

The 50th Anniversary
Christmas Concert
of the
Carey Ecumenical
Choir



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2024

5:00 PM

BASILICA & NATIONAL SHRINE OF

Our Lady of Consolation

315 CLAY STREET • CAREY, OHIO • 43316



Our History

On March 25, 1970, a small blurb appeared in the Carey Progressor Times: **Community Choir to Be Organized**. All men and women older than high school age interested in forming a community choir were encouraged to attend a meeting in the band room of the high school. "All types of music will be sung," stated the blurb. Brother Paul Faroh, OFM Conv., the director of the Shrine Chorale, had attended a concert at the Fort Wayne cathedral and thought that forming a community choir in Carey would be a great idea. With inter-denominational collaboration between the local Catholic and Protestant groups having been a success in other facets of town life, organizing an ecumenical musical group was a great opportunity. Fast forward about eighteen months, and the Carey Ecumenical Choir as we know it today was preparing for its first ever Christmas concert.

In 1971, four local choir directors came together to lead the first Christmas concert: John Raymaley, director of the Christ Lutheran Church Choir and music teacher at Wynford High School; Ronald Croy, director of the Grace United Methodist choir and director of music at Vanlue Schools; James Roynon, director the Youth Choir of Memorial Methodist Church, and Brother Paul Faroh, OFM Conv., director of the Shrine Chorale at Our Lady of Consolation. The choir was accompanied by Mrs. Lyle Orians of Christ Lutheran Church, Sister Andrea Inkrott of Our Lady of Consolation, and Donna Orians of Grace Methodist. The first choir of over fifty singers presented a concert of a cappella works as well as some accompanied by organ and piano. That first concert on December 19, 1971, attended by almost 800 people, was a splendid success.

Following the success of the first concert, the Choir returned for its second concert in 1972. Although initial plans were to rotate the concert location amongst the area churches, the size of the audience in 1971 illustrated that only the basilica was large enough to accommodate the crowd. In 1972, the Carey Ecumenical Choir received the honor of singing for the taped Christmas Day Mass to be shown on Channel 13. The Mass was celebrated by Bishop John Donovan of the Diocese of Toledo. It was the first time in diocesan history that an ecumenical choir sang for a Catholic Mass celebrated by a bishop. The choir, numbering 76 members with nearly two-thirds being non-Catholics, had a little over a week to learn music and the order and flow of the liturgy.

For the next eleven years, concerts continued with membership consistently hovering between 60 and 70. Unfortunately in 1984, no director could be found, and no concert was presented. This truly proved to be the spark which ignited members of the community because 1985 was a fantastic return of the choir – nearly 100 singers joined to ensure the annual tradition made its reappearance!

In 1987, the Choir invited New York Metropolitan Opera tenor Robert Nagy and his wife, Vincenza, a soprano, as featured soloists. Sadly, they fell ill and were unable to attend; however, area vocalists stepped up to fill in and sang with the 90 member choir.

With a special Marian Year proclaimed by Pope John Paul II in 1988, the Basilica & Shrine scheduled special events to celebrate and commemorate the year since the basilica is under a title of Mary. As the kick-off of these monthly events at the Shrine, the choir presented the only Spring Concert in its

history on April 24. Sixty-six members joined this special edition of the Choir. That same year in December, portions of the Choir's 17th annual Christmas concert were featured on WBGU-TV on two separate occasions.

In 1991, a chapter closed in the choir's history. Celebrating its 20th anniversary, the choir bid farewell to Fr. Paul Faroh who was sent by the Franciscans to southern Indiana. Membership in the choir that year was 132 singers—the highest number in the choir's history up to that point. Throughout the 1990s, membership in the choir was at its all-time high with numbers each year averaging 130+. The choir celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1997. In 1998, the choir featured John Hines as a soloist. He was a Heidelberg College graduate and one of eight international finalists to perform in 1996 at Lincoln Center in New York City.

The 2000s brought significant changes to the Ecumenical Choir. Celebrating its 30th anniversary, the choir closed another chapter in 2001. Donna Orians, who had served as one of the principal accompanists, planning committee members, and the group's unofficial historian, "retired" from the choir. Even though she had fractured her right wrist in October, she still managed to rehearse. She had her cast off in early December and played for her final concert on December 16, 2001. The following year on December 15, 2002, John Raymaley directed his final concert with the Ecumenical Choir. The legacy that he had helped begin 32 years prior was still going strong with over 90 choir members in the choir that year. John and Jack Gerding, the current OLC Director discussed potential replacements and asked Patricia Murphy to replace John. She continues as a director to this day.

In 2007, northwest Ohio winter struck and postponed the concert. Originally scheduled for December 16, it had to be moved to the 23rd due to snow. Despite the weather hurdle from the previous week, John Raymaley, Donna Orians, Sr. Veronica Nowakowski, and Fr. Paul Faroh were able to return and attend the concert. For the first time, the OLC Children's Choir sang for the prelude. Three years later, the weather struck again and unfortunately for the first time in the choir's history, the concert had to be cancelled. In subsequent years, the concert time was moved earlier in the day so there would be some light outside for travel in case there was bad weather. This change proved to be helpful in rebuilding audience attendance and choir membership which had been waning somewhat the past few seasons. The rest of the 2010s continued with membership hovering between 80 and 100 members each year.

With the COVID pandemic of 2020, all the Arts came to a screeching halt and the Ecumenical Choir was certainly not exempt. Painful as it was, there were no concerts in 2020 or 2021 due to the pandemic. The following year, due to no director of music at OLC, a concert was not able to be held. Upon Anthony Gallina being hired at OLC in January of 2023, he and Patricia Murphy coordinated the return of the Choir for its 49th concert on December 10. Sixty-two singers joined to bring back the annual tradition.

The Ecumenical Choir is proud to present its 50th Anniversary Concert for you today. We give thanks to each and every person who has made this amazing ensemble a possibility over the last 53 years. Likewise, we give praise and glory to Jesus Christ our Savior for the gift of music and the ability to share that gift with each other and with you. Merry Christmas and God's blessings to you!

Our Program

*As a courtesy to everyone present, please silence all cell phones and other electronic devices.
We kindly ask that you hold your applause until the end of the concert.*

Prelude Music

Prelude music will begin at approximately 4:35.

*Enjoy Advent and Christmas selections for
Brass Quintet, Flute, Piano, & Organ*

Welcome & Opening Prayer

*Very Rev. Thomas Merrill, OFM Conv.,
Rector and Pastor of the Basilica & National Shrine of Our Lady of Consolation*

Processional for Christmas

Benjamin Harlan

*O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him, born the King of angels;
O come, let us adore him, O come let us adore him,
O come let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!*

Narration from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

Read by Keith Koehler

Is Your Heart Prepared for a King

Robert Lau

Emmanuel is Coming

Nancy Price & Don Besig

Prepare the Way of the Lord

William Rowan

Narration from the Book of the Prophet Micah

Read by Pam Ward

Will We Know Him When He Comes?

Nancy Price & Don Besig

Break forth, O beauteous heavenly light *from* Christmas Oratorio

J. S. Bach
arr. Alice Parker & Robert Shaw

Comfort, Comfort, These My People

Matthew Armstrong

*Desra Dabney, flute
Matthew Armstrong, conductor*

Offertory

What Child is This
arr. Charles Evans

Brass Quintet

Narration from the first chapter of the Gospel of Luke

Read by Dave Claborn

Ave Maria (Angelus Domini)

Franz Biebl

Stephen Christiansen, Bill Smesler, & Dave Yost, soloists

*Stephen Christiansen, Keight Gallina, Teresa Shumaker Logsdon, Bobbi Parker,
Vicki Reineck, Bill Smesler, Tracy Smesler, Jan Steinman, antiphonal choir*

Narration from the second chapter of the Gospel of Luke

Read by Kate O'Reilly

Angels' Carol

John Rutter

Coventry Carol

Howard Helvey

Ruth Coldwell & Joy Orians, piano for four hands

Of the Father's Love Begotten

Anthony Gallina

World Premiere



The Nativity by Giovanni Antonio Pellegrini (1725-1727)

*Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise; Join the triumph of the skies;
With th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"*

Choir: O Little Town of Bethlehem

*Angels we have heard on high sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply echo back their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Glorious in excelsis Deo!*

*Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing,
Come adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Glorious in excelsis Deo!*

Benediction & Closing Prayer

The Lord Bless You and Keep You

Peter C. Lutkin

John Raymaley, conductor

We invite all past members of the Carey Ecumenical Choir to join us for this final piece.

Our Donors

Ronald and Brenda Arbogast
Carl and Theresa Arnold
Charlene Beeler
Don and Ruth Caldwell
Julie and Stephen Christiansen
Dave and Alice Claborn
Anthony & Keight Gallina
Mack Gerschutz
Kevin Hammer
Barb and Neil Jordan
Matthew S. Jordan, DDS
Debbie and Larry Kisabeth
Keith Koehler Family
Mary Ann Kromer

Twila Laing
Teresa Shumaker Logsdon
Sr. Mary Patricia Miller
Mark and Pat Murphy
Mike and Carol O'Reilly
Karen Phillips
Runion, Thacker, Niese Families
Bill Smelser
Tracy Smelser
Linda Steen and Family
Stanley and Susan Stombaugh
Rick and Karen Strahm
Roger and Pam Ward in memory of Fr. Paul

Directors of the Ecumenical Choir

John Raymaley: 1971-1978, 1985-2002
Bro. (Fr.) Paul Faroh: 1971-1976, 1985-1991
James Roynon: 1971-1972
Ronald Croy: 1971
Donna Orians: 1972
Richard Geib: 1973
Bruce Koons: 1977-1978
Vince Brown: 1977-1978
Paul Giles: 1978, 1980
Matthew Armstrong: 1978-1979
Eileen Buckland: 1978-1983
Dave Mowery: 1979-1983
Bro. Ambrose Eischens: 1981-1982
Sr. Ritamarie Miller: 1983
Dennis Clark: 1985

William Seymour III: 1985
James Kitzler: 1985
Phil Lortz: 1986-1996
Karl Stephan: 1986-1990
Carolyn Huston: 1986-1988
Connie Goshe: 1987-1989
Christine Meyer: 1989-1990
Bev (Chapman) Roby: 1998-1999
Jack Gerding: 2000-2003, 2010-2019
Patricia Murphy: 2003-2019, 2023-present
Shawn Daly: 2004-2005
Travis Powell: 2006-2008
Matthew Walicke: 2009
Anthony Gallina: 2023-present

Thank You & Acknowledgments

We give thanks to:

God our heavenly Father, Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior, and the Holy Spirit our inspiration
who have blessed us with the gift of song

Matthew Armstrong & John Raymaley for returning and conducting at today's concert
Anthony Gallina for composing "Of the Father's Love Begotten" for the choir's 50th anniversary

The Conventual Franciscan Friars of Our Lady of Consolation
Christ Lutheran Church in Carey for providing our rehearsal space

Kate O'Reilly for rehearsal assistance & secretarial help
Ron Pahl, OLC Maintenance Director, for helping move the risers
Rosary Altar Society for decorating the basilica for the concert
OLC Office Staff for support

Angela Hutson and *The Progressor-Times* for the article and publicity
Tami Myers & Anne Gerber for helping coordinate the post-concert reception

Lora Kane for opening the OLC Gift Shop for extended hours today
Each and every choir member, director, accompanist, instrumentalist, soloist, and all other
supporters over the last fifty-three years who have made the Ecumenical Choir a continued success

All are welcome to come to the Shrine Cafeteria for a reception following the concert.

The Shrine Gift Shop is open following this concert until 7:30pm.

Mark your calendars for the 51st Annual Concert on December 14, 2025

May all of you have a wonderful remainder of Advent and a blessed Christmas season!

2024 Carey Ecumenical Choir



Anthony Gallina & Patricia Murphy, Directors
Ruth Coldwell, Accompanist
Kate O'Reilly, Rehearsal Assistant

**BELLEVUE**

Chris Walter

CALEDONIA

Jennie Dranschak

CAREY

Paula Blair

Janeen Boutwell

Teresa Shumaker

Logsdon

Carol McCarley

Lisa Miller

Patricia Niederkohr

Kate O'Reilly

Joy Orians

Deb Pergram-Walter

Karen Phillips

Lois Risner

Linda Steen

Susan Stombaugh

Daniel Walter

Pamela Ward

FINDLAY

Marcia Bello

Julie Christiansen

Stephen Christiansen

Vicki Reineck

Jan Steinman

Scott Stoepfel

FORT JENNINGS

Patty Ricker

FOSTORIA

Kevin Hammer

Bill Smesler

Tracy Smesler

Karen Strahm

Dave Yost

HARPSTER

Dennis Bumb

KANSAS

Anthony Gallina

Keight Gallina

LIMA

Fred Ryan

MARION

Jeannine Caudill

Dave Claborn

Ruth Coldwell

Amy Erickson

Twila Laing

Juanita Shuck

Mark Stoneburner

Mary Stoneburner

MCCOMB

Heather Routson

MORRAL

Marilyn Forry

NEW RIEGEL

Mack Gerschutz

OTTAWA

Bobbi Parker

TIFFIN

Fran Genet

Rachel Herron

Neil Jordan

Debbie Kisabeth

Mary Anne Kromer

Sr. Mary Patricia Miller

Sue Pfaff

Regina Runion

UPPER SANDUSKY

Ronald Arbogast

Charlene Beeler

Lynda Capelle

Diana Craft

Keith Koehler

Diane Welly

Patricia Murphy

WHARTON

Dave Fadley

Susan McClain

Terry McClain

VANLUE

Freddi Kear

Audrey Walter

Instrumentalists

**TRUMPET**

Tad Day
Tom Guernsey

HORN

Don Guernsey

TROMBONE

Robert Hoff

TUBA

Richard Haar

FLUTE

Desra Dabney

PIANO

Joy Orians

ORGAN

Anthony Gallina

