



CAROL BARNETT

# CHRISTMAS EVE, BELLS

*for SSSAAATTBB Chorus*

Text by Alfred, Lord Tennyson



  
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CHRISTMAS EVE, BELLS

*for SSSAAATTBB chorus*

Text by Alfred, Lord Tennyson

Commissioned by the Dale Warland Singers

Premiered December 5, 1991  
by the Dale Warland Singers  
at Orchestra Hall  
Minneapolis, MN

c. 4 minutes

PROGRAM NOTE:

*Christmas Eve, Bells* was written in 1991 for the Dale Warland Singers' *Echoes of Christmas* concert. I set the first three stanzas from Alfred, Lord Tennyson's *In Memoriam, canto XXVIII*, imagining the voices as bells ringing the changes – exploring the variations of their tunes – from “four hamlets round, from far and near, on mead and moor,” the background hum always present in their combined overtones, and a sense of wistful nostalgia for days gone by.

*In Memoriam*

XXVIII

The time draws near the birth of Christ:  
The moon is hid; the night is still;  
The Christmas bells from hill to hill  
Answer each other in the mist.

Four voices of four hamlets round,  
From far and near, on mead and moor,  
Swell out and fail, as if a door  
Were shut between me and the sound:

Each voice four changes on the wind,  
That now dilate, and now decrease,  
Peace and goodwill, goodwill and peace,  
Peace and goodwill, to all mankind.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)

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# Christmas Eve, Bells

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

Carol Barnett

$\text{♩} = 56$

*pp*

Soprano

(hum)

Soprano 2

(hum)

Alto

(hum)

Alto 2

(hum)

Tenor solo

Tenor

Bass

$\text{♩} = 56$

Piano  
(for rehearsal only)

Freely

6

S

S 2

A

A 2

T solo

*p*

The time draws near the birth of Christ:

T

B

Freely

6

Pno.

The musical score is arranged in a system with eight staves. The vocal parts are Soprano (S), Soprano 2 (S 2), Alto (A), Alto 2 (A 2), Tenor solo (T solo), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The piano accompaniment (Pno.) is shown in grand staff notation. The score begins with a rehearsal mark '6' and the tempo instruction 'Freely'. The Tenor solo part includes the lyrics 'The time draws near the birth of Christ:'. The piano part features a dynamic marking 'p' and is also marked 'Freely'. The score is watermarked with 'For Permissions beady eyes Publishing'.

10  $\text{♩} = 56$

S \_\_\_\_\_ zm \_\_\_\_\_

S 2 \_\_\_\_\_ zm \_\_\_\_\_

A \_\_\_\_\_ zm \_\_\_\_\_

A 2 \_\_\_\_\_ zm \_\_\_\_\_

T solo  
The moon is hid; the night is still; \_\_\_\_\_

T \_\_\_\_\_  
*pp*  
(hum) \_\_\_\_\_

B \_\_\_\_\_  
*pp*  
zm \_\_\_\_\_

10  $\text{♩} = 56$

Pno.

15

S  
zm

S 2  
zm

A  
zm

A 2  
zm

T solo  
*p*  
The Christ-mas bells from

T  
zm

B  
zm

Pno.  
15

*n.*

20

S

S 2

A

A 2

T solo

T

B

Pno.

zm zm zm zm zm zm

zm zm zm zm

zm zm zm zm

*mp* *pp* *mp*

hill to hill, to hill An - swer,

zm

20



26

S  
zm

S 2  
zm

A  
zm

A 2  
zm

T solo  
*p*  
an - swer each oth - er in the mist.

T  
*pp*  
(hum)

B  
*pp*  
(hum)

Pno.  
26

The musical score consists of eight staves. The vocal parts (S, S 2, A, A 2, T solo, T, B) are in treble clef, and the piano accompaniment (Pno.) is in bass clef. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The tempo and dynamics are indicated by *p* and *pp*. The lyrics are: "an - swer each oth - er in the mist." The piano part features a melodic line in the right hand and a harmonic accompaniment in the left hand. A large watermark "For Personal Use Only beady eyes Publishing" is overlaid on the score.



♩ = 120

37 *p*

S Four voic - es of four ham - lets round, round, four voic - es, —

S 2 *p*  
Four voic - es of four ham - lets round, —

A *p*  
Four voic - es of four ham - lets round, —

A 2 *p*  
Four voic - es of four ham - lets round, four voic - es, —

T *n.* *p*  
From far — and

B *n.*

Pno.

37 ♩ = 120

41 *cresc. poco a poco*

S  
four voic - es, mead,

S 2  
*cresc. poco a poco*  
four voic - es, four voic - es, moor,

A  
*cresc. poco a poco*  
four voic - es, four voic - es, moor,

A 2  
*cresc. poco a poco*  
four voic - es, mead,

T  
*cresc. poco a poco*  
8 near, on mead and moor, on mead and moor, *mf*

B  
Swell

Pno.  
41

46 *f dim. poco a poco*

S mead, mead, zm

S 2 moor, moor, zm

A moor, moor zm

A 2 mead, mead, zm

T mead, moor, mead, moor, zm zm

B *cresc.* *f dim. poco a poco*  
out, swell out and fail, as if a door were shut be -

46

Pno.

The musical score is arranged in a system with six vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The vocal parts are Soprano (S), Soprano 2 (S 2), Alto (A), Alto 2 (A 2), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The piano part is labeled 'Pno.'. The lyrics are: 'mead, mead, zm', 'moor, moor, zm', 'moor, moor zm', 'mead, mead, zm', 'mead, moor, mead, moor, zm zm', and 'out, swell out and fail, as if a door were shut be -'. The score includes dynamic markings such as 'f dim. poco a poco' and 'cresc.'.

52 *pp* ♩ = 56

S *pp* *p* zm \_\_\_\_\_ Each

S 2 *pp* *p* \_\_\_\_\_ Each

A *pp* *p* \_\_\_\_\_ Each voice four chang-es on the

A 2 *pp* *p* zm \_\_\_\_\_ Each voice four chang-es on the

T *pp* *p* \_\_\_\_\_ Each voice four chang-es on the wind, (close to "n")

B *p* \_\_\_\_\_ tween me and the sound: (close to "n")

52 ♩ = 56

Pno.

56

S voice four chang-es on the wind, (close to "n") That now di-late, and now de-crease, and

A wind, (close to "n") That now di-late, and now de-crease, and

T *p* zm zm zm zm

B Each voice four chang-es on the wind, (close to "n")

Pno.

60

S *rit. poco*, *a tempo* *p* now di-late, and now de-crease, Peace and good-will, good-will and

A *p* now di-late, and now de-crease, Peace and good-will, good-will and

T *p* zm zm zm zm Peace and good-will, good-will and

B *p* zm Peace and good-will, good-will and

Pno. *rit. poco*, *a tempo*

65 *p* *floating*

S solo

65 *mp* *p* *più p*

S

peace, Peace and good - will. zm

65 *mp* *p* *più p*

S 2

peace, Peace and good - will. zm

A

65 *mp* *p* *pp*

A

peace, Peace and good - will. zm

A 2

65 *mp* *p* *più p*

A 2

peace, Peace and good - will. zm

A 3

65 *mp* *p* *più p*

A 3

peace, Peace and good - will. zm

T

8

65 *mp* *p*

T

peace, Peace and good - will.

B

65 *mp* *p*

B

peace, Peace and good - will.

Pno.

65

Piano accompaniment



70

S solo

S

dim. poco a poco a niente

zm

S 2

dim. poco a poco a niente

zm

A

dim. poco a poco a niente

zm

A 2

dim. poco a poco a niente

zm

A 3

dim. poco a poco a niente

zm

T

B

Pno.

The musical score is arranged in a grand staff format. It includes parts for Soprano Solo (S solo), Soprano (S), Soprano 2 (S 2), Alto (A), Alto 2 (A 2), Alto 3 (A 3), Tenor (T), Bass (B), and Piano (Pno.). The piano part features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The vocal parts have lyrics 'zm' written below the notes. A dynamic marking 'dim. poco a poco a niente' is present above the vocal staves. The score is numbered 70 at the beginning of each system.