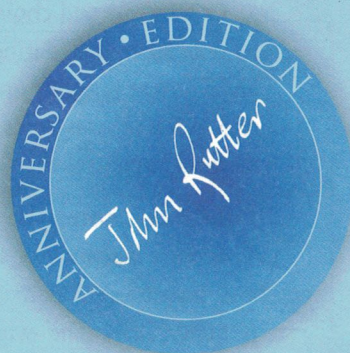


JOHN RUTTER²

For the beauty of the earth



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Composer's note

The author of this well-known but now much-altered hymn text, F. S. Pierpoint (1835–1917), was a schoolmaster who taught Classics in his native city of Bath, reputedly inspired to write the words while contemplating the elegant city and its natural surroundings from a nearby hill. He was a devout Tractarian – that is, a follower of the Oxford Movement which, from its origins in the 1830s, sought to beautify Anglican worship and restore pre-Reformation rites and theology within the Church of England. *For the beauty of the earth* was published in 1864 in *Lyra Eucharistica*, a collection of sacred verses by different authors, intended to adorn and celebrate the rite of Holy Communion. In its original version (with the refrain 'Christ our God, to thee we raise, This our sacrifice of praise'), the Eucharistic theme of Pierpoint's text is clear. The two concluding stanzas – containing references to martyrs, prophets, confessors, and the Virgin Mary – perhaps made the text less palatable to non-Tractarians and were generally omitted in most hymnals, while the remaining six verses were variously altered to obscure the Eucharistic theme, leaving a simple-hearted thanksgiving for nature, hearth and home, unlikely to offend any denomination. Some editors, fearing misinterpretation of the line 'To our race so freely given', have substituted 'To the world' or 'To us all'.

My musical setting (originally for sopranos, altos, and piano) was written in 1980 as one of a set of three pieces commissioned by the Texas Choral Directors Association for performance at their annual convention; the other two were *Open thou mine eyes* (for SATB unaccompanied) and *Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace* (for TTBB with organ or piano). The present adaptation of *For the beauty of the earth* for SATB dates from 1981, my orchestration from about 1982.

Performance hints

The singing style appropriate for this piece is hard to get exactly right. There is an obvious pop influence in the music, calling for lightness, lift, and bounce in performance, yet it is not a pop song and should be sung with simple classical purity and a sense of a sustained vocal line despite the rests between phrases. The most important thing is to project the text with a sense of joy.

In bar 15 and all parallel places, the sixteenth notes need to be crisply articulated, not slithered over.

In bar 96 the soprano rhythm is often mistaken in performance: the G sharp should come *on* the second quarter note of the bar, not before it.

Conductors and choirs sometimes struggle with the rhythm in bars 105–110. The secret is to remember that during the 3/8 bars, eighth notes remain at exactly the same speed they always were but they are grouped in threes instead of in fours. After that, beat the 2/4 bar as two quick quarter notes (eighth notes still being constant), then stay in four from bar 110 to the end to control the *rallentando* – don't go back into two in bar 114 for the piano postlude.

Publisher's note

This piece is scored for small orchestra (2fl, ob, 2cl, bsn, 2hn, perc, hp, str). Conductor's scores and instrumental parts are available for purchase from Hinshaw Music or music retailers (HMC2418A). The original version, for SA and piano (HMC2457), is also published. The orchestral accompaniment is compatible with both versions.

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for Rosemary Heffley and the Texas Choral Directors Association

For the beauty of the earth

for mixed choir, S.A.T.B., with keyboard

F. S. Pierpoint (1835–1917)

JOHN RUTTER

Happily ♩ = 66

PIANO
or
ORGAN

mp delicato

4

8

SOPRANOS
mp legato

1. For the beau-ty of the earth, _____

12

For the beau-ty of the skies, _____

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HMC2418

16

For the love _____ which from our birth _____

20 *poco staccato*

O - ver and a - round us lies, _____ o - ver and a -

23 *legato* *mf*

-round us lies: _____ Lord of all, to thee we

27 *mp poco marcato*

raise _____ This our joy - ful hymn - of

31

praise._____

A

35

SOPRANO *mf*

ALTO

2. For the beau - ty of each hour_____

TENOR

BASS

mf

A

mf

39

Hill and

Of the day and of the night,_____

Hill and

43

S. *leggiero*
vale _____ and tree and flower, _____ Sun and moon and

A. *leggiero*
Hill and vale _____ and tree and flower, Sun and moon and

T. *leggiero*
Hill and vale _____ and tree and flower,

B. *leggiero*
vale _____ and tree and flower, _____

47

legato
stars of light: _____ Lord of

legato
stars of light: _____ Lord of

leggiero *legato*
Sun and moon and stars of light: _____ Lord of

leggiero *legato*
Sun and moon and stars of light: _____ Lord of

cresc. *legato*
Sun and moon and stars of light: _____ Lord of

51

f

all, to thee we raise_____

f

all, to thee we_____ raise_____

f

all, to thee we raise_____

f

all, to thee we_____ raise_____

55

mf

This our joy - ful hymn_____ of praise._____

mf

This_____ our hymn of praise._____

mf

This our joy - ful hymn_____ of praise._____

mf

This_____ our hymn of praise.

59 **B** (S. and A.) *unis. p*

3. For the

(T. and B.) *unis. mp espress.*

3. For the joy of hu-man love, _____

B *p dolce*

Ped. *

64

joy _____ of love, Bro-ther, sis-ter, pa-rent,

Bro-ther, sis-ter, pa-rent, child, _____ Friends on

69

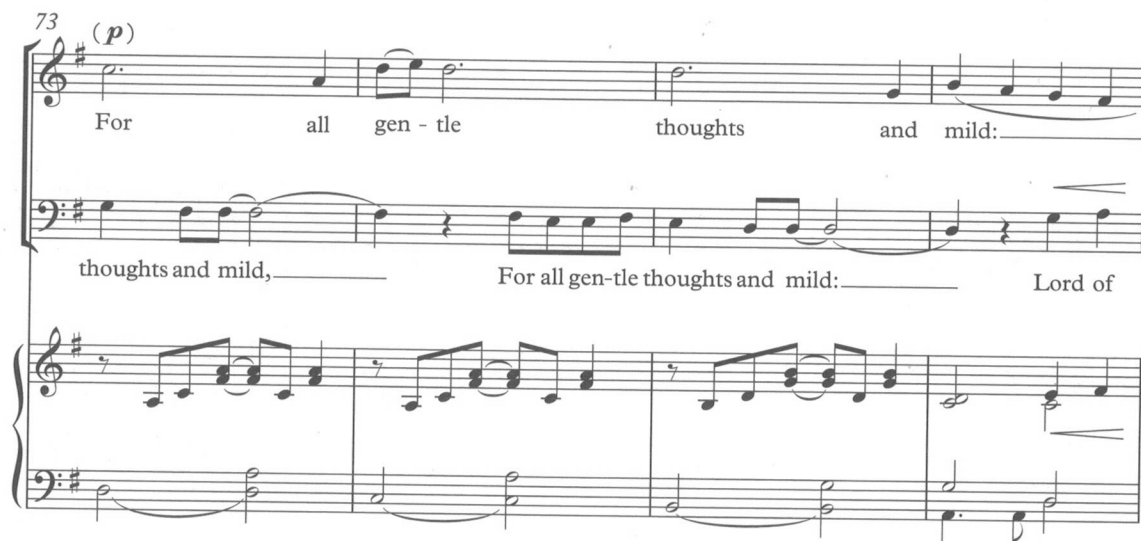
child, Friends on earth, _____ and friends a - bove, _____

earth, _____ and friends a - bove, _____ For all gen-tle

73 *(p)*

For all gen - tle thoughts and mild: _____

thoughts and mild, _____ For all gen - tle thoughts and mild: _____ Lord of

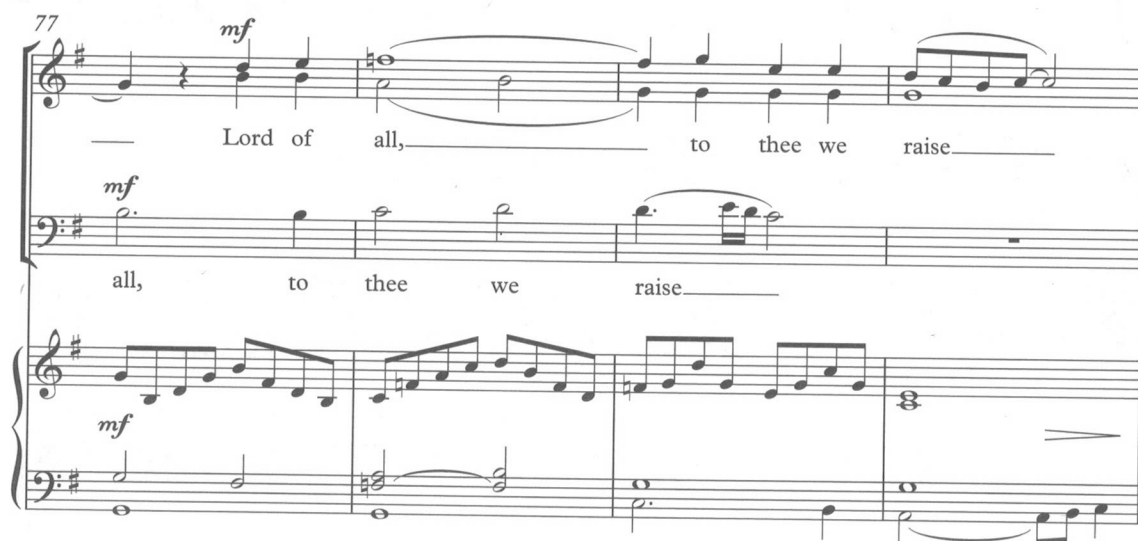


77 *mf*

_____ Lord of all, _____ to thee we raise _____

mf

all, to thee we raise _____



81 *unis. p*

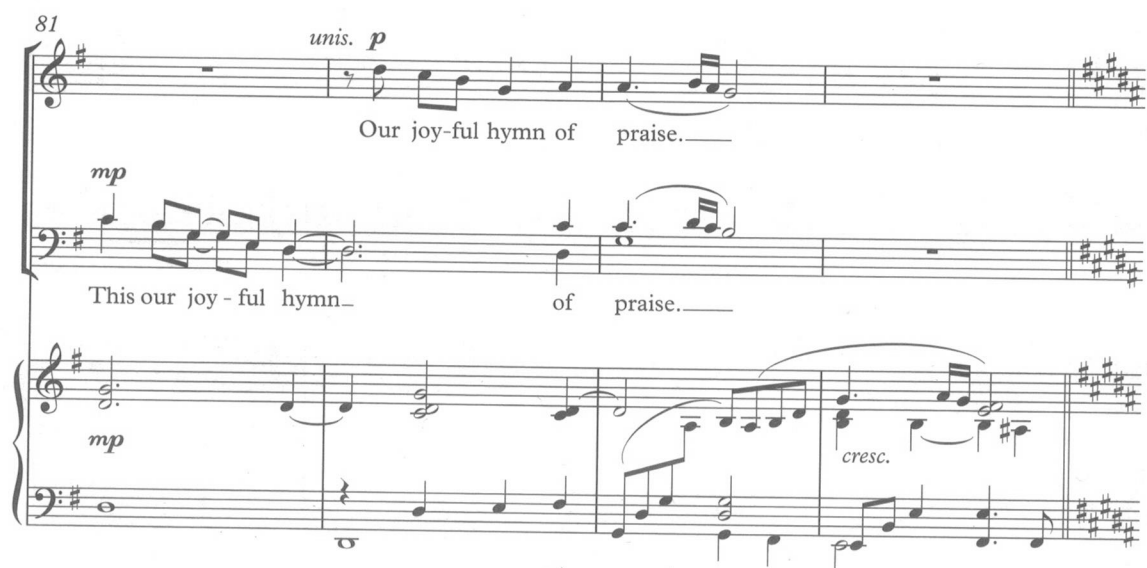
Our joy - ful hymn of praise. _____

mp

This our joy - ful hymn _____ of praise. _____

mp

cresc.



85

[C] ALL VOICES

*unis.**f*

4. For each per - fect gift of thine_____

f

89

SOPRANOS

To our race so free - ly giv - en,_____

ALTOS, TENORS,

BASSES

mf

To our race so free - ly giv - en,_____ Gra - ces

mf

93

mf

Gra - ces_____ hu-man and di-vine,_____

hu - - - man and di - vine,_____ Flow'rs of earth and

mf

97

cresc. *s. f*
 Ah— Ah— A.
 Lord of
cresc. *T. f*
 buds of heav'n, _____ flow'rs of earth and buds of heav'n: _____ *B. f*
cresc. *f*

101

S. all, to thee we raise—
A. all, to thee we— raise—
T. all, to thee we raise—
B. all, to thee we— raise—
 3
 3

105

D (♩ = ♪)

mf
This our joy - ful hymn of praise,

mf
This our joy - ful hymn of praise,

mf
This our joy - ful hymn of praise,

mf
This our joy - ful hymn of praise,

D (♩ = ♪)

mf

111

rall.

(rallentando al fine)

p legato

This our joy - ful hymn of praise.

p
our hymn of praise.

p
our hymn of praise.

p
our hymn of praise.

p
our hymn of praise.

rall. (rallentando al fine)

dim. *p* (*p*)

115

molto rall.

molto rall.



7 28215 05071 8