

## Songs for the Soul

The Williamsport Civic Chorus will celebrate its 80<sup>th</sup> birthday on September 10<sup>th</sup>. In thinking about the organization's four score years, which is a longer span than the average American's life, we are humbled by how many generations of people in this area have sung with the Chorus at some point, or who have enjoyed our performances.

In this issue, you will read about stretching beyond our mortal lifetimes, both in terms of providing for future generations'

needs as well as by providing what is important for our souls.

The year's final concert, *Songs for the Soul*, will take place at 3 pm on Sunday, April 21<sup>st</sup>, in the lovely sanctuary of St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 142 Market Street, in Williamsport.

The setlist for the concert is filled with heartwarming music that will stir your soul. Among the pieces is the mournful "David's Lamentation." As the

program progresses, we'll fall in love with Mulholland's romantic arrangement of a tune first popularized by Doris Day, and we'll get patriotic with Edgerton's take on "The Star-Spangled Banner." There's an uplifting global flair too — from "Nigra Sum" to the Caribbean rhythms of "Jamaican Market Place." No matter your musical taste, these diverse and emotive performances are sure to move you. The soaring melodies of "God Bless America" and the tender "Dirait-on" will give you

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### Singers' Corner: Bridging to the Future at Longwood Gardens



## Know the Score



**Michael Connor**

The human voice is a remarkable instrument.

The scope of sounds that human mouths can make is quite remarkable. We are reminded of this daily.

In the choral arts, we get to experience the beauty of the human voice as it relates to music. It's a glorious thing.

We make music with our mouths. The air we breathe becomes the music. We are the human instrument. Sometimes one feels like we witness an organ of humans. Witnessing a choir of people is to peer into humanity itself and its development.

What is so important about what we do is that we share our music... Being in the presence of an expressive choir is an awesome jolt of humanity. Whether you've enjoyed singing or listening, it is an art form for humanity to keep.

For most of us reading this, one can assume we've enjoyed sung music at one point or another.

We are thankful for the choral arts. We are thankful for being able to make music that reflects what humans create. It's awesome to think about.

Each person's contribution to a chorus brings value that is compounded many-fold.

Called *Songs for the Soul*, our upcoming concert sheds light on the scope and range of music's effect on the human soul. While many people think upon the soul and commit the soul to purely religious ideas, we, as humans, and on the broader global scale, represent the soul in many ways. Our concert aims to touch and represent a broad array of topics that touch and represent the soul.

We are the music. We are society. We are Williamsport and the surrounding community.

So, this concert is meant to be impactful to the human soul on a personal level. The songs represent music that brings joy and sadness, anger and peace, life and death. Here are prayerful, peaceful moments nestled between joyful songs, as well as soul-searching works beside soul-nurturing ones.

Like us, our concert is seeking to reflect and touch us in impactful ways.

We hope that you will join us on April 21<sup>st</sup>.

### 81<sup>st</sup> SEASON

\* **Sunday, Nov. 24, 2024**  
3 pm

*Seasonal Music of Ola Gjeilo  
and Others*

St. Luke Lutheran Church  
1400 Market Street  
Williamsport

\* as part of the  
Victorian Christmas weekend

and

**April 2025**

TBA

*A Community Collaboration  
with the Repasz Band*

in Williamsport

Always (y)ours,

Mike 🎵

*"Know the Score" is provided for the enjoyment of our readers by Michael Connor who is in his ninth year as music director of the Williamsport Civic Chorus. With a master's degree from Bucknell University, he is a frequent vocal soloist and conductor in north central Pennsylvania.*



## Endowment Fund Campaign to Launch at Spring Concert

The WCC Endowment Fund Committee, chaired by Chorus member Darlene Connelly, is proud to announce its inaugural fundraising campaign. In the spirit of the Williamsport Civic Chorus' motto, "Music for the people, by the people," the Endowment Fund has been christened with its own tagline, "Music for all...Forever." The endowment will serve as a permanent financial resource for the Chorus, ensuring the longevity needed to support its music-making and music education mission for another 80 years and beyond.

The Chorus is truly grateful for the annual support it receives from members and other patrons, businesses, and granting organizations like the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. These gifts support the annual budget and provide the music and performances you have come to know and love throughout the years. The endowment will also consist of contributions from Chorus membership, the general public, arts support groups, granting bodies, and corporate entities. These gifts will be invested in perpetuity, and the earnings on the investment will be

used to support both existing and new initiatives.

Ambitious goals for the use of endowed funds have been set. They include performing at least one free concert each year, compensation for guest conductors, accompanists, and premier performance musicians, and the private commissioning of works to reflect the depth and musical diversity of our community. By expanding its audience, membership, and network of collaborative partners, the Civic Chorus is rededicating itself to fulfilling its mission of welcoming singers at every level of vocal achievement without audition, and entertaining listeners of all tastes, cultures, ethnicities and traditions.

Please join us for *Songs for the Soul* on Sunday, April 21<sup>st</sup>. You can look forward to an eclectic and evocative concert, as well as the official launch of the first Endowment Fund campaign. By supporting this endowed fund, you are helping to provide a stable and predictable source of income for the Chorus' future. Those interested in making a gift to the WCC Endowment Fund should contact the committee at

[wccendowment@gmail.com](mailto:wccendowment@gmail.com). All contributions to the WCC Endowment Fund are treated under the provisions of the Williamsport Civic Chorus' 501(c)(3) status, ensuring that donors will receive the corresponding tax benefits. 🎵



*The Williamsport Civic Chorus receives state arts funding support through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.*



Visit us:  
[williamsportcivicchorus.org](http://williamsportcivicchorus.org)

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

WILLIAMSPORT CIVIC CHORUS *is delighted to present*



*Songs*  
for the  
*Soul*

*Musical refreshment across a range of cultures*

Sunday April 21<sup>st</sup> 2024  
St. Mark's Lutheran Church  
3 pm  
(audience reception follows)



“The Williamsport Civic Chorus is an open community of singers dedicated to making fine music accessible to all through education, participation, and inspiration. Our diverse and inclusive membership welcomes all singers and listeners as we perform music from a wide range of cultures, ethnicities, and traditions.”

**Special Events**

*with and for the  
Williamsport Civic Chorus*



**Tuesday, June 11, 6:35 pm:** We will perform the National Anthem at the Crosscutters' Journey Bank Ballpark—Historic Bowman Field.

**Monday, August 12, 5:30 to 8 pm:** Annual singers' picnic at the Susquehanna State Park, followed by a Hiawatha Paddlewheel Riverboat cruise. Reservations required.

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chills. Rachmaninoff's gorgeous "Bogoroditse Devo" sung in Russian, and Burleigh's gospel-inspired "In Bright Mansions Above" will lift your spirits. We'll finish passionately with our own Michael Connor's original composition, "Invictus," and end with "Sing Gently" by Eric Whitacre, so get ready to hear captivating music that will fill heart and soul with joy!

Tickets for the April 21<sup>st</sup> concert may be purchased beginning on April 9<sup>th</sup> for \$8 (students and seniors) and \$10 (general admission) at the Otto Bookstore, R.M. Sides Family Music Center, and [online](#). Seats sold at the door will cost \$10 and \$12. As always, children under 12 as well as patron ticket holders will be admitted without charge. 