

Hymns for all Seasons

CANTUS CHORO

directed by
PETER CHAPMAN

NORMAN KAYE, organ

MELBOURNE BRASS ENSEMBLE
directed by Mark Summerbell

Favourite hymns from
THE AUSTRALIAN HYMN BOOK
... volume 2

These hymns trace in sequence the great events of the Christian year.

1 O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL (AHB 193)

In the Middle Ages Advent hymns of this type were sung by the monks in joyous anticipation of the coming of Christ. The hymn expresses the longing of the ages for the Messiah. “Emmanuel” meaning “God with us”, shows that God appeared in human form in Jesus. God’s Law was given first on Sinai to His ancient people, whose history prepared them for the advent of the Messiah.

2 OF THE FATHER’S LOVE BEGOTTEN (AHB 215)

This is one of the outstanding Latin hymns on the theme of the Incarnation. Its popularity is assisted by its fine musical setting. At the background of this stately hymn stands the Nicene Creed, drawn up by the councils of Nicea and Constantinople in the fourth century to establish the fully divine nature of Christ. John Mason Neale is the translator.

3 BRIGHTEST AND BEST OF THE SONS OF THE MORNING (AHB 234)
Bishop Reginald Heber has given us this glorious Epiphany hymn. It is an example of the Romantic school of poetry on a Scriptural subject. We are in company with the wise men

of the East bringing their gifts to the infant Jesus and are called upon to offer our homage to Christ, “dearer by far” than material gifts. The music is from the immortal J.S. Bach.

4 EARTH HAS MANY A NOBLE CITY (AHB 216)

Prudentius, a Spanish mystic of the fourth century, who wrote “Of the Father’s love begotten”, wrote this Epiphany hymn. Bethlehem excels all cities because Jesus was born there. Eastern sages representing Gentile nations bring their gifts to recognise Him as divine, as king, as sacrificing Saviour. The spirit of the original Latin hymn has been transmitted in Edward Caswall’s translation.

5 FORTY DAYS AND FORTY NIGHTS (AHB 506)

This hymn for the season of Lent exhorts us to endure temptation through the courage and patience of Christ who vanquished temptations in the forty days in the wilderness. Francis Pott, a 19th century Victorian clergyman, wrote this meditation and encouragement to Lenten discipline.

6 LORD JESUS, THINK ON ME (AHB 122)

This hymn comes from the early Greek Church, written by Synesius, a Christian leader in Cyrene, North Africa. There is a timeless quality about this ancient hymn of penitence and true piety which still appeals to modern worshippers. It breathes trust in Christ and hope for a victorious life.

7 RIDE ON, RIDE ON IN MAJESTY (AHB 264)

Dean Milman, of St Paul’s Cathedral, London, in the middle of last century wrote this Palm Sunday hymn. He represents Christ riding down the slope of the Mount of Olives, receiving the hosannas of the pilgrims who had come to the Passover, and riding to his death in Jerusalem. Milman uses imagery and imagination to heighten the effect of that memorable scene.

8 WHEN I SURVEY THE WONDROUS CROSS (AHB 258)

Isaac Watts, the “Father of English Hymnody”, wrote this hymn as preparation for the Lord’s Supper. It most feelingly describes the crucifixion in restrained emotion which all Christians have recognised as befitting

the central act of our faith. Watts has an unerring instinct for the right words. After the incomparable third verse he gives us the climax in our vow to give Christ our all in return for “love so amazing, so divine”.

9 THE STRIFE IS O’ER, THE BATTLE DONE (AHB 287)

This Easter hymn, with its triumphant Alleluias, probably originated with German Jesuits at Cologne in the 17th century. The hymn rejoices that “Death’s mightiest powers have done their worst”. Christians renew their confidence in the reality of the world unseen when they sing of Christ’s victory. The striking melody “Vulpus” is named after the German composer.

10 CHRIST THE LORD IS RISEN TODAY (AHB 290)

Charles Wesley, after his evangelical experience in May 1738, began to write many hymns, not only those which should awaken faith, but hymns celebrating the great festivals of the Christian year. “Christ the Lord is risen today” is one of these. Every line is marked by Wesley’s assurance of the Christian’s sharing with our Lord the risen life which we commemorate at Easter.

11 HAIL THE DAY THAT SEES HIM RISE (AHB 291)

Another of Charles Wesley’s festival hymns, written for Ascensiontide. He strikingly affirms the end of Christ’s earthly ministry and the resumption of His heavenly reign. Wesley alludes to Psalm 24 (“Lift up your heads”) for the entry of the King of Glory, and to passages from the Epistle to the Hebrews emphasising Christ’s intercession.

12 COME, O SPIRIT FROM ON HIGH (AHB 326)

This Latin hymn from the 13th century is attributed to Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury, of Magna Carta fame. It is an invocation of the Holy Spirit suitable for the Festival of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit is addressed as the giver of life, the consoler, the source of forgiveness and virtue and the assurance of life eternal.

13 BRIGHT THE VISION THAT DELIGHTED (AHB 69)

Bishop Richard Mant in the last century wrote this hymn which is based on Isaiah 6:1-3, the vision of the prophet in the temple when cherubim and seraphim cried before the throne of God “Holy, holy, holy”. In some hymnals this hymn is known by the phrase “Round the Lord in Glory seated”, words which begin verse 2 in AHB. This hymn is often sung on Trinity Sunday.

14 O BROTHER MAN, FOLD TO THY HEART THY BROTHER (AHB 503)

The gentle Quaker poet of New England, John Greenleaf Whittier, wrote this hymn during the Mexican War in 1847. He opposed this war as an act of aggression and injustice. Anti-slavery feeling was mounting in the USA, and Whittier regarded all men as brothers and children of the Heavenly Father. This hymn is sung with conviction by supporters of peace and disarmament. The melody “Tree of Peace” was composed by the late Dr A. E. Floyd, beloved broadcaster and organist of St Paul’s Cathedral, Melbourne.

15 LET ALL THE WORLD IN EVERY CORNER SING (AHB 13)

George Herbert was a poet who left the court of James I to become a clergyman in a village parish where he was content to serve God and shepherd his people for the rest of his rather short life. The joy in his heart sparkles in every line of this delightful hymn. Religion was never doleful to George Herbert.

16 FOR ALL THE SAINTS WHO FROM THEIR LABOURS REST (AHB 384)

Bishop William Walsham How was asked by the Prince of Wales to write this hymn for the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria’s reign, 1897. There is a sense of the historic continuity of Christianity throughout these majestic lines. Vaughan Williams’ lively tune, set to the Bishop’s words, has become familiar in recent years.

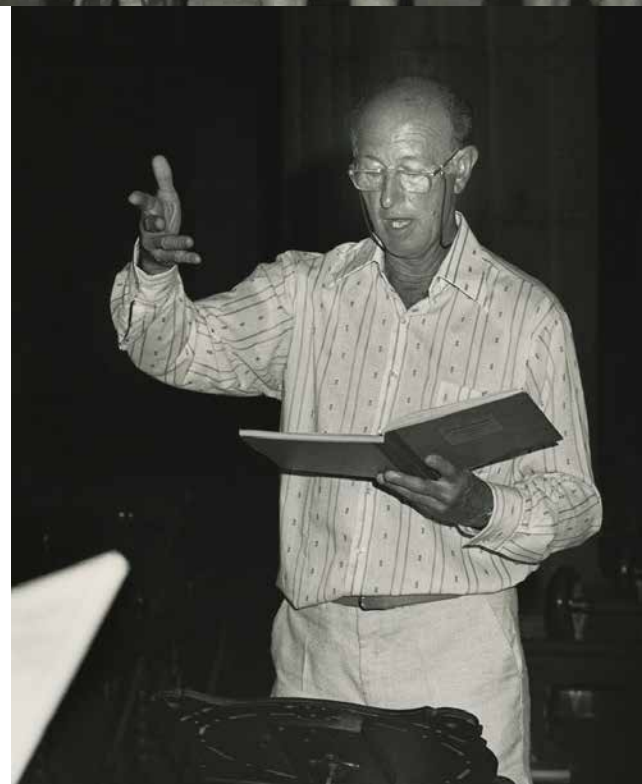


At the recording sessions.

Cantus Choro at St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne (above).

Organist Norman Kaye and brass ensemble director Mark Summerbell discuss one of the fanfares (left).

Choral director Peter Chapman (right).





Norman Kaye *organ*

Organist and composer, Norman Kaye is also a noted actor for films and television. His bold and colourful organ accompaniments contribute much to the dramatic impact of the hymns.

Cantus Choro

Formed in Melbourne in 1979, Cantus Choro specialises in music for men's voices ranging from the 16th to the 20th centuries, and it has established a fine reputation for its ABC broadcasts of religious music. In this recording women's voices have been included in the ensemble.

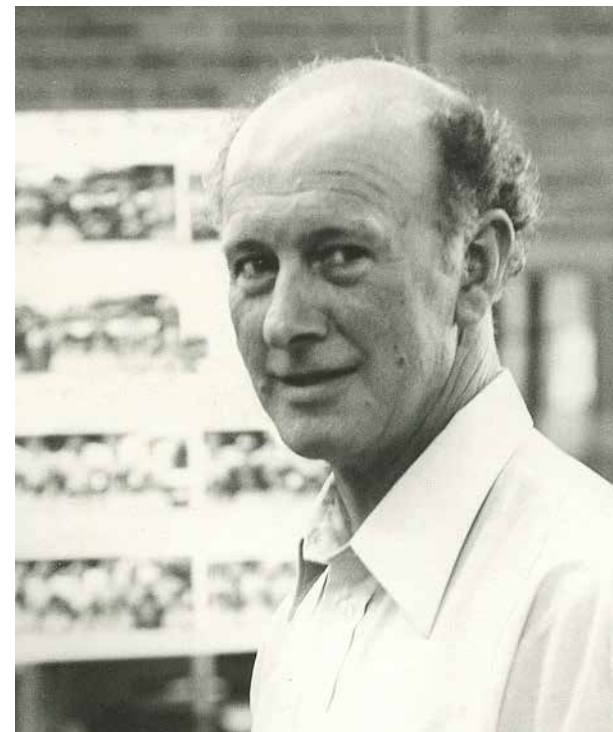
This is the second of four recordings by Cantus Choro. Also available:

- Volume 1: Sing out with Joy
- Volume 3: Songs and Praises
- Psalms

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Peter Chapman *choral director*

Choral conductor, singer, and music teacher, Peter Chapman achieved renown for his direction of The Choir of the Canterbury Fellowship at Trinity College Chapel. This recording with Cantus Choro demonstrates his lively musicianship and his care for phrasing and words.



MUSIC ARRANGEMENTS

Norman Kaye

AHB 193 fanfare and brass accompaniment

AHB 215 fanfare, brass accompaniment and descant

AHB 216 descant

AHB 506 descant

AHB 287 fanfare, brass accompaniment and descant

John Rutter

AHB 193 harmony and descant

Peter Chapman

AHB 290 fanfare

Sydney H. Nicholson

AHB 291 arrangement for choir and organ

Mark Summerbell

AHB 291 brass realisation

Robert Boughen

AHB 384 arrangement for choir, organ and brass

Recorded in St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne, by kind permission of the Dean, the Very Reverend F.M.Chamberlin. The cathedral organ was built by the Melbourne firm of John Fincham and Sons in 1964. It has four manuals and 73 speaking stops. The recording was made in March 1985 using Sony digital equipment, transferred to analog tape using *dbx* noise reduction for editing purposes and then mastered back to digital.

Production: Martin Wright, Barry Firth, Nicholas Alexander, Warwick Papst

Colour photos: Howard Birnstihl

Mono photos: Don Wirth

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Haileybury College Chapel, Melbourne

