

Deep Peace is a transportive setting of an ancient Gaelic prayer for peace. Especially appropriate for Christmas concerts or worship, it may be performed by both school and church choirs at Christmas or throughout the year.

Perform this ardent choral prayer freely and with great expression, artfully shaping the phrase and sensitively declaiming the text. When introducing the anthem, first speak the text as a prayer, slowly and with great devotion; then, sing the text with equal expression. To improve intonation, rehearse sections such as mm. 1-4, 12-19 and 35-37 singing a focused neutral syllable such as “noo,” moving chord-by-chord rather than in tempo until all of the harmonies are secure. Highlight inner moving voices such as the tenors in mm. 14-15.

Careful dynamic shading is critical to successful performances of this work. Long note values, such as the dotted-half note on the word “Peace” in m. 6, should crescendo discreetly as if “blossoming.” Phrases should crescendo and decrescendo quite naturally as dictated by their rising and falling contours.

When **Deep Peace** is performed for Christmas worship, suggested corresponding lectionary readings include Psalm 9, Isaiah 9: 1-7, Luke 2: 1-20 and Titus 2: 11-14. One basic homiletical theme is praying for the peace that passes human understanding — the deep peace that is felt in the flowing air, heard in the angels’ song and seen in the Prince of Peace.

Ruth Elaine Schram lives in Birmingham, Alabama, where she is a full-time composer and arranger. She is an ASCAP Special Awards recipient, with over four hundred published works. In addition to her printed choral music, she has written numerous songs for popular children’s albums and video tapes.

DEEP PEACE

(A Christmas Prayer)

for S.A.T.B. voices, accompanied

Words adapted from an ancient Gaelic prayer
by RUTH ELAINE SCHRAM

Music by
RUTH ELAINE SCHRAM

Freely, expressively (♩ = ca. 80)

SOPRANO
ALTO

TENOR
BASS

ACCOMP.

④

dim.

dim.

mp unis.

Peace, deep peace, deep

8

peace of the run - ning wave to you, of the run - ning wave to

10

mp unis.

Peace, deep peace, deep peace of the flow - ing air to
you.

mp

13

mf

cresc.

you, of the flow - ing air to you. Deep peace, deep
Peace of the flow - ing air to you.

mp

mf

cresc.

mf

cresc.

16 *f*
 peace of the shin - ing stars to you, of the shin - ing stars to

18 *mf* you, deep peace. *poco rit.* *a tempo* (20) Peace, deep
 you, peace. Peace, deep

mf *poco rit.* *a tempo*

21 *p* peace; *mp* Oo
 peace; *mp*

Peace, deep peace, deep
mp

24 *mp* *unis.*

Peace of the qui - et earth to you.

mp *unis.*

peace of the qui - et earth to you, of the qui - et earth to

26 *mp* Peace, deep peace,

Peace, deep peace, deep peace of the shep-herds' watch-ful

mp

you. Deep peace, deep

29 *mf*

eye, of the an - gels' lul - la - bye, deep peace; Deep

mf

32 peace, deep peace, *rit. e dim.*

peace, — deep peace, — deep peace *rit. e dim.*

35 *mp* Slowly of the Prince of Peace to you. *dim.*

37 *Tempo I dim.*

35 *mp* Slowly of the Prince of Peace to you. *dim.*

37 *Tempo I dim.*

L.H. *mp* *dim.*

38 *rit.* *pp*

pp

rit. *pp*

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