

**The Risen Christ:  
A Celebration of the Resurrection  
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**Performance Production Notes**

**Introduction**

Thank you for choosing to celebrate The Risen Christ with us through this work. In creating it, we studied the powerful songs of Keith and Kristyn Getty and Stuart Townend. These songwriters have done a beautiful job of interpreting the meaning of the story of Jesus' public ministry, death and resurrection. They guide our response to it. So in setting these songs, we felt that the task of our work was to tell the Biblical story to the listener/congregant – to fill in the details. Re-telling the story of Jesus is an important act of worship – remembering. Without the telling of the story, there is no act of asking, “How shall I respond to this good news?”

So let's think together about some creative ways to tell this good news, as well as some ways to help the hearers respond to it.

The story is told through four actors who speak as Jesus, Peter, John, and Mary Magdalene. They speak directly to the congregation; in theatrical terms, this is called “breaking the fourth wall.” The dialog for these storytellers has been drawn directly from scripture, primarily the Gospels of Mark and John. Any additional dialog is employed just to bridge gaps or condense events in the gospels.

Think of your choir and soloists as worship leaders who help the congregation consider the meaning of these events and lead them to respond. Together our goal is, as the song so beautifully says, that we may know the risen Christ.

In these Production Notes, we will think through two different options for staging the complete work as a presentation by your Worship Ministry.

- Option 1 is a simple, stripped-down setting with a more contemporary feel.
- Option 2 employs Biblical settings and dress; if you have a strong tradition of presenting a pageant, this option allows you to utilize these resources.

In addition, you will find Production Notes for utilizing the separate components of this work, as well as the Bonus Choral Selections and Congregational Settings which are included in the Choral Book and accompaniment products.

## **Option 1 for Presenting the Full Work (using four actors in a Reader's Theater format)**

In this setting, we will be relying on a simple presentation, putting the bulk of the work on the four actors who tell the story and the visuals which continue the story on the Accompaniment DVD.

### **Staging**

Position the four actors on stools across the front of the stage. Set Peter, John and Mary at intervals on Stage Right. Place Jesus on a stool set at Stage Left. They should be placed far Downstage, on the lip of the platform, out front of the choir and orchestra. We want them to make an intimate connection with the congregation. If necessary, (for instance, if your orchestra takes up the bulk of your platform) you may create a small thrust on which to place the actors.

The actors will speak to the congregation, telling their story, remembering what they have seen and heard. Occasionally they may interact with each other, but they are never moved into dramatic scenes. What we are creating here is a “living room” feel – as though these friends have returned from a trip and are telling us about what happened and how it felt when it happened.

If it is possible in your facility, light these actors each from an overhead light called a “Pin light” (or sometimes a “God light”), as well as a Solo Spot (which lights their faces from the front). If a Pin light for each is not available, position the stage lights which you have available to flood the Stage Left and Stage Right areas where you have placed the actors.

Soloists may then step out into the aisles of the Choir Loft (where they will need to be lit with a Spot) or out to Center Stage. They should not move into the area where the actors are.

### **Costume**

These actors will not be in Biblical costume, but very nondescript street clothes. Depending on the personality and style of your church, they might be dressed in basic black turtleneck and pants (a theatrical look), or they might be dressed very casually in jeans (a “street” look).

These actors do not need to be soloists, but they could be if necessary in a smaller church.

Mic them with a wireless lapel or earpiece and body-pack.

How will you dress your choir/orchestra? Again, this depends on the personality and style of your church. This work is not so much a performance presentation as it is a celebratory service which employs some drama and media. So if your church is

accustomed to seeing your choir in robes for a service, robes are appropriate here. If your church setting is more casual, you may allow your choir to wear street clothes. You might limit them to black pants and skirts and choose a limited range of blouses/shirts that provide a more uniform look. Unless your church is accustomed to very formal productions, this work does not lend itself to a choir loft and stage full of formal wear. (Remember that the setting we are going for is intimate story-telling.)

### **ACCOMPANIMENT DVD**

An Accompaniment DVD is available for THE RISEN CHRIST, utilizing footage from the movie, MATTHEW (International Bible Society). These visuals are an integral part of the story-telling process, bringing the Biblical historical setting to life.

This Accompaniment DVD has two mixes to which the musical can be performed:

- a Split Track mix of the orchestra on one side and choral vocals on the other, and
- a Split Track mix of a Click Track on one side and a String Section submix on the other.

Both of these mixes allow for your choir to present the music with the orchestra track or with any combination of live musicians from one pianist to a full orchestra. Whatever accompaniment you choose, the DVD movie footage will synchronize completely with any combination of live musicians or the orchestral track.

Also available are separate instrumental track mixes of several songs, which can be used in other services or in other ways that may not necessarily relate to the performance of this work.

In addition, the DVD contains a Pre-service Loop which runs the graphic of The Risen Christ cover art and serves as a backdrop before and after the service.

### **ACCOMPANIMENT CD**

An Accompaniment CD is available for THE RISEN CHRIST in a Split Trax format, featuring orchestra track on the left channel and choral vocals on the right channel. It also includes separate instrumental track mixes of several songs, which are explained in the choral book.

With these components in mind, let's walk through the work together.

#### **1. The Risen Christ (*Invocation*)**

This song calls for a soloist on verse 1, choir on verse 2, and optional congregation on verse 3. If you opt to invite the congregation to participate on verse 3, the Accompaniment DVD provides lyrics for verse 3.

End Pre-Service Loop on screens.

If inviting congregation participation on verse 3:

Cue DVD/CD to The Risen Christ (Invocation). In the DVD accompaniment, the screen remains dark until the third verse, when lyrics for the congregation appear.

Actors area remains darkened. Light soloist, choir and accompanists. Since the soloist is the principle worship leader, calling us to worship, this is a good opportunity to place them down center stage for full impact. Soloist remains lit through end of song, when there is a brief solo tag.

Solo option: If you have a talented child soloist, you might consider using them for this opening solo. Be sure to take a look at The Risen Christ (*Benediction*) which closes the work, and also calls for a soloist, but is in a higher key. You may need to consider whether your child soloist can handle this key, or whether you will use a different soloist for the Benediction.

If your church observes Easter by the lighting of the Paschal candle, this is an opportunity to enact that observance here. The soloist may enter (from Stage Left or Right, or down the aisle from the back of the sanctuary) carrying a smaller candle, may sing their solo, then move to light the Paschal candle during verse 2, returning to face the congregation for verse 3 and the solo tag. In this way, the Invocation serves as an opportunity to greet and celebrate the Light.

If you choose to have the soloist enter from the back of sanctuary, you may also choose to bring your choir in the same way. Position them in the aisles and let them sing the Invocation from this spot. They then move into the loft as the soloist exits and actors enter.

The soloist exits after Invocation. Solo spot out. John, Mary and Peter actors enter and take their places.

## **2. Scene 1: Introduction – *We were eyewitnesses***

Stop DVD/CD.

Lights up on actors Stage Right. John may begin his dialog even if the choir is still moving into place, if they have sung the Invocation from the aisles.

Cue DVD/CD and accompaniment as indicated in script for “Across The Lands”. The introduction to this song serves as an underscore for the remaining dialog.

Light up on Jesus Stage Left as he enters on cue indicated in script.

### **3. Across The Lands**

Lower lights on actors at conclusion of dialog and bring up choir lights as they begin to sing. DVD rolls footage to accompany this song.

### **4. Scene 2: *Jesus calls his disciples***

Stop DVD/CD.

Lights up on actors Stage R and L; lower lights on choir.

### **5. Hear the Call of the Kingdom**

Cue DVD/CD at conclusion of Scene 2 dialog.

Lights out on actors. Solo light on Soloist. Lights up on choir as they join on verse 2.

DVD rolls footage to accompany this song.

### **6. Scene 3: *Jesus builds his church***

Stop DVD/CD.

Lights up on actors Stage R and L. Lower lights on choir.

Cue DVD/CD track for “Speak O Lord” at point indicated in the script. The instrumental accompaniment serves as an underscore for the remaining dialog in this scene. [Rehearse this with your actors portraying Jesus and Peter. If either one speaks slower than the actors on the recording, you may need to cue the DVD/CD to start later in this dialog, since it runs right up to the moment when the choir begins to sing. You will get a feel for what works best with your actors. Also note that separate musical underscores have been written to accompany the three narrations – Jesus (beginning measure 1), Peter (beginning measure 27), and Jesus (beginning measure 37).]

### **7. Speak O, Lord**

Lights down on actors, up on choir as dialog ends and choir begins singing. The DVD rolls footage to accompany this song.

### **8. Scene 4: *Jesus is arrested, tried and led to Golgotha***

Stop DVD/CD.

Lights up on actors Stage R and L. Lower lights on choir.

After Peter’s line, “The cock crowed. And it was morning,” Peter should bow his head and turn away from the others, though remaining on his stool. Any lighting on him should go out. If he is not lit separately from the other two actors, he should remain as still and unobtrusive as possible throughout the remainder of this scene, the song “Beneath the Cross of Jesus” and Scene 5.

Cue DVD/CD accompaniment track for “Beneath the Cross of Jesus” at point indicated in the script. Again, you will want to work with your actor playing Mary Magdalene on this cue, to get the timing right according to the speed at which she speaks. Adjust the cue so that her dialog ends before the soloist begins singing.

### **9. Beneath the Cross of Jesus**

This song begins with a female soloist and adds a male for a duet on verse 2. These soloists can be your actors who play Mary Magdalene and John, but it is not necessary. If you are using these actors as your soloists, I suggest that Mary stand when she begins her dialog, “They bound Jesus, led him away. ....”. If possible, move her slightly forward. She can deliver her solo from this position, and John can come to stand beside her when he joins her.

From this point in the dialog, the actors (and soloists) need to tell the story as if they have forgotten the audience is there – as if they now see (in their mind’s eye) the scene unfolding. Play the scenes and songs as if they can see the events taking place on the back wall of the church, beyond the congregation.

If you are not using the actors as your soloists, move the two soloists unobtrusively into place as the intro to the song begins. Bring lights up on Female Solo for verse 1 as lights go out on actors Stage R and L. Add light on Male Soloist for verse 2, then add choir lights as choir begins to sing.

Option: If you use liturgical dance in your church, this is a beautiful opportunity for a solo or duet ballet which might mirror/interpret the soloists’ words. Keep it simple and light it tightly, keeping the moment VERY intimate. This is the most personal and reflective moment of the work.

At measure 75 in this song, the female soloist sings the last line of the song. Lights on her only.

At measure 82 in this song, as solo ends, John begins dialog for Scene 5. Accompaniment continues to play out under dialog.

### **10. Scene 5: *Jesus is crucified***

As solo ends, lights out on Female Soloist and lights up on John and Mary, Stage R and Jesus, Stage L. (If Mary and John have sung the solos, then lights remain up on them; light up on Jesus Stage L.) John and Mary remain standing where we placed them in Scene 4. (This separates them from Peter, who is not in the scene.) They should continue to play this dialog as though they can see the events taking place on the back wall of the sanctuary.)

Jesus should stand for his lines in this scene, but remain in place. After delivering his last line, he sits again, bowing his head and remaining still.

The accompaniment DVD/CD will segue to “The Power of the Cross” during the dialog as indicated in the script. You will want to work with your actors to work out a smooth transition according to their tempos, so that the dialog ends just before the choir begins to sing.

### **11. The Power of the Cross**

This is a climactic moment in the work. Place all your emphasis here on the choir, orchestra/accompanists and the footage on the screen, which tells the story. This is a moment for your musicians to lead powerfully.

Lights out on actors Stage R and L as dialog ends. Lights up on choir/orchestra as choir begins.

During this song, Jesus remains seated, head bowed, unmoving. Peter remains seated, head bowed, with back to audience, as he has been since Scene 4. John and Mary sit. They may huddle together, Mary leaning on John, during this Scene, but remain still, drawing no attention to themselves.

The conclusion of this song is a powerful moment. Allow your congregants to take it in; don't rush into the next scene.

### **12. Scene 6: *Jesus is risen***

Stop DVD/CD.

Lights up on actors Stage R.

Peter turns to face congregation as he begins the scene. His dialog should begin with a tone that is sensitive to both the gravity of what he witnessed and the emotion of what the congregation just experienced visually. Then gradually let the intensity build. Their dialog should become quick here, almost tripping over each other. They speak to each other and the congregation as the story gathers momentum up to Peter's line, “We ran back to tell the others.”

Mary then tells her story (“I don't know how long I stood there...”).

As Jesus delivers his line (“Mary.”), hit him with the Stage Left overhead Pin light (“God light”) only. He stretches out his arms to greet her as he speaks her name. She responds with awe and joy.

On Mary's line, cue Accompaniment DVD/CD to immediately begin “See What A Morning.”

### **13. See What A Morning**

Lights out on actors Stage R and L. Lights very bright on choir and musicians.

Option: If you have liturgical dancers in your church, this is a beautiful spot to incorporate them in a joyous dance. Brightly colored ribbons or banners in liturgical purples and pinks may accentuate their dance.

This song calls for movement! You can also provide this with the lighting you use on the choir – moving lights, gobos, etc. This should be the brightest moment in the work.

### **14. Scene 7: *Jesus commissions his church***

Stop DVD/CD.

Lights up on actors Stage R and L. Lights may dim on choir/orchestra, but not completely. You don't want to lose the momentum you've been creating.

Cue accompaniment DVD/CD during Jesus' dialog as indicated in the script. Work with your Jesus actor to compare the pace of his delivery of this speech to the recorded version. You may want to adjust your DVD cue to accommodate the actor's pace, so that he finishes just before the choir begins.

### **15. O Church Arise w/In Christ Alone**

Lighting should grow steadily during this song to become full and bright at the end. DVD footage rolls to accompany this song.

At measure 95, as the song "In Christ Alone" begins, the DVD will provide lyrics if you wish to invite your congregation to sing with you. The conductor should turn to them and indicate that they stand and sing with the choir. Lights up on actors Stage R and L, as they also stand and may join the singing. So you have your full cast and chorus (and congregation if you choose) standing at the close of this song. This should be the final climax to the musical presentation.

Stop DVD/CD.

What you do next depends on your church tradition and the setting in which you have chosen to present this work. At this moment you may:

- Ask your pastor to offer brief comments or he/she may want to enter a time of invitation. If offering an invitation, you may want to consider using "Beneath the Cross of Jesus (Hymn of Decision)" from the Bonus Choral Selections and Congregational Settings included in the choral book, as this arrangement was created specifically for that purpose. It includes an extra verse of lyrics penned by Kristyn Getty for an invitational moment. If you do not wish to sing during the invitation, your musicians can play this selection or possibly "Speak, O Lord" as background music.

- Ask your pastor, a worship leader, one of the actors, or a congregant to read from selected passages of scripture, such as Colossians 2:6-15; selected verses from 1 Corinthians 15; or Acts 2:22-39, using these passages as a charge to your congregants to live in light of the risen Christ.
  
- Observe Communion with your congregation. For this option, you have several track versions on the Accompaniment DVD/CD, including one version on the DVD with full movie footage. The other track versions are available in audio form only.
  
- Close in prayer, leading into the choral benediction.
  
- Or you may go directly into the choral benediction, “The Risen Christ.”

### **16. The Risen Christ (*Benediction*)**

Cue accompaniment DVD/CD for “The Risen Christ” (*Benediction*) With the DVD, lyrics will appear for your congregation to join with you in singing if you so choose.

You could opt to sing this Benediction a cappella if your choir and/or congregation are already familiar with this song.

Light up for soloist on final tag. You may use the same soloist who sang this in the Invocation, or choose another soloist.

Optional: If you employed the observance of the Paschal candle lighting at the Invocation, you might now want to spread that light by having a candle-lighting ceremony while singing this benediction. Congregants or worship leaders or children may light candles from the Paschal candle, carrying them out to the congregants, who then light their candles from these. This is a beautiful way to reinforce the idea of the light and life of the risen Christ being spread through his church.

Dismiss! Cue the DVD Pre-service Loop to run as people exit.

### **Production Note: Behold The Lamb**

This is a strong song for use during any Communion service, but particularly during the Lenten season or Holy Week in a Communion setting. To bring this song to life with visuals:

A DVD accompaniment track has been created and is included in this product, which features footage from the Matthew film (International Bible Society) drawn from the Last Supper. The movie footage is only available with the choral

arrangement beginning on page 111; however it is not available on any of the “Edited versions” of this song as described on page 117.

You can also stage a Biblical “Last Supper” setting, much the same as you would do for Scene 7 in Option 2 of the Full Production (see notes above.) This is an effective visual whether you use actors in it or not. Set a low table with the elements of a Passover meal – earthy bowls/platters of flat bread, wine, fruit, meat, olives, a common cup as would have been used at the time. Around the table, place pillows. Add the touch of a basin and cloth for foot washing. In my own church, we have used this set as a visual during a Maundy Thursday service, lighting it with small votive candles and washing the staged area with a very low, warm light. Although no actors ever enter it, it provides a meditation point and reminds us that this meal was a very real event. (You can also add actors who portray the disciples and Jesus, following the story as it is told by the song. They would have no dialog, but just enact the events we are singing about.)

### **Option 2 for Presenting the Full Work (using actors in a dramatic stage format)**

In this setting, we will be relying on the basic story presentation, still putting the bulk of the work on the four actors who tell the story, but our visuals will come from dramatic (or traditional “pageant”) scenes staged with historic Biblical sets and costumes rather than from the Accompaniment DVD. In these Production Notes, I will suggest some vignettes that you may stage, using small groups of actors and pieces of sets that suggest location. These provide the backdrop for the story.

If you have traditionally presented a full dramatic pageant, this is a good option for still making use of these resources, but not having to stage the full play.

#### **Staging**

Choose two or three locations on your platform where you can stage the vignettes, or build up platforms for this purpose. For these staging areas, you will need small set pieces or props that suggest location, such as a hillside (some rocks and a grassy slope), the Upper Room, Golgotha or the empty tomb. (See more details in specific scene notes below.)

The actors will speak to the congregation, telling their story, remembering what they have seen and heard, usually standing just aside or opposite the scene. During choir numbers, they may be moved into the action of the vignettes.

You will work with your Lighting Director to set the marks where actors will be best lit to deliver their lines.

Soloists may step out into the aisles of the Choir Loft (where they will need to be lit with a Spot) or out to Center Stage. They should not move into the area where the actors are.

### **Costume**

All actors (speaking and non-speaking) and soloists will be dressed in historical Biblical costume.

The four principle actors do not need to be soloists, but they could be if necessary in a smaller church.

Mic them with a wireless lapel or earpiece and body-pack.

One option for your choir is to dress your choir also in Biblical dress, so that soloists or non-speaking actors involved in the vignettes can move in and out of the choir easily. However, another option is to dress your choir in something nondescript, like casual black attire, and keep the Biblical settings very separate from the choir/orchestra members. Taking this approach, your vignettes really serve as “living stained glass windows” – they are illustrations only. They do not advance the story through action.

### **ACCOMPANIMENT DVD**

You will not be using the Accompaniment DVD in this version of the production, since your visuals will be provided by live actors.

### **ACCOMPANIMENT CD**

An Accompaniment CD is available for THE RISEN CHRIST in a Split Trax format, featuring orchestra track on the left channel and choral vocals on the right channel. It also includes separate instrumental track mixes of several songs, which are explained in the choral book.

### **Screens**

You may want to create a pre-service slide with the cover art, which runs as a backdrop before and after your presentation. You may also want to create lyric slides for the portions of the songs [The Risen Christ (Invocation), In Christ Alone, The Risen Christ (Benediction)] when you want the congregation to sing with you.

With these components in mind, let's walk through the work together.

## **1. The Risen Christ (*Invocation*)**

This song calls for a soloist on verse 1, choir on verse 2, and optional congregation on verse 3. If you opt to invite the congregation to participate on verse 3, create lyric slides.

End Pre-Service slide on screens.

Cue CD to The Risen Christ (*Invocation*).

Actors area remains darkened. Light soloist, choir and accompanists. Since the soloist is the principle worship leader, calling us to worship, this is a good opportunity to place them down center stage for full impact. Soloist remains lit through end of song, when there is a brief solo tag.

Solo option: If you have a talented child soloist, you might consider using them for this opening solo. Be sure to take a look at The Risen Christ (*Benediction*) which closes the work, and also calls for a soloist, but is in a higher key. You may need to consider whether your child soloist can handle this key, or whether you will use a different soloist for the Benediction.

If your church observes Easter by the lighting of the Paschal candle, this is an opportunity to enact that observance here. The soloist may enter (from Stage Left or Right, or down the aisle from the back of the sanctuary) carrying a smaller candle, may sing their solo, then move to light the Paschal candle during verse 2, returning to face the congregation for verse 3 and the solo tag. In this way, the Invocation serves as an opportunity to greet and celebrate the Light.

If you choose to have the soloist enter from the back of sanctuary, you may also choose to bring your choir in the same way. Position them in the aisles and let them sing the Invocation from this spot. They then move into the loft as the soloist exits and actors enter.

The soloist exits after Invocation. Solo spot out. John, Mary and Peter actors enter and take their places.

## **2. Scene 1: *Introduction – We were eyewitnesses***

Stop CD.

Lights up on actors in designated staging spot. This area may already be set for Scene 3 – along the sea of Galilee – or as a nondescript Judean hillside. John may begin his dialog even if the choir is still moving into place, if they have sung the Invocation from the aisles.

Where Jesus' entrance is cued in the script, bring lights up on a simple vignette of Jesus being baptized by John the Baptist, as a few onlookers are posed, watching. When I say "vignette", I mean that the actors are posed in a setting and do not move, just present a picture that illustrates the dialog.

### **3. Across The Lands**

Cue accompaniment CD as indicated in the script.

Lower lights on actors at conclusion of dialog; actors exit as you bring up choir lights as they begin to sing.

### **4. Scene 2: *Jesus calls his disciples***

Stop CD.

Lights up on actors set in a vignette along the sea of Galilee; lower lights on choir.

Depict fishermen at their nets. (Again, these actors are still, providing a back drop.)

Principle actors speak their dialog with this setting behind them. As the song begins, they move into the action of the scene.

### **5. Hear the Call of the Kingdom**

Cue accompaniment CD at conclusion of Scene 2 dialog.

Solo light on Soloist. Lights up on choir as they join on verse 2.

Principle actors join the action of the scenes that are staged during this song. I suggest that you stage the calling of Peter, Andrew, James and John by the sea, and then move (with crowds following) to another setting like a Judean hillside, where you may stage some healings, Jesus teaching or feeding the multitudes. These scenes are “pantomimed” during the song – by which I mean you don’t hear any dialog, just watch the action. Or you can present them as still vignettes only, bringing the lights up on various scenes at cues you set throughout the song.

Note: Be sure that as the story moves from vignette to vignette or action scene to action scene, you keep the four main actors the same – always the same Jesus, Peter, John, and Mary. Move them quickly with the lights down, then bring up lights on a scene when they are in place.

### **6. Scene 3: *Jesus builds his church***

Stop CD.

Lights up on principle actors for this dialog. Lower lights on choir. This dialog can take place apart from any particular setting. During this time, you can set the scene for the Lord’s Supper.

Cue CD track for “Speak O Lord” at point indicated in the script. The instrumental accompaniment serves as an underscore for the remaining dialog in this scene. [Rehearse this with your actors portraying Jesus and Peter. If either one speaks slower than the actors on the recording, you may need to cue the CD to start later in this dialog, since it runs right up to the moment when the choir begins to sing. You will get a feel for what

works best with your actors. Also note that separate musical underscores have been written to accompany the three narrations – Jesus (beginning measure 1), Peter (beginning measure 27), and Jesus (beginning measure 37).]

### **7. Speak O, Lord**

As dialog ends and choir begins singing, move the principal actors into the Lord's Supper setting, where they are joined by the other disciples and a few women to serve. As the choir sings, the actors portray the progression of the meal, especially the passing of the bread and the cup.

### **8. Scene 4: *Jesus is arrested, tried and led to Golgotha***

Stop CD.

As soon as lights go out on the Lord's Supper scene, move principal actors quickly out of it and into a lit area where they will tell this part of the story. This scene covers a lot of ground quickly. I do not recommend that you try to stage all of the action in it. Instead, look for "pictures" that are mentioned in the dialog and illustrate them with vignettes – small clusters of actors that are tightly lit and do not require much setting. (For instance, "an angry mob" – Judas, soldiers, and a few angry civilians; or "the chief priests and the elders" – the court before which Jesus is tried; Pilate before the mob of people, with Barabbas. By adding in each of these vignettes as the story is told, you show us a sense of the growing conflict coming to a head.

After Peter's line, "The cock crowed. And it was morning," Peter should turn to look at Jesus, and both these actors should exit.

Cue accompaniment CD for "Beneath the Cross of Jesus" at point indicated in the script. Again, you will want to work with your actor playing Mary Magdalene on this cue, to get the timing right according to the speed at which she speaks. Adjust the cue so that her dialog ends before the soloist begins singing.

### **9. Beneath the Cross of Jesus**

This song begins with a female soloist and adds a male for a duet on verse 2. These soloists can be your actors who play Mary Magdalene and John, but it is not necessary. From this point in the dialog, the actors (and soloists) need to tell the story as if they have forgotten the audience is there – as if they now see (in their mind's eye) the scene unfolding. Play the scenes and songs as if they can see the events taking place on the back wall of the church, beyond the congregation.

If you are not using the actors as your soloists, move the two soloists unobtrusively into place as the intro to the song begins. Bring lights up on Female Solo for verse 1 as lights go out on actors Stage R and L. Add light on Male Soloist for verse 2, then add choir lights as choir begins to sing.

Option: If you use liturgical dance in your church, this is a beautiful opportunity for a solo or duet ballet which might mirror/interpret the soloists' words. Keep it simple and light it tightly, keeping the moment VERY intimate. This is the most personal and reflective moment of the work.

At measure 75 in this song, the female soloist sings the last line of the song. Lights on her only.

At measure 82 in this song, as solo ends, John begins dialog for Scene 5. Accompaniment continues to play out under dialog.

### **10. Scene 5: *Jesus is crucified***

As solo ends, lights out on Female Soloist and lights up on John and Mary. (If Mary and John have sung the solos, then lights remain up on them.) John and Mary remain standing where we placed them in Scene 4.

You have two options for staging the crucifixion. You can portray it, as Mary and John describe it. In this case, there is action taking place in another staged area opposite Mary and John, and Jesus is a participant in this action. He has to deliver his lines from the cross.

Or I suggest that you continue to have John & Mary tell the story as if they can see it taking place, but we can't. Jesus' lines can be incorporated into John's dialog and delivered by John, who tells us what Jesus said.

The accompaniment CD will segue to "The Power of the Cross" during the dialog as indicated in the script. You will want to work with your actors to work out a smooth transition according to their tempos, so that the dialog ends just before the choir begins to sing. Adjust the cue to make this work with your actors.

### **11. The Power of the Cross**

This is a climactic moment in the work. This is a moment for your choir and musicians to lead powerfully.

This is also the moment when you can stage the crucifixion – either by action, or by a progression of vignettes that move from the soldiers nailing Jesus to the cross, raising him, Jesus crying out or being offered the vinegar, and finally, Jesus dying – with John, Mary, and others (not Peter) as witnesses.

The conclusion of this song is a powerful moment. Allow your congregants to take it in; don't rush into the next scene.

## **12. Scene 6: *Jesus is risen***

Stop CD.

Lights up on principal actors Peter, Mary and John, standing in an area set to represent the entrance to the empty tomb.

Peter turns to face congregation as he begins the scene. His dialog should begin with a tone that is sensitive to both the gravity of what he witnessed and the emotion of what the congregation just experienced visually. Then gradually let the intensity build. Their dialog should become quick here, almost tripping over each other. They speak to each other and the congregation as the story gathers momentum up to Peter's line, "We ran back to tell the others." Peter and John exit.

Mary then tells her story ("I don't know how long I stood there...").

Light up on Jesus, who has stepped into the edge of the scene, as he delivers his line. Mary turns to him.

On Mary's line, cue accompaniment CD to immediately begin "See What A Morning." Lights out on scene as actors exit.

## **13. See What A Morning**

Lights out on actors Stage R and L. Lights very bright on choir and musicians.

Option: If you have liturgical dancers in your church, this is a beautiful spot to incorporate them in a joyous dance. Brightly colored ribbons or banners in liturgical purples and pinks may accentuate their dance.

This song calls for movement! You can also provide this with the lighting you use on the choir – moving lights, gobos, etc. This should be the brightest moment in the work.

## **14. Scene 7: *Jesus commissions his church***

Stop CD.

Lights up on principal actors, who may be tightly lit with no set or may be standing on the Judean hillside again. Lights may dim on choir/orchestra, but not completely. You don't want to lose the momentum you've been creating.

Cue accompaniment CD for "O Church, Arise" during Jesus' dialog as indicated in the script. Work with your Jesus actor to compare the pace of his delivery of this speech to the recorded version. You may want to adjust your cue to accommodate the actor's pace, so that he finishes just before the choir begins. Jesus should speak from another part of the stage than the other principal actors. He is delivering an address to all of us. He doesn't have to be in any particular setting.

### **15. O Church Arise w/In Christ Alone**

Lighting should grow steadily during this song to become full and bright at the end.

At measure 95, as the song “In Christ Alone” begins, provide lyrics on screen if you wish to invite your congregation to sing with you. The conductor should turn to them and indicate that they stand and sing with the choir. Lights up on actors – principal actors, plus other disciples and believers - as they also stand and may join the singing. So you have your full cast and chorus (and congregation if you choose) standing at the close of this song. (I would not have any “opposition” actors, such as Pharisees, Pilate, Judas, soldiers, etc. join this line. This line-up of actors should be comprised of believers – those who have gone before us and are now issuing the challenge to us.) This should be the final climax to the musical presentation.

Stop CD.

What you do next depends on your church tradition and the setting in which you have chosen to present this work. At this moment you may:

- Ask your pastor to offer brief comments or he/she may want to enter a time of invitation. If offering an invitation, you may want to consider using “Beneath the Cross of Jesus (Hymn of Decision)” from the Bonus Choral Selections and Congregational Settings included in the choral book, as this arrangement was created specifically for that purpose. It includes an extra verse of lyrics penned by Kristyn Getty for an invitational moment. If you do not wish to sing during the invitation, your musicians can play this selection or possibly “Speak, O Lord” as background music.
- Ask your pastor, a worship leader, one of the actors, or a congregant to read from selected passages of scripture, such as Colossians 2:6-15; selected verses from 1 Corinthians 15; or Acts 2:22-39, using these passages as a charge to your congregants to live in light of the risen Christ.
- Observe Communion with your congregation. For this option, you have several track versions on the Accompaniment DVD/CD, including one version on the DVD with full movie footage. The other track versions are available in audio form only.
- Close in prayer, leading into the choral benediction.
- Or you may go directly into the choral benediction, “The Risen Christ.”

## **16. The Risen Christ (*Benediction*)**

Cue accompaniment CD for “The Risen Christ” (*Benediction*) Create lyrics on screen for your congregation to join with you in singing if you so choose.

You could opt to sing this Benediction a cappella if your choir and/or congregation are already familiar with this song.

Light up for soloist on final tag. You may use the same soloist who sang this in the Invocation, or choose another soloist.

Optional: If you employed the observance of the Paschal candle lighting at the Invocation, you might now want to spread that light by having a candle-lighting ceremony while singing this benediction. Congregants or worship leaders or children may light candles from the Paschal candle, carrying them out to the congregants, who then light their candles from these. This is a beautiful way to reinforce the idea of the light and life of the risen Christ being spread through his church.

Dismiss! Cue the Pre-service slide to remain on screen as people exit.

### **Production Note: Behold The Lamb**

This is a strong song for use during any Communion service, but particularly during the Lenten season or Holy Week in a Communion setting. To bring this song to life with visuals:

A CD accompaniment track has been created and is included in this product. The matching choral arrangement is located on page 111, and the matching choral arrangement for the “Edited versions” is located on page 118. The movie footage from the Matthew film (International Bible Society) is only available on the Accompaniment DVD.

You can also stage a Biblical “Last Supper” setting, much the same as you would do for Scene 7 in Option 2 of the Full Production (see notes above.) This is an effective visual whether you use actors in it or not. Set a low table with the elements of a Passover meal – earthy bowls/platters of flat bread, wine, fruit, meat, olives, a common cup as would have been used at the time. Around the table, place pillows. Add the touch of a basin and cloth for foot washing. In my own church, we have used this set as a visual during a Maundy Thursday service, lighting it with small votive candles and washing the staged area with a very low, warm light. Although no actors ever enter it, it provides a meditation point and reminds us that this meal was a very real event. (You can also add actors who portray the disciples and Jesus, following the story as it is told by the song. They would have no dialog, but just enact the events we are singing about.)

## **Suggestions for using Bonus Materials; Additional suggestions for use of songs in “The Risen Christ”**

### **Bonus selections to use for your Easter presentation**

Several Bonus Selections have been provided in this project, knowing that you may need other musical components to complete your music needs for Easter. To that end, we have provided a few additional things:

1. A congregational setting for “Beneath the Cross of Jesus” which can be used as an Invitational or time of Commitment. Kristyn and Keith Getty have provided brand new lyrics to this song which will serve well as an invitational. This is the first publication of this new lyric. A choral arrangement and a separate congregational arrangement have been provided in this book. Please note that the congregational arrangement can be reprinted in a church bulletin provided your church has a CCLI license or written permission from the copyright owner. Dave Williamson has also provided an orchestral accompaniment which is available in the Orchestration (CD-ROM) product. (However, please note that this arrangement has not been recorded and is not available on the Accompaniment CD or DVD, simply because of the difficulty of providing one recording of the arrangement that would fit everyone’s needs.)
2. A new communion hymn, “Behold the Lamb,” written by Keith & Kristyn Getty and Stuart Townend. There are two separate arrangements of this new song – first a full arrangement of all four verses, including a modulation, and secondly, several remixes of this arrangement with no modulation that provides for using any combination of one to four verses. A detailed explanation of all of the options is provided immediately preceding these arrangements in the back of the book. Also, provided is a congregational arrangement of this song, which again can be reprinted in your bulletin with the appropriate permission(s). An accompaniment DVD has also been created, using footage from the Matthew film (International Bible Society.) See Production Notes for use of this song in the two Options for Presenting the Work above.
3. Congregational settings of several songs. Keith Getty and Stuart Townend have made their own mark in writing music for the church by composing what many have termed as the “modern hymn.” In fact, all of the songs included in THE RISEN CHRIST were originally written to be used as a modern hymn in their own churches. In order to accommodate the possibility of introducing some of these songs to your congregation, we have provided congregational arrangements to several songs – specifically “The Risen Christ,” “Speak, O Lord,” “Beneath the Cross of Jesus,” and “Behold the Lamb.” Either the track or accompaniment from this project can be played as accompaniment to those

congregational uses, or a separate piano accompaniment is provided in the case of “Speak, O Lord.”

### **Other ways to use this music**

Several of these songs can be used throughout the church year for different purposes than as they were intended in the musical. You might consider these other possibilities:

“The Risen Christ” – Invocation and/or Benediction

“Across the Lands” – Missions, Outreach or Discipleship service

“Hear the Call of the Kingdom” – Missions, Outreach or Discipleship service; Palm Sunday

“Speak, O Lord” – Preceding the Bible reading before the sermon, or possibly before and after the Gospel reading

“Beneath the Cross of Jesus” – Invitation or time of Commitment

“O Church, Arise” with “In Christ Alone” - Missions, Outreach or Discipleship service; Pentecost Sunday

“Behold the Lamb” – Communion service; Palm Sunday; Easter week service

### **Closing**

Maximizing the use of your music is very important to every church these days. We hope that these suggestions will provide you with resources that will enhance your times of worship and help lead your congregation to have a closer walk with the risen Christ.

Clear Call Music