



AFTER CHAPEL CONCERT

9:55 a.m. May 7, 2024

CHAPEL OF ST. TIMOTHY AND ST. TITUS

Featuring *Kammerchor* from
Concordia University Wisconsin, Mequon



Concordia
Seminary
ST. LOUIS

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PROGRAM

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Kammerchor from Concordia University Wisconsin, Mequon

Domine Deus

David Caldarella (b. 2002)

Singer and composer David Caldarella is currently an undergraduate student studying music theory and composition at the University of Miami. He has composed music for film, video games and musicals, in addition to his piece, “*Domine Deus*,” which the Chamber Singers from the University of Miami Frost School of Music premiered in 2022. This text has been set for centuries by thousands of composers, but Caldarella’s setting is unique because he rearranges the phrases in order to match his musical ideas. For example, at the opening the sopranos and altos sing a recurring pattern on *Domine Deus* while the tenors sing the first line of text. This piece is notable for its unusual and constant meter changes and frequent key modulations.

O God, the King of Glory

Henry Purcell (1659–95)

Considered to be the greatest English composer of the Baroque era, indeed, one of the greatest English composers of all time, Henry Purcell was a child prodigy who began composing at the age of 8. He was appointed organist at Westminster Abbey at 20 and was organist at the Chapel Royal at 23. In his relatively short life, he composed music for the opera and the theater, 24 odes, six operas, more than 300 songs for soloists and about 100 church anthems. “O God, the King of Glory” sets the Collect for the Sunday after Ascension in the *Book of Common Prayer* and is thought to be one of Purcell’s earliest surviving full anthems (that is, an anthem composed for a choir with no soloists). In this piece Purcell alternates between homophonic and polyphonic textures, and he notably uses some chromaticism when setting the text “leave us not comfortless” to symbolize our plight without the guiding comfort of the Holy Spirit.

Love Is the Key

Zebulon M. Highben (b. 1979)

Dr. Zebulon M. Highben is a choral conductor, church musician and composer who currently serves as the director of chapel music at Duke University and as associate professor of the practice of church music at Duke Divinity School. He received the 2011 Raabe Prize for Excellence in Sacred Composition and was recognized as a finalist for the American Prize in Choral Composition for his piece, “Love Is the Key.” The text, taken from the poem “A Song for the Least of All Saints,” references three passages from the Bible: Jesus asking Simon Peter three times if he loves Him (John 21:15-19), Simon Peter’s three denials of knowing Jesus (John 18:15-27) and the description of “love as strong as death” (Song of Solomon 8:6). Highben says about his piece, “The tempo of each successive stanza increases with the growing urgency of the text. The seven-measure motive which begins the piece returns in an abbreviated form between stanzas as a reminder of love’s presence even in the midst of anxiety and strife.”

With a Voice of Singing

Kenneth Jennings (1925–2015)

Dr. Kenneth Jennings is known primarily as a conductor, having succeeded F. Melius Christiansen and Olaf C. Christiansen as the director of the St. Olaf Choir at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn. After his retirement in 1990, he remained as director emeritus until his passing. During his time on the faculty at St. Olaf, and as a visiting professor at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minn., and the University of Arizona in Tucson, Ariz., Jennings mentored many of the most outstanding choral conductors currently in the field, including his successor, Dr. Anton Armstrong. As a composer, Jennings wrote several pieces, mostly for advanced choirs. He is known for sensitively depicting the meaning of a text,

as he does in his setting of Isaiah 48:20b and Psalm 66:1-2 in “With a Voice of Singing.” The opening and closing sections of the piece are fanfare-like in spirit with the text, “Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands.” These two sections bookend a calmer and more penitential doxology sung by the tenors and basses.

Psalm 61

Zanaida Stewart Robles (b. 1979)

Magdalena Obsersat and Julia Schulteis, soloists

A native of southern California, Dr. Zanaida Stewart Robles is in demand as a composer, conductor, singer and teacher, and she currently teaches music at the Harvard-Westlake Upper School in Studio City, Calif. Her compositional style can be described as energized, soulful, contrapuntal, harmonically colorful, rhythmically driven and heavily modal, and one can find many of these elements in her setting of the first two verses of Psalm 61. Expressing a supplication to God, “Psalm 61” begins in quiet stasis, then gradually adds in harmonic and rhythmic interest and calls and responses between the two soloists. Most of the piece is set in a mode or a minor key to depict the despair of the psalmist, but the key shifts dramatically to a major key in the final section to depict the assurance of God’s help.

Plaudite, Psallite

Kęstutis Daugirdas (b. 1985)

Lithuanian-American composer Kęstutis Daugirdas studied composition and conducting at the University of Illinois, Berklee College of Music, and at the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre in Vilnius. He now lives in his hometown of Chicago, where he works as a composer, educator and performer. “*Plaudite, Psallite*” won first prize in the 2022 *Vox Juventutis* composition competition in Lithuania and was premiered by the professional chamber choir Jauna Muzika. Daugirdas says that, in writing this piece, he was “inspired by the harmonies and textures of early music: trumpet fanfares, modality, hocketing [an alternation of melodic pitches between two or more voice parts], plainchant and organum ornamentation. These influences are meshed with the rhythmic drive of rock music to create a piece that pays homage to both sacred and secular affirmations of life.” This text was most famously set in the 16th century by Giovanni Gabrieli for 12 voices; in a nod to this earlier piece, Daugirdas set his composition for eight voice parts.

About *Kammerchor*

Kammerchor (German for “chamber choir”) was founded by Dr. Kenneth T. Kosche as a small vocal group selected from concurrent membership in the Concordia Chorale. In 1981, it became established as Concordia University Wisconsin, Mequon’s touring choir, and the Concordia Chorale became the chapel choir. Tours subsequently have taken *Kammerchor* practically all over the continental United States, several times to Canada and overseas to locations as varied as Brazil, Great Britain, China, Taiwan, Italy, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. *Kammerchor* has provided recorded music for broadcasts of *The Lutheran Hour*, the radio ministry of Lutheran Hour Ministries, and for *Worship Anew*. It was selected a two-time 2023 finalist for The American Prize, both in Choral Performance (college/university division, smaller program) and for the Ernst Bacon Memorial Award for the Performance of American Music (collegiate/university ensemble and conductor division). Membership in *Kammerchor* is not limited to music majors, but includes students with a range of majors and minors. *Kammerchor* sings a wide variety of choral literature from the Renaissance to the present, including concert pieces, anthems, spirituals and hymns.

Dr. Alexa Doebele is professor of music, director of choral activities and director of graduate church music at Concordia University Wisconsin, Mequon, where she conducts *Kammerchor*, Selah and the Chapel Choir, and teaches courses in music education and parish music. She has taught previously at the University of Wyoming, the University of Colorado and Front Range Community College. She is a frequent clinician, adjudicator and guest conductor, and is active as an editor of choral music. She also is active as both a solo and choral singer, having appeared with the Milwaukee Chamber Choir, *Vox Antiqua*, the Milwaukee Choral Artists, the Colorado Conductors’ Chorus, the Ars Nova Singers and St. Martin’s Chamber Choir.