

# 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.

## VERSE 1 Unison

Soprano *mp*

Alto

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

Tenor

Bass *mp*

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

1. O come, let us a - dore.

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VERSE 2

*mp*

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

*mp*

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

2. Son of God and Prince of Peace.

O com - met us a - dore.

*mp*

Ped.

VERSE 3

*mf*

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

*mf*

**W**

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

**E**

3. Son of God and Prince of Peace. O com - mune us a - dore.

**N**

*mf*

Ped.

**A**

**S**

VERSE 4

Descant *f*

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

*f*

4. Let trum - pet sound and m - ba - 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.

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

4. O come, let us a - dore.

*NB*

Slower (♩ = ca. 72)

*mp*

*mp*

*rit.*

*mp*

## 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 *fauxbourdon* 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, *chanting* by phrase, not by meter; let the text be your guide.

—Barney Walker

SAMPLE

# Assembly Edition

**A CHILD IS BORN IN BETHLEHEM**

Barney Walker

1. A child is born Beth - le - hem } Re - joi - ce  
 2. The vir - gin moth - bore a son } A child  
 3. The an - gels sing shep - herds near } The song  
 4. Let trum - pet sound and cym - als ring } Let all

1. and sing Je - ru - sa - lem, )  
 2. di - vine yet with us one, ) al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!  
 3. that earth so longed to hear, )  
 4. on earth in glad - ness sing, )

1-4. Son of God and Prince of Peace, O come, let us a - dore.

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SAMPLE