

## HYMN STUDY for CGA1134

### “Sing We Now of Christmas”

arr. Becki Slagle Mayo

This Christmas carol was actually written in the 15<sup>th</sup> century as a New Year’s Carol. The original carol text, written in French is titled “Noel Nouvelet.” The word “noel” means “news” or “newness,” and it’s still that “new birth” that we celebrate each Christmas. Sometime in the 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> century, the French text was translated into English and has developed to be the traditional carol that we enjoy today.

Most of the music that we sing is written in a major or minor mode.

Sing this scale in a major mode:



Now sing the same scale in a minor mode.



Can you hear the difference?

This arrangement of “Sing We now of Christmas” is written in a different mode called Dorian. Sing this scale in the Dorian mode.



Use this as a warm-up for your rehearsals as you learn this anthem. You may especially notice the Dorian mode as you sing the word “now” in the phrase “Sing we now of Christmas.”

“Sing We Now of Christmas” presents the Christmas story just as it is recorded in the Bible. In the book of Luke, we learn about the promise of the newborn king. This is followed by the angel’s announcement to the shepherds telling them not to be afraid. The shepherds then traveled to Bethlehem to see for themselves this “new birth” (or “noel”). In Matthew, we find the story of the wise men (men who studied the stars) that followed a bright star to Bethlehem to offer gifts to the newborn King. As you sing the carol, remember this story and the hope and promise it still brings today.