Composed and Performed by
Ms. Baker and Ms. McCarthy’s 4th Grade Class

Neighborhood House Charter School
Birmingham, 1963

The Little Rock Nine

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BIRMINGHAM, 1963
A Cantata written by Ms McCarthy’s Fourth Grade
Ms Baken’s Music class
Neighborhood House Charter School, 2009-2010
Joshua Taylor, Lead Teaching Artist

CHORALE: This Little Light of Mine
In Memory of Addie Mae Collins
In Memory of Cynthia Wesley
In Memory of Denise McNair
In Memory of Carole Robertson
CHORALE: This Little Light of Mine

THE LITTLE ROCK NINE

A Cantata written by Ms Baker’s Fourth Grade
Ms Baken’s Music class
Neighborhood House Charter School, 2009-2010
Joshua Taylor, Lead Teaching Artist

CHORALE: Stand Tall
Make a Space
Warriors
New Year’s Resolutions
Let Him Be Safe
CHORALE: Stand Tall
Background
The struggle for civil rights for black Americans had many participants and many heroes—black and white, young and old. Among them are the brave and strong children and young people who played very important roles. In Birmingham, Alabama, many children who joined in the marches to bring about an end to segregation, were arrested and spent time in jail. In Selma, Alabama, children joined in the march to the capital, Montgomery, to demand the right to vote for their parents, and along the way they faced state troopers with guns and bayonets. In Little Rock, Arkansas, nine young people were the first black Americans to attend Central High School, following the court’s decision that schools must be integrated. They endured a year of insults and bitter hatred from white teachers and students who would not accept the decision and tried in every way possible to keep them out.

To prepare for these important roles, young people learned the principles of non-violence. Dr. Martin Luther King taught them to stand up for their rights, to fight for the cause of integration by demonstrating their quiet strength, the determined courage of their families, and their absolute belief that what they were asking for was just and good and fair. Dr. King taught them that if they used violence or responded to the insults and the hate with more hatred, they would be punished so badly by the angry people in power that the cause would be lost. He was right. The cause for civil rights, created and sustained by non-violence finally achieved its goal. But it was a terrible and painful struggle, and we will never forget the young people who endured so much without striking back.

PART I: BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA,
SEPTEMBER 15, 1963
SIXTEENTH ST. BAPTIST CHURCH

Chorale: This Little Light of Mine

“This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine”
suddenly a boom shakes the church
smashes the walls, the windows.
I cry for my friends who are killed.
“Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.”

In memory of Addie Mae Collins

Who was the seventh of eight children and the
peacemaker of the family
Who sang in the church choir
Who could pitch underhand and draw portraits
Addie Mae who played hopscotch and loved bright colors.

In memory of Cynthia Wesley

Whose father guarded their neighborhood because of
the bombings.
A delicate, carefree girl who sang soul music
Cynthia, who loved her friends and was always laughing.

In memory of Denise McNair

Who had been a Brownie and held tea parties.
Who raised money to fight muscular dystrophy.
Necie once put a mud pie in a mailbox!
She would have been a real go-getter!

In memory of Carole Robertson

Who loved history and science and books
Who made straight A’s and played the clarinet in the school band.
Carole was a Girl Scout and always knew what was important.

Chorale

“This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine”
We cry for our friends who were killed.
“Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.”
PART II:  LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS, SEPTEMBER, 1957
FEDERAL COURT HOUSE

Chorale: Stand Tall
The Federal judge ordered the integration of Central High School to proceed against the objection of Governor Faubus. For the first time we students were introduced as the Little Rock Nine.

Smile kids. Straighten your shoulders. Stand tall.

Make a Space
Melba Pattillo, age 16, chose, with the support her family, to be one of the nine teen-agers to integrate Central High School, following the Supreme Court ruling in 1954, Brown v. Board of Education.

There seems to be no space for me at Central High.
Please God, make a space for me.

President Eisenhower speaks:

I will use the full power of the United States, including whatever force may be necessary to prevent any obstruction of the law and to carry out the orders of the Federal court.

Warriors

Now I have a body guard.
I know that the president didn’t send those soldiers just to protect me.
Still I feel specially cared about.

New Years Resolutions

One—to do my best to stay alive until May 29
Two— to pray daily for the strength not to fight back
Three—to maintain the best attitude I can at school

Let Him Be Safe

On May 27, 1958 Ernie received his diploma. He became the first of our people to graduate from Central High school in all its 49 years.

Dear God, please walk with Ernie
In the graduation line at Central.
Let him be safe

Chorale

Smile kids. Straighten your shoulders. Stand tall.
Chorale: Let It Shine

Birmingham, 1963

Music by Ms McCarthy's 4th Grade
Ms Baken's Music Class
Neighborhood House Charter School, Dorchester, MA
with Joshua Taylor, Cantata Singers Teaching Artist

Swing the eighths

Piano and Voices

This little light of mine,
I'm gonna let it shine.

This little light of mine,
I'm gonna let it shine.

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Chorale: Let It Shine

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine Let it shine

Even 8ths

Let it shine, Let it shine. Suddenly a

boom shakes the church. Smash es the walls, the windows.
I cry for my friends who are killed.
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.
In Memory of Addie Mae Collins

Birmingham, 1963

Music by Kenny Demosthene, Gavin Doherty, Justin Green, Jashara Henderson and Kion Tucker
Ms Baken’s Music Class, Ms McCarthy’s 4th Grade
Neighborhood House Charter School, Dorchester, MA
with Kynesha Patterson-Shaw, Cantata Singers Teaching Artist

Slowly, sadly

Who was the seventh of 8 children and the peacemaker—

of the family who sang in the church choir who could pitch under

hand and draw portraits Ad-die Mae, Ad-die Mae, Ad-die

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In Memory of Addie Mae Collins

Mae who played hop-scotch and loved bright colors.
In Memory of Cynthia Wesley

*Birmingham, 1963*

Music by Jeniel Foster, Jy-Shoun McNeil, Kareema Tyler and Azana Williams
Ms Baken's Music Class, Ms McCarthy's 4th Grade
Neighborhood House Charter School, Dorchester, MA
with Joshua Taylor, Cantata Singers Teaching Artist

Piano and Voices

Not fast

Whose father guarded the neighborhood, because of the bombings.

A delicate, care-free girl, who sang soul music.

Cynthia who loved her friends. (Friends, friends, friends, friends.)

And was always la-a-a-a-aughing. (La-a-a-a-aughing.)

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In Memory of Denise McNair

Birmingham, 1963

Music by Felisha Cabral, Jalen Ellis, Edwin Jones, Kairo Quest and Elisabeth Quinn
Ms Baken's Music Class, Ms McCarthy's 4th Grade Neighborhood House Charter School, Dorchester, MA with Kumi Donaghue, Cantata Singers Teaching Artist

who had been a Brown- ie

and held tea par- ties. who raised mon- ey to fight

Mus- cu- lar Dys- tro- phy. Nie- cie once put a

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mud-pie in a mailbox.

She would have been a real go-getter! a real go-getter! a real go-getter!

(1: Jalen) (2: Kairo)

(3: Felisha) (4: Felisha & Edwin)

Drums
In Memory of Carole Robertson

Birmingham, 1963

Music by Jessica Buchan, Emma Cataloni, Celena Eccleston, and Michelle Mantilla and Michael Otero
Ms Baken's Music Class, Ms. Baker's 4th Grade
Neighborhood House Charter School, Dorchester, MA
with Susan Navien, Cantata Singers Teaching Artist

Spoken: "In memory of Carole Robertson..."
Who loved his to-ry and science, and books. Who

made straight As and played the clar-i-net in the school

band. Car-ole was a Girl Scout and al-ways

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knew what was important.
Chorale: Let It Shine
Birmingham, 1963

Music by Ms McCarthy's 4th Grade
Ms Baken's Music Class
Neighborhood House Charter School, Dorchester, MA
with Joshua Taylor, Cantata Singers Teaching Artist

Swing the eighths

Piano

and

Voices

This little light of mine,
I'm gonna let it shine.

This little light of mine,
I'm gonna let it shine.

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Chorale: Let It Shine

This little light of mine,
I'm gonna let it shine

Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Even 8ths

Suddenly a boom shakes the church.
Chorale: Let It Shine

Smashes the walls, the windows. I cry for my friends who are killed

Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.
Chorale: *Stand Tall*
*The Little Rock Nine*

Music by Ms Baker's 4th Grade
Ms Baker's Music Class
Neighborhood House Charter School, Dorchester, MA
with Joshua Taylor, Cantata Singers Teaching Artist

Firmly \( \frac{3}{4} \) = 96

Piano and Voices

Smile kids.

Straighten your shoulders.

Straighten your shoulders; Stand tall; Stand tall!
Make a Space
The Little Rock Nine

Music by Jahyi Aubrey, Ellen Feeney,
Prestley Getant and Brittney Smith
Ms Baken's Music Class, Ms Baker's 4th Grade
Neighborhood House Charter School, Dorchester, MA
with Joshua Taylor, Cantata Singers Teaching Artist

Piano and Voices

There seems to be no place for me at

Central High.

Please God make a space for me.

I will use the full power of the United

Dr

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States. Including whatever force may be necessary for the purpose of preventing any obstruction of the law, and to carry out the orders of the Federal Court.
Warriors
The Little Rock Nine

Music by Amarj Alexandre, Makaylah Burgos-Edwards, Catherine Mulvey, Tashelle Somers and Nathaniel Williams
Ms Baken's Music Class, Ms Baker's 4th Grade
Neighborhood House Charter School, Dorchester, MA
with Susan Navien, Cantata Singers Teaching Artist

Now I have a body guard.

I know that the President didn't send these soldiers just to protect

me. Still, I feel specially cared about.

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New Year's Resolutions

The Little Rock Nine

Music by Carlos Blanco, Colin Craddock, Tatiana Joseph, Jeremias Lima and Kate McKinnon
Ms Baker's Music Class, Ms Baker's 4th Grade
Neighborhood House Charter School, Dorchester, MA
with Kynesha Patterson-Shaw, Cantata Singers

Girls: One!

Boys: One!

All: To do my best to

Piano

stay a live until May Twenty-nine

Girls:

14 Two!

All: To pray daily for the strength not to fight

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New Year's Resolutions

22

All: [clapping]

back.

Three! Three! Three!

27

To maintain the best attitude

I

32

[clapping]

can at school!
Let Him Be Safe
The Little Rock Nine

Music by Da'Anna Berment, Devin Hale, Breyanna Harewood, and Jose Sanchez
Ms Baken's Music Class, Ms Baker's 4th Grade
Neighborhood House Charter School, Dorchester, MA
with Kumi Donaghue, Cantata Singers Teaching Artist

Dear

God, please walk with Ernie in the graduation line at Central. Let him be safe. Let

© 2010 Cantata Singers
Spoken: On May 27, 1958, Ernie received his diploma.

He became the first of our people to graduate from Central High School in all its 49 years.

Let him be safe.
Chorale: *Stand Tall*
*The Little Rock Nine*

Firmly $\frac{4}{4} = 96$

Music by Ms Baker's 4th Grade
Ms Baker's Music Class
Neighborhood House Charter School, Dorchester, MA
with Joshua Taylor, Cantata Singers Teaching Artist

Piano and Voices

Smile ___ kids.

Smile ___ kids. Straighten ___ your shoulders.

Straighten ___ your shoulders. Stand ___ tall; Stand ___ tall!