

# AMASONG

Presents

## Winter Solstice Concert

*featuring special guest, The Coneflowers*

**DECEMBER**

**18**

**AT 7:00 PM**

**McKinley Memorial  
Presbyterian Church**

*801 S. Fifth St  
Champaign, IL*

**\$20 suggested donation**

Illinois  
**ARTS**  
Council

*Amasong acknowledges support from the Illinois Arts Council.*

Winter Solstice Concert

December 18, 2025, 7:00pm

A concert with **Amasong**

Featuring: The Coneflowers, MJ Walker, Molly Jennings, and ærin tedesco

WELCOME

**Poem            Let This Darkness Be a Bell Tower**

[Rainer Maria Rilke](#) from Sonnets to Orpheus II, 29

Quiet friend who has come so far,  
feel how your breathing makes more space around you.  
Let this darkness be a bell tower  
and you the bell. As you ring,  
what batters you becomes your strength.  
Move back and forth into the change.  
What is it like, such intensity of pain?  
If the drink is bitter, turn yourself to wine.  
In this uncontainable night,  
be the mystery at the crossroads of your senses,  
the meaning discovered there.  
And if the world has ceased to hear you,  
say to the silent earth: I flow.  
To the rushing water, speak: I am.

<https://onbeing.org/poetry/let-this-darkness-be-a-bell-tower/>

JOURNEY THROUGH THE LONG NIGHT

**Evening Rise**                      original source unknown, arr. Meinhard Ansohn

Evening rise spirit come sun goes down when the day is done  
Mother earth awaken me with the heartbeat of the sea

**Dream a Little Dream of Me**

Lyrics/Music: Kahn, Andre, and Schwandt, arr. Andy Beck

*Dearborn Plys and Brandon Young-Eleazar, Ukelele;*

*Mari Lud McKeeth, Melodica*

Stars shining bright above you.  
Night breezes seem to whisper "I love you."  
Birds singin' in the sycamore tree. Dream a little dream of me.

Say "nighty-night" and kiss me.  
Just hold me tight and tell me you'll miss me  
While I'm alone and blue as can be, dream a little dream of me.

Stars fading but I linger on, dear still craving your kiss.  
I'm longing to linger 'til dawn, dear, just saying this.

Sweet dreams 'til sunbeams find you.  
Sweet dreams that leave all worries behind you  
But in your dreams, whatever they be, dream a little dream of me

Stars fading but I linger on, dear, still craving your kiss.  
I'm longing to linger 'til dawn, dear just saying this.

Sweet dreams 'til sunbeams find you.  
Sweet dreams that leave all worries far behind you  
But in your dreams, whatever they be, dream a little dream of me

## **Winter Birds**

written and sung by MJ Walker

### **Poem**

### **The Snow Man**

Wallace Stevens

One must have a mind of winter  
To regard the frost and the boughs  
Of the pine-trees crusted with snow;  
And have been cold a long time  
To behold the junipers shagged with ice,  
The spruces rough in the distant glitter  
Of the January sun; and not to think  
Of any misery in the sound of the wind,  
In the sound of a few leaves,

Which is the sound of the land  
Full of the same wind  
That is blowing in the same bare place  
For the listener, who listens in the snow,  
And, nothing himself, beholds

Nothing that is not there and the nothing that is.

From Collected Poems of Wallace Stevens by Wallace Stevens. Copyright © 1954 by Wallace Stevens. Used by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

<https://poets.org/poem/snow-man>

**Arlington** words and music by Nicky Mehta, sung by the Coneflowers

**Loneliest Songs** Laura Wortman & Richard Parrish Jr  
sung by the Coneflowers

**Poem** **Season of skinny candles** Marge Piercy

A row of tall skinny candles burns  
quickly into the night  
air, the shames raised  
over the rest  
for its hard work

Darkness rushes in  
after the sun sinks  
like a bright plug pulled.  
Our eyes drown in night  
thick as ink pudding

When even the moon  
starves to a sliver  
of quicksilver  
the little candles poke  
holes in the blackness.

A time to eat fat  
and oil, a time to gamble

for pennies and gambol  
around the table, a light  
and easy holiday.

No disasters, no  
repentance, just remember  
and enjoy. The miracle  
is really eight days  
and nights without trouble.

\*shames: the middle candle that lights the others every night

Copyright Credit: Marge Piercy, "Season of Skinny Candles" from The Crooked Inheritance. Copyright © 2006  
by Marge Piercy. Used by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, an imprint of the Knopf Doubleday Publishing  
Group, a division of Random House LLC. All rights reserved.

Source: The Crooked Inheritance (Alfred A. Knopf, 2006)

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/57592/season-of-skinny-candles>

## NIGHT SOUNDS AND EXPERIENCES

The lights will be lowered.

The audience is invited to join the choir in offering night sounds.

Bells will ring to remind the sun to rise once again.

## BELLS RING IN THE SUN –THE SUN RISES

### **Lay Down Your Burden**

C. Crangle, Marilyn Ann Wetzler, Susan Osborne, Paul Winter  
Solo – Molly Jennings

Oh lay down your burden. Lay it all down.

Pass the glass between you - Drink it up

Place the light before you, Come through the door.

The dragon doesn't live here anymore

Sing with the choirs that surround you.

And dance to music in your soul

Look into the eyes that really see you.

Place all that you have into that bowl

“Light is the left hand of darkness  
and darkness the right hand of light.  
Two are one, life and death, lying  
together like lovers in kemmer,  
like hands joined together,  
like the end and the way.”

<https://www.goodreads.com/work/quotes/817527-the-left-hand-of-darkness>

**Cosmos**

Sarah Vos (Dead Horses), sung by the Coneflowers

**Rachuli Alilo**

Christmas ‘wassailing’ song from the Racha region, Georgia  
(Translation: May God bring us Christmas this morning and many new years. Alleluia!)

**Big Old Life**

Rani Arbo, sung by the Coneflowers

**SINGALONGS**

**One Love**

Bob Marley, led by the Coneflowers

**One love! One heart! Let's get together and feel alright.**

*Hear the children crying (One love!)*

*Hear the children crying (One heart!)*

*Saying, "Give thanks and praise to the Lord and I will feel alright."*

*Saying, "Let's get together and feel alright."*

*Verse: Let them all pass all their dirty remarks (One love!)*

*There is one question I'd really love to ask (One heart!)*

*Is there a place for the hopeless sinner*

*Who has hurt all mankind just to save his own beliefs?*

**One love! One heart! Let's get together and feel alright**

**One love! One heart!**

**Give thanks and praise to the Lord and I will feel alright**

**Let's get together and feel alright.**

*Verse: Let's get together....One love! ... one song!*

**One love! One heart! Let's all get together and feel alright**

**One love! One heart.**

**Give thanks and praise to the Lord and feel alright  
Let's get together and feel alright.  
Give thanks and praise to the Lord and I will feel alright.  
Let's get together and feel alright.**

**The Earth, the Air, the Fire, the Water**

Source Unknown

The Earth the Air, the Fire, the Water, Return, return, return, return.  
Ah-ay-ah-ay-ah-ay-ah-ay-ah, Oh-ah-oh-ah-oh-ah-oh-ah-oh

**Lean On Me**

Bill Withers

Sometimes in our lives we all have pain. We all have sorrow.  
But if we are wise we know that there's always tomorrow.

**Lean on me, when you're not strong, and I'll be your friend.  
I'll help you carry on.  
For it won't be long 'til I'm gonna need somebody to lean on.**

Please swallow your pride, if I have things you need to borrow  
For no one can fill those of your needs that you won't let show.

You just call on me brother, when you need a hand.  
**We all need somebody to lean on.**  
I just might have a problem that you'll understand  
**We all need somebody to lean on.**

**Lean on me, when you're not strong and I'll be your friend,  
I'll help you carry on.  
For it won't be long 'til I'm gonna need somebody to lean on.**

**We just call on each other when we need a hand  
We all need somebody to lean on  
I just might have a problem that you'll understand  
We all need somebody to lean on.  
We all need somebody to lean on.  
We all need somebody to lean on.**

**Christians and the Pagans**

Dar Williams, sung by ærin tedesco



I pick an orange from a wicker basket  
and place it on the table  
to represent the sun.  
Then down at the other end  
a blue and white marble  
becomes the earth  
and nearby I lay the little moon of an aspirin.  
I get a glass from a cabinet,  
open a bottle of wine,  
then I sit in a ladder-back chair,  
a benevolent god presiding  
over a miniature creation myth,  
and I begin to sing  
a homemade canticle of thanks  
for this perfect little arrangement,  
for not making the earth too hot or cold  
not making it spin too fast or slow  
so that the grove of orange trees  
and the owl become possible,  
not to mention the rolling wave,  
the play of clouds, geese in flight,  
and the Z of lightning on a dark lake.  
Then I fill my glass again  
and give thanks for the trout,  
the oak, and the yellow feather,  
singing the room full of shadows,  
as sun and earth and moon  
circle one another in their impeccable orbits  
and I get more and more cockeyed with gratitude.

<https://www.saltproject.org/progressive-christian-blog/2023/11/21/as-if-to-demonstrate-an-eclipse-by-billy-collins>



## Payapang Daigdig

text by Felipe de Leon

arr. Brandon Alexander Young-Eleazar

Ang gabi'y payapa / Lahat ay tahimik  
Pati mga tala / Sa bughaw na langit  
Kay hinhin ng hangin / Waring umiibig  
Sa kapayapaan / Ng buong daigdig  
Payapang panahon  
Ay diwa ng buhay . Biyaya ng Diyos / Sa sangkatauhan  
Ang gabi'y payapa / Lahat ay tahimik  
Pati mga tala / Sa bughaw na langit

The night is peaceful and everything is still,  
Even the stars in the dark blue sky.  
The breeze is gentle,  
as if it is in love with the peacefulness of the whole world.  
This peaceful moment is the essence of life;  
it is the grace of God upon humanity.

## Cuncti Simus

from Llibre Vermell, edited by Richard Soto

Translation found, <https://www.avemariasongs.org/aves/o-anon/Vermell1.htm>

Cuncti simus concanentes; Ave Maria

1) Virgo sola existente,  
en affuit angelus

Gabriel est appellatus,  
atque missus caelitus

Clara facieque dixit;

Ave Maria: Cuncti simus concanentes;

2) Clara facieque dixit  
audite carissimi

En concipies Maria

Cuncti simus concanentes; Ave Maria x 2

(3) En concipies Maria  
audite carissimi

Pariesque filium; Ave Maria

Cuncti simus concanentes; Ave Maria

4) Pariesque filium

Let us all sing together: Hail Mary

As the Virgin was alone,  
lo an angel appeared.

He is called Gabriel  
and sent from heaven.

And with shining mien he said:

Hail Mary: Let us all sing

And with shining mien he said  
hear, most beloved,

lo you shall conceive, Mary:

Let us all sing, Hail Mary

Lo you shall conceive, Mary,  
hear, most beloved,

you shall bear a son: Hail Mary

Let us all sing

You shall bear a son,

audite carissimi	hear, most beloved,
Vocabis eum Jhesum; Ave Maria	you shall call him Jesus: Hail Mary
Cuncti simus concanentes; Ave Maria	Let us all sing, Hail Mary

### ***Amasong Is***

Heidi Weatherford, Director

Brandon Alexander Young-Eleazar, Assistant Director

Hannah Freeman-Choi, accompanist

Ada Stelzer	Erin Creuz	Mari Lud McKeeth
Alana Smith	Fin McMahon	Molly MJ Jennings
Alyssa Obradovich	Hannah Perhai-Josek	Nicole Whitworth
Andrea Anderson-Holmes	Jan Troutt	Piper Coe
Andrea Sullivan	Janellie Roach	Sara Bowman
Annie Coddington	Jennilee Benda	Sheryl Dyck
Beth Watkins	Kat Setterlund	Susannah Davison
Dearborn Plys	Kathleen Fuller	Theresa Lawrence
Emma Walters	Kayt Workman	
	Lock Mier	

*Not singing with Amasong in this concert:* aerin tedesco , Ann Nelson, Claire Harmening Jessica Williams, Mae Collins, Marcia Nelson, MJ Walker, Olive Jan Mathewson-Smith, Sarah Little

### **The Coneflowers are**

Ann Coddington, Brenda Koenig, Heidi Weatherford, Mari Lud McKeeth,  
Jen Gibas, Jodi Birdwell, Julie Birdwell, Linda Owens, MJ Walker,  
Sally Shepherd, Theresa Lawrence

***Many thanks to you, our audience,  
for coming to our concerts!***

**Amasong: Champaign Urbana's  
Feminist/Lesbian//Non-Binary Chorus**

Amasong welcomes all feminist  
cis and transgendered women and queer folks  
who sing in the Soprano / Alto ranges.

**Amasong Open House Rehearsal and Potluck supper**

**5:30pm - January 15, 2026**

Contact Director Heidi Weatherford  
at [amasongdirector@gmail.com](mailto:amasongdirector@gmail.com) for more information.



Amasong gratefully acknowledges  
support from the

**Illinois**  
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Council