

# SWEDISH ST. LUCIA DAY CELEBRATIONS

A singing procession with candles, costumes and saffron buns.  
Bringing light to the darkest time of the year.



Saturday 13th December 2025

St. Michaels & All Angels' Church Mount Dinham  
Exeter EX4 4EB

# ABOUT THE ST LUCIA CELEBRATIONS

SAINT LUCIA, THE ITALIAN SAINT OF LIGHT AND EYES, IS CELEBRATED IN SWEDEN ON THE 13TH DECEMBER EVERY YEAR.

SWEDEN IS A HIGHLY SECULARISED COUNTRY WITH A LARGELY NON-PRACTISING LUTHERAN POPULATION AND NO OTHER CATHOLIC SAINT IS COMMEMORATED IN A SIMILAR MANNER.

HOWEVER, SWEDEN IS A VERY DARK, COLD PLACE IN DECEMBER AND A FESTIVAL OF CANDLES, SONGS AND GOODIES AT THIS TIME IS A PRECIOUS TREAT.

THE CELEBRATION IS SO DEAR TO SWEDES THAT THEY HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO EXPORT THE FESTIVAL WHEN THEY EMIGRATE!

CELEBRATING ITS 21ST ANNIVERSARY IN EXETER, THE SWEDISH SAINT LUCIA PROCESSION HAS BEEN AN ANNUAL EVENT SINCE 2004 WHEN IT WAS STARTED BY ROSA REBECKA.

SINCE THEN, VARIOUS BRITONS, SWEDES AND FELLOW IMMIGRANTS HAVE TAKEN PART THROUGHOUT THE YEARS.

THIS YEAR'S SINGERS ARE A GLORIOUS MIX OF OLD HANDS AND NEW JOINERS.



# In support of Refugee Support Devon

*This year's performance is dedicated to Refugee Support Devon.*

Donating money will support the Lucia procession, cover expenses, pay the musical director, and also raise money for our chosen charity.

Refugee Support Devon want to help refugees and their families in Devon, support them in everyday life, make sure their voices are heard, teach others about their situation, and offer chances to learn new skills through volunteering.

More information about the charity please visit  
<https://refugeesupportdevon.org.uk/>



If you can, please use this QR code to help us support them.  
Thank you very much!

## THE LUCIA CAROL

### PROCESSION ENTERS

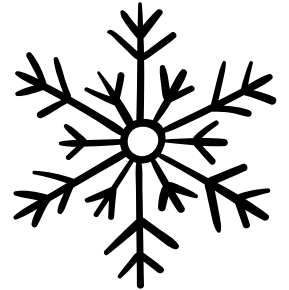
SUNG TO THE TUNE OF AN ITALIAN FOLK SONG, THIS MELODY IS PERFORMED AS THE PROCESSION ENTERS AND LEAVES.

THE WORDS SPEAK OF THE WIDESPREAD DARKNESS, AND THE RELIEF OF LIGHT THAT LUCIA BRINGS.



**SÅ MÖRK ÄR NATTEN**

*SO DARK IS THE NIGHT*



CONTRASTS THE DARKNESS OF MIDWINTER WITH LUCIA, THE BRINGER OF LIGHT.



**GOD MORGON MITT HERRSKAP**

*GOOD MORNING MY LORDSHIP*

THIS IS A SONG IN THE TRADITION OF LUCIA WAKING THE FAMILY UP IN THE MORNING, STATING THAT LUCIA WISHES THE LORD AND LADY OF THE HOUSE A JOYFUL CHRISTMAS.

THE PERSON REPRESENTING LUCIA WOULD BRING A BREAKFAST OF SAFFRON BUNS, GINGER THINS AND COFFEE.



**HIMLEN I MIN FAMN**

*HEAVEN IN MY ARMS*

BY ERIK HILLESTAD, CAROLA HÄGGKVIST

SOLOISTS: CARIN LINDBERG AND KATERINA WESTMAN

THIS BEAUTIFUL SONG IS SUNG FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF MARY CRADLING JESUS. THE REPEATED FINAL LINE, "IS IT HEAVEN ITSELF THAT I'M ROCKING IN MY ARMS?" WILL RING TRUE TO ANY PARENTS WHO HAVE FELT A SENSE OF VERTIGO WHEN LOOKING INTO THEIR BABY'S EYES.





## JUL, JUL, STRÅLANDE JUL

*CHRISTMAS, CHRISTMAS, RADIANT CHRISTMAS.*

THIS BEAUTIFUL SONG DECLARES A LOVE FOR THE HOLIDAY, AND DESCRIBES THE SNOWY FORESTS, THE PEOPLE WITH THEIR CHRISTMAS LIGHTS AND THE LONGING FOR PEACE THROUGH DIFFICULT TIMES.



## STAFFAN STALLEDRÄNG

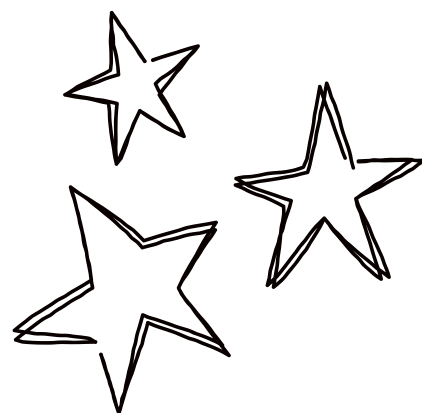
NO LUCIA SET IS COMPLETE WITHOUT A SONG OF STAFFAN; THE STABLE HAND. HIS PLACE IN THE CELEBRATION IS SHROUDED IN MYSTERY.

HE MAY BE BASED ON ANOTHER SAINT BUT THE LYRICS SIMPLY TELL OF A SIMPLE STABLE HAND RIDING A GREY HORSE UNDER THE STARRY WINTER SKY.

THE MELODY HAS MANY LOCAL VARIATIONS.



## VINTERHAMN



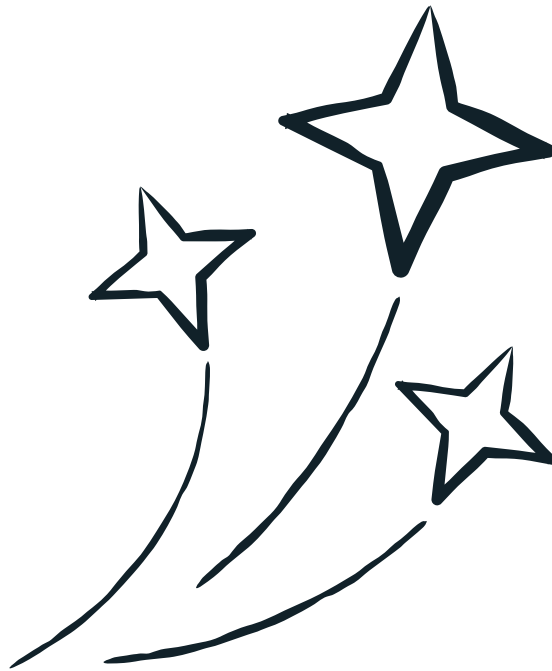
BY BENNY ANDERSSON AND BJÖRN ULVAEUS

SOLOIST: CARIN LINDBERG

VINTERHAMN WAS WRITTEN BY BENNY AND BJÖRN OF ABBA FAME. IT'S A SPIRITUAL WINTER SONG, REFERRING TO VINTERHAMN, THE WINTER HARBOUR. WHETHER IT'S PHYSICAL OR ON A MORE SPIRITUAL LEVEL, THE WINTER HARBOUR GIVES STRENGTH AND PROTECTION, AND PEACE OF MIND IN YULE TIDE.

THE SONG DESCRIBES THE STRENGTH, CALM AND COMFORT THAT CAN BE DRAWN FROM YULE TIDE WITH ALL ITS CONNOTATIONS; FRESH FALLING SNOW, GLIMMERING CANDLE LIGHT, COMFORTING PSALMS AND OF COURSE THE ARRIVAL OF CHRIST.





### **STJÄRNGOSSARNAS VISA**

*THE SONG OF THE STAR BOYS*

THE MEN IN THE PROCESSION, WITH THEIR POINTED HATS AND GOLDEN STARS, ARE KNOWN AS STAR BOYS. THIS SONG SPEAKS OF HOW THEY HONOUR LUCIA WITH MUSIC.



### **GLÄNS ÖVER SJÖ OCH STRAND**

*SHINE OVER LAKE AND SHORE*

DESCRIBES THE FAMOUS SCENE OF THE SHEPHERD DISCOVERING THE STAR, THE HOST OF SINGING ANGELS. A VERY COMMON SONG IN LUCIA CELEBRATIONS.



### **FÖR REDELIGA MÄN**

*FOR HONEST MEN*

A SONG ABOUT STRONG, DECENT MEN AND WOMEN IN A FAMILY GETTING UP EARLY IN DARK AND COLD MIDWINTER. COFFEE GETS THEM GOING.





## **GOD REST YE MERRY GENTLEMEN**

*TRAD ENGLISH*

SOLOIST: TOBY RYAN

THIS BEAUTIFUL ENGLISH CHRISTMAS CAROL, WITH ITS WARM MINOR MELODY,  
DATES BACK TO THE 1600S.



## **HERDARNA SJUNGER FÖR BARNET JESUS**

BY ALICE TEGNÉR

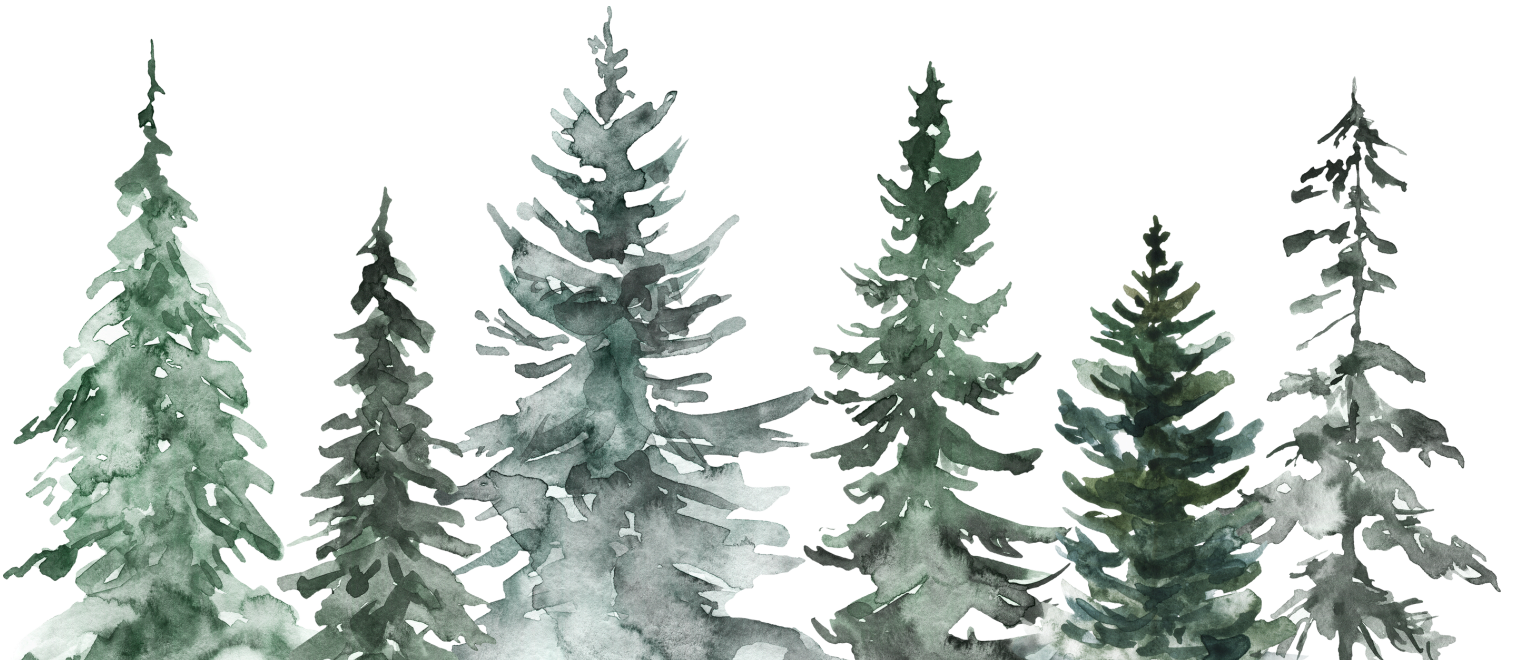
IN THIS SONG, THE SHEPHERDS VISIT THE BABY JESUS. THEY HAVE NO RICHES TO  
GIVE THE CHILD, SO THEY OFFER HIM THE FINEST GIFT THEY CAN: THEY MAKE  
MUSIC FOR HIM.

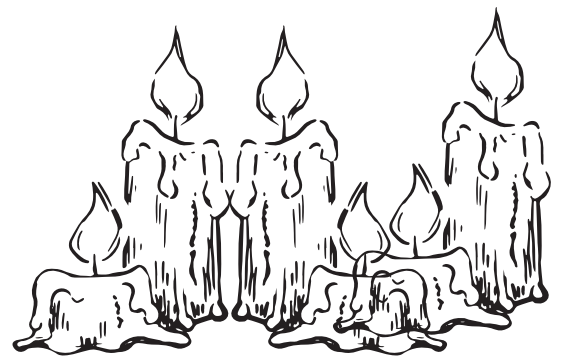
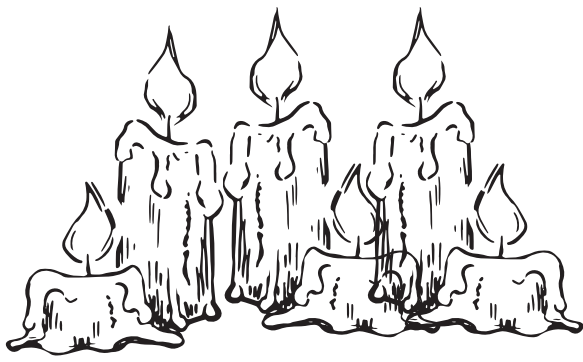


## **ADVENT**

*ADVENTSTID*

A LONELY PERSON LIGHTS A CANDLE IN THEIR EMPTY HOUSE AND WAITS FOR THE  
GIFT OF ADVENT WHICH IS GREATER THAN ANY WORLDLY GIFT.





## **TÄND LJUS**

*LIGHT CANDLES*

POEM BY BO SETTERLIND

READER: ANNIKA SKOOGH

"DO NOT LET THE DARKNESS STOP YOU FROM SEEKING THE LIGHT", THIS POEM IMPORES. IT URGES US TO LIGHT UP THE DARKNESS OF DESPAIR AND DEATH WITH THE LIGHT OF HOPE AND LOVE.



## **LUCIAS BUD / DET ÄR VI**

BY ROSA REBECKA

SOLOIST: ROSA REBECKA

PREMIERE OF THIS ESPECIALLY COMPOSED SONG. IT SPEAKS OF NOT GIVING UP IN DARK TIMES, AND HOW WE OURSELVES ARE THE ONES WHO BRING THE LIGHT: "IF WE AWAKEN HOPE, THEN THERE IS HOPE".

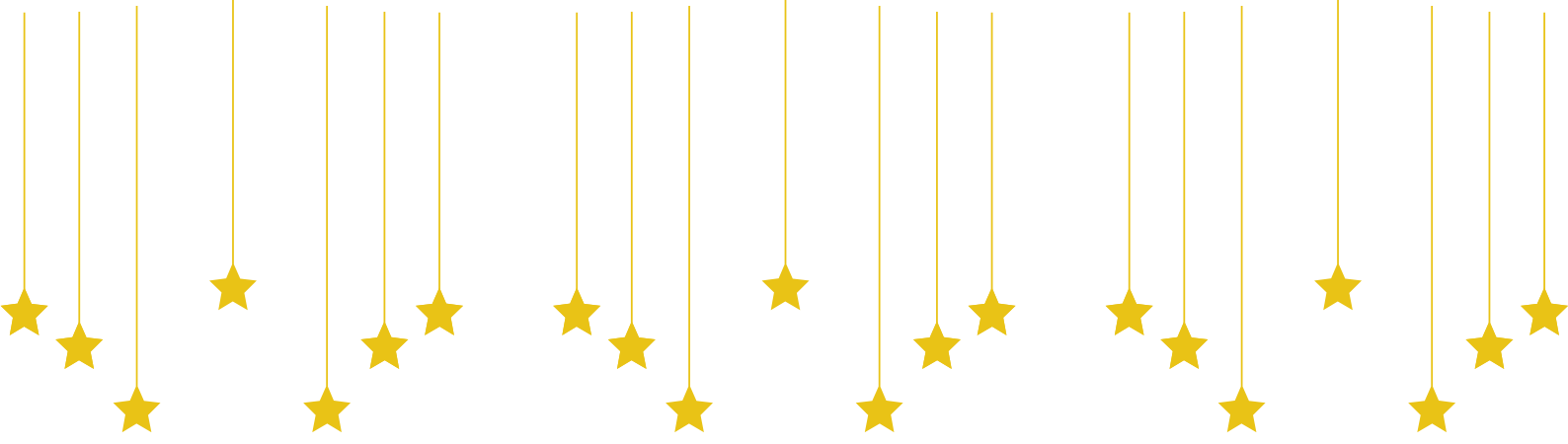


## **NÄR DET LIDER MOT JUL**

*WHEN CHRISTMAS TIME DRAWS NEAR*

A SONG LISTING THE MANY JOYS OF THE HOLIDAY - ONE OF OUR FAVOURITES.





## **VI HÄLSA DIG LUCIA**

*WE GREET YOU, LUCIA*

BY STEPHEN LYONS

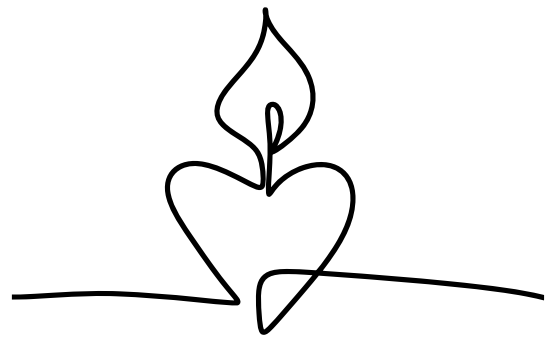
THIS SONG WAS COMPOSED ESPECIALLY FOR THE EXETER LUCIA CELEBRATION, AND WAS FIRST PERFORMED IN THE GROUP'S ONLINE PERFORMANCES DURING LOCKDOWN. THE LYRICS SPEAK OF THE LIGHT AND MUSIC THAT LUCIA BRINGS AMID THE DARKNESS AND SILENCE OF WINTER.



## **LUCIA KOMMER MED LJUS**

BY ROSA REBECKA

THE SECOND WORLD PREMIERE OF THE NIGHT. THIS BRAND NEW LUCIA SONG CELEBRATES THE LIGHT AND HOPE THAT LUCIA BRINGS, ECHOED IN THE CHORUS WITH THE WORDS "LUCIA COMES WITH THE LIGHT – WE COME WITH THE LIGHT"



## NU TÄNDAS TUSEN JULELJUS

*A THOUSAND CHRISTMAS CANDLES ARE NOW BEING LIT*

SOLOIST: RONIA LYONS

A CHRISTMAS SONG ABOUT THE WINTER NIGHT, THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM AND THE MESSAGE OF CHRISTMAS.



## OLD JACKY FROST

BY BARRIE TEMPLE

SOLOISTS: SARAH DINGLEY-BROWN AND JULIE MATTHEWS

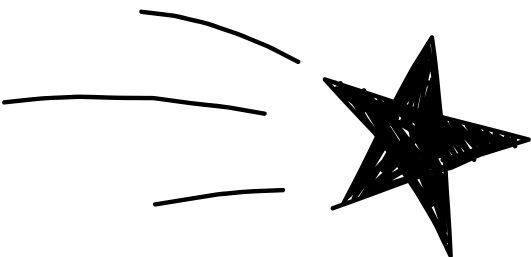
THIS SONG TALKS ABOUT THE CHALLENGES OF WINTER AS DELIVERED BY “OLD JACKY FROST”. ON THE UPSIDE IT ALSO TALKS OF THE BEAUTY THAT THIS SEASON BRINGS AND THE UNDENIABLE FACT THAT WITHOUT WINTER WE MIGHT NOT FULLY APPRECIATE THE WARMTH AND PLEASURE OF SUMMER. REST ASSURED THAT SPRING WILL SOON BE WITH US ALL. NOTHING LASTS FOREVER. MEANWHILE KEEP WARM: AND, “DON’T LET HIM IN, NO WAY SIR”.



## LUSSE LELLE

*LITTLE LUCIA*

THIS ROUND SIMPLY STATES THAT LUCIA IS HERE AND CHRISTMAS IS NEAR.





STILLA NATT

*SILENT NIGHT*

SOLOIST: HELGA GUNNARSDOTTIR

YOU WILL PROBABLY ALL KNOW THIS TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS SONG.



THE LUCIA CAROL ENCORE

PROCESSION LEAVES



God Jul / Merry Christmas

from our choir

ExeSwedes & Friends.

# LUCIA BUNS RECIPE (25 BUNS)

LUCIA BUNS ARE, AS THE NAME SUGGESTS, TRADITIONALLY EATEN AT LUCIA CELEBRATIONS ON 13 DECEMBER. THESE FRAGRANT SAFFRON BUNS ARE DELICIOUS WITH A COFFEE, HOT CHOCOLATE OR GLÖGG, SWEDISH MULLED WINE.



## PREPARATION

### INGREDIENTS:

1 G SAFFRON THREADS  
50 G YEAST  
200 G SUGAR  
300 ML MILK  
1 EGG  
150-200 G BUTTER  
1 TSP SALT  
750 G FLOUR  
100 G RAISINS

### GLAZE:

1 EGG  
2 TBS WATER

TO MAKE LUCIA BUNS, OR 'LUCIA CATS' (LUSSEKATTER), AS THEY'RE OFTEN CALLED, GRIND THE SAFFRON ALONG WITH A CUBE OF SUGAR, USING A MORTAR AND PESTLE. (FOR THOSE WHO THINK AHEAD: DRIP A LITTLE COGNAC ON TOP, AND LET STAND A FEW DAYS.)

CRUMBLE THE YEAST IN A BOWL AND STIR IN A FEW TABLESPOONS OF MILK.  
MELT THE BUTTER AND POUR ON THE MILK.

ADD THE REST OF THE INGREDIENTS, EXCEPT THE RAISINS, AND KNEAD THE DOUGH IN A DOUGH MIXER FOR 10 MINUTES. CAREFULLY MIX IN MOST OF THE RAISINS,

COVER THE DOUGH AND LET IT RISE FOR 30 MINUTES AT ROOM TEMPERATURE.

DIVIDE THE DOUGH INTO 25 PIECES AND ROLL THE BUNS IN AN OBLONG SHAPE, ABOUT 10 CM (4 IN) LONG. COVER THEM AND LET REST FOR 10 MINUTES, THEN ROLL THEM TWICE AS LONG AND TWIST THE ENDS OF EACH BUN IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS TO FORM A SORT OF FIGURE 8. PUT ONE RAISIN IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH HALF FIGURE 8.

PLACE ON A GREASED BAKING SHEET AND LET RISE UNDER A TOWEL FOR ABOUT 90 MINUTES, OR UNTIL THE BUNS HAVE DOUBLED IN SIZE. BAKE IN THE OVEN (220°C/GAS MARK 7) FOR 5 MINUTES. BEAT TOGETHER THE EGG AND WATER, BRUSH THE MIXTURE ON THE BUNS. ALLOW TO COOL ON THE BAKING SHEET.