
Christmas comes but once a year

For SATB divisi a cappella choir

Peter Burton
(2025)

Duration c. 3' 50"

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Written for Jack Apperley and the Epsom Chamber Choir

Christmas comes but once a Year

Merinda D'Aprano

Peter Burton

cheerful and hearty ♩. = 72
poco a poco cresc.

pp

Soprano 1

* Christ - mas, Christ - mas, Christ - - mas,

Soprano 2

pp *poco a poco cresc.*

* Christ - mas, Christ - mas, Christ - - mas,

Alto 1

Alto 2

mp

Christ-mas comes but once_ a year,___

Tenor 1

pp *poco a poco cresc.*

* Christ - mas, Christ mas, Christ - - mas,

Tenor 2

Bass 1

pp *poco a poco cresc.*

* Christ - mas, Christ - mas, Christ - -

Bass 2

pp *poco a poco cresc.*

* Christ - mas, Christ - mas, Christ - -

cheerful and hearty ♩. = 72

Piano
(for rehearsal only)

* dotted crotchets to be sung full value, staggered breathing.

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7

S1. *mp*
Christ - - - mas, Christ - mas comes,

S2. *mp*
Christ - - - mas, Christ - mas comes,

A1. *mp*
Christ - mas comes but once__ a

A2.
Christ - - - mas,

T1.
Christ - - - mas, Christ - - - mas,

T2. *mp*
Christ - mas come but once__ a year, Christ -

B1.
mas, Christ - - - mas, Christ -

B2.
mas, Christ - - - mas,

Pno.

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poco accel.

10

S1. *f* Christ - mas comes, Christ-mas comes but once a year, —

S2. *f* Christ - mas comes, Christ-mas comes but once a year, —

A1. *f* year, — once a year, —

A2. *mp* Christ-mas comes but once a year, *f* once a year, —

T1. *mp* Christ-mas comes but once a year, *f* once a year, —

T2. *f* - mas, once a year, —

B1. *mf* mas, Oh, Christ-mas comes but once a year, — *f*

B2. *mf* Christ-mas comes but once a year, *f* once a year, —

Pno. *poco accel.*

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A Tempo primo

13 *mf* *mp*

S. Christ - mas comes but once a year, Was - sail and Yule. So,

A. Christ - mas comes but once a year, Was - sail and Yule. So,

T. Christ - mas comes but once a year, Was - sail and Yule. So,

B. Christ - mas comes but once a year, Was - sail and Yule. So,

Pno. **A** Tempo primo

17 *f* *mf*

S. let us all be of good cheer, Sing, No - well!

A. let us all be of good cheer, Sing, No - well!

T. let us all be of good cheer, Sing, No - well!

B. let us all be of good cheer, Sing, No - well!

Pno.

21

S. *mf*
We

A. *f*^{*}
ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong,

T. *f*^{*}
ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong,

B. *f*^{**}
Ding, Dong, Ding, Dong, Ding, Dong, Ding, Dong,

Pno.

25 **B**

S. light the twink-ling can- dles there on the tree,

A. *mp*
ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong,

T. *mp*
ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong,

B. *mp*
Ding, Dong, Ding, Dong, Ding, Dong, Ding, Dong, *mf* we

Pno. **B**

* with the quavers, expressionless with the 'g' almost silent.

** with the dotted crotchets, accented like a bell with the 'g' almost silent.

29 *mp* *f*

S. ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong,

A. *mp* *f*

ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, ding, dong, ding, ding,

T. *mp* *f* *f*

ding, ding, dong, ding, dong, We

B. chink our glas-ses prai - sing good com - pan - y.

Pno.

33 *mf* *f*

S. ding, Ah, join in the feast, sing out with glee:

A. *mf* *f* *f*

Ah, Ah, with bells and trum-pets, sing out with glee:

T. *f*

hang our stock-ings, join in the feast, Ah, sing out with glee:

B. *mf* *f*

Ah, join in the feast, sing out with glee:

Pno.

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37 **C**

S. *mf* Christ - mas comes but once__ a year, Was - sail and Yule.____ *mp* So,

A. *mf* Christ - mas comes but once a year, Was - sail and Yule.____ *mp* So,

T. *mf* Christ - mas comes but once a year, Was - sail and Yule.____ *mp* So,

B. *mf* Christ - mas comes but once__ a year, Was - sail and Yule.____ *mp* So,

Pno. **C**

41 *f* *mf*

S. let us all__ be__ of good cheer,____ Sing, No - well!____

A. let__ us all__ be of good cheer, Sing, No - well! *mf*

T. let__ us__ all__ be of good cheer, Sing, No - well! *mf*

B. let__ us all__ be of good cheer, Sing, No - well! *mf*

Pno.

45

S. *rall.* *mf* But

A. *f* ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong,

T. *f* ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong,

B. *f* Ding, Dong, Ding, Dong, Ding, Dong, Ding, Dong, *mp*

Pno. *rall.*

D

slower, expressive ♩ = 45

49

S. *legato* yule - tide comes to tug at our souls, re - call ing those a - part or a - lone,

A. *mp* *legato* ding, Ah, re - call ing those a - part or a - lone,

T. *mp* *legato* ding, Ah, comes to tug at our souls, Ah, We

B. *legato* Ding, Ah, Ah, We

Pno. *legato*

D

slower, expressive ♩ = 45

54

S. *p* to love for us all, with peace on earth,

A. *p* to love for us all, with peace on earth, —

T. turn our hope to love for us all, with peace on earth, with

B. turn our hope to love for us all, with peace on earth, with

Pno.

57

S. *mp* *p* *pp* with peace on earth, We turn our hope to love for us all, with

A. *mp* *p* *pp* — with peace on earth, We turn our hope to love for us all, with

T. *mp* *pp* peace on earth, — to love for us all,

B. *mp* *pp* peace on earth, — to love for us all,

Pno.

60

S. *mf*
 peace on earth, with peace on earth, with peace, peace on

A. *mf*
 peace on earth, with peace on earth, with peace, peace on

T. *mf*
 with peace on earth, with peace on earth, with peace, peace on

B. *mf*
 with peace on earth, with peace on earth, with peace on

Pno.

63

S. *p* *rall.* *pp*
 earth, with peace on earth.

A. *p* *pp*
 earth, with peace on earth.

T. *p* *pp*
 earth, with peace on earth.

B. *p* *pp*
 earth, with peace on earth.

Pno. *rall.*

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Tempo primo

67 *pp* poco a poco cresc.

S1. *pp* poco a poco cresc.

Christ - mas, Christ - mas, Christ - mas,

S2. *pp* poco a poco cresc.

Christ - mas, Christ - mas, Christ - mas,

A1.

A2. *p*

Christ-mas comes but once a year, Christ -

T1. *pp* poco a poco cresc.

Christ - mas, Christ - mas, Christ - mas,

T2. *mp*

Christ-mas comes but once a year,___

B1. *pp* poco a poco cresc.

Christ - mas, Christ - mas, Christ -

B2. *pp* *mp*

Christ - mas, Christ - mas comes___ but_ once a

Pno. Tempo primo

73

S1. *p* Christ - mas comes, _____ Christ - mas comes,

S2. *p* Christ - mas comes, _____ Christ - mas comes,

A1. *mp* Christ - mas comes but once _____ a year, _____

A2. *mp* mas, _____ Christ - mas comes but once a

T1. Christ - - - mas, Christ mas comes but once _____ a

T2. _____

B1. *mf* mas, Christ - - - mas, Oh,

B2. year, _____ Christ - mas comes but once _____ a

Pno. *E*

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75

S1. Christ - mas comes_ but once_ a year,_____ *f*

S2. Christ - mas comes_ but once a year,_____ *f*

A1. _____ once a year,_____ *f*

A2. year, _____ once a year,_____ *f*

T1. year, _____ once a year,_____ *f*

T2. _____ once a year,_____ *f*

B1. Christ mas comes_ but once_ a year,_____ *f*

B2. year, _____ once_ a year,_____ *f*

Pno.

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77

S. *mf* Christ - mas comes but once a year, Was - sail and Yule. *mp* So,

A. *mf* Christ - mas comes but once a year, Was - sail and Yule. *mp* So,

T. *mf* Christ - mas comes but once a year, Was - sail and Yule. *mp* So,

B. *mf* Christ - mas comes but once a year, Was - sail and Yule. *mp* So,

Pno. *F*

81

S. *f* let us all be of good cheer, *mf* Sing, No - well!

A. *f* let us all be of good cheer, *mf* Sing, No - well!

T. *f* let us all be of good cheer, *mf* Sing, No - well!

B. *f* let us all be of good cheer, *mf* Sing, No - well!

Pno.

85 **G**

S1. *f* Glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis de - o.

S2. *f* Glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis de - o.

A1. *f* Glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis de - o.

A2. *f* Glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis de - o.

T1. *f* Christ - mas comes but once a year,

T2. *f* Christ - mas comes but once a year,

B1. *f* Christ - mas comes but once a year,

B2. *f* Christ - mas comes but once a year,

Pno. **G**

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Slower ♩. = 50

88

S1. *f* *ff* be of good cheer, of good cheer be-cause it's

S2. *f* *ff* be of good cheer, of good cheer be-cause it's

A1. *f* *ff* be of good cheer be-cause it's

A2. *f* *ff* be of good cheer be-cause it's

T1. *f* *ff* be of good cheer, be of good cheer be-cause it's

T2. *f* *ff* be of good cheer, be of good cheer be-cause it's

B1. *f* *ff* be of good cheer, be of good cheer be-cause it's

B2. *f* *ff* be of good cheer, be of good cheer be-cause it's

Pno. *f* *ff* Slower ♩. = 50

92 *p*

S1. Christ - - - mas.

S2. Christ - mas.

A1. Christ - mas.

A2. Christ - mas.

T1. Christ mas, it's Christ - - - mas.

T2. Christ - mas.

B1. Christ mas.

B2. Christ - mas, it's Christ - - - mas.

Pno.

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H Tempo Primo

97

S. *p* Sing, No - well! *pp* Sing, No - well!

A. *p* Sing, No - well! *pp* Sing, No - well!

T. *p* Sing, No - well! *pp* Sing, No - well!

B. *p* Sing, No - well! *pp* Sing, No - well!

Pno. *H* Tempo Primo

101 *molto rall.* *mp* *mf* *mp* *slower* ♩ = 50

S. Sing No-well, Sing - well, Sing No - well!

A. *mp* *mf* *mp* Ding, Dong, Ding, Dong, Sing No - well!

T. *mp* *mf* *mp* Ding, Dong, Ding, Dong, Sing No - well!

B. *mp* *mf* *mp* Ding, Dong, Ding, Dong, Sing No - well!

Pno. *molto rall.* *slower* ♩ = 50

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