

WEST VILLAGE CHORALE PRESENTS

# A LIGHT OF HOPE, A SONG OF PEACE

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2023

JUDSON MEMORIAL CHURCH



# A LIGHT OF HOPE, A SONG OF PEACE

## West Village Chorale

**Colin Britt** - Artistic director and conductor

**Rong Zhang** - Assistant Conductor

**Elena Belli** - Pianist

Calliope Brass

Sunday, December 17, 2023  
at 3:30 pm

Judson Memorial Church

## ⌘ PROGRAM ⌘

Kindly turn off your cell phones during the program

- O Come, All Ye Faithful\*** Unknown, arr. *David Willcocks*
- A Light of Hope, A Song of Peace** *Mark Burrows* (b. 1971)
- Deck the Hall** Traditional Welsh carol, arr. *Jocelyn Hagen* (b. 1980)
- I Saw Three Ships** Traditional English carol, arr. *Andy Brooke*
- The First Noel** English carol arr. *Dan Forrest* (b. 1978)
- S'vivon** Traditional Hebrew song, arr. *Betty Bertaux* (1938-2014)
- Durme, Durme** Sephardic Folk Song, arr. *Audrey Snyder* (b. 1953)

### Brass Interlude:

"Jingle Bells" from Christmas Jazz Suite, arr. Arthur Frackenpohl  
"Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," arr. Justin Weiss

- Seven Principles** *Bernice Johnson Reagon* (b. 1942)
- Hold Out Your Light** Traditional Spiritual, arr. *Moses Hogan* (1957-2003)
- Feliz Navidad** *José Feliciano* (b. 1945), arr. *Mac Huff*
- Sleigh Ride** *Leroy Anderson* (1908-1975),  
arr. *Hawley Ades* (1908-2008)
- Nutcracker Jingles** *James Pierpont* (1822-1893) and  
*Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky* (1940-1893) arr. *Chuck Bridwell*
- Happy Holiday/White Christmas** *Irving Berlin* (1888-1989),  
arr. *Ed Lojeski* (d. 2020)
- The Christmas Song\*** *Mel Tormé* (1925-1999) and  
*Robert Wells* (1922-1998)

\*Singalong!

## West Village Chorale Singers

### SOPRANOS:

Claire Aidem  
Ortal Cohen  
Wei-Ting Duo  
Katie FitzGerald  
Ellen Gottlieb  
Suzanne Hartman  
Jenna Johnson  
Danielle Malkin  
Alexa Mamoulides  
Maureen McCarthy  
Maddie Ritchie  
Katie Sanborn-Price  
Joan Shavit  
Evelyn Simon  
Mary Wade  
Sondra Ward\*

### ALTOS:

Amy Daly  
Ana de Mendoza  
Vera Finkemeier  
Grace Goodman  
Johanna Henry  
Christina Longo  
Sara Mael  
Juliet Milhofer\*  
Catherine Morrison-Garcia  
Kimberly Mossel  
Dianne Patterson  
Melanie Pfetsch  
Stephanie Serpick  
Mariah Spillers  
Hadley Taylor

### TENORS:

Steven Bizzell  
Michael Figueroa  
Nicholas Gottlieb  
Joseph Hatem\*  
Andrew Langerman  
Liam McNamara  
John Onderdonk  
Terry Quinn  
David Reinhart  
Edward Shiner

### BASSES:

Justin Beck  
Teedo Bilecky  
J. Robert Charles  
Jack Darcey  
John Herzfeld\*  
Thomas Higgins  
Pete Klosterman  
Louis Krefsky  
Eugene Y. Q. Shen  
John Stout

\*section leader

## CALLIOPE BRASS



Olivia Pidi - Trumpet  
Kevin Barnes - Trumpet  
Erin Paul - Horn  
Sara Mayo - Trombone  
Samantha Lake - Tuba



## Program Texts

### O Come, All Ye Faithful\*

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!  
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;  
Come and behold him, born the king of angels:

REFRAIN:

O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him,  
Christ the Lord.



God of God, Light of Light,  
Lo, he abhors not the Virgin's womb.  
Very God, begotten, not created:  
REFRAIN

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,  
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!  
Glory to God in the highest:  
REFRAIN

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,  
Jesus to thee be glory be giv'n.  
Word of the father now in flesh appearing.  
REFRAIN

### A Light of Hope, A Song of Peace

We light a candle, and we remember  
there is hope in this world.  
We sing our heartsong, and we remember  
there is peace in this world.

The days are getting colder,  
the nights are growing long,  
but there is warmth and wonder  
a candle and a song.

And so we shine, and so we sing  
till doubt and sorrow cease.  
A light of hope, a song of peace.

A single candle will light another,  
spreading hope through this world.  
We'll share our heartsong with one another,  
singing peace to this world.



## Deck the Hall

Deck the hall with boughs of holly,  
Fa la la la la la la la.  
'Tis the season to be jolly, Fa la la . . .  
Fill the meadcup, drain the barrel, Fa la la . . .  
Troul the ancient Christmas carol, Fa la la . . .

See the flowering bowl before us, Fa la la . . .  
Strike the harp and join the chorus, Fa la la . . .  
Follow me in merry measure, Fa la la . . .  
While I sing of beauty's treasure, Fa la la . . .

Fast away the old year passes, Fa la la . . .  
Hail the new, ye lads and lasses, Fa la la . . .  
Laughing, quaffing all together, Fa la la . . .  
Heedless of the wind and weather, Fa la la . . .

### I Saw Three Ships

I saw three ships come sailing in  
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day;  
I saw three ships come sailing in  
On Christmas Day in the morning.



And what was in those ships all three,  
On Christmas Day in the morning?

Our Saviour Christ and his lady,  
On Christmas Day in the morning.

Ding, dong, ding, dong,  
On Christmas Day in the morning.

And all the bells on Earth shall ring,  
On Christmas Day in the morning.

And all the angels in heav'n shall sing,  
On Christmas Day in the morning.

And all the souls on earth shall sing,  
On Christmas Day in the morning.

## The First Noel

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel  
Born is the King of Israel.

The first Noel the angels did say  
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields where they lay,  
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep  
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel . . .

They looked up and saw a star  
Shining in the east, beyond them far:  
And to the earth it gave great light  
And so it continued both day and night.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel . . .

Then let us all with one accord  
Sing praises to our heav'nly Lord,  
That hath made heav'n and earth of naught,  
And with his blood mankind has bought.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel . . .



## S'Vivon

S'vivon sov, sov, sov,  
Hanukka hu hag tov,  
Hanukka hu hag tov,  
S'vivon sov sov sov.

*translation from Hebrew*

Dreidel, spin, spin, spin,  
Chanukah is a nice holiday,  
Chanukah is a nice holiday,  
Dreidel, spin, spin, spin.

Hag simcha hu la'am,  
Nes gadol haya sham!  
Nes gadol haya sham,  
Hag simcha hu la'am!

It's a joyous holiday for the nation  
A great miracle happened there!  
A great miracle happened there,  
It's a joyous holiday for the people

## Durme, Durme

Durme, durme ijiko de madre

Sleep, sleep mother's little boy

Durme, durme sin ansia y dolor

Sleep, sleep free from worry  
and pain

Kon ermozura de Sh'ma Yisrael!

With the beauty of the words of  
Sh'ma Yisrael

## Seven Principles

Umoja: Unity that brings us together

Kuujichagulia: We will determine who we are (x3)

Ujima: Working and building our union

Ujamaa: We'll spend our money wisely

Nia: We know the purpose of our lives

Kuumba: All that we touch is more beautiful

Imani:  
We believe that we can  
We know that we can  
We will any way that we can

## Hold Out Your Light

Hold out your light, you Heav'n-bound soldier,  
Let your light shine around the world.

Singin',  
O, preacher can't you hold out your light.  
O, deacon can't you hold out your light.  
O, leader can't you hold out your light,  
Let your light shine around the world.

Hear the children singin',  
Hold out your light, you Heav'n-bound soldier,  
Let your light shine around the world.

## Feliz Navidad

Feliz Navidad, Feliz Navidad,  
Feliz Navidad, próspero año y felicidad.

I want to wish you a Merry Christmas  
From the bottom of my heart.  
Feliz Navidad!



## Sleigh Ride

Let's go for a sleigh ride!  
A wonderful sleigh ride!  
Come, hurry along with a song,  
in a wintery world to glide!

Just hear those sleigh bells jingling, ring-ting-tingling, too.  
Come on, it's lovely weather for a sleigh ride together with you.  
Outside the snow is falling and friends are calling, "Yoo-hoo,"  
Come on, it's lovely weather for a sleigh ride together with you.

Giddy-yap, giddy-yap, giddy-yap, let's go, let's go.  
Let's look at the snow.

We're riding in a wonderland of snow.

Giddy-yap, giddy-yap, giddy-yap, it's grand, it's grand,  
just holding your hand.

We're gliding along with a song of a wintry fairyland.  
Our cheeks are nice and rosy and comfy cozy are we.

We're snuggled up together like two birds of a feather would be.  
Let's take that road before us and sing a chorus or two.  
Come on, it's lovely weather for a sleigh ride together with you.  
There's a birthday party at the home of Farmer Gray.

It'll be the perfect ending a perfect day.  
We'll be singing the songs we love to sing without a single stop,  
at the fireplace while we watch the chestnuts pop. Pop! pop! pop!  
There's a happy feeling nothing in this world can buy,

When they pass around the coffee and the pumpkin pie.  
It'll nearly be like a picture print by Currier and Ives.  
These wonderful things are the things we remember all through our  
lives!

Come on, it's lovely weather now, we're together now!  
Bells are jingling, ring-ting-tingling.  
Snow is falling and friends are calling.  
It's lovely weather for a sleigh ride together with you

## Nutcracker Jingles

Dashing through the snow in a one horse open sleigh.  
O'er the fields we go, laughing all the way.  
Bells on bobtail ring, making spirits bright.  
What fun it is to ride and sing a sleighing song tonight.  
Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way,  
O what fun it is to ride in a one horse open sleigh.

## Happy Holiday/White Christmas

Happy holiday, happy holiday,  
while the merry bells keep ringing,  
may your every wish come true.

Happy holiday, happy holiday,  
may the calendar keep bringing  
happy holidays to you.

I'm dreaming of a white Christmas  
just like the ones I used to know.  
Where the treetops glisten  
and children listen  
to hear sleigh bells in the snow.

I'm dreaming of a white Christmas  
with every Christmas card I write.  
May your days be merry and bright.  
And may all your Christmases be white.

Happy holidays to you.

## The Christmas Song\*

Chestnuts roasting on an open fire  
Jack Frost nipping at your nose  
Yuletide carols being sung by a choir  
And folks dressed up like Eskimos.

Everybody knows a turkey and some mistletoe  
Help to make the season bright  
Tiny tots with their eyes all aglow  
Will find it hard to sleep tonight.

They know that Santa's on his way  
He's loaded lots of toys and goodies on his sleigh  
And every mother's child is gonna spy  
To see if reindeer really know how to fly.

And so I'm offering this simple phrase  
To kids from one to ninety-two.  
Although it's been said many times, many ways,  
Merry Christmas to you.

## 🎵 Program Notes 🎵

We are so glad you can celebrate this festive time of year with us!

The song that gives its title to our concert, Mark Burrows' "A Light of Hope, a Song of Peace," sets the atmosphere for this evening's program. This particular choice holds significance for me, as I grappled with profound loss during the challenging days of the pandemic when my grandmother passed away. With global restrictions preventing my return to China, I found solace in something my grandfather told me—a gentle reminder that I am the light of hope within our family. It is this sentiment that reverberates through Burrows' composition, a source of comfort and a wish for inner peace that I extend to each of you.

Rehearsing and singing holiday pieces can create and strengthen a much-needed sense of community – which is so important during a time of crisis around the world. Our wishes to find – and pass on - comfort and peace extend through a number of today's works, including the gorgeous Sephardic lullaby "Durme, Durme" and Dan Forrest's reflective meditation on "The First Noel." Moses Hogan's arrangement of the traditional spiritual "Hold Out Your Light" and Bernice Johnson Reagon's celebratory Kwanzaa work "Seven Principles" remind us to strive to be a source of light and joy to our larger community.

Along with the Christmas and Hanukkah favorites "O Come All Ye Faithful," "I Saw Three Ships," and "S'Vivon," we are excited to share contemporary (and unexpected!) arrangements of classics "Deck the Hall" and "Jingle Bells."

We hope our music can transcend the stage, connecting us all in a shared embrace of hope, love, joy, and the promise of brighter days ahead.

Thank you for joining us!



Praised by the New York Times as possessing a "well-blended sound," the West Village Chorale is a sixty-voice avocational ensemble founded in 1971 by Gwen Gould. Originally established in connection with the 150th anniversary of the Church of St. Luke in the Fields as the St. Luke's Community Chorus, the group incorporated in 1975 as the West Village Chorale. In 2010 the Chorale moved to our current home, the historic and acoustically magnificent Judson Memorial Church, designed by Stanford White.

Following Gwen Gould was interim Director Andrew Megill (1998–2000), and Artistic Director and Conductor Michael Conley (2000–2015). Michael developed the Chorale into an auditioned ensemble, and—in partnership with a devoted and energetic board and a motivated, talented group of singers—helped bring the Chorale to new levels of musicianship and accomplishment.

Malcolm J. Merriweather led the Chorale as Artistic Director for the 2015–16 season, continuing a tradition of excellence. Since his appointment as Artistic Director in 2016, Colin Britt has further expanded the Chorale's repertoire and reach.

The Chorale's members are talented avocational singers with varied professional backgrounds (attorneys to Zumba instructors) but one shared goal: to make beautiful music. Our members give voice, leadership and passion to the Chorale.

We typically perform several concerts per year, with repertoire ranging from traditional and major works choral staples to contemporary pieces (including several world premieres and commissions in recent years). We also host an annual Caroling Walk that regularly sends hundreds of singers out around the Village, and a series of weekly Summer Sings, which allow the many choral singers in the area the chance to get together and sing through classic pieces while the choruses are on summer hiatus. And because we are lucky enough to make music in New York, we've also had the opportunity to participate in a variety of other activities—including

singing with Patti LuPone and indie rock band Sky-Pony at the 2016 Park Avenue Armory Gala, at Carnegie Hall in 2017 with tenor Amine Hachem, as part of the 2018 Mile-Long Opera on NYC's High Line, and at the United Nations with the Qatar Philharmonic in celebration of UN Day in 2019.

As the COVID-19 pandemic unfolded and forced closures and shut-downs in 2020, the Chorale pivoted like so many groups —thanks to the persistence, creativity, and technical ingenuity of our artistic staff and dedicated volunteers—from in-person rehearsals and performances to virtual events. During the 2020–2021 season, we produced two virtual concerts and one concert recorded at Judson for broadcast. In a time when so many of us stayed home to keep ourselves and our community safe, we were pleased to offer our usual Summer Sings, Messiah Sing, and Caroling Walk in a virtual format as a way to offer our choral community in New York a means of staying connected to the music we love.

We're so grateful that our rehearsal and performance opportunities have returned to some version of "normal" and can't wait to see what our next half-century will bring! Thank you for sharing this winter afternoon with us, and we hope to see you at a future event!

**Contact information:**

West Village Chorale, 239 Thompson Street, New York, New York 10012  
www.westvillagechorale.org ✨ westvillagechorale@gmail.com



**West Village Chorale  
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Now in his eighth season as Artistic Director and Conductor of the West Village Chorale, **Colin Britt** also serves as Director of Choral Activities at Mount Holyoke College. Prior to his current positions, he served for seven years as Choir Director at Rutgers Preparatory School and for ten years as Director of Music at Grace Church Van Vorst in Jersey City. He has also served on the conducting faculty at SUNY New Paltz and the Hartt School,

as director of Amuse Singers and North River Sing, and he is the founding director of Terpsichore Ensemble. In spring 2023, Colin was one of the principal conductors for the Lincoln Center premiere of Jonathan Dove's "Search for Spring." Colin completed the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Choral Conducting at Rutgers in 2016, where he studied with Patrick Gardner; as a graduate student and teaching assistant, he directed the Rutgers University Choir and taught undergraduate conducting for three years.

Colin's compositions have been performed by ensembles at Rutgers, Westminster Choir College, Hartt, Yale, and Seraphic Fire, the Yale Schola Cantorum, the Yale Alumni Chorus, C4, VOCE, and the Riverside Choral Society, and by ensembles across the country and on four continents. In April 2019, the Rutgers University Voorhees Choir premiered his work "Imagination" at Carnegie Hall. He was the commissioned composer for the Maine Bicentennial, the 100th anniversary of the Hartt School, and the 2020 ACDA Eastern Division Honor Choir, and his composition won first prize in the 2021 Missoula Community Chorus competition, "The Way Through."

Colin holds degrees from the Hartt School, the Yale School of Music, and Rutgers University. He lives in Massachusetts with his wife, actress Victoria Britt, their daughter Amelia, and their dog Mari, and they are expecting their second child in December!



**Elena Belli**, Pianist and Assistant Conductor, is a versatile concert artist and influential teacher who has appeared nationally and internationally as both soloist and chamber musician. A sought-after collaborator, she has performed with prestigious instrumentalists and vocalists from leading

ensembles, including the Metropolitan Opera, New York City Opera, Orpheus, and the New York Philharmonic. She has toured throughout Europe with members of the Berlin Philharmonic, and been hailed *“a captivating performer...elegant and poetic”* by the *Correio del Povo* in Brazil. Closer to home, she has been heard in NYC’s major venues, as well as on WNYC and WQXR, and been the featured soloist with local orchestras. Always a champion for new music, she has played a broad array of world premieres, some composed expressly for her. She takes an active role in promoting young talent, is often invited to conduct Master Classes for aspiring young pianists, and for over a decade chaired the AMTL Young Musicians Concerts at Carnegie Recital Hall. Ms. Belli holds both Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from the Manhattan School of Music. Past faculty positions have included The New School and Concordia College. Currently, she is on the piano faculty of the Manhattan School of Music Precollege Division, and the Hoff-Barthelson Music School.

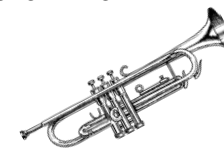
A devoted and valuable part of the WVC community, Ms. Belli has been the pianist for the West Village Chorale since 1988.

**Rong Zhang**, a native of China, is a Doctor of Musical Arts candidate in Choral Conducting at Manhattan School of Music, under the tutelage of Kent Tritle and Dr. Ronnie Oliver. She earned a Bachelor of Music degree with academic honors from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, a Master of Music degree and a Graduate Diploma from the New England Conservatory in choral conducting. During her time at NEC, she studied with Erica Washburn and has regularly conducted the NEC Chamber Singers and the Concert Choir, and served as a graduate assistant to William Drury with the NEC Symphonic Winds.



Rong has appeared as a guest conductor with the Navy Band Northeast, Cambridge A cappella Group, Shanghai Opera House Chorus, and the Choir of the Shanghai University for Science and Technology. Besides her experience as a conductor, Rong is also a trained pianist and won first prize in the Hong Kong International Piano Competition.

Before taking on her role as the assistant conductor at the West Village Chorale, Rong directed a few ensembles in Massachusetts and New York City. She previously served as assistant conductor at the Lincoln Center Search for Spring Project and the Oratorio Society of New York, where she had the opportunity to perform at Carnegie Hall. Currently, she has appeared as the guest conductor with the Berlin Radio Choir, working closely with the chorus master Simon Halsey, and directed a concert with them at St. Elisabeth Kirche in Berlin.



## Calliope Brass

Inspired by the eponymous storytelling muse in Greek mythology, American quintet **Calliope Brass** (pronounced “Kuh-LIE-uh-pea”) collaborates with the world’s most prominent creatives to build evocative, story-driven concert experiences. The quintet developed its flagship educational initiative, *“What’s Your Story?”*, in collaboration with creatives from Hamilton and Sesame Street, and otherwise keeps an active concert schedule across the tri-state area. A registered 501(c)3 organization based in New York City, Calliope Brass furthers the role of women brass musicians as both artists and teachers through excellence in artistry and innovation in performance.



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The West Village Chorale gratefully acknowledges contributions received January 1, 2023 through December 5, 2023.  
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Jane & Terry Quinn

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Mail your check to West Village Chorale,  
239 Thompson Street,  
New York, NY 10012,  
hand it to a chorale member, or make a donation  
through our website at [westvillagechorale.org](http://westvillagechorale.org)

## Special Acknowledgements

Katie Sanborn-Price - *Concert program*

Katie FitzGerald and Sara Mael - *Communications and Social Media*

Renée Cafiero - *Lyrics and Editorial*

Brianne Rowe - *Graphic Design for programs and social media/email*

Catherine Morrison-Garcia - *Front of House coordinator*

Ed Shiner - *Box Office*

Noriko Okabe - *Recording Engineer*

John O - *for knowing where everything is, and where it needs to go*

The Clergy and Staff of Judson Memorial Church

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