

The South Church Chancel Choir

New Britain, Connecticut

Richard Coffey, Minister of Music

presents

A CONCERT OF SACRED MUSIC

In celebration of the 250th Anniversary of
the Founding of the Harbor Church, Block Island



Harbor Church, by Claire Marschak Used with kind permission of the artist

Saturday, August 8, 2015 • 4:00 p.m.

The Empire Theater • Block Island, Rhode Island

Welcome and Greetings

Thank you for joining the Chancel Choir of South Church, New Britain,
at this musical celebration of the 250th Anniversary of the founding of Harbor Church.

WELCOME FROM HARBOR CHURCH

The Reverend Stephen Hollaway, Pastor
Martha Ball, Executive Board Chair and Church Historian
The Reverend Dr. Anthony Pappas, Pastor 1976-1995

GREETINGS FROM THE TOWN OF NEW SHOREHAM

Ken LaCoste, First Warden

GREETINGS FROM THE AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES OF RHODE ISLAND

The Reverend Dr. Tom Wiles, Executive Minister

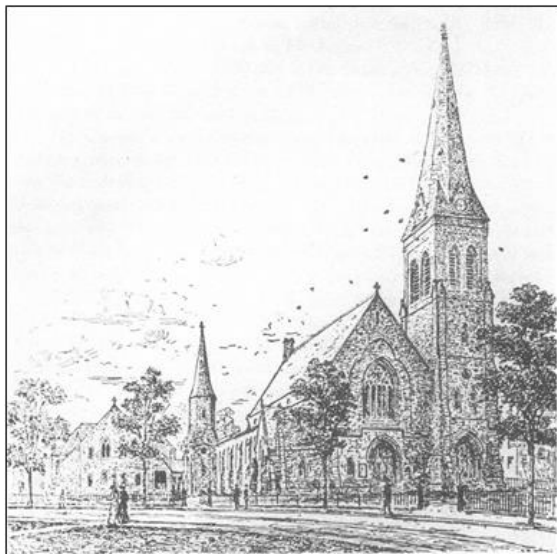
GREETINGS FROM THE RHODE ISLAND STATE COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

The Reverend Marie Carpenter, Vice President

A WORD FROM A POET

Lisa Starr, Rhode Island Poet Laureate 2007-2012

The members and friends of the Chancel Choir
and the people of South Church, New Britain, Connecticut
extend warm greetings to Harbor Church on its 250th Anniversary
and further express warmest appreciation to the people of Harbor Church
and to the people of the Block Island community
for their warm welcome and gracious hospitality.



South Church, New Britain, Connecticut (1868)

The concert will be performed
without intermission.

Kindly silence phones, watch alarms,
and pagers, and refrain from using any glowing or
buzzing devices during the performance.

Please refrain from flash photography.

**You are invited to sing with the Choir in
designated verses and refrains for
“When the Roll is Called up Yonder”
and “Amazing Grace”
as shown on page 6 of this program book.
Raise your voices with joy and enthusiasm!**

THE SOUTH CHURCH CHANCEL CHOIR

New Britain, Connecticut

Richard Coffey, Minister of Music

presents

A CONCERT OF SACRED MUSIC

In Celebration of the 250th Anniversary of Harbor Church

Conducted by Richard Coffey

Jean Esselink, Robert Lussier, and Colin Britt, piano

Catherine Peters, flute

PROGRAM

SONGS OF PRAISE AND PRAYER

Praise the Lord Who Reigns Above

Words by Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

Musical Setting (2000) by Michael Larkin (b. 1951)

Author of nearly 6,500 hymns (that is, religious poems), Charles Wesley was the younger brother of Methodist founder John Wesley, and, with him and others of his family, an early leader in that faith tradition. More than two centuries after their writing, Wesley's hymns are still fresh and compelling, as evidenced by their continual inclusion in hymnals of nearly every Christian denomination and sect. American composer Michael Larkin's setting of this paraphrase of Psalm 150 captures the confidence of Wesley's faith, as well as his joyful embrace of music as a means of praising God.

Praise the Lord who reigns above
And keeps his courts below;
Praise the holy God of love
And all his greatness show;
Praise God for his noble deeds,
Praise him for his matchless pow'r;
God from whom all proceeds,
All creation sing,
Let earth and heaven adore.

Celebrate our mighty God
With harp and psaltery,
Timbrel soft and cymbals loud
In God's high praise agree;
Praise God ev'ry tuneful string;
All the reach of heav'nly art,
All the pow'rs of music bring,
Earth and heaven adore, all creation sing
the music of the heart.

God in whom all move and live,
Let ev'ry creature sing,
Glory to our Maker give,
And homage to our King.
Hallowed by his name beneath,
As in heav'n on earth adored;
Praise the Lord in ev'ry breath,
Let all things praise the Lord.

Christ Hath a Garden

Words by Robert Bridges (1844-1930)

English Folk Song, arranged (1973) by Gerald Near (b. 1942)

British poet Robert Bridges enjoyed a career as a physician before illness forced early retirement at age 38, after which he devoted himself to literary endeavors, especially poetry. He was named as Britain's Poet Laureate in 1913. His poems, many of which are religious, are celebrated for their subtlety and introspection. American composer Gerald Near, in choosing the English folk tune "O Waly Waly" as a melody for Bridges' "Christ Hath a Garden," finds expressive voice for the poet's evocative metaphor of the love of Christ as a bountiful, fragrant orchard.

Christ hath a garden walled around,
A paradise of fruitful ground,
Chosen by love and fenced by grace
From out the world's wide wilderness.

Like trees of spice his servants stand,
There planted by his mighty hand;
By Eden's gracious streams, that flow
To feed their beauty where they grow.

Awake, O wind of heav'n and bear
Their sweetest perfume through the air:
Stir up, O south, the boughs that bloom,
Till the beloved Master come:

That he may come, and linger yet
Among the trees that he hath set;
That he may evermore be seen
To walk amid the springing green!

THE FAVORITE PSALM

The King of Love My Shepherd Is

Words (1868) by Henry Williams Baker (1821-1877)
Setting (1886) by Harry Rowe Shelley (1858-1947)

Solo Quartet: Christine Laird, Cynthia Mellon, Stephen Corma, Anthony DeDominicis

Among the extensive and varied repertoire of the South Church Chancel Choir are many beautiful anthems that have become favorites of the South Church congregation and, of course, of the choir itself. This poetic paraphrase of the Twenty-third Psalm is by British poet and hymnodist Henry Williams Baker. The graceful setting, by Connecticut-born composer and organist Harry Rowe Shelley, has been sung at South Church for many decades and is much beloved. It is an example of what might be called "19th century religious parlor music," with its sweet and soaring melodies and conventional harmonies, yet remains fresh and compelling. Shelley composed this music in 1868, the year in which South Church's neo-Gothic structure was dedicated. (An 1868 illustration of South Church may be seen on the inside cover of this program book, and a contemporary rendering of the steeple, by choir member Robert Lussier, MD, is on page 9.)

The King of love my Shepherd is
Whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am His
And He is mine forever.

Where streams of living water flow
My ransomed soul He leadeth,
And where the verdant pastures grow,
with food celestial feedeth.

Perverse and foolish oft I strayed,
But yet in love He sought me,
And on His shoulder gently laid,
And home, rejoicing, brought me.

In death's dark vale I fear no ill,
With Thee, dear Lord, beside me;
Thy rod and staff my comfort still,
Thou Cross before to guide me.

Thou spread'st a table in my sight,
Thy unction grace bestoweth;
And O! the transport of delight,
with which my cup o'erfloweth!
unction = healing

And so through all the length of days,
Thy goodness faileth never;
Good Shepherd, may I sing Thy praise
Within Thy house forever! Amen.

"WATER MUSIC"

The Hidden Stream That Feeds

Words (1994) by Thomas H. Troeger (b. 1945)
Setting (2006) by Eleanor Daley (b. 1955)

The Reverend Thomas H. Troeger is a distinguished Connecticut author and poet whose lyrical sacred verses enrich our contemporary hymns and choral repertoire. Canadian composer Eleanor Daley selected several of Dr. Troeger's poems for her *Four Canticles of Praise*, of which "The Hidden Stream that Feeds" is the third. An undulating undercurrent of voices evokes the "hidden stream" with its "ceaseless currents" that "taste of heaven's skies."

The hidden stream that feeds our daily acts of care
Springs forth in worship when Christ leads
the church in song and prayer.
Lord, through our lives may others hear
Your living waters drawing near.

The stream runs clear and deep and tastes of heaven's skies,
And where its ceaseless currents sweep
flows life that never dies.
Lord, through our lives may others hear
Your living waters drawing near.

A heart of stone and dust, of withered hopes and dreams,
Becomes a spring of faith and trust
by drinking from these streams.
Lord, through our lives may others hear
Your living waters drawing near.

We leave this watered place to work on rocky ground,
Yet even there, the streams of grace
sustain our daily round.
Lord, through our lives may others hear
Your living waters drawing near.

Sound Over All Waters

Words by John Greenleaf Whittier (1873, adapted) (1807-1892)
Music by Paul Halley (b. 1952)

Christine Laird, soprano

Grammy-award winning composer, pianist, choirmaster and organist Paul Halley is widely admired for his moving and memorable choral compositions and arrangements. His 1994 gospel-infused setting of portions of John Greenleaf Whittier's poem "Sound Over All Waters" has long been part of the Chancel Choir's core repertoire. Whittier, an American Quaker, penned an eloquent plea to turn away from war, exhorting the "bugles of battle" to play instead "the marches of peace."

Sound over all waters, reach out from all lands
The chorus of voices, the claspings of hands;
Sing hymns that were sung by the stars of the morn,
Sing songs of the angels when Jesus was born;
With glad jubilations, bring hope to the nations;
The dark night is ending, and dawn has begun.
Arise, hope of the ages, arise like the sun;
All speech flow to music, all hearts beat as one!

Blow, bugles of battle, the marches of peace;
East, west, north, and south, let the long quarrels cease;
Sing the song of great joy that the angels began,
Sing of glory to God, and of goodwill to man!
Joining in chorus, the heavens [angels] bend o'er us:
The dark night is ending and dawn has begun.
Arise, hope of the ages, arise like the sun;
All speech flow to music, all hearts beat as one!

IN PRAISE OF MUSIC

How Shall I Sing That Majesty?

Words (1685) by John Mason (1645-1694)
Melody, "Coe Fen," by Kenneth Naylor (1931-1991)
Arranged (2004) by John Ronald Daniels

John Mason (1646-1694) was a prolific writer of hymns (that is, hymn texts), and encouraged the singing of hymns in his congregation. His verses were among the earliest hymns used within the Church of England. Rich in imagery of the heavenly Kingdom, "How Shall I Sing that Majesty" reflects on the insignificance of human praise when compared to the glorious praises sung by the heavenly host. With its depiction of "ten thousand times ten thousand" angelic voices in the celestial choir (Revelation 5:11), the hymn is appreciated by church musicians, particularly choristers. Because of the particular complexities of its meter, a satisfactory hymn tune had never been found for Mason's words, and the text remained relatively unknown for 300 years, until British composer Kenneth Naylor (1931-1991) created the melody he called "Coe Fen," after a lovely marsh near Cambridge, England, where he taught. This setting of what has been called "one of the finest hymn tunes of the latter half of the twentieth century," is by American composer John Ronald Daniels,

How shall I sing that majesty
Which angels do admire?
Let dust in dust and silence lie;
Sing, sing, ye heav'nly choir.
Thousands of thousands stand around
Thy throne, O God most high:
Ten thousand times then thousand sound
Thy praise; but who am I?

Thy brightness unto them appears
While I thy footsteps trace;
A sound of God comes to my ears,
But they behold thy face.
They sing because thou art their sun;
Lord, send a beam on me;
For where heav'n is but once begun,
There alleluias be.

Enlighten with faith's light my heart,
Inflame it with love's fire;
Then shall I sing and bear a part
with that celestial choir.
I shall, I fear be dark and cold,
with all my fire and light;
Yet, when thou dost accept their gold,
Lord, treasure up my mite.

How great a being, Lord, is thine,
Which doth all beings keep!
Thy knowledge is the only line
To sound [measure] so vast a deep.
Thou art a sea without a shore,
A sun without a sphere;
Thy time is now and evermore,
Thy place is ev'rywhere.

TWO CHORAL FOLK HYMNS

Wondrous Love

Early American melody, from *The Southern Harmony*, 1835
Arranged (2014) by David Pegg

Catherine Peters, flute

Though the tune for this American folk hymn derives from an old English ballad, it has been so strongly associated with the words of “Wondrous Love” and for so long that the tune, too, is now known as “Wondrous Love.” The words and music first appeared together in *Southern Harmony* (1835), and soon thereafter in *The Sacred Harp* (1844), two early and important collections of American sacred music. The evocative and often-ethereal arrangement for choir with flute is by North Carolina composer David Pegg.

What wondrous love is this, O my soul!	When I was sinking down, O my soul!	And when from death I’m free, I’ll sing on!
What wondrous love is this That caused the Lord of bliss To bear the dreadful curse for my soul!	When I was sinking down Beneath God’s righteous frown, Christ laid aside his crown for my soul!	And when from death I’m free I’ll sing and joyful be, And through eternity I’ll sing on!

The Morning Trumpet

Words by John Leland (1754-1841)
Traditional Folk Hymn, tune by B. F. White (1800-1879)
Arranged by Alice Parker (b. 1925) and Robert Shaw (1916-1999)

Anthony DeDominicis, baritone

Like “Wondrous Love,” this rousing song was included in *The Sacred Harp*, and in fact its tune was composed by the chief compiler of that music book, an itinerant preacher and singing teacher named Benjamin Franklin White. American musicologist George Pullen Jackson called this folk hymn “one of the best examples of revival spiritual song,” and certainly with its driving rhythms and evocation of “end times,” it is easy to imagine worshippers at a tent revival roused to religious ecstasy as they sang in strong and resonant “shape note” harmonies. The masterful, commanding arrangement by American choral composer-conductors Robert Shaw and Alice Parker evokes the “fire and brimstone” preaching to which this music might have been sung as response.

O, when shall I see Jesus, and reign with Him above,
And shall hear the trumpet sound in that morning?
And from the flowing fountain drink everlasting love,
And shall hear the trumpet sound in that morning?
Shout O glory, for I shall mount above the skies,
When I hear the trumpet sound in that morning!

When shall I be delivered from this vain world of sin,
And shall hear the trumpet sound in that morning?
And with my blessed Jesus drink endless pleasures in,
And shall hear the trumpet sound in that morning?
Shout O glory, for I shall mount above the skies,
When I hear the trumpet sound in that morning!

Through grace I am determined to conquer, though I die,
And shall hear the trumpet sound in that morning.
And then away to Jesus on wings of love I’ll fly.
And shall hear the trumpet sound in that morning.
Shout O glory, for I shall mount above the skies,
When I hear the trumpet sound in that morning!

MUSIC FOR WOMEN'S VOICES

Day by Day

Words: Prayer of St. Richard of Chichester (c. 1197-1253)
Setting (1978) by Martin How (b. 1931)

A wholly different vision of a longed-for union with God is presented in this setting by English composer Martin How of "Day by Day," the second part of a famous prayer attributed to Richard, Bishop of Chichester (England), canonized as a saint in 1262. The rhyming modern translation first appeared in print in 1922, but it retains the simplicity of the lines that Richard is said to have uttered on his deathbed more than seven centuries ago. The first part of the poem comments on the love and sacrifice of Christ; the second part expresses the desire to more fully understand, love, and follow Christ. Though he set only the second portion of the prayer, How imbued the music with both sweetness and sharp poignancy, thus conveying, in musical terms, Richard's reflection on the love and suffering of Christ expressed in the first part of the poem. After the first unison lines are sung, listen for the voices "following nearly" in closely overlapping phrases, creating dissonances and releasing them in one beautiful moment after another. This exquisite anthem is much loved by the Chancel Choir and the congregation of South Church.

Day by day, dear Lord, of thee three things I pray:
To see thee more clearly,
Love thee more dearly,
Follow thee more nearly.

MUSIC FOR MEN'S VOICES

At the River

Words and Music (1864) by Robert Lowry (1826-1899)
Setting (1954) by Aaron Copland (1900-1990)

At the River — perhaps better known by its first line, "Shall we gather at the river" — is one of the best-known and best-loved of American sacred songs. Because of its familiarity and utter simplicity, it is often thought to be a folk song, but both words and music are from the fertile mind and pen of Robert Lowry, an American Baptist minister and editor of hymns and gospel tunes. The song, which was first published in *Happy Voices* (1865), had a most unusual inspiration, which is best told in Lowry's own words: "One afternoon in July, 1864, when I was pastor at Hanson Place Baptist Church, Brooklyn, the weather was oppressively hot, and I was lying on a lounge in a state of physical exhaustion. My imagination began to take wing. Visions of the future passed before me with startling vividness. The imagery of the apocalypse took the form of a tableau. Brightest of all were the throne, the heavenly river, and the gathering of the saints. I began to wonder why the hymn writers had said so much about the 'river of death' and so little about the 'pure water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb.' [Revelation 22:1-2] As I mused, the words began to construct themselves. They came first as a question of Christian inquiry, 'Shall we gather?' Then they broke in chorus, 'Yes, we'll gather.' On this question and answer the hymn developed itself. The music came with the hymn." The 1954 arrangement for men's voices by Aaron Copland preserves the simplicity of Lowry's melody, while surrounding and supporting the tune with a richly harmonic choral accompaniment that ebbs and flows in river-like fashion.

Shall we gather at the river,
Where bright angel feet have trod,
With its crystal tide forever
Flowing by the throne of God?

Soon we'll reach the shining river,
Soon our pilgrimage will cease;
Soon our happy hearts will quiver
With the melody of peace.

Refrain:

Yes, we'll gather at the river,
The beautiful, the beautiful river,
Gather with the saints at the river
that flows by the throne of God.

SING WITH US!

When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder

Words and Music by James M. Black (1856-1938)
Setting (2015) by Colin Britt (b. 1985)

The choral setting was commissioned of composer Colin Britt in honor of the 250th anniversary of the Harbor Church, for whom this hymn has strong and ongoing significance.

The audience is invited to join in singing the final refrain, shown below.

This stirring song inspires all the confidence of “The Morning Trumpet” without a hint of apocalypse, but rather of joyous anticipation and unwavering faith. The song had its genesis when James Black, a Sunday school teacher in a Methodist church in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, commented to his pupils after a laggard child failed to arrive to class on time: “Well, I trust that when the roll is called up yonder, she’ll be there.” He tried to illustrate his comment with an appropriate song, but found none. As he later recalled, “This lack of a fitting song caused me both sorrow and disappointment. An inner voice seemed to say, ‘Why don’t you write one?’ I put away the thought. As I opened the gate on my way home, the same thought came again so strongly that tears filled my eyes. I entered the house and sat down at the piano. The words came to me effortlessly; the tune came the same way; I dared not change a single note or word.” The Chancel Choir is delighted to present the premiere of Colin Britt’s setting of Black’s song, composed for this concert and for Harbor Church.

When the trumpet of the Lord shall sound, and time shall be no more,
And the morning breaks, eternal, bright and fair;
When the saved of earth shall gather over on the other shore.
And the roll is called up yonder, I’ll be there.

Refrain for choir: *When the roll is called up yonder, I’ll be there.*

On that bright and cloudless morning when the dead in Christ shall rise,
And the glory of His resurrection share;
When His chosen ones shall gather to their home beyond the skies,
And the roll is called up yonder, I’ll be there.

Refrain for choir: *When the roll is called up yonder, I’ll be there.*

Let us labor for the Master from the dawn till setting sun,
Let us talk of all His wondrous love and care;
Then when all of life is over, and our work on earth is done,
And the roll is called up yonder, I’ll be there.

Refrain for everyone: *When the roll is called up yonder, I’ll be there.*

Amazing Grace

Words (1779) by John Newton (1725-1807)
Music (“New Britain”) from *Virginia Harmony, 1831*, arr. Anthony Furnivall

The audience is invited to join in singing the final stanza, as shown on the following page.

Perhaps the best known of American folk-hymns, “Amazing Grace” has long transcended its sad origins and is now heard as a song of consolation or simple beauty in films, at funerals and memorials, and even at weddings and other celebrations. The familiar words are just part of a longer poem by John Newton, a British sailor whose experiences on ships transporting enslaved people from Africa to the New World haunted him for many years. After nearly dying in a storm at sea, he experienced a religious awakening and abandoned his maritime profession in order to enter the church. He wrote nearly 300 hymns, publishing in 1779 a collection that included “Amazing Grace,” his lyric expression of his shame, conversion, and hoped-for salvation. Newton’s story is the subject of a new Broadway musical, “Amazing Grace.” The poem was published in the United States in 1789. In the 1835 edition of *Southern Harmony* (source also for “Wondrous Love,” heard earlier) the words were paired for the first time with an anonymous tune called “New Britain,” a melody that had first been published in an 1829 collection called *Columbian Harmony* (with the text “Arise, my soul”).

The text is shown on the following page.

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me,
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

Through many dangers, toils, and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far
And grace will lead me home.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved.
How precious did that grace appear,
The hour I first believed.

**PLEASE JOIN IN SINGING THE FINAL STANZA:
When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise,
Than when we first begun.**

IN TRIBUTE TO HARBOR CHURCH

Make Our Church One Joyful Choir

**Words (1994) by Thomas H. Troeger (b. 1945)
Setting (2000) by Jonathan Crutchfield (b. 1959)**

Another of the lyric hymns from the prolific pen of The Reverend Thomas H. Troeger, "Make Our Church One Joyful Choir" is from his 1994 collection *Borrowed Light: Hymn Texts, Prayers, and Poems*. While invoking music as an inspiring force for unity, the text also draws on the Pentecostal images of wind and fire as powerful metaphors of outreach and communion with friends and neighbors from near and far, whether across town or across the water. The march-like setting by American composer Jonathan Crutchfield is imbued with energy and forward momentum.

Make our church one joyful choir
on this glad and festive day
and by song invoke the fire
that invites our hearts to pray:
Shape us, Christ, to live and claim
all it means to bear your name.

Lift us up by song and prayer
'til the way we deal with loss
and our acts and words of care
trace the pattern of your cross:
Shape us, Christ,
to bear your name.

Bend us low by song and prayer,
low enough to lift the cross
and to take the weight and bear
love's uncounted final cost.
Shape us, Christ, to live and claim
all it means to bear your name.

Bend us, lift us, make us strong,
send us out with wind and fire,
so the world may hear the song
that we offer as your choir:
Shape us, Christ, to live and claim
all it means to bear your name. Amen.

TWO TRADITIONAL SPIRITUALS

Ride On, King Jesus!

**African-American Spiritual
Setting (2008) by Nancy Wertsch (b. 1948)**

Ev'ry Time I Feel the Spirit

**African-American Spiritual
Setting (2001) by Bob Chilcott (b. 1955)**

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

The **SOUTH CHURCH CHANCEL CHOIR** provides choral leadership for South Church worship services and sings for festivals and for special services such as Maundy Thursday, the Candlelight Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, and Christmas Eve. The Choir is composed of 30-35 volunteer singers and a core of professional soloists/section leaders who provide musical and vocal leadership. Membership is open by simple audition to all members and friends of South Church who are eager to study and rehearse the great sacred choral repertoire for worship and concert. The Chancel Choir, which has earned a regional reputation as an extraordinary ensemble committed to providing the best possible choral leadership for public worship, attracts talented singers from the greater New Britain community. A large number of the volunteer singers are professionally trained musicians who appreciate the rich musical heritage and high musical standards that define the music ministry at South Church. The Chancel Choir also has a long and distinguished history as a performing ensemble, offering concerts independently or in collaboration with area choirs and ensembles. In this tradition, the Choir has presented many great choral masterpieces, including Bach's *Passion According to Saint Matthew*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Brahms' *Requiem*, Handel's *Judas Maccabaeus* and *Israel in Egypt*, and Britten's *War Requiem*. The Chancel Choir's repertoire is broad and eclectic, drawn from ancient, historic, and modern sources. In 1996, the choir released to much acclaim a compact disc recording on the Arkay label, *Choral Settings of Great Hymns*. Other recordings include *Sacred Music from Central Europe* (2000) and *A Candlelight Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols* (2001).

SOPRANO	ALTO	TENOR	BASS
Claire Madsen-Bibeau	Salli-Jo Borden	Paul Archaski	Steven Banasiewicz
Tori Britt	Patti Buccheri	Colin Britt	Robert Borden
Laura Conner	Laura Cook	Stephen Corma	Anthony DeDominicis
Linda Day	Jean Esselink	Dylan Koerner	Martin Ill
Danielle Foint	Pamela Johnson	Michael McAllister	Dennis Johnston
Sarah Hager Johnston	Kathleen McLean	Timothy O'Leary	Robert Lussier
Miriam Kennedy	Cynthia Mellon		Rick Mellon
Christine Laird	Laurie Miner		Alexander Patrie
Linda Nowak	Catherine Peters		





RICHARD COFFEY is Organist and Minister of Music at South Church in New Britain, where he conducts a choir of professional and amateur singers and serves as Artistic Director of its Music Series, which annually presents concerts by visiting artists. Known as one of New England's principal choral conductors, Mr. Coffey is also Music Director of the Hartford Chorale and Artistic Director Emeritus of CONCORA (Connecticut Choral Artists), which he founded in 1974 and directed for 40 years. In frequent demand as a chorus master, Mr. Coffey has prepared choruses for many orchestras and festivals, including the Hartford Symphony, Orchestra New England, the Springfield Symphony, the New Britain Symphony, the Waterbury Symphony, the Bard Music Festival, and the Harkness Summer Music Festival. For five seasons, Mr. Coffey was chorus master of the Connecticut Opera Association. Mr. Coffey holds degrees in music from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and the School of Sacred Music of New York's Union Theological Seminary. He was awarded France's "premier prix" in organ performance following studies with organist Marie-Claire Alain. In 1992 Mr. Coffey was named Choral Director of the Year by the Connecticut Chapter of the American Choral Directors Association. In 2007 he was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award by the Greater New Britain Arts Alliance and a Major Achievement Award by the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, in recognition of outstanding and inspiring artistic leadership. Mr. Coffey is the 2009 recipient of the Alfred Nash Patterson Lifetime Achievement Award, presented annually by Choral Arts New England to individuals who have made exceptional contributions to choral singing and its culture within New England.



COLIN BRITT holds a bachelor's degree in music composition from the Hartt School and a master's degree in choral conducting from the Yale School of Music and Yale Institute of Sacred Music. During his time at Yale, he studied conducting with Marguerite Brooks, Jeffrey Douma, Simon Carrington, and Masaaki Suzuki. He conducted the Marquand Chapel Choir and served as assistant conductor with the Yale Camerata. He has studied composition with David Macbride, Larry Alan Smith, Ken Steen, and Stephen Gryc, organ with Ezequiel Menendez, piano with Margreet Francis and Brian Franck, voice with Wayne Rivera and Cherie Caluda, and conducting with Edward Bolkovac. He has sung with the Tanglewood Festival Chorus, the Greater Middletown Chorale, Con Brio, and CONCORA.

His compositions have been performed by ensembles at Westminster Choir College, Hartt, Yale, and throughout the region, including the Hartt Chorale, the Yale Schola Cantorum, the Yale Alumni Chorus, and the Greater Middletown Chorale. In the 2008-2009 season, he was the composer-in-residence for the New Haven Chorale. He was a finalist in the 2013 Young New Yorkers' Chorus Competition for Young Composers. Colin has served as music director of Marquand Chapel at Yale, on the adjunct conducting faculty at Hartt, as the conductor of the Hartford Chorale Chamber Singers, and as the assistant music director at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Hartford. He serves as director of music for Grace Church Van Vorst in Jersey City, and he is currently pursuing a DMA in Choral Conducting with Patrick Gardner at the Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

JEAN ESSELINK earned a Bachelor of Music from the Eastman School of Music and Master's degree in music from the Hartt School. Ms. Esselink has sung with CONCORA and with the Chancel Choir of South Church. She taught elementary music in the New Britain public schools and maintained a private piano studio. She serves on the Board of Directors of the Main Street Singers.

ROBERT LUSSIER, MD is a psychiatrist by profession, but his first love was music. He began his musical studies on piano at the Hartford Conservatory, studying with Eva Lang and Howard Parsons. In his early adult years he continued piano instruction with Haskell Small, Andres Anweiler, and David Westfall and enjoys accompanying local instrumentalists and vocalists in concerts and recitals. Dr. Lussier also enjoys singing and studied voice with Joanne Scattergood. He has been a member of the South Church choir since 1980, and sang with Connecticut Choral Artists for more than 15 years. Dr. Lussier is pleased to be able to accompany the South Church choir on this special occasion.



*Illustration of South Church, New Britain (this page) by Robert Lussier, MD
Program notes and program design by Sarah Hager Johnston, BMus, MLS*

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