



Advent Vespers Devotional 2020

Thursday, December 24
Beautiful Star of Bethlehem
Stanzas 1 & 2

Oh beautiful star of Bethlehem,
shining afar through shadows dim,
giving a light for those who long have gone (have gone)
and guiding the wise men on their way
unto the place where Jesus lay.
Oh beautiful star of Bethlehem, shine on (shine on).

Oh beautiful star (beautiful, beautiful star) of Bethlehem,
shine upon us until the glory dawns,
give us the light to light the way
unto the land of perfect day.
Oh beautiful star of Bethlehem, shine on (shine on).

— R. Fisher Boyce, 1938

We know too well that the dangers of the coronavirus have reformed our communal life. When breathing together puts people at risk, everything necessarily changes. This Christmas Eve family gatherings, communal celebrations, and church worship services will likely look and feel different – all for the sake of protecting our neighbors and the communities to which we belong.

“Oh Beautiful Star of Bethlehem” was the signature choral piece of our 2020 virtual Augsburg University Advent Vespers. Performed by the Augsburg Choir, Riverside Singers, the Global Harmony class, and community members under the steadfast direction of Dr. Kristina Boerger, this offering combined over eighty some voices through the aid of technology and virtual collaboration. This joint choir – connected online – found a way to join voices and harmoniously sing out the starlight promise of Christ Jesus.

I believe the heart of the Advent/Christmas season is the communal call to join the angelic chorus and sing of our Savior’s birth - to praise God together and proclaim God’s Spirit-breath taking flesh and being birthed among us! Somehow, we find a way to sing because our God finds a way to fill our lungs with hope. Even in these challenging times, the songs of incarnational love will be sung and the beautiful star announcing Christ’s birth will shine on (shine on)!

The Rev. Justin Lind-Ayres
University Pastor

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