ri - e e - . The piano part includes a *p* dynamic marking and a *cresc.* marking. The piano accompaniment consists of a right-hand melody with a long note and a left-hand accompaniment with a long note.

205

Musical score for measures 205-209. The score is in 2/4 time and features four vocal staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: - - ri - e e - lei - son, *mf* Chris - te e - - ri - e e - lei - son, *mf* lei - - - son, *mf* Chris - lei - - - son, *mf*. The piano part includes a *cresc.* marking and a *mf* dynamic marking. The piano accompaniment consists of a right-hand melody with a long note and a left-hand accompaniment with a long note.

210

le - i - son, Chris - te e - lei - son.
 Chris - te e - lei - son, Chris - te e - lei - son.
 te e - lei - son, Chris - te e - lei - son.
mf Chris - te e - lei - son.

Chris - te e - lei - son, Chris - te e - lei - son. *dim.* *rit.*
 Chris - te e - lei - son, Chris - te e - lei - son. *dim.* *rit.*
 Chris - te e - lei - son, Chris - te e - lei - son. *dim.* *rit.*
 Chris - te e - lei - son, Chris - te e - lei - son. *dim.* *rit.*
 215 *rit.*

p Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, Ky - ri -

p Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, Ky - ri -

p Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, Ky - ri -

pp

220 lei - son, e - lei - son, —

lei - son, e - lei - son, —

e e - lei - son,

e e - lei - son,

pp

The Gift of Light

225

pp [Musical staff with treble clef, 3/2 time signature, and notes for the first vocal line.]

Ky - rie e - lei - - - son.

pp [Musical staff with treble clef, 3/2 time signature, and notes for the second vocal line.]

Ky - rie e - lei - - - son.

pp [Musical staff with treble clef, 3/2 time signature, and notes for the third vocal line.]

Ky - rie e - le - i - - - son.

pp [Musical staff with bass clef, 3/2 time signature, and notes for the fourth vocal line.]

Ky - rie e - le - i - - - son.

[Piano accompaniment staves with treble and bass clefs, 3/2 time signature, and chords.]

pp possibile
laissez vibrer

