

for the First United Methodist Church Chancel Choir,  
Olympia, Washington

# IN THE BLEAK MIDWINTER

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

Words by  
**CHRISTINA ROSSETTI** (1830-1894)

Music by  
**GUSTAV HOLST** (1874-1934)  
Arranged by **CATHERINE BENNETT**

Gently, expressively (♩ = ca. 72-80)

ACCOMP.

4 UNISON MEN 5 *mp*

In the bleak mid win - ter,

7

frost - y winds made moan, earth stood hard as

\* Also available for S.A.B. voices, No. 18330.

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10

i - ron, wa - ter like a stone;

13 SOPRANO & ALTO  
*mp cresc.*

snow had fall - en, snow — on snow, — snow — on — snow, —

*dim.*

*mp cresc.* *dim.*

17 UNISON VOICES  
*mp*

in the bleak mid - win - ter, man - y years a -

*mp*

20

go. —

23 UNISON WOMEN  
*mp*

An - gels and arch - an - gels, all were gath-ered

26 there, cher u - bim and

28 ser - a - phim \* hov - ered in the air;

31 TENOR & BASS  
*mp cresc.*

but His moth - er on - ly, — in her maid - en bliss, —

*dim.*

*mp cresc.* *dim.*

35 *mp unis.*

S.  
A. wor - shiped the Be - lov - ed, wor - shiped with a

T. *mp unis.*  
B.

*mp*

38

kiss. \_\_\_\_\_

42 *mf* What can I give Him, poor as I am?

*mf* What can, what can I give Him, oh, poor as I am?  
What can I give Him, oh, poor as I am?

What can I give Him, poor as I am?

*mf* (accompaniment optional through m. 48)

46 If I were a shep - herd,

If I were a hum - ble shep - herd, } I would bring — a lamb;  
If I were a shep - herd,

If I were a shep - herd,

50

*cresc.*

I would do my *rit.* part; *a tempo*  
*dim.* *mf unis.*

if I were a wise — man, I would do, I'd do my part; yet

*cresc.*

*dim.* *mf*

I'd do my part; *a tempo*

*cresc.* (accompaniment optional through m. 53)

*dim.*

*rit.*

*mf*  
(play)

54

what I have I give Him: give to Him my

*unis.*

57 *mp*  
 heart. \_\_\_\_\_ Yes, *mp*

61 *mf* give to Him my *rit. e dim. mp*  
 what I have I give Him: give, give to Him *rit. e dim.*  
 give to Him *mf rit. e dim. mp*

*a tempo*  
 65 heart, \_\_\_\_\_

*a tempo*

68 *molto rit.* *p* *a tempo* *rit.*

my heart.

*p*

*dim. e molto rit.* *p* *a tempo* *rit.*

*Ped.* *Ped.*

The image shows a musical score for a choral arrangement of 'In the Bleak Midwinter'. It consists of three systems of staves. The top system has a vocal line with lyrics 'my heart.' and dynamic markings *p*, *a tempo*, and *rit.*. The middle system has piano accompaniment with dynamic markings *dim. e molto rit.*, *p*, *a tempo*, and *rit.*. The bottom system continues the piano accompaniment with *Ped.* markings. A large red watermark 'Preview Only' is overlaid diagonally across the score.

**In the Bleak Midwinter** is a choral arrangement of a beloved Christmas carol, with melody by Gustav Holst (1906) and text adapted from Christina Rossetti's famous 19th century poem. Appropriate for performance by school or church choirs, it should be performed very expressively, with some freedom of movement, highlighting the moving voices.

When performed by church choirs at Christmas, suggested corresponding lectionary readings include Isaiah 9: 1-6, Luke 2: 8-14 and Titus 2: 11-14. One basic homiletical theme is "treasures of the heart."

**Catherine Bennett** lives in Olympia, Washington, where she is choir director and a humanities teacher at Thurgood Marshall Middle School and director of the Chancel Choir at the First United Methodist Church. With music degrees from Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Washington, and Lesley College in Cambridge, Massachusetts, she is a widely published composer.

