

Never Before

Deanna Witkowski

In the traditional service of lessons and carols, each passage of scripture is followed by a musical response. This three-part women's *a cappella* piece was composed for just such a service at All Angels' Church (NYC) in 1998, as a response to the story in which an angel announces to Mary that she will bear the Christ child.

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Never Before

The angel said the Lord is with me:

The Lord is with me in a way he's never been before;
His Spirit is my lover, his son shall fill my womb
With holiness and joy
And with life that I can feel kicking at my insides.

The Lord will stay with me in a way he's never stayed before;
He will suckle at my breast and let me hold him in my arms.
He will run to me when he cuts his finger
Or wonders aloud at his Father's creation in a brightly colored butterfly.

Oh, who is this child Lord who comes from up above,
Whose eyes will look beyond my own to a destiny I do not know?
Oh, who is this God boy whose hands shall clasp mine
And whose tears I shall wipe away with trembling fingers of my own?

The Lord will leave me in a way he's never left before;
As a king whose time has come, as a son his mother loved,
As a boy whose laughter has filled my heart
And as a baby whose tears I have cried as if they were my own.

The angel said the Lord is with me.

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$\text{♩} = 63$

The an-gel said the Lord _____ is with me: _____ The
an-gel said the Lord _____ is with _____ me: _____
an-gel said the Lord _____ is with _____ me: _____

Piano
(rehearsal
only)

5 **A**
Lord is with_ me_ in a way he's nev-er been be- fore._ His
Lord is with_ me_ way nev-er been be fore._
Lord is with_ me_ way nev-er been be fore._

Pno.

11
Spir- it is_ my lov - er, his Son shall fill_ my womb with
Spir- it is_ my lov - er, Son shall fill_ my womb
Spir- it is_ my lov - er, Son shall fill_ my womb

Pno.

15

hol - i - ness_ and_ joy_ and with life_

hol - i - ness_ joy_

hol - i - ness_ joy_

Pno.

19

that I_ can feel_ kick-ing at_ my in - sides. The

and with life_ I feel kick-ing at_ my in - sides.

and with life_ I feel kick-ing at_ my in - sides.

Pno.

25 **B**

Lord will stay with me_ in a way he's nev-er stayed be- fore._

Lord will stay with me_ way nev-er stayed be fore._

Lord will stay with me_ way nev-er stayed be fore._

Pno.

31

He will suck-le at my breast and let me hold him in my arms. He will

He will suck-le at my breast hold him in my arms.

He will suck-le at my breast hold him in my arms.

Pno.

35

run to me when he cuts his fin - ger or won - ders a - loud

run to me cuts his fin - ger.

run to me cuts his fin - ger

Pno.

39

at his Fa - ther's cre - a - tion in a

won - ders loud cre - a - tion

won - ders loud cre - a - tion

Pno.

43

bright - ly col - ored but - ter - fly. Oh,
 bright - col - ored but - ter - fly.
 bright col - ored but - ter - fly.

Pno.

47 **C**

who_ is_ this child - Lord_ who comes from up_ a- bove, whose
 who_ is_ this child - Lord_ comes from up_ a- bove,
 who_ is_ this child - Lord_ comes from up_ a- bove,
 who_ is_ this child - Lord_ comes from up_ a- bove,

Pno.

51

eyes will look be yond_ my own to a des - ti - ny_ I do_ not know? O,
 eyes will look be yond_ my own to a des - ti - ny_ I do_ not know?
 eyes will look be yond_ my own to a des - ti - ny_ I do_ not know?
 eyes will look be yond_ my own to a des - ti - ny_ I do_ not know?

Pno.