



Gwyneth Walker

Carols of Light

for Solo Piano



1. The Holly and the Ivy
2. We Three Kings
3. Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella

Dedicated to Linda Holzer, pianist and professor – University of Arkansas at Little Rock

Carols of Light

for Piano Solo

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1. The Holly and the Ivy

Candles or lamps may be placed at the front of the church, or on the piano.

Introduction: *free tempo*

“rays of light”

loco

Piano

p

with much pedal

Time for lighting candles

A At a graceful tempo ♩ = 160

1

(p)

with pedal

9 **B**

17

25 **C**

mf

33 **D**

sparkling
8^{va}

mf

41 *loco*

mf

48 **E**

(mf)

more pedal

mf

56 **F**

mf

64 **G**

p

mf

mf

4

71 H

79

I [Same tempo ♩ = 160]
"the rising of the sun"

85 (LH)

88 *mp*

J Slower, more freely and reflectively

91 *rit.* (LH) *p*

94

97 *accl.* 5

Reo. *Reo.* *Reo.* *cresc.*

100 *a tempo* ♩ = 160 **K**

Reo. *f celebratory*

105

111 **L**

118 **M**

124 *rit.* *dim. to end* *pp* *8va* *as light from a single candle*

Reo.

connect directly to the next movement

2. We Three Kings

Moderate tempo ♩ = 120
"the star – mystery and reverence"

8^{va}-----
p
with pedal

8 (8^{va})-----
loco

16 (8^{va})-----
loco

23 **A**
with pedal
loco

30
poco cresc.
loco

36
(*cresc.*)
mf
loco

REFRAIN

B Faster, more animated ♩ = 132

42 *rit.* *grandly* *f*

48

53

59 *p* *rit.* *(p)*

65 **C** [Same tempo ♩ = 120] *gently, as a waltz* *mf* *with slight pedal*

72 *loco* *8va*

79

REFRAIN

molto rit.

D Faster, more animated ♩ = 132

85

91

97

103

Original tempo ♩ = 120

110

E Lively tempo ♩ = 132

117

F Slower, more freely and reflectively ♩ = 120 (or slower)

125

rit.

Ped.

132

mp

Ped.

138

Start slowly

with slight pedal

(p)

accel.

more pedal

141 (accel.)

♩ = 132

(cresc.)

f

8va

146

rit. to end

dim. to end

(Ped.)

8va

3. Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella

Gently flowing ♩. = 66

lightly, as a single candle glowing in the dark

The first system of music is in 3/8 time, marked *p* (piano). It features a treble and bass clef with a key signature of one flat. The melody in the treble clef consists of eighth and quarter notes, while the bass clef provides a simple accompaniment of eighth notes.

with slight pedal

8

The second system begins at measure 8. It features a treble and bass clef with a key signature of one flat. The melody in the treble clef is marked *mf warmly* (mezzo-forte warmly). The bass clef accompaniment consists of eighth notes and chords. A hairpin crescendo is shown over the first four measures of this system.

with more pedal

16

A

The third system begins at measure 16. It features a treble and bass clef with a key signature of one flat. The melody in the treble clef is marked *delicately*. The bass clef accompaniment consists of eighth notes and chords. A box labeled 'A' is placed above the first measure of this system.

24

The fourth system begins at measure 24. It features a treble and bass clef with a key signature of one flat. The melody in the treble clef is marked *p* (piano) and *mf* (mezzo-forte). The bass clef accompaniment consists of eighth notes and chords. A box labeled 'B' is placed above the first measure of this system.

33

C

very quietly, hushed, so as not to awaken Baby Jesus

The fifth system begins at measure 33. It features a treble and bass clef with a key signature of one flat. The melody in the treble clef is marked *p* (piano). The bass clef accompaniment consists of eighth notes and chords. A box labeled 'C' is placed above the first measure of this system.

41

50

58 **D**
full sonority, joyous
f
with pedal
Ped.

64

70 **E**
(f)

77 **F**
p hushed

85

92

G

hints of "Away in a Manger"

mf

with pedal

100

H

107

poco rit.

Slightly slower

114

accel.

I *a tempo* (♩. = 66)

p *delicately*

121

mf

127

molto rit.

grandly

f

J Free measure

start slowly and accel.

133

p

cresc. poco a poco

Quickly, with excitement

134

f

5

138

rit.

p

8va

Carols of Light: program notes

duration: 8 minutes

The Christmas season is a time of lights – ranging from holiday decorations to candles lit in church, and most, profoundly, to the Holy Light shining above the Nativity. The universal image has inspired the **Carols of Light**.

The music opens with high, sparkling patterns described as *rays of light*. During this section, it is suggested that candles (or a small, battery light) be lit and placed near the front of the church, or on top of the piano.

The first carol, **The Holly and the Ivy**, is delicate and flowing. A favorite line from the lyrics inspires the music: *The rising of the sun, and the running of the deer*. Scales rise throughout. And the final, high notes sound as a single star.

The star guides **We Three Kings**, as the Magi move quietly with reverence beneath the mystery of the starlight. Star patterns (high *arpeggios*) are often inserted into the carol melody. *Guide us to thy perfect light*. This movement ends with a single star *tremolo*.

Bring a Torch, Jeannette, Isabella bears the *light* reference in its title. The stable is dark, and the *good folk of the village* want to see The Child! A favorite line from these lyrics is: *Hush! hush! see how fast he slumbers!* The musical phrases are played very delicately and quietly, so as to not awaken Baby Jesus! [The astute listener may hear hints of **Away in a Manger**. This carol, with its Nativity setting and focus on the sleeping Child, was a natural companion.]

At the end, candlelight sparkles as the music rises to the heights. The little rolled chord in the last measure may be a time when the candles may be extinguished.