

Sweetest Music Softly Stealing

~ for SATB choir, a cappella ~

"Gladsome Sound" Shaker Hymn

Arranged by Christopher J. Hoh



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Sweetest Music Softly Stealing

"Gladsome Sound"
Arr. Christopher J. Hoh

Shaker Hymn from Mt. Lebanon

Gently (♩ = 48)

mp

Soprano / Alto

Tenor / Bass

Sweet - est mu - sic soft - ly steal - ing O'er our hearts in

4

tune - ful chime, Shall in joy - ous notes re - veal - ing, Swell the song_ of

8

old - en times. *mf* Sweet - est mu - sic soft - ly steal - ing O'er_our hearts in

12

tune - ful chime, Shall in joy - ous_ notes re - veal - ing, Swell the song_ of

16

old - en times. *mp* When the morn - ing star_ was beam - ing, An - gels sang of

20

peace and love; Ma - ny souls a - woke from dream - ing, Hail'd the light from

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24

Heav-en a-bove. *mf* When the morn-ing star was beam-ing, An-gels sang of_

28

peace_and love; Ma-ny souls_a-woke from dream-ing, Hail'd_the_light from_

32

Heav-en a-bove. (*mf*) Glad-some sounds we ech-o still, Peace on earth, to

36

all good-will. *mp* Glad-some sounds we ech-o still, Peace on earth, to

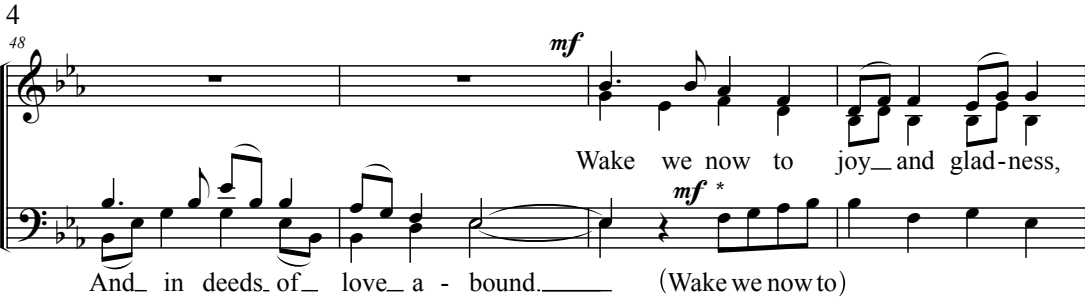
40

all good-will. *mf* Wake we now to joy_and glad-ness,

44

Christ the Sav-our we_have_found; Ban-ish from_our hearts all sad-ness,

4
48 *mf*



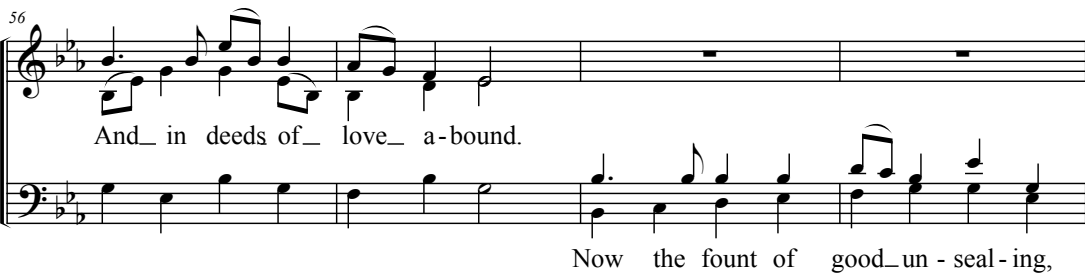
Wake we now to joy and glad-ness,
And in deeds of love a - bound. (Wake we now to)

52 *mf**



Christ the Sav - iour we have found; Ban - ish from our hearts all sad - ness,

56



And in deeds of love a-bound.
Now the fount of good un - seal - ing,

60



Let us all our souls up - fill; And in kind - ly Christ-ian feel - ing

64



Now the fount of good un - seal - ing,
Breathe sweet peace and speak good - will. (Now good)

68



Let us all our souls up - fill; And in kind - ly Christ-ian feel - ing

* Take care that tenors and basses *combined* sing mezzo forte, not overpowering the soprano melody in meas. 50-57, 66-73 & 78-82

72

Breathe sweet peace and speak goodwill.
Glad - some sounds we ech - o still,

76

Glad - some sounds we ech - o still,
Peace on earth, to all good-will.

80

Slower

Peace on earth, to all good - will.
Glad - some sounds

84

p

Glad - some sounds we ech - o still, Peace on earth,
we ech - - - o still, Peace_

87

Peace on earth, to all good - will.
on earth,

Sweetest Music Softly Stealing

Sweetest music softly stealing O'er our hearts in tuneful chime,
 Shall in joyous notes revealing, Swell the song of olden times.
 When the morning star was beaming, Angels sang of peace and love;
 Many souls awoke from dreaming, Hail'd the light from Heaven above.

Gladsome sounds we echo still, Peace on earth, to all goodwill.

Wake we now to joy and gladness, Christ the Saviour we have found;
 Banish from our hearts all sadness, And in deeds of love abound.
 Now the fount of good unsealing, Let us all our souls upfill;
 And in kindly Christian feeling Breathe sweet peace and speak goodwill.

Gladsome sounds we echo still, Peace on earth, to all goodwill.

Christmas Offering, Shaker Hymn
Attr. Martha Jane Anderson, 1844-1897

The unison lines in measures 1 - 8, 17 - 24, and 32 - 40 may be sung by soloists. This composition sets "Gladsome Sound," from an 1884 hymnal published for the Shakers at Mt. Lebanon, NY. It has been reportedly attributed to Martha Jane Anderson, possibly called "Christmas Offering," and supposedly found in an 1875 Shaker hymnal from Albany, NY. Adding to the uncertainty, the first phrase (and a few other elements) is similar to "Sweetest Music, Softly Stealing," words by G.W. Brindley, music by C. (?Caleb) Simper. That Christmas carol is found in the monumental 1916 collection "Carols Old and Carols New" of Rev. Charles Lewis Hutchins (Boston: Parish Choir). Which piece came first and whether one helped inspire the other are questions for further research. Stylistically, the opening lines are reminiscent of a Central European folk tune. Whatever its origins, "Gladsome Sound" is definitely sweet music divinely inspired and deserves to be sung gently and to be heard widely.