

Glad Tidings!

from

Chorus Polaris & Bells of the Lakes

Saturday, Dec. 6, 2025

3:00 p.m.

First Lutheran Church,
Columbia Heights, MN

Sunday, Dec. 7, 2025

3:00 p.m.

Incarnation Lutheran Church
Shoreview, MN



William H. Mathis
Artistic Director

choruspolaris.org | bellsofthelakes.org

Glad Tidings!

from

Chorus Polaris & Bells of the Lakes

Change Ring Prelude

Fred Gramann

Carol of the Bells

Mykola Leontovych, arr. Peter J. Wilhousky

Sing We Now of Christmas

Kevin McChesney

Gaudete

Gerald Custer

* * * * *

Ave Maria

Franz Biebl

Bogoroditse Devo

Sergei Rachmaninov, arr. Cathy Moglebust

O Magnum Mysterium

Tómas Luis de Victoria

Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day

John Gardner

* * * * *

Shepherds' Farewell

Hector Berlioz

Riu Riu Chiu

Cathy Moglebust

God With Us for All Time

Betty B. Garee

Climb to the Top

Carolyn Jennings

I Wonder As I Wander

John Jacob Niles, arr. Mathis

* * * * *

Christmas Time is Here

Vince Guaraldi

Some Children See Him

Alfred Burt, arr. Joseph Martin

White Christmas

Irving Berlin, arr. Cynthia Dobrinski

Dona Nobis Pacem

Johann Sebastian Bach

Both ensembles give their thanks to Paul McKenzie for joining us as percussionist.

Listening Notes

Each piece of music we include today was particularly chosen to bring us all to places of peace and joy, which is the real goal of the season, isn't it? December is always busy, and sometimes stressful, but with the national and international sense of strife all around us, it's all the more important for us to spend some time with beauty and togetherness.

Here are just a few words about the music you'll hear. Several of the texts are also given below.

Change Ring Prelude on Divinum Mystrium is a composition combining Westminster Quarters (used for counting hours on Big Ben, etc.) and a melody from the monasteries of the 9th Century. You might know it with the text "Of the Father's love begotten."

Ukrainian Carol of the Bells is by Mykola Leontovych, arranged for chorus by Peter Wilhousky, an American educator of Ukrainian origin.

The French carol you hear next, **Sing We Now of Christmas**, is also sung at Easter, with the words, "now the green blade rises."

Gaudete is an anonymous carol, first published in 1582 in a collection of carols and other religious songs called *Piae Cantiones*. The arranger is a teacher, composer, and conductor in Detroit, and a friend of Chorus Polaris.

Now we have two settings of the Angel Gabriel's message to Mary: "Hail Mary, full of grace..." The first was composed by a German/Austrian composer and conductor. The second is by Rachmaninov from his *Vespers*.

Next come four songs from other lands: **O Magnum Mystrium** (text below) is by a Spanish composer from the 16th century. John Gardner wrote his setting of the medieval carol **Tomorrow Shall be my Dancing Day** (Jesus inviting people to "his dance,") for a girls' school in England where he was Director of Music. **The Shepherds' Farewell to the Holy Family** is from the French composer Hector Berlioz's larger work **The Childhood of Christ**, in which the Nazareth neighbors of Mary and Joseph's family are sending them off on a flight to Egypt to escape Herod's search for the baby. **Riu Riu Chiu** comes from 16th century Spain.

God With Us for All Time is a handbell composition including Westminster Quarters marking time of our lives; **O come, O come, Emmanuel** as a hopeful plea, and finally culminating in **Joy to the World**.

Listening Notes (cont)

Two more gentle songs now come back to back, both with roots in mountains. **I Wonder As I Wander** by John Jacob Niles, based on an Appalachian folk melody. **Climb to the Top of the Highest Mountain** is by Carolyn Jennings, a longtime faculty member at St. Olaf College.

Here are three popular carols of the 20th century. From the delightful “*Charlie Brown’s Christmas*” comes a favorite by the Vince Guaraldi Trio: **Christmas Time Is Here**. **Some Children See Him** is one of the carols Alfred Burt wrote every year for his family; this one says that we are all children of God. **White Christmas**, is of course from the 1942 movie “Holiday Inn.”

If you’ve been with us for other holiday concerts, you might recall that we always include some setting of the Latin words, “dona nobis pacem,” in English, “grant us peace.” This one is the last movement of Bach’s *Mass in B Minor*.



About

Chorus Polaris is a premier community choral ensemble based in the Twin Cities of Minnesota. In the “land of 10,000 choirs,” Chorus Polaris is an auditioned, adult community concert choir comprised of professional, semi-professional, and talented amateur singers. The 50+ voice choir presents music spanning nearly a thousand years – from the Renaissance to jazz, to classic and modern choral masterworks complete with orchestra.

Chorus Polaris celebrates 20 years of music making in 2026!

Find them at: <https://choruspolaris.org/>

Bells of the Lakes is a community handbell ensemble located in the Twin Cities of Minnesota directed by William H. Mathis, a nationally known conductor and arranger of handbell and choral music. It is a proud member of Handbell Musicians of America and supports the work and activities of Area 7.

Bells of the Lakes celebrates 30 years of handbell excellence in 2026!

Find them at: <https://bellsofthelakes.org/>

William H. (Bill) Mathis, Artistic Director for both Chorus Polaris and Bells of the Lakes, is a graduate of Westminster Choir College. He has served churches and colleges in the Midwest, New Jersey, California, and Oklahoma.

Bill is an active clinician, leading workshops or guest conducting in 35 states, including national events for the American Choral Directors Association, Choristers Guild, the American Guild of Organists, and teaching conferences. He has served on state boards of ACDA in California, Oklahoma, and Minnesota. His compositions are found in the catalogues of 15 music publishers. He is married to Carolynne Mathis, also a recently retired church musician. They have six children.

TEXTS

Gaudete

Gaudete, Gaudete!
Christus et Natus
Ex maria virgine,
Gaudete!
Tempus ad est gratiae,
Hoc quod optabamus;
Carmina laetitiae,
Devote redamus.
Deus homo factus est,
Natura mirante;
Mundus renovatus est
A Christo regnante.
Ezechiellis porta
Clausula pertransitur;
Unde lux est orta
Salus invenitur.
Ergo nostra cantio,
Psallat iam in lustro;
Benedicat Domino:
Salus Regi nostro.

Rejoice, Rejoice!
Christ is born
Of the virgin Mary,
Rejoice!
It is now the time of grace
That we have desired;
Let us sing songs of joy,
Let us give devotion.
God was made man,
And nature marvels;
The world was renewed
By Christ who is King.
The closed gate of Ezechiel
Has been passed through;
From where the light rises
Salvation is found.
Therefore let our assembly now sing,
Sing the Psalms to purify us;
Let us praise the Lord:
Greetings to our King.

O Magnum Mysterium

O magnum mysterium,
et admirabile sacramentum,
ut animalia viderent Dominum natum,
iacentem in praeseptio!
O beata virgo, cuius viscera
meruerunt portare
Dominum Christum.
Alleluia!

O great mystery,
and wonderful sacrament,
that animals should see the newborn Lord,
lying in a manger!
O blessed virgin, whose womb
was worthy to bear
the Lord Jesus Christ.
Alleluia!

Bells of the Lakes

William H. Mathis, Artistic Director

2025-26 Ringers

Jordan Buchholtz
Megan Brozenec
Jennifer Cadwell
Cynthia Clanton
Erik Freed
Laura Goulding
Kristin (KJ) Johnson
Eric Kvasnicka
Martha Mathis

Whitney Nagel
Akudo Omeoga
Laurie Pyle
Bridget Rands
Krista Riedel
Kristyn Svoboda
Laura Wahl
Scott Ward



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Our mission:

*to promote musical excellence in performance, collaboration,
and education through the medium of handbells.*

Make a tax-deductible donation to Bells of the Lakes:



EIN: 41-1845274

Bells of the Lakes Events

The annual ***BellFest!*** ringing event will be held March 7, 2026. Special guest conductor Matthew Compton will lead multiple bell ensembles in a day-long rehearsal with a free public concert in the afternoon!

More information can be found at: <https://bellsofthelakes.org/index.php/concerts/bellfest/>



Bells of the Lakes
Legacy in Bronze:
The Sound of Celebration
2026 Celebrating our 30th season

You're invited to help us
celebrate our 30th season!

Celebration Concert
special guests: Alumni of Bells of the Lakes

Sunday, April 26 @ 3 PM
Hennepin Ave United Methodist Church
511 Groveland Ave
Minneapolis, MN 55403

- Silent Auction
- Raffles
- Reception
- Celebration!



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Chorus Polaris

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Bitna Jeong, Collaborative Pianist

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Julie Crawford
Janine Emerick*
Becky Flory
Sarah Hemstad
Kristen Husby
Joy Jacobson
Cheryl Joseph
Emily LaPointe
Rebecca Margolis
Linda Ribbach
Elizabeth Richter
Suzy Schultz
Ava Sletten

ALTO

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Marcia Baurain
Rachel Biegel
Laura Coale*
Gail Gordon**
Alex Hassel
Esther Hope
Andrea Kircher
Carol Lacey
Robin McCormack
Maddie Mularky
Ije Omeoga
Nancy Petersen
Shelley Robbins
Barb Ruble
Satomi Shinde
Carol Stoops
Natalie Trahan
Jill Wilhelmi

TENOR

Alex Asp
Ralph Jacobson
Fred Jensen
Keith Liuzzi*
Warren Moe
Bill O'Brien
Frank Petersen
Jeff Saarela
Greg Trahan

BASS

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Steven Hodulik*
Josh Hunt
Nick Lewis
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Chorus Polaris Events

Saturday, February 14, 2026:

A Valentine Gala - An afternoon of beautiful entertainment, complete with a silent auction!

Hennepin Ave. UMC

511 Groveland Ave.

Minneapolis, MN 55403

Sunday, May 10, 2026:

Ode to Joy - Chorus Polaris joins the Mississippi Valley Orchestra as the chorus for Beethoven's Symphony No. 9.

Benson Great Hall, Bethel University

3900 Bethel Drive

Arden Hills, MN 55112



OUR MISSION:

to engage, connect, and strengthen communities through collaboration and educational outreach

Chorus Polaris is a premier community choral ensemble based in the Twin Cities of Minnesota, United States. In the “land of 10,000 choirs,” Chorus Polaris is an auditioned, adult community concert choir comprised of professional, semi-professional, and talented amateur singers. The 50+ voice choir presents music spanning nearly a millenium – from the Renaissance to jazz, to classic and modern choral masterworks complete with orchestra.

Chorus Polaris connects and engages with other community and professional artists to present programs of musical excellence for our audiences to enjoy.

Chorus Polaris is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization governed by a volunteer board of directors.

Make a tax-deductible donation to Chorus Polaris:



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Chorus Polaris, Inc.

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