

for Bill Janzen and the Menno Singers  
**PRAIRIE NATIVITY**

I  
**Winter's Blanket**

Leonard Enns

$\text{♩} = 56 \text{ c.2.}$

*mp*

S 1. Snow falls soft- ly  
2. Moon and stars like

*mp*

S 1. Snow falls soft- ly  
2. Moon and stars like

*mp*

A 1. Snow falls soft- ly  
2. Moon and stars like

*mp*

Winter is a striking reality on the Canadian prairies and Christmas takes on a special character because of this, as I rediscovered recently when I spent a year in Manitoba, the province of my birth. In *Prairie Nativity*, I have taken two of the overwhelming realities of the Manitoba winter - snow and Northern Lights - as images of Christ's presence among us. Although these images form the central idea, I must also acknowledge the influence of the Canadian painter William Kurelek on both the title and the spirit of these pieces.

The Biblical promise that the Messiah will make *the rough places plain* finds a wonderful parable in the quiet snowfalls of a prairie winter, which gently smooth the plough furrows in the fields. The first piece, *Winter's Blanket*, uses this image.

One of my most profound childhood memories of the prairie winter is of a particular night when the Northern Lights were so spectacular that I was absolutely convinced that it was the end of the world and the moment of Christ's return. These fantastic lights are, in fact, a wonderful image of Christ's coming - an image of the light He brings into the night of our own lives. On his painting, *Arctic Madonna and Child*, Kurelek writes: "I myself once saw a whole sky full of these dancing, bewitching nuances of colour . . . It was so breathtaking, the only truly appropriate reaction seemed to be to whisper an *Alleluia*". This response is the starting point for the second piece.

The third piece is a reminiscence - a memory of leaving church on a cold, late Christmas eve. The sound of *Silent Night* is still in the air outside the village church, small clouds of vapour signal each breath, white snow crunches under foot, the Northern Lights shine through the crisp air, and Christ has come!

Leonard Enns  
16 November 1990

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whis-per-ing                      Gent-ly sooth-ing fur-rowed fields                      Win-ter's blan-ket,  
 crys-tal shine                      Cel-e-brat-ing win-ter's sky                      Sheets of col-our

whis-per-ing                      Sooth-ing,                      gent-ly sooth-ing                      Win-ter's blan-ket,  
 crys-tal shine                      Crys-tals                      cel-e-brat-ing                      Sheets of col-our

whis-per-ing                      Sooth-ing,                      gent-ly sooth-ing                      Win-ter's blan-ket,  
 crys-tal shine                      Crys-tals                      cel-e-brat-ing                      Sheets of col-our

whis-                      per-ing                      Sooth-                      ing,                      gent-ly sooth-ing                      Win-ter's blan-ket,  
 crys-                      tal shine                      Crys-                      tals                      cel-e-brat-ing                      Sheets of col-our

9

qui-et warmth                      Com-fort to the sleep-                      ing earth.  
 fill the night                      Giv-ing light to all                      the world.

qui-et warmth                      Com-fort                      to                      the                      sleep-ing earth.  
 fill the night                      Giv-ing                      light                      to                      all the world.

qui-                      et warmth                      Com-                      fort                      ing                      to                      the                      sleep-ing earth.  
 fill                      the night                      Giv-                      ing                      light                      to                      all                      the world.

# II

## Winter Light

Leonard Enns

♩ = 82 ca.

*p*

The musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. It contains two phrases of the lyrics "Al-le-lu-ia Al-le-lu-ia" with notes and rests. The middle staff is a vocal line in bass clef, mostly containing rests. The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). It features a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The piano part includes dynamic markings such as *mf* and *p*, and performance instructions like "(always with pedal, let all notes sound as long as possible)", "(Loco)", and "8va". There are also markings for "LH" and "RH" with arrows indicating hand positions.

Al- le- lu- ia Al- le- lu- ia  
(always stagger breathe, so  
there is no break in the line.)

(always with pedal, let all  
notes sound as long as possible)

(Loco)

5

Al-le-lu-ia Al-le-lu-ia Al-le-lu-ia Al-le-lu-ia Al-le-lu-ia Al-le-lu-ia

8va

always *mf*

8vb

8

Al-le-lu-ia Al-le-lu-ia Al-le-lu-ia Al-le-lu-ia Al-le-lu-ia Al-le-lu-ia

*mf*

A- cross the cold still black- ness Sheets of col- our

8va

8vb

# III

## Holy Night

Leonard Enns

♩ = 54-64 with rubato

The musical score consists of a piano accompaniment and four vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass). The piano part begins with a *mf* dynamic and features a melodic line in the right hand and a more rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand. The vocal parts enter at measure 6. The Soprano and Alto parts have lyrics: "Come dwell with us this silent night." The Tenor and Bass parts have lyrics: "Si- lent night, Ho- ly night,". The piano accompaniment continues with a *mp* dynamic and includes a *rit.* marking at the end of the section.

*Prairie Nativity*

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10 *mf* *p*

Like win-ter snow come down to earth, like mid- night danc- ing with new

*mf* *p*

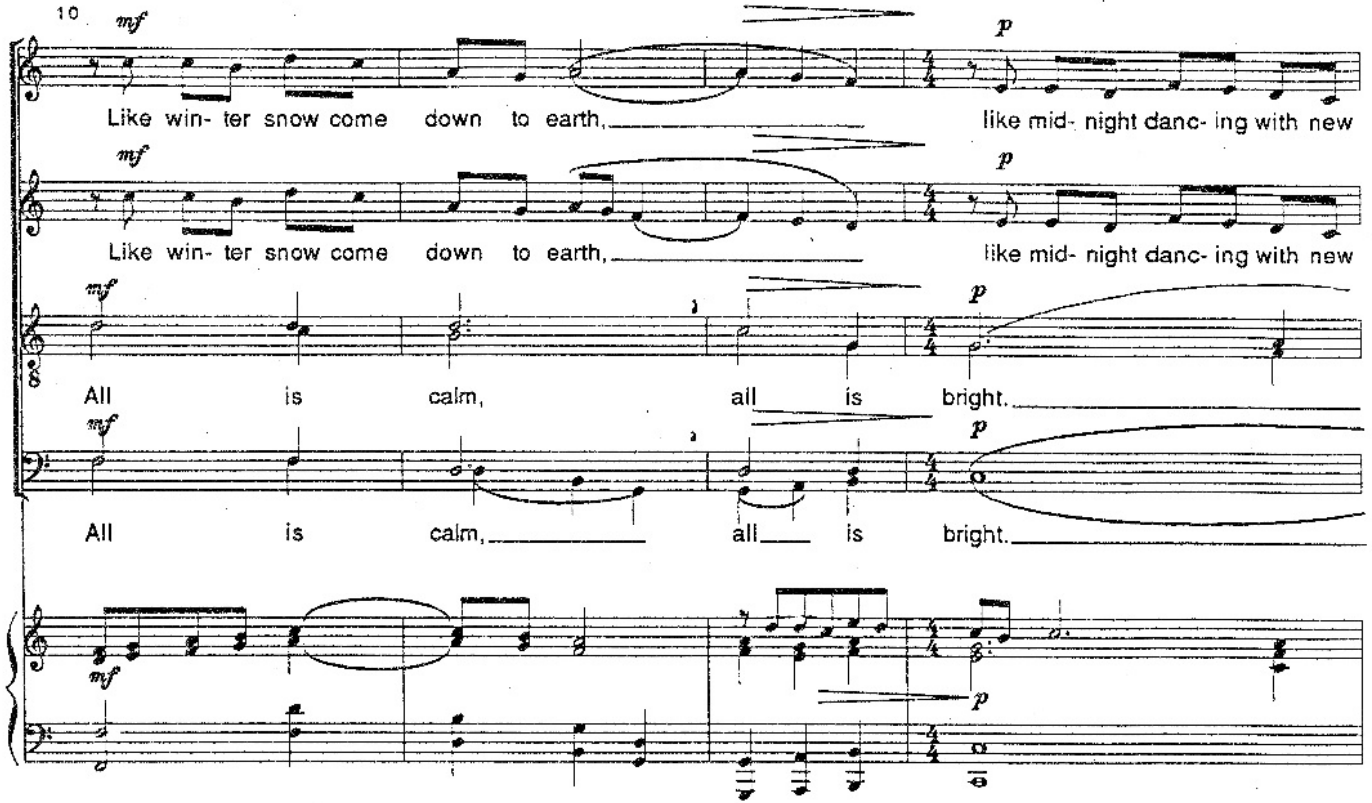
Like win-ter snow come down to earth, like mid- night danc- ing with new

*mf* *p*

All is calm, all is bright.

*mf* *p*

All is calm, all is bright.



*allargando* *a tempo* *mf* *f*

light. Ra- diant child! Ho- ly

*mf* *f*

light. Ra- diant child! Ho- ly

*mf* *f*

Ah Ra- diant child! Ho- ly

*mf* *f*

Ah Ra- diant child! Ho- ly

*allargando* *a tempo* *mf* *f*

