

for the choirs of St. John's Cathedral, Denver, Colorado

# EXSULTET

Based on Easter Exsultet, *Book of Common Prayer*  
For the Easter Vigil

John Repulski

Handbells used: 

*Freely – unmeasured*

Handbells 

Soprano  
Alto *mf* Re-joyce — now, heav'n-ly hosts and choirs of an - gels,

Tenor  
Bass *mf* Re-joyce —

for — the vic-to-ry of our might - y — King.

and let your trum-pets shout Sal-va - tion —

Re-joyce — and sing now, all the round earth, bright — with a glo-ri-ous splen - dor, —

Re-joyce —

Re-joyce, —

for — dark-ness has been van-quished by our e - ter - nal — King.

re-joyce — and be glad now, Moth - er Church, and let your ho - ly courts, in ra - diant light, —

re - sound with the prais-es of — your — peo - ple. Deacon/Priest

The — Lord be — with — you.

*Freely*  
All *f* Deacon/Priest

And — al - so with you. Let us give thanks — to the Lord — our God.

*f*

*Freely*  
All *f*

It is right \_\_\_\_\_ to give God thanks \_\_\_\_\_ and praise. \_\_\_\_\_

*f*

OSTINATO: *slowly* (♩ = ca. 46) *strict tempo, grace notes on the beat*

S *mp*

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

T

B *mp*

\*Cantor (sung over Ostinato)

It is tru - ly right and good, al - ways and \_\_\_\_\_ ev - 'ry - where, with our whole heart and  
mind and voice, to \_\_\_\_\_ praise \_\_\_\_\_ you, the in - vi - si - ble, al - migh - ty, and e - ter - nal God,  
and your on - ly - be - got - ten Son, \_\_\_\_\_ Je - sus Christ \_\_\_\_\_ our Lord; for he is the true \_\_\_\_\_  
Pas - chal Lamb, who at the feast of the Pass - o - ver paid for us the debt of \_\_\_\_\_  
Ad - am's sin, and by his blood de - liv - ered your \_\_\_\_\_ faith - ful peo - ple.

\*Cantor parts to be sung freely over Ostinato.

*in tempo* **OSTINATO** *mp*

S  
A  
T  
B

*in tempo* *mp*

This is the night, Alleluia, alleluia.  
Alleluia.

**Cantor (sung over Ostinato)**

when you brought our fathers, the children of Israel, out of bondage  
in Egypt, and led them through the Red Sea on dry land,

*freely* **OSTINATO** *f* *mp*

S  
A  
T  
B

*freely* *f* *mp*

This is the night, Alleluia, alleluia.  
This night,

**Cantor (sung over Ostinato)**

when all who believe in Christ are delivered from the  
gloom of sin, and are restored to grace and holiness of life.

## OSTINATO

*f* *mp*

This \_\_\_\_\_ is the night, Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

*f* *mp*

This night.

## Cantor (sung over Ostinato)

when Christ broke the bonds \_ of \_ death \_ and hell, and rose vic - to - rious from \_ the grave.

*freely - unmeasured* *mf*

Ho - ly Fa - ther, ac - cept our eve - ning \_ sac - ri - fice, the of - fer - ing of this

*mf*

can - dle in your \_ hon - or. May it shine con - tin - ual - ly to drive a - way \_

## Cantor

*p*

May \_\_\_\_\_ Christ, the Morn - ing Star who knows no \_ set - ting,

*p*

all dark - ness. Oo \_\_\_\_\_

*p*

find it ev - er\_\_ burn - ing- he who gives his light to all cre - a - tion,

*mp* *mf*

oo \_\_\_\_\_ oo \_\_\_\_\_

*mp* *mf*

This system contains a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The lyrics are "find it ev - er\_\_ burn - ing- he who gives his light to all cre - a - tion,". The piano accompaniment consists of two staves (treble and bass clefs) with a grand staff brace on the left. The piano part features long, sustained chords in both hands, with dynamics marked *mp* and *mf*. There are also some melodic lines in the piano part.

and who lives and reigns for ev - er\_\_ and ev - er. A-men. \_\_\_\_\_

*f* *f* *ppp*

*f* *f* *ppp*

This system continues the musical score. The vocal line has lyrics "and who lives and reigns for ev - er\_\_ and ev - er. A-men. \_\_\_\_\_". The piano accompaniment continues with chords and some melodic movement. Dynamics include *f* and *ppp*. The system ends with a double bar line.

## PERFORMANCE NOTES

For SATB choir, cantor, and handbells, this piece was composed out of a need for an enhanced, yet straightforward version of the Exsultet from the Easter Vigil service. Taken from the *Book of Common Prayer*, this version utilizes all optional omissions from the text. It is based on the traditional chant melody and is also designed to work perfectly with the usual congregational responses at the *Sursum corda* and at the *Amen*. Handbells are optional, but do prove helpful in establishing beginning pitches for choir and cantor. It is intended to be accessible to a choir of moderate skill in one or two rehearsals. The cantor part is relatively unchanged from the original chant melody and should be familiar to those who have sung the chant found in the *Altar Book* for Episcopal services.

When used in its intended liturgical context, the Exsultet is sung in darkness, with the cantor standing near the Paschal candle. The choir should be in close proximity, if not gathered around the cantor. Small battery powered clip-on book lights have proven to be very successful for seeing the music in minimal lighting. Except where indicated, speech rhythm should determine the pace of the notes, and not be rushed or plodding. Rather, an essence of fluidity and forward motion should be the goal. However, the choral ostinato needs to be sung at an unwavering strict pace, and not hurried. If preferred, "Hilariter" may be substituted for the word "Alleluia" in the ostinato passage. "Hilariter" is Latin for "joyfully" and is pronounced hih-lair-i-tair.

—J.R.