Benzie County Community Chorus
presents

A Classical Christmas Choral Concert

The 2022 Concert Series

Friday, December 9

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church
8190 Lincoln Rd., Beulah
7:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 10

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church
8190 Lincoln Rd., Beulah
3:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 11

Frankfort United Methodist Church
537 Crystal Ave., Frankfort
7:00 p.m.

A freewill offering will be collected to help defray costs.

231-651-0311 benziechorus@gmail.com

The Benzie County Community Chorus is grateful

to the good people of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church for the gracious use of their space and facilities for rehearsals.

Thank you, Frankfort United Methodist Church and St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church for hosting our concerts. Your church families are always so gracious in allowing us to perform in your facilities.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the BCCC, please contact any chorus member or give our director Dinah Haag a call at 231-651-0311. Rehearsals for our summer concerts will begin in late February. The date will be announced on the chorus website (www.benziechorus.org) and on our Facebook page (Benzie County Community Chorus). To keep up with all our events, please feel free to check out both sites.

Unwanted programs can be recycled
in the black boxes at the "entrance" tables.

We are grateful that you have chosen to spend this time with us. And we greatly appreciate your freewill gift.
Should you feel inclined to give an additional gift to the Chorus,
simply use your phone to scan the donation QR code here.
And should you do that, we are even more delighted.
We are a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation. Thank you.

The Benzie County Community Chorus Presents

A Classical Christmas Choral Concert

December 9, 10 and 11, 2022

SURELY THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD, Lanny Wolfe

A business major with an MBA, Mr. Wolfe found his calling as one of the great gospel writers with just a year of piano lessons as a child and then in college. Between those years he improvised and played by ear. To date, Mr. Wolfe has composed over 700 songs, 14 musicals, and recorded over 70 projects.

NOEL CELEBRATION, arr. Lee Dengler

This collage is comprised of the tunes Personet Hodie, Sussex Carol, O Sanctissima, and Venite Adoremus. Personet Hodie is a Christmas carol originally published in the 1582 Finnish song book *Piae Cantiones* in honor of Saint Nicholas, the patron saint of sailors. Sussex Carol came out of the 17th century, rediscovered by Ralph Vaughn Williams in 1919. The earliest publication of O Sanctissima was from London in 1792, presented as a song from Sicily, which is probably how it became known as the Sicilian Mariners Hymn. Venite Adoremus has been accredited to numerous composers and writers, but it is interesting that like the other songs in this collection, it has connections to other seafaring countries such as Spain and Portugal.

CANDLELIGHT CAROL, John Rutter

Composed in 1984, Mr. Rutter's own group, the Cambridge Singers, were the first to record it. Commissioned by John Romeri, then Director of Music at the Church of the Assumption in Bellevue, Pennsylvania, Rutter drew inspiration from Geertgen's painting *Nativity at Night*, in which the Christ child was the source of light.

**Please hold applause between the three Britten pieces.*

A CEREMONY OF CAROLS, Op. 28, Benjamin Britten, arr. by Julius Harrison
Originally the eleven movements were written for a three-part treble choir and harp. The texts of these short vignettes come from *The English Galaxy of Shorter Poems*, edited by Gerald Bullett, written in Latin, Middle English and Early Modern English. Britten picked up the book of poems in Nova Scotia and wrote the music influenced by Indonesian percussion while aboard a rickety merchant ship returning to England through U-boat infested waters after a three year stay in America during the majority of World War II.

Deo Gracias, Anonymous, based on a medieval text
Adam's fall is celebrated as it was the ultimate cause of the coming of Christ. This medieval poem assumes that time began at 4,000 BCE, the secular reference to time referencing.

Deo gracias! Deo gracias! *(Thanks be to God!)*
Adam lay i-bounden, bounden in a bond; (*Adam / mankind bound in sin)*
Four thousand winter thought he not too long. *(Waiting for Messiah)*

And all was for an appil, an appil that he tok,
As clerkès finden written in their book.
(All for an apple, as clerics found written in their history.)

Ne had the appil takè ben, the appil takè ben
Ne haddè never our lady a ben hevenè quene.
(No apple eaten, no Lady – Virgin – no heavenly queen.)

Blessèd be the time that appil takè was.
Therefore we moun singen.
(Blessed be the apple that was eaten, which is why we sing.)

There Is No Rose, Anonymous, 14th century

There is no rose of such vertu *(rose - reference to Mary)*
As is the rose that bare Jesu.
Alleluia, Alleluia,
For in this rose conteinèd was *(contained)*
Heaven and earth in litel space, *(little)*
Res miranda, Res miranda. *(Miraculous thing)*

By that rose we may well see
There be one God in persons three,
Pares forma, pares forma. *(In the parent's image)*

The aungels sungen the shepherds to: *(angels sang to shepherds)*
Gloria in excelsis, gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gaudeamus, gaudeamus. *(We rejoice)*

Leave we all this werldly mirth, *(worldly)*
and follow we this joyful birth.
Transeamus, *(We follow)*

This Little Babe was based on the poem *New Heaven, New War* by Jesuit poet Robert Southwell, 1561-1595. The paradoxes of Christ's birth and infant images juxtaposed with weapons and battles, sung in canon (round) evoke an imagery of cannon echoes within a cosmic battle scene between good and evil.

This little Babe so few days old,
Is come to rifle Satan's fold; *(rifle – plunder, fold – enclosure)*
All hell doth at his presence quake, *(Hell shivers at the Babe's presence)*
Though he himself for cold do shake; *Though he shakes with cold)*
For in this weak unarmèd wise *(wise – way, manner)*
The gates of hell he will surprise. *(In this state he will surprise hell.)*

With tears he fights and wins the field,
His naked breast stands for a shield;
His battering shot are babish cries, *(Pounding shots are his infant cries)*
His arrows looks of weeping eyes, *(arrows = looks)*
His martial ensigns Cold and Need, *(His battle flags are cold and need)*
And feeble Flesh his warrior's steed.

His camp is pitchèd in a stall, *(pitched – leans)*
His bulwark but a broken wall; *(bulwark – defense)*
The crib his trench, haystalks his stakes;
Of shepherds he his muster makes; *(muster – troops)*
And thus, as sure his foe to wound,
The angels' trumps alarum sound. *(trumps – trumpets, alarum – alarm)*

My soul, with Christ join thou in fight;
Stick to the tents that he hath pight. *(Stay by the tents he pitched - pight)*
Within his crib is surest ward; *(ward – protection)*
This little Babe will be thy guard.
If thou wilt foil thy foes with joy; *(If Christ can foil foes with joy*
Then flit not from this heavenly Boy! *(flit not - stay near)*

GESU BAMBINO, Fredrick H. Martens, Pietro A. Yon. Kyle Taylor, soloist

American Frederick Herman Martens (1874–1932) translated the poem written by Italian Pietro A. Yon (1886–1943), who also composed the music. The reference to the Christmas Rose may have been to the *helleborus niger*, an evergreen perennial in the buttercup family. Legend has it that a young shepherdess, Madelon, was tending her sheep when the magi passed by with their lavish gifts for the Baby Jesus. Living in poverty, she had no gift to give, so she wept. A hovering angel brushed the snow from where her teardrops fell, and there bloomed a profusion of small white flowers, which Madelon joyfully picked and presented to the Child. Further legend has it that when Jesus touched the blossoms, they became tinged with pink, symbolizing the blood later to be shed. That the plant is toxic and was used in traditional medicine as a purgative and sedative makes the beauty of the song all the sweeter.

O HOLY NIGHT, Adolphe Adam, Arr. Peter Stone, English version by John S. Dwight. Kay Gossens & Dawn Cummings, soloists

Originally titled *Cantique de Noël*, it is based on a poem by Placide Cappeau written in 1843 to celebrate the renovation of the organ in Roquemaure, France. Jewish composer Adolphe Adam set it to music four years later. The song was banned in France for a time, after Mr. Cappeau turned away from his faith. The third verse became popular, particularly in northern America, where it resonated with abolitionists.

O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM, Phillips Brooks, Hymn Tune (St. Louis) arr. Dan Forrest. Serenity Schulz, Clarinet

Originally written for children, this hymn captures the heart of ageless children. It is usually sung with its original tune, ST. LOUIS by American composer Louis H. Redner (1831-1908). Phillips Brooks wrote the lyrics of the poem, influenced by a horseback journey between Jerusalem and Bethlehem on Christmas Eve, describing a little town asleep in December, transitioning into the meaning of Christmas.

JINGLE BELLS, George Frederick Handel, arr. Bill Wolaver

Soloist, Susan Snyder

Making its debut in 1850 from the hand of James Lord Pierpont while in Medford, Massachusetts, it was to commemorate the annual sleigh races around town during Thanksgiving. It was the first song broadcast from space when the astronauts aboard Gemini 6 decided to play a prank on Mission Control and performed the song on a harmonica and actual jingle bells they had smuggled on board.

GO WHERE I SEND THEE, Gospel Spiritual, arr. Paul Caldwell & Sean Ivory

Although this is a traditional African American spiritual, it has a "relative" in "The Twelve Apostles" from England that became popular in the mid 19th century. It has been recorded by dozens of artists, including Peter, Paul and Mary; The Carter (Johnny Cash) family; Kenny Rogers; Tennessee Ernie Ford; Audra McDonald and was the closing song for the 1961 version of "A Black Nativity."

3 Hebrew children – Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego – thrown in to the fiery furnace by King Nebuchadnezzar.

4 Gospel writers - Matthew, Mark, Luke, John

5 bread - the loaves of bread that fed 5,000+ people

8 - people instructed to board Noah's ark: Mr. & Mrs. Noah, three sons and wives

9 - the traditional number of angelic choirs

11 - opinion that Judas Iscariot might not do well on judgement day, ergo eleven disciples that would do well.

THE CHRISTMAS WALTZ, Sammy Cahn, Jule Styne, arr. Mark Hayes

This song was written for Frank Sinatra, at his request, who recorded it in 1954 as the B-side of a new recording of "White Christmas", it never reached any Billboard Magazine charts until Harry Connick, Jr. got it onto the Adult Contemporary list with his recording 2003, which lasted two weeks at number 26. Those who have recorded it are far too numerous to list.

AN IRVING BERLIN CHRISTMAS, arr. Roger Emerson

Count Your Blessings Instead of Sheep, White Christmas, Happy Holidays

Samantha O'Brien, soloist

"Count Your Blessings" is from the movie White Christmas although there is no reference to the December holiday. In Berlin's own life, it was a result of his doctor, who suggested the idea to deal with his insomnia brought on by stress in 1952.

"White Christmas" was first aired on radio in 1941. Pearl Harbor had been bombed just a few weeks earlier. Although it is a Christmas holiday song, composed by a Jewish, Russian born immigrant, it was perhaps the death of his own three-week-old son on Christmas Day, 1928, that gave cause for it morph into the best-selling Christmas song and the best-selling single of all time, according to the Guinness World Records.

Written in 1942, "Happy Holidays" was performed on New Year's Eve in the movie Holiday Inn.

LET THERE BE PEACE ON EARTH, Sy Miller and Jill Jackson-Miller,

arr. Mark Hayes

Jackson-Miller, who had been suicidal after the failure of her marriage to screenwriter Felix Jackson, is said to have written the song after discovering what she called the "life-saving joy of God's peace and unconditional love." Written in 1954 for the International Children's Choir created by Easter Beakly and Arthur Granger, "Let There Be Peace" has become internationally associated with Christmas.

Please join us in singing the second time through with the lyrics on the next page.

"Let There Be Peace on Earth"

Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.
Let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be.

With God our Creator, we are family.
Let us walk with each other in perfect harmony.

Let peace begin with me. Let this be the moment now.
With every step I take, let this be my solemn vow:

To take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally.
Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

Let There Be Peace on Earth by Sy Miller and Jill Jackson, Copyright © 1955, 1983 by Jan-Lee Music, ASCAP. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

OUR SINGERS

Delores Berta	Kay Gossens	Samantha O'Brien
*Becky Beutler	Jeanne Hafer	Becky Ogilvie
Cory Bissell	Missi Hamp	Kelly Ottinger
Bob Boehm	Abby Hayes	Stan Otto
Nancy Boehm	Dale Herscher	Nancy Reed
Judith Bosma	Rachel Higgins	*Steve Reicker
Jeryl Colby	Dave Johnson	Serenity Schulz
Dawn Cummings	**Fran Johnson	Laura Sheffield
Myra Elias	Dave Limer	*Kyle Taylor
Jennifer Flynn	Peggy Link	Sabine Vera
Ginny Freeman	Leslie McElduff	Judy Welch
Bob French	**Sharon McKinley	Karyn Wells
Melissa Gilbert	Maureen Merry	** Founding Member
*Pam Gilbert	Ray Miller	# New Member

OUR ACCOMPANIST

We are so fortunate that Susan Snyder was able to take over from Christy Case, whose family needed more of her time. Susan is a collaborative pianist on staff at Interlochen Center for the Arts, and organist and choir director at Redeemer Lutheran church of Interlochen. She's also an animal lover, enjoys yoga and has brought a sweet joy to the chorus family.

OUR DIRECTOR

Dinah Haag obtained her undergraduate degrees in music education at St. Cloud State University and a Master of Divinity degree from Bethel Theological Seminary, all of which took place in Minnesota. She finds it amazing that she's been able to be and work and live in this amazing place since 1998. She is the current staff to the miniature black panther feline family of Bella and Gracie.

This evening's concert was made possible in part by 100+ Women Who Care. We deeply appreciate your support!

Thank you, Martha Mollema, chorus photographer, for your quiet efforts to document the chorus family long into the future.

Thank you, too, to our volunteers. From handing out programs to helping with set-ups and teardowns, all your help is deeply appreciated.

Rehearsals for the 2023 Summer concerts will begin at the end of February. Specific details will be posted to our Facebook page and our website: www.benziechorus.org. If you have questions about participating, feel free to contact Director Dinah Haag at 231-651-0311.

The 2023 Summer concert series dates are June 24, June 25, June 26, July 9 and July 10.