

SWEET SINGER

A MUSICAL PLAY ABOUT CHARLES WESLEY,
THE SWEET SINGER OF METHODISM

PERFORMED BY

STEVEN KIMBROUGH,

Baritone

Pianist

Timothy E. Kimbrough

Musical Arrangements

by

John Innes

Mary K. Jackson

Steven Kimbrough

Timothy E. Kimbrough

Book by

Steven Kimbrough

with adaptations from Charles Wesley's Journal and letters

ORDER OF THE MUSICAL NUMBERS¹

ACT I

"Come, O thou Traveller unknown"		Traditional Scottish Melody
	<i>arr. by Mary K. Jackson</i>	
"Thou hidden Source of calm repose"		Dimitri Bortniansky
	<i>arr. by Timothy E. and Steven Kimbrough</i>	
"And can it be that I should gain"		attributed to J. Ingalls
	<i>arr. by John Innes, Timothy E. and Steven Kimbrough</i>	
"Thou hidden love of God, whose height"		Mary K. Jackson
	<i>Text: Gerhard Tersteegen, translated by John Wesley</i>	
Reprise: "Come, O thou Traveller unknown"		
"Come, thou long-expected Jesus"		Rowland H. Prichard
	<i>arr. by Timothy E. Kimbrough</i>	
"O for a thousand tongues to sing"		Carl G. Gliser
	<i>arr. by Mary K. Jackson</i>	

INTERMISSION

ACT II

Reprise: "Come, O thou Traveller unknown"		
"Where shall my wondering soul begin?"		attributed to J. Ingalls
	<i>arr. by Timothy E. Kimbrough and John Darnall</i>	
"Nancy Dawson"	(see words in program)	Traditional Folk Melody
	<i>Here We Go 'Round the Mulberry Bush</i>	
"Listed into the cause of sin"		(see words in program)
	<i>Here We Go 'Round the Mulberry Bush</i>	
"Ye servants of God"	William Croft	
	<i>arr. by John Innes, Timothy E. and Steven Kimbrough</i>	
"Spirit of faith, come down"		Traditional Welsh Melody
	<i>arr. by Mary K. Jackson</i>	
"Love divine, all loves excelling"		John Zundel
	<i>arr. by Timothy E. and Steven Kimbrough</i>	
"Rejoice, the Lord is King!"		Georg Friedrich Handel
"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild"		Martin Shaw
	<i>arr. by Timothy E. and Steven Kimbrough</i>	
"Hark! the herald angels sing"		Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy
	<i>arr. by Timothy E. Kimbrough</i>	

¹All texts are by Charles Wesley unless otherwise indicated.

(To be included in program)

The following texts will be sung to the tune of "Here We Go 'Round the Mulberry Bush" by the audience at the direction of the pianist.

NANCY DAWSON

<p>1. Of all the girls in our town, The black, the fair, the red, the brown, That prance and dance it up and down, There's none like Nancy Dawson.</p> <p>2. Her easy mien, her shape so neat, She foots, she trips, she looks so sweet, Her every motion's so complete, I die for Nancy Dawson.</p>	<p>3. See how she comes to give surprise, With joy and pleasure in her eyes, To give delight she always tries, So means my Nancy Dawson.</p> <p>4. See how the opera takes a run, Exceeding Hamlet, Lear, and Lun, Though in it there would be no fun, Were it not for Nancy Dawson.</p>
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LISTED INTO THE CAUSE OF SIN

<p>1. Listed into the cause of sin, Why should a good be evil? Music, alas! too long has been Pressed to obey the devil.</p> <p>2. Drunken, or lewd, or light the lay Flowed to the soul's undoing, Widened, and strown with flowers the way Down to eternal ruin.</p> <p>3. Who on the part of God will rise, Innocent sound recover, Fly on the prey, and take the prize, Plunder the carnal love,</p>	<p>4. Strip him of every moving strain, Every melting measure, Music in virtue's cause retain, Rescue the holy pleasure?</p> <p>5. Come, let us try if Jesus' love Will not as well inspire us; This is the theme of those above, This upon earth shall fire us.</p> <p>6. Say, if your hearts are tuned to sin, Is there a subject greater? Harmony all its strains may bring, Jesus's name is sweeter.</p>
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THE ARTISTS

SINGER/ACTOR

S T Kimbrough, Jr. is known as a professional singer under the name **Steven Kimbrough**. His baritone voice has been praised as "magnificent" (*Journal de Genève*, Switzerland), "mellow, dramatic, elegant" (*The New York Times*), "pure liquid gold" (*The Birmingham News*), and his acting as "brilliant" (*Richmond Review*, Vancouver) and "captivating" (*StadtAnzeiger*, Cologne, Germany). He has performed on the operatic, concert and musical stages of North and South America and Europe including: New York, San Francisco, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Miami, Rio de Janeiro, Hamburg, Berlin, Bonn, Vienna, Barcelona, and London. For a number of years he was leading baritone of the Bonn Opera Company (Germany). He has sung over 40 operatic roles and 22 world premieres of contemporary operas.

Kimbrough is well known as a recital and concert singer through many appearances at New York's Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center and with symphonies in the USA and abroad. He has received international acclaim for numerous solo recordings of German arts songs (of such composers as Schreker, Zemlinsky, Korngold, Schönberg, Kienzl, Weill, Weigl) two of which were nominated by *Ovation* magazine as "Best Solo Record of the Year." He has recorded for the following labels, EMI, CBS, KOCH-SCHWANN, ARABESQUE, ACANTA/PILZ, CAPRICCIO, ANKER Musik, and VMS Recordings. Two outstanding musical theater CDs were recorded by Kimbrough for the KOCH-SCHWANN label: *Classics from Hollywood to Broadway* and *Kurt Weill on Broadway*. He has also recorded *Spirituals: Songs from the American Experience* with Cynthia Wilson for GBGMusik in the Global Praise series of the General Board of Global Ministries. Recent releases on the VMS label are *The Art of American Song: Songs of the Wild West* and *Korngold's Hollywood Songbook*. European television audiences know him well through numerous appearances on musical shows. He has starred in musical television films such as *Man of La Mancha* and *Katharina und Potemkin* and as a member of Actors' Equity has portrayed leading roles in many summer stock productions of musicals such as *The Most Happy Fella*, *Kismet*, and *South Pacific*.

He is author/editor of numerous books and articles on musical, biblical, theological and historical subjects including the following volumes concerning Charles Wesley and other subjects: *Lost in Wonder*, *Sweet Singer*, *The Unpublished Poetry of Charles Wesley* (3 vols.), *A Song for the Poor*, *Sweet Singer* (a collection of new arrangements of C. Wesley hymns), and *Israelite Religion in Sociological Perspective*. In 1996 Abingdon Press published his book about C. Wesley hymns entitled *A Heart to Praise My God, the Meaning of Charles Wesley Hymns for Today*. He has also written *Anna Eklund: Methodist Saint in Russia* (GBGM Books, 2001) and is author/editor of a book entitled *Methodism in Russia and the Baltic States: History and Renewal* (Abingdon, 1996). His newest books on Wesleyan theology are: *Resistless Love: Christian Witness in the New Millennium: A Wesleyan Perspective* (GBGM Books, 2000), *Orthodox and Wesleyan Spirituality* (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2002), *Orthodox and Wesleyan Scriptural Understanding and Practice* (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2005). Kimbrough holds a doctorate in Old Testament and Semitic languages from Princeton Theological Seminary, is the

founding President of The Charles Wesley Society, and has served as Associate General Secretary of the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church. He was a co-director of music for the 1996 General Conference of The United Methodist Church in Denver, CO. He also founded and directs the Global Praise Music Program for the Board. He is a poet, composer, and editor of numerous books of global song, e.g. *Global Praise 1*, *Global Praise 2*, and *Global Praise 3*.

Kimbrough wrote the musical *Sweet Singer* in 1985 and premiered it that year at New York's Carnegie Hall to a sold out house. Since that time he has presented over 500 performances on three continents, in theaters, churches (Baptist, Nazarene, Episcopal, Presbyterian, Brethren, United Methodist, and independent denominations), concert and drama series of colleges, universities and seminaries. The musical drama was professionally filmed in Singapore in Sept. 2001 and released there on May 24, 2002 on DVD and VHS. He portrays Wesley and sings his songs with a deep faith and desire that Wesley's life and message of Christ's love he experienced and captured in verse will give redeeming strength to people everywhere.

PIANISTS

TIMOTHY E. KIMBROUGH is a graduate of Duke University and its Divinity School and has done graduate work at General Theological Seminary in New York City. For a number of years he was lead keyboard player and composer for *One Real Band* in Europe and the USA. At Duke he studied composition with Robert Ward and for his ordination as deacon composed a new setting of the Wesley hymn, "Give me the faith which can remove the mountain." On the occasion of the premiere of *Sweet Singer* at New York's Carnegie Hall, he wrote a new arrangement of "Hark! the herald angels sing" and was also pianist on that occasion. He is currently Rector of The Church of the Holy Family Episcopal in Chapel Hill, NC and has also been an adjunct lecturer in worship and Anglican studies at The Divinity School of Duke University. His compositions have been published in *The United Methodist Hymnal* (1989), *Psalms for Praise and Worship* (Abingdon), *Sweet Singer* (Hinshaw), and *Songs for the Poor* (General Board of Global Ministries, United Methodist Church). He has performed *Sweet Singer* with his father through the USA and other countries. Abingdon Press has published his English translation of a German volume dealing with Charles Wesley's theology, *Theology in Hymns?* by Teresa Berger. Timothy E. Kimbrough has had compositions and arrangements published in the songbooks *Global Praise 1*, *Global Praise 2*, and *Global Praise 3* collections of global song published by GBGMusik of the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church. He has also contributed compositions and arrangements to the songbooks and CDs *Songs for the World: Hymns of Charles Wesley* and *Songs of Love and Praise: Hymns of John Wesley* also releases of GBGMusik.

MARY KIMBROUGH JACKSON is a graduate of Birmingham Southern College where she studied at the Birmingham Conservatory of Music and holds a Masters Degree in Choral Conducting and Arranging from Auburn University. She has been organist and choir director in numerous United Methodist churches in the North Alabama Conference. Five of the selections

in the musical *Sweet Singer* are arranged by Mary Jackson and they have been published in the piano/vocal book *Sweet Singer* by Hinshaw Music, Inc. Other sacred solos and anthems by Ms. Jackson have been published by Abingdon Press. Among her compositions for voice and piano are two song cycles, *Proverbs* and *Five Children's Poems* of Charles Wesley, both written for and performed by Dr. Kimbrough, who is her brother. She has accompanied him in many concerts throughout major cities in the USA and Asia. She was commissioned by The Wesley Methodist Church of Singapore to compose a cantata entitled *The Good Samaritan* using heretofore unpublished Charles Wesley poems based on the biblical story. She conducted its world premiere in Victoria Hall in Singapore a few years ago. Ms. Jackson has also had musical arrangements and compositions published in *Global Praise 1* and *Global Praise 2*, songbooks of global song published by the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church. For the last Women's Assembly of United Methodist Women Jackson was commissioned to write the theme song of the Assembly. She has also been associated with Opera Birmingham as choral director for the opera performances.

THE POET

CHARLES WESLEY is one of Christendom's most outstanding poets. He wrote some 9,000 poems, many of which were set to music for use as hymns and are found in almost every English-language Christian hymnal regardless of denomination. He came by his gifts rightly, as his father, a sister and two brothers were poets. Charles attended Christ Church College of Oxford University where he and his brother founded the Holy Club, a small group of students later called "Methodists" because of their methodical concern for the daily routine of living, study and social service. Although he and his brother, John, both clergymen of the Church of England, are best remembered as founders of Methodism, their friendship with the poor, opposition to slavery, emphasis on inward spirituality, witness of the Spirit, and social outreach formed a life-style of worship, inspiration and reform which is universal.

Many of Wesley's poems were born out of crisis, conflict, violence, oppression and opposition, and are still timely today. They have spread around the world wherever people suffer, rejoice and worship, for their message of self-giving love, as Wesley experienced it in Christ, redeems the time and those who sing them

THE PLAY

Eighteenth-century England lacked the structure to take action against the injustices rampant in its society. Into this environment Charles Wesley was born. *Sweet Singer* is a musical drama which tells the story of this prolific poet and man of God. It presents some of Wesley's best loved poems, such as "Hark! the herald angels sing," "Love divine, all loves excelling," and many more, which relate his reaction to an unjust world and his quest to answer the question: "What shall I do to make the most of a short life?"

Sweet Singer deals with Wesley's struggle against poverty, reluctant acceptance of Holy Orders and life as a Church of England clergyman, adventure to America, opposition to slavery, social and spiritual reform, personal transformation, stormy beginnings of the Methodist movement, courage in the face of violence, family devotion and conflict, and poetic genius.

In the midst of a corrupt human society he sang a song which unites the music in every song with "Peace on earth and mercy mild / God and sinners reconciled."