

Anthem Notes for December 4, 2016

Carol of the Advent

Philip Dietterich (b 1931)

*People, look east. The time is near
Of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able,
Trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the guest, is on the way.*

*Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,
One more seed is planted there:
Give up your strength the seed to nourish,
That in course the flower may flourish.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the rose, is on the way.*

*Birds, though you long have ceased to build,
Guard the nest that must be filled.
Even the hour when wings are frozen
God for fledging time has chosen.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the bird, is on the way.*

*Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim
One more light the bowl shall brim,
Shining beyond the frosty weather,
Bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the star, is on the way.*

*Angels, announce with shouts of mirth
Christ who brings new life to earth.
Set every peak and valley humming
With the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Lord, is on the way.*

Advent is a time of preparing for the coming of Christ as a child and for His ultimate return with “clouds descending.” Most Advent hymns focus on or herald the coming of Christ to the world as Savior. This hymn is somewhat unusual as it touches on preparation not only of ourselves, but on our surroundings—our homes, extending to our environments, extending yet to the world—preparing for the chosen time and the anticipation of the angels announcing the arrival of Love, the Guest, who is, of course, Jesus Christ.

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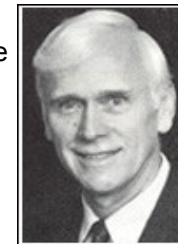
“Carol of the Advent” (also known as “People, Look East, the Time is Near”), is a carol that seems to bring in the “greening” of the home that is often done in Advent— specifically in “Make your house fair as you are able, trim the hearth and set the table.” Many of us in this modern world—where Christmas almost starts in October—begin preparing our homes and trimming the hearths for several weeks in anticipation of the coming celebration of the Nativity. The text by Eleanor Farjeon extends from the warmth of the home and journeys into the world with the joyful good news of the coming Savior.

As noted, the text was written by Eleanor Farjeon (1881-1965), who was an English author of children's stories and plays, poetry, biography, history and satire. A gifted writer, she also wrote the hymn “Morning has Broken,” which was recorded and popularized by the singer Cat Stevens. Achieving international recognition, she won the Carnegie Medal, the Hans Christian Andersen medal and received the American Regina medal in 1959.



Eleanor Farjeon

The text appeared in the Oxford Book of Carols in 1928 as a “Modern text written for or adapted to traditional tunes.” It is set to “Besançon,” an ancient French melody which is in a cheerful, dance-like 6/8 meter. In this arrangement, the tune is sung in unison as well as in four-part harmony and in two-part counterpoint in the middle section, where the women ‘chase’ the men singing the tune.



Philip Dietterich

Philip R. Dietterich (b. 1931), arranger, is a widely published composer of sacred music. A lifelong Methodist, he was the full time Minister of Music at First United Methodist Church in Westfield, New Jersey, for most of his adult life.

**Today's Advent and Christmas Courtyard Music is presented
by the Men's Choir.**

Advent
*A Season of Hope
& Expectation*