

# Let the Stable Still Astonish

by David Himes

Text by Leslie Leyland Fields

for  
SATB Chorus  
and  
Piano

Commissioned by Dr. David McConnell  
and Vox Philia Chorus  
in Reading, Pennsylvania  
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**Let the Stable Still Astonish**  
by Leslie Leyland Fields

Let the stable still astonish:  
Straw-dirt floor, dull eyes,  
Dusty flanks of donkeys, oxen;  
Crumbling, crooked walls;  
No bed to carry that pain,  
And then, the child,  
Rag-wrapped, laid to cry  
In a trough.

Who would have chosen this?  
Who would have said: "Yes,  
Let the God of all the heavens and earth  
be born here, in this place."?

Who but the same God  
Who stands in the darker, fouler rooms of our hearts  
and says, "Yes, let the God  
of Heaven and Earth  
be born here---  
in this place."

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# Let the Stable Still Astonish

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**Allegro** (M.M. ♩ = c. 130)

The musical score is written in 3/4 time with a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). It begins with a piano introduction marked **ff** (fortissimo) and **Allegro** (M.M. ♩ = c. 130). The piano part features a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes in the right hand and chords in the left hand. A rehearsal mark 'A' is placed above the piano part at measure 7. The vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) enter at measure 7 with the lyrics: "Let the \_\_\_\_\_ still as - ton - ish: Straw-dirt". The Soprano and Tenor parts have a melodic line with a slur over the first four notes, while the Alto and Bass parts have a more rhythmic line. The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern, with a **ff** dynamic marking at measure 7. A second rehearsal mark 'A' is placed above the piano part at measure 7 of the second system. The score concludes with a final chord in the piano part.

Let the Stable Still Astonish

14

S floor, dull eyes, Dust - y

A floor, dull eyes, flanks of

T floor, dull eyes, Dust - y

B floor, dull eyes, flanks of

Pno.

14

S *rit.* **C** *Slower, more deliberate* ♩ = 90 *ff*

— don-keys, ox - en; — ox - en; Crumb-ling crook-ed

A *ff*

— don-keys, ox - en; — ox - en; Crumb-ling crook-ed

T *ff*

8 — don-keys, ox - en; — ox - en; Crumb-ling crook-ed

B *ff*

— don-keys, ox - en; — ox - en; **C** Crumb-ling crook-ed

Pno.

20 *rit.* *Slower, more deliberate* ♩ = 90

## Let the Stable Still Astonish

**D** Allegro (M.M. ♩ = c. 130)

26

S walls; \_\_\_\_\_ Crumb-ling crook-ed walls; *f* *rit.*

A walls; \_\_\_\_\_ Crumb - ling crook - ed walls; *f*

T walls; \_\_\_\_\_ Crumb-ling crook-ed walls; *f*

B walls; \_\_\_\_\_ Crumb - ling crook - ed walls; *f*

Pno. *f* *ff*

32

**E** *f*

S No bed \_\_\_\_\_ to car - ry that pain, And then, the

A No bed to car - ry that pain, And

T No bed \_\_\_\_\_ to car - ry that pain, And then, the

B No bed to car - ry that pain, And

Pno. *ff*

32

**E**