

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hilversum, 4 October 2026

THE ROAD TO BETHLEHEM BRINGS THE CHRISTMAS STORY CLOSER TO THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE

A sacred-symphonic musical narrative about faith, doubt, trust and human courage

On 4 October 2026, the feast day of Saint Francis of Assisi, the **Prelude** to *The Road to Bethlehem - A Musical Journey of Trust, Courage, and Humanity* is released.

In 2026, the world marks 800 years since the death of Francis. In Greccio, he brought the Christmas story close to people through a living Nativity scene, allowing them to experience the simplicity, vulnerability and human closeness of the birth.

Sinclair Simons recognises the heart of his own project in that same desire. *The Road to Bethlehem* also seeks to bring the familiar story closer to people: not by changing it, but by spending more time with the people who had to live through it.

A PROJECT BORN FROM LOVE

The Road to Bethlehem was not created on commission. It grew from Simons' love of classical music, Christmas music and stories that move people.

He admires the great musical works through which the Christmas story has been told over the centuries, but at times felt that the personal emotional world behind the familiar events remained less visible.

What might Mary and Joseph have thought when the life they knew suddenly changed? How might they have found calm again after fear or tension? And how could they hold on to trust without knowing what the next day would bring?

From these questions came **51 original musical creations**, spread across three albums and introduced by a Prelude of twelve musical chapters.

"What I found so beautiful was taking time with each part of the story and asking what a deeply human response might have been in that moment. What might someone feel, think or do when something like this happens? From that perspective I approached Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, the townspeople and the Wise Men - with feelings and questions that people today can still recognise."

- Sinclair Simons

THE PRELUDE AS A FIRST ENCOUNTER

The Prelude offers a first encounter with the musical and emotional world of the complete work.

Across twelve musical chapters, listeners can already hear how the Christmas story is approached: through faith, doubt, trust, human vulnerability and courage.

The Prelude is therefore not a separate opening programme, but a first window into the larger sacred-symphonic musical narrative that continues to unfold across three albums.

Churches, choirs, faith communities, church media and other organisations can use this first release to experience whether this approach connects with their audience, community or programming.

TRUST WITHOUT CONSTANT CERTAINTY

In *The Road to Bethlehem*, the human and the heavenly are deliberately placed side by side.

Faith does not mean that Mary and Joseph are never afraid, tired or overwhelmed. At times they find calm with one another again, only for a new instruction, journey or threat to place their lives under pressure soon afterwards.

Trust is not presented as constant certainty, but as the courage to take the next step after doubt.

The story therefore does not begin only with the angel. In *Maybe in Our Time* and *Mary of Nazareth*, the listener first meets Mary within her own life.

Joseph, too, is given space for grief, his dream, his return and the peace that follows between them. Other chapters bring the story back into motion: the census, the road to Bethlehem, the journey of the Wise Men and the flight into Egypt.

The added scenes are not presented as new biblical facts, but as musical reflections on possible feelings and responses of the people within the story.

THREE ALBUMS, ONE JOURNEY

1/3 - The Promise

The Promise follows Mary's questions and prayer, Joseph's grief and dream, and their return to one another. The promise brings hope, but also asks for courage, love and trust. The Roman decree and the census then set them on the road to Bethlehem.

2/3 - The King Is Born

The King Is Born follows the closed doors and the search for a safe place.

When Joseph reaches the stable, his response is small and decisive: **"This is it."** His certainty brings Mary calm.

After the birth, she holds her child for the first time. In *Aria of Mary - So This Is Your Face*, she sees his face. Only then does heaven awaken in *The Heavens Awake*, confirming who the child is.

The story then turns to the shepherds, and the birth of Jesus begins to be made known beyond the stable.

3/3 - Fulfilment

Fulfilment follows the star, the Wise Men, Herod's fear, and the gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

After their visit, the road begins again. The flight into Egypt makes clear that danger and uncertainty do not disappear immediately, even after a sacred moment.

THIS WAS NEVER ONLY ABOUT BETHLEHEM

The thematic conclusion is found in *This Was Never Only About Bethlehem*.

The song carries the light of Bethlehem into the present day and invites listeners to let the story inspire them to look towards others with greater attention, courage and compassion.

RELEASE DATES

Prelude: 4 October 2026

1/3 - The Promise: 23 October 2026

2/3 - The King Is Born: 30 October 2026

3/3 - Fulfilment: 6 November 2026

The Prelude is available from 4 October on the major streaming platforms and YouTube. At the bottom of this press room, the Prelude can be listened to directly via **Spotify, Apple Music and YouTube**; the **trailer** is also available there.

Church media, parishes, congregations, choirs and faith communities are warmly invited to bring *The Road to Bethlehem* to the attention of their own audiences through publications, newsletters, websites and social media channels.

PRESS CONTACT

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