PSALLITE

TBB, a cappella

MICHAEL PRAETORIUS

Arranged by RUSSELL ROBINSON

PERFORMANCE NOTES

Michael Praetorius was born in Germany in 1571. He is well known for his three-volume book on sacred and secular music practices, the Syntagma Musicum. It was published in 1619, two years before his death at the age of 50. For most of his life he was organist and court musician for the Duke of Brunswick. He became organist at the age of 24 and the chief court musician at the age of 33.

"Psallite" is extremely popular in the choral literature. It is a unique piece because it uses both Latin and German text within the same song. This arrangement can be sung any time of the year although it revolves around the Christmas theme. The words translate to mean:

Let us sing altogether to the Son of God.
He is born as our Saviour and Redeemer.
Come see the Christ Child in the manger.
The sweet little Babe, Christ the King.

The English translation is not written in the music because, as with most Latin and German pieces, it must be sung in the original language to have the same flavor as the original. However, the Latin and German pronunciations are quite easy and repeated within the song. Here are the phonetic pronunciations for the Latin and German:

LATIN
Saw-lee-toh oo-nee-geh-neef-toon, Krees-toh Deh-ee Fee-tell-oh
Roh-demp-toh-ri Dayooh-nee-noh poo-eh-roo-looh yaw-chen-teh
een oreh-shuh-pee-oh

GERMAN
Ahee-uhn Klabe-neh-ehs Kin-dehw-laheen leekt een dem Krip-puh laheen
Aw-luh Tuh-puh Ehn-guh-laheen dee-nenn dem Kin-dehw-laheen
Oont... Gruhn een faheen

Pronounce all “aheen” in German as one syllable. Also, in Latin “aw” is used to produce vertical vowels for the “ah” vowel. Also, try to achieve text accents to produce so that no two syllables have the same stress. When pronouncing the “ee” vowels, put an “oo” on the lips with an “ee” inside the mouth to produce a consistent choral sound without spreading the “ee” vowel.

Measures 9–16 should be performed as an echo of the first eight measures.

I hope you enjoy singing this arrangement of Michael Praetorius’s wonderful “choral classic.”
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Performance time: approx. 3:00

Allegro (j = 112)

MICHAEL PRAETORIUS (1571–1621)
Arranged by RUSSELL ROBINSON (ASCAP)

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Re-dempto-ri Do-mi-no, pu-e-rul o ja-cen-

in pra-e-se pi-o. Psal-te,

in pra-e-se pi-o. Psal-te,

in pra-e-se pi-o.

Psal-te,
Ein kleines Kindlein liegt in dem Kripplein;
Alle liebe Engelalerlein, Engelalerlein,
ich kenne Euch nicht, Engelalerlein,
ich kenne Euch nicht, Engelalerlein.
alle liebe Engel,
dienen dem Kindlein und singen ihm fein.

Psallite, unigenite.