

PSALM

Pan-Orthodox Singers And Liturgical Musicians

Volume 1, #1

N * O * T * E * S

Spring 1996

What is PSALM?

*Alice Hughes and Anne Schoepp
Ben Lomond, California*

PSALM is a group of Pan-Orthodox Singers And Liturgical Musicians from all over North America who have been working towards the formation of an association of Orthodox liturgical musicians from all traditions. This newsletter is the product of our work thus far, and we believe it will be the primary means for greater communication between musicians working in our churches. We began in February, 1995, with the following mission statement and goals:

Mission Statement:

To form a pan-Orthodox network for liturgical singers and musicians to grow spiritually, liturgically, and musically in their ministry. To more fully manifest the richness, depth, and beauty of Orthodox worship so that we may fittingly proclaim the love of God and offer worship that is pleasing to Him.

Goals:

- To inspire enthusiasm for the ministry of liturgical singing
- To train singers spiritually, liturgically, and musically
- To provide means of communication between church musicians of all traditions

We, the choir directors at Ss. Peter and Paul Orthodox Church in Ben Lomond, California, began the project having become aware of the need for Orthodox musicians to be in communication with each other at both local and national levels. Our parish has benefited immensely from our interaction with other Orthodox musicians from a variety of backgrounds. After attending many music conferences and meeting other musicians who also enjoy working together, and desire more interaction, we decided to pursue forming an organization. We presented a proposal which included the above goals and mission statement to His Grace Bishop BASIL (Essey), who was at that time acting as the head of the Department of Sacred Music in our Antiochian Archdiocese. He gave us his blessing to gather names of inter-

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The Ministry of Church Singers Part I

*His Grace Bishop BASIL (Essey)
excerpts from a lecture given at the
Liturgical Singing Seminar, March, 1995
St. Luke Orthodox Church, Garden Grove, California*

There are few ministries of the Church that require the devotion and the dedication that church singing does. You who lead the singing as well as you who follow the leader are precious gifts to your parishes. You are as important to the parish as is the holy table itself. As there can be no liturgy without the holy table, there can be no liturgy without you. This is not to compliment you or increase your pride, but rather to put a little fear and awe in you, so you know what your responsibilities are.

Church singing is not a hobby. Being a choir director is not something one does for personal fulfillment. It is first and foremost a duty, a duty of those to whom God has given musical talents. It is sinful, in my opinion, for someone not to sing who has been given the gift to sing. Sinful! You join the angels, and do that which the angels do perpetually. That's not an interest, avocation, or a hobby; it is a duty. Angels were created to serve and to praise, and you have been given voices for that same purpose.

I love to remind our church singers of the fact that we physically jump into something that goes on perpetually. We jump in and join with the angels for a couple of hours, and then we jump back out. The liturgy does not begin with "Blessed is the Kingdom" and your "Amen," and it doesn't end with "Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers" and your "Amen." Those phrases only define the time that we participate in the liturgy which goes on perpetually before the throne of God.

We've been told that singers should listen to each other for a good blend. The tenors should listen to each other, and then the tenors should listen to the sopranos. The sopranos ought to listen to the altos, etc., etc. That's fine for the street. For the church singer it is not the tenor, alto, or soprano who stands next to you we need to listen to, but the angels who lead us in our singing. Those are the voices we need to hear and with which

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ested musicians from all jurisdictions and to accept donations for seed money to get started. We spoke to the leaders of music in the Greek, Antiochian and OCA archdioceses about our ideas. We then presented our ideas at the following music conferences in 1995:

- Liturgical Singing Seminar at St. Luke Orthodox Church in Garden Grove, California
- St. Vladimir’s Summer Institute of Liturgical and Pastoral Practice in Crestwood, New York
- Greek Choir Federation National Forum in Long Beach, California

We also did a mass mailing to over 750 people and churches. The response we received was very encouraging. We received over a hundred response forms and \$849 from people interested and committed to the idea of an association. (Several of these people contributed material for this first issue of PSALM Notes.) In the fall of 1995, His Grace Bishop DEMETRI was assigned to the Department of Sacred Music in the Antiochian Archdiocese. He also gave us his support for this project and his blessing to proceed with a newsletter as the most efficient means of continued communication.

PSALM Notes can begin to meet the above goals by providing a national calendar of events, articles by the Church Fathers and contemporary authors, information and reviews of recordings, books, etc., resource information, reports on events such as conferences and community events, and advertisements for recordings and musical/liturgical publications. It can also become a forum for those interested in beginning new projects.

With your participation, PSALM can be much more than just a newsletter. With help, within the next year, we can publish a directory of Orthodox choir directors, chanters, composers, musicologists, etc. Working together, we can encourage local events such as conferences, training seminars, and concerts. Working together, we can develop libraries, resources, and publications, sharpen our skills, share our knowledge, and so much more!

We at Ss. Peter and Paul are committed to publishing this newsletter at least twice a year. We also are willing to spearhead a directory project, but will need help to make this happen. Others can take on projects that interest them. Through PSALM Notes, we can connect those interested in working on similar projects. We can begin by sharing what is already happening. Please subscribe by returning the form on page 7. We would like to send this first issue to every Orthodox church in the country. If you would like to make a contribution which would allow us to do this, please send it with your subscription.

Calendar information, reviews, reports on current events or local activities, advertisements, comments, suggestions, or other materials for the next issue of PSALM Notes can be sent to: PSALM Notes, Ss. Peter and Paul Orthodox Church, P.O. Box 458, Ben Lomond, CA 95005. Deadline for the fall issue is September 1. ✚

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we blend our voices. What can sound beautiful to us can sound like cacophony at the throne of God, if we are not singing with the angels.

St. John Chrysostom tells us that while the priesthood is something that takes place here on earth, and is an ordinance established here on earth, yet it is something that is super-heaven, because the priest and the deacon do that which angels dare not do. The angels stand in awe, not at the priest or bishop or deacon, but at what they’ve been permitted to do by God’s grace. If John Chrysostom wrote a book on choirs, as he did on the priesthood, I’m sure he would say that while being a choir member, cantor, or reader is something earthly, it is also something heavenly. That the angels stand there, perhaps not in awe, but at least with a little bit of jealousy, because you who are flesh and blood have been called upon to serve in the same ministry that they have been created for.

It’s a holiness. It’s not *your* ministry. It’s a ministry that belongs to the Church, and you respond to the call as well as recognize the gift which has been given you. The ministry which you specifically fulfill in the church was, traditionally, and in some sense still is, an ordained ministry. The choir was not some club that existed in Church for those with some particular musical talent. To be a church singer was an ordained office within the Church. Canon 15, from the Council of Nicea, the Council of the 4th century, makes its point clear that only canonical singers should be appointed for that kind of ministry in the Church. That means “one set apart” for that particular ministry. Today we might call them Readers. While I’m not saying that every choir member must be a tonsured Reader, I do say that if we fulfill at least the spirit, if not the law of the Canon, that each choir member ought to see his/her participation in the choir as seriously as the ordained clergy take their ministry. I don’t know any priest who thinks that he can say on some Sunday, “I don’t want to serve because I want to sit with my wife,” or, “I don’t feel like serving today,” or, “I’m angry, one of the altar boys offended me, so I don’t want to serve this morning.”

As seriously as the ordained clergy need to take their ordination, so you ought to as church singers. Canonically, they are an order of the Church, to begin with. I’m not proposing that we fulfill the letter of the law by having you all ordained, but I think we ought to at least incarnate the spirit of the law, which implies a great responsibility, a great sense of duty and a privilege that is given to him or her as a church singer. This, then, should create in all of us, whether or not we are ordained clergy, a real sense of humility. We should give thanks that God has been pleased to call us who were created from the dust of this earth to participate in the heavenly liturgy and to offer up praises with His angels to join in the perpetual hymn of “Holy, holy, holy.”

We jump in and we jump out. Some of us jump in on

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RESOURCES

Resource Guide for the Orthodox Liturgical Musician

Walter G. Obleschuk
Boston, Massachusetts

Over the centuries the Orthodox Church has maintained its tradition of liturgical prayer. Its theology is clearly expressed through the liturgical texts used in its worship (i.e. corporate prayer).¹ At times, the complexities of Orthodox liturgical worship can be overwhelming for the beginning practitioner. It is easiest to follow the order of service prescribed in the annual rubrics (liturgical calendars). Unfortunately, this practice, while maintaining liturgical order, does not reveal the meaning of what is being done and why. Service books are often consulted, but the non-liturgical portions² are frequently overlooked. *The Festal Menaion*,³ well-known as an English translation of the services of the Great Feasts, is commonly included in most libraries and collections of liturgical books for use in preparing festal services. Its non-liturgical portions are an excellent guide to the intricacies of Orthodox worship.

The Festal Menaion contains a Preface in three parts and an Appendix in four parts which provide a wealth of information. In the translators' preface, Mother Mary and Bishop Kallistos give a detailed description of their translation process.⁴ The second preface is a superb essay entitled "The Worshipping Church," by the eminent theologian Archpriest Georges Florovsky, in which he describes liturgical piety and worship from an Orthodox perspective. The introductory material concludes with "The Orthodox Services and Their Structure," which is subdivided into four sections. In the first section, the cycles of worship (daily, weekly, etc.) are defined and explained. The second lists the Feasts of the Lord and those of the Mother of God, along with their pre-festal and post-festal periods. The third section, "The Background and Meaning of the Feasts," is an extensive explanation of the feasts contained in the main body of the work. The last section contains plans of services and possible variations (daily, festal, Sunday, etc.), concluding with a translation of the Common of the Vigil (the unchanging portion of Vespers and Matins).

The Appendix is divided into four sections. The first section contains information on the subdivisions of the Psalter and a chart of the psalm readings throughout the liturgical year. The second appendix lists the Service Books of the Orthodox Church, with a brief description and their Greek and Slavonic titles. The third section is a glossary of terms pertaining to Orthodox worship; especially valuable to church musicians are the listings of the names of hymns and their Greek and Slavonic equivalents. The last appendix concerns the calendar.

The Festal Menaion is an indispensable source to those who wish to gain a greater understanding of the liturgical life of the Orthodox Church. Its copious footnotes offer valuable information on scriptural references and differences in Greek and Slavic liturgical practice. The contents of the supplementary material of *The Festal Menaion* make excellent topics for discussion for adult education classes and choir rehearsals. For those who wish to learn more about the worship of the Orthodox Church, *The Festal Menaion* is an excellent place to begin.

Future articles will present more sources of information pertaining to Orthodox worship and church singing. If you have specific questions, please submit them to: Walter G. Obleschuk, c/o Holy Trinity Orthodox Cathedral, 165 Park Drive, Boston, MA 02215. Questions will be answered as time and space permit. ✚

1. Although the private use of these texts for prayer and study is encouraged.
2. The preface, appendix, and other supplementary materials.
3. Mother Mary and Archimandrite (Bishop) Kallistos Ware, translators (London, 1969).
4. This includes reasons for the translation, sources consulted, and other considerations.

From the Editors...

Walter G. Obleschuk has agreed to be the Resource Editor for PSALM Notes. He is a third-generation Orthodox choir director of Ukrainian-American ancestry. Mr. Obleschuk, who holds a degree in Music Theory and History from Westchester University (Pennsylvania), is a composer and arranger of Orthodox Church music based on traditional chant melodies. Since 1986, he has been the musical director at Holy Trinity Orthodox Cathedral in Boston (OCA). Prior to his current position, he was musical director at St. Herman of Alaska Orthodox Church in Wallingford, Pennsylvania. In addition, he is the director and founder of the Holy Trinity Chorale, a Boston-area ensemble which specializes in the music of American Orthodoxy. We are excited to have him be a regular part of this newsletter. ✚

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June 20 - 23

Choir Conference, San Francisco Greek Orthodox Diocese Choir Federation, Oakland, California. Conducting and chanter workshops. Information: Tikey Zes (408) 723-0640

June 24 - 28

St. Vladimir's Seminary Summer Institute, Crestwood, New York. "The Church in Orthodox Doctrine, Worship, and Spiritual Life." Dr. Jessica Suchy-Pilalis, guest speaker (music track). Information: (914) 961-8313

July 7 - 13

Choral Techniques Workshop, Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, New York. Rehearsal skills and knowledge of sacred choral literature. Information: Rev. Dn. Andre Papkov, (315) 894-6274.

July 14 - 27

Summer School of Liturgical Music, Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, New York. Intensive training for choir director/readers. Full course requires three summers with academic credit available. Information: Rev. Dn. Andre Papkov, (315) 894-6274.

July 18

Church Music Institute, "Development and creative implementation children's choirs," Mid-Eastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Church Choirs, Canton, Ohio. Information: George Raptis, 17516 Fairfield, Detroit, MN 48221.

July 19 - 21

Choir Conference, Mid-Eastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Church Choirs, Canton, Ohio. Ted Bogdanos, guest conductor. Information: George Raptis, 17516 Fairfield, Detroit, MN 48221.

August 15 - 18

Sacred Music Institute at Antiochian Village, Ligonier, Pennsylvania. "Let us lay aside all earthly care." Fr. Sergei Glagolev, guest speaker. Information: (412) 238-3677.

October 2-6

10th Annual Russian Orthodox Liturgical Music Conference, Radisson Miyako Hotel, San Francisco, California. Information: A. Cabading (415) 386-3652 or I. Krishpinovich e-mail - krispi@ix.netcom.com

October, TBA

IOCC Benefit Choral Concert - San Francisco Bay Area, St. Stephen's Antiochian Orthodox Church, San Jose.

TBA

Church Music Institutes, San Francisco Greek Orthodox Diocese Choir Federation, August in Phoenix, Arizona and in the Los Angeles area in the Fall. Information: Tikey Zes (408) 723-0640

CONFERENCES

Sacred Music Institute 1995

*Antiochian Department of Sacred Music
Antiochian Village, Ligonier, Pennsylvania*

Anne Schoepp, Ben Lomond, California

Last summer's Sacred Music Institute began with an encouragement from His Grace Bishop DEMETRI for choirs to study with understanding the hymns we sing, for it is our hymns that communicate the teaching of the church. Hymns have always been a part of Christian worship, and choir's ministry is to lead the singing prayerfully.

The Sacred Music Institute boasts a large assortment of classes to choose from, including beginning and advanced music training, as well as liturgical training. I found Fr. Elias Bitar's two chanting sessions extremely well organized, easy to follow and informative for an

introduction to Byzantine chant. Fr. Alkiviades Calivas from Holy Cross Seminary unveiled theological treasures within the services of Holy Week, helping us to begin to understand what we sing. Musical training ranged from conducting classes complete with video taping (Norman Mamey & James Meena), to "Extending the vocal range" (Nancy Hanna) and "Voice placement for choirs" (Al Hazeem). It would be impossible to list or comment on all the offerings. It's a packed schedule, with daily Liturgy and Vespers, plenty to learn, and the large group singing is always uplifting! ✚

St. Vladimir's Summer Institute 1995

Ruth Rutledge, Huntington Beach, California

Last summer I had to make a difficult decision. I was expecting my first child and I wasn't sure if I should go to the St. Vladimir's 1995 Liturgical Institute. I'm See "CONFERENCES" on next page

“CONFERENCES” continued

glad I did! The focus of the Institute was “Monasticism: Impact on Orthodox Worship and Spiritual Life.” It was not only the lectures that were inspiring: it was also having the opportunity to discuss central issues in Orthodoxy with other musicians, clergy and monastics. It helped me to realize how important growth of monasticism is in America and how monastics have had such a central role in the development of Orthodox worship over the centuries.

Some of the most memorable times were the conversations over a meal or walking back to the dorms. The Institute gave me the opportunity to discuss issues that are important to me: How can we work together as Orthodox musicians? What can I do to encourage musical growth at my own parish? What is happening in Orthodox churches in other parts of America?

It was inspiring to learn that monasticism is growing, that other Orthodox are facing many of the same struggles that we deal with on a local level, and that we have the continual prayers of the monastics and the saints to support our humble efforts. ✚

St. Vladimir’s Summer Institute 1996

Diane Prokipchiak, Albuquerque, New Mexico

The 1996 St. Vladimir’s Seminary Institute is June 23 - 28th. This year’s topic is “The Church in Orthodox Doctrine, Worship and Spiritual Life.” For the Orthodox singer/musician, St. Vladimir’s Seminary Summer Institute offers a unique opportunity to learn more about Orthodoxy and improve Orthodox music skills while enjoying Orthodox fellowship. There are parallel pastoral and music tracks with some combined sessions. Music sessions focus on the musical aspects of the Institute theme. The week also includes workshops in choir directing, composition, rehearsal techniques, chant and liturgics. Choir rehearsals are held during the evening or afternoon.

For both beginning and experienced conductors and singers, the Institute is a fabulous opportunity to learn new skills, get new ideas, acquire new music, make new friends, and sing a variety of music. We sing daily Matins and Vespers and a Divine Liturgy during the week.

Registration, room and meals run about \$425. To obtain a detailed schedule and tuition information call: (914) 961-8313. New York in June is hot and humid, so a small fan is a good item to bring along. The dorm rooms are comfortable, but if you have trouble climbing hills, let them know so you can be placed in a central dormitory. I hope to see you there! ✚

Liturgical Singing Seminar 1996

Betsy Tumbas, Walnut Creek, California

The third annual West Coast Liturgical Singing Seminar was held on Friday and Saturday, February 9 and 10, 1996, at Ss. Peter and Paul Orthodox Church in Ben Lomond, California. Close to 100 participants from

all parts of California and out-of-state (Idaho, New Mexico, Texas, Indiana, Alaska—even Saskatchewan) gathered for two days of workshops, lectures and worship. Featured speakers and practicum leaders included Vladimir Morosan, Tikey Zes, Fr. David Anderson, Anne Schoepp, and Alice Hughes.

The Seminar, as in the past, was nicely balanced between lectures for all participants and smaller group sessions. Daily worship framed the lectures and workshops with third hour prayers or Matins and Divine Liturgy, and Vespers. Vladimir Morosan spoke on “Performance Practice of Russian Chant,” and Tikey Zes presented “Byzantine Music Theory.” Fr. David Anderson led a small group session devoted to Byzantine Chant and also spoke to the entire group Saturday afternoon about “Services of Holy Week,” focusing on the need to gladly enter into these services, rather than to simply survive them. Other practica were beginning and advanced conducting and “Singing and Conducting Chant” with Anne Schoepp. Alice Hughes presented “Selecting and Adapting Music for Small Choirs” and “Vocal Technique.” In addition, the group rehearsed antiphonal choirs for Saturday evening Great Vespers, as well as singing through Paschal troparia in several languages.

As in the prior Liturgical Singing Seminars, participants were exposed to a wonderful variety of Orthodox music, sound guidelines and useful tips, as well as theological insights. As Vladimir Morosan expressed it, “Orthodox music is a tradition in transition: we still have a long way to go.”

Video and audio cassettes are available from: Ss. Peter and Paul Orthodox Church, PO Box 458, Ben Lomond, CA 95005 or call (408) 336-2228. ✚

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time and some of us jump in a little bit late. In my opinion, being in church for that first “Amen” is a sign, an indication of one’s humility. And where humility is, indeed, a virtue, its opposite is a sin. The sin is not disturbing other people. The other people in the church are not the object of our worship. It is rude, but not necessarily sinful, to disturb other people. But it is sinful to be presumptuous and prideful that one can jump in and sing with thousands of archangels and ten-thousands of angels at one’s own whim. “This Sunday I feel like singing, and next Sunday I won’t sing, I want to sit with my wife.” Leave that Hallmark—card kind of sentimentality for restaurants, concerts, and cinemas. You sing with angels, that’s secondary to sitting with any husband or wife or children. We stand before the throne of God, and when we realize that, every other consideration, all of our own personal likes and dislikes, become secondary. I’m giving my opinion now, and hopefully it humbles all of us. It’s a humiliation, that in its end, should be something that elevates us, that exalts us, something that gives us wing. ✚

REVIEWS

Chants From Valaam

*Choir of the Brethren of the Valaam Monastery, ©1994
(Sung in Slavonic)*

Reviewed by Walter G. Obleschuk

According to tradition, in the first century St. Andrew-the-First-Called blessed the islands of Valaam in Lake Ladoga. As early as 960, Saints Sergius and Herman of Valaam came to Karelia from Byzantium and founded a monastic community on the main island, where St. Andrew had placed a cross. Despite falling prey to various enemies over the centuries, the monastery was repeatedly rebuilt and continued to flourish. In 1793, during one of the periods of Valaam's prosperity, monks from the monastery joined the mission being sent to Alaska. Among them was a simple monk named Herman, now known as St. Herman of Alaska, the first American saint. At the time of the Russian Revolution of 1917, Valaam was on the Finnish side of the border and was thereby spared the destructive fate of many monasteries in Russia. During World War II, however, Valaam was abandoned as the Soviets approached and the monastery was quickly re-established as New Valamo in central Finland. In 1989, fittingly on the feast of St. Andrew, four monks and two novices arrived at Old Valaam to revive monasticism, finding the monastery in appalling condition. Despite limited resources, the monastic community has grown to more than eighty men.

Chants From Valaam is a recording of the current monastic choir of Old Valaam. The singing is a synthesis of Slavic and Byzantine elements. Traditional Slavic melodies (Znamenny, Kievan and Valaam Chant) are sung either in unison or with the Byzantine *ison* (holding tone). Whether through a conscious effort to return to Byzantine roots or out of pure practicality (the need for fewer singers), this combination proves highly effective.¹ This is not innovation, but restoration—recent research by Russian musicologists has shown that the *ison* was employed in Russian church singing in the past.

The hymns are grouped into main categories: "Selected Hymns from the Services and Triodia" (Lent and Pascha) and "Hymns of the All-Night Vigil." The very first hymn, "Behold the Bridegroom comes at midnight..." clearly sets the tone. The combination of the Kievan melody used in many Slavic parishes sung with

ison is at the same time original, yet familiar. The setting of "Remain with us, O Lord of Hosts," is of particular interest. The psalm verses and refrains are sung in the Valaam melody with *ison* and the concluding *stichera* are then sung in unison. The singing is rhythmic and displays the subdued joy of the 'Lenten spring' and not the gloominess displayed in popular Lenten piety. Throughout this recording, whenever *ison* is employed, the text is not only sung by the chanter, but the *isocrats* (holders of the *ison*) as well. Therefore, text is conveyed with clarity and not obscured by the *ison*. For those who wish to make an historical comparison, "Let my prayer arise..." "Bless the Lord..." and "It is truly meet..." which appear on this recording, also appear on **Orthodox Church Music from Finland (Vol. 1)** *Ikon Records, IKO 4F*, as sung by monks of pre-World War II Valaam.

This recording has minor flaws. Either the microphone placement picked up too much ambient sound of a highly resonant acoustical space, or the original recording was electronically enhanced to simulate a resonant space, and the engineer got a bit carried away. In either case, this is only a minor distraction, and it is quickly overlooked when full attention is paid to the singing. Another consideration is that each hymn is well documented as to its context within a service, but there is no mention of the source of the melodies. I found that many of the melodies (or variants) are taken from the single-voice chant book published in 1909 at the Valaam Monastery, although unfortunately, this volume is not well documented.

Chants from Valaam is a worthwhile recording to add to any collection of Orthodox church music. Not only does the recording merit attention in its own right, but the proceeds benefit the Valaam Monastery Restoration Project. In the past, Orthodoxy in America has benefited from the labors of Valaam monks. By purchasing **Chants from Valaam** we can begin to repay Valaam for what has been given to us. ✚

Available from: Conciliar Press, P.O. Box 76, Ben Lomond, CA 95005 or (800) 967-7377.

1. The use of unison singing and *ison* could be one solution to the problem that many American parishes face today, i.e. too few singers. Caution should be exercised, however, since many Americans are accustomed to 4-part singing and this style of singing may sound "foreign" or even alienate worshippers, although it is a traditional manner of Orthodox church singing.

PSALM Notes

Managing Editor: Alice Hughes
Associate Editors: Anne Schoepp
 Vladimir Morosan
Resource Editor: Walter G. Obleschuk

The articles and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors. While the editors assume responsibility for the selection of the articles included, the authors assume responsibility for facts and interpretations that appear in their articles.

Are you interested in being the editor for the calendar, conferences, reviews or community activity columns? Let us know.

PSALM Notes, P.O. Box 458, Ben Lomond, CA 95005

CHOIRS IN THE COMMUNITY

International Orthodox Christian Charities Benefit Choir Festival

Angie Kreta, Walnut Creek, California

On Saturday, August 26, 1995, singers from all over the San Francisco Bay area gathered in Ben Lomond, California for a festival of liturgical music hosted by Ss. Peter and Paul Antiochian Orthodox Church. St. Stephen's Antiochian Orthodox Church Choir sang beautiful Byzantine music in English as well as other liturgical music. The Choir of Ss. Peter and Paul performed pieces from their latest CD, "Rejoice, O Virgin," and the Ss. Peter and Paul Youth Choir delighted the audience with their young voices. Choir members from the St. Elias Mission in Placerville, California joined with the other choirs to form a combined choir which performed a variety of liturgical music, including Paschal Troparia in several languages, Bortniansky's "Glory to God", and "Alleluia" by Fr. Sergei Glagolev. After an evening of fellowship and dinner, Great Vespers was served with all participants singing in antiphonal choirs. Many of the singers stayed overnight and sang at the Liturgy. All proceeds benefited the International Orthodox Christian Charities and almost one hundred people became members of that worthwhile charitable organization. We are looking forward to the IOCC Choir Festival 1996 which will be in October hosted by St. Stephen's Antiochian Orthodox Church in San Jose, California. ✚

Cappella Romana

Mark Powell, Seattle, Washington

Founded in 1991, **Cappella Romana** is a vocal chamber ensemble dedicated to exploration of the musical traditions of the Christian West and East, with emphasis on early and contemporary music. Flexible in its size according to the demands of the repertory, Cappella Romana consists of some of the finest professional singers in the Pacific Northwest. The ensemble has a special commitment to mastering the difficult Slavic and

Byzantine repertories in their original languages, thereby making accessible to the public two great musical traditions that are little-known in the West. Leading scholars have supplied the group with their latest discoveries, while its music director has prepared a number of the ensemble's performing editions from original sources. In the field of contemporary music, Cappella Romana has taken a leading role in bringing to West Coast audiences the works of such European composers as Michael Adamis, Arvo Pärt and John Tavener, as well as in promoting the works of North Americans.

Cappella Romana made its debut in April, 1991, with two enthusiastically received benefit concerts of "Orthodox Music: Ancient and Modern" in Portland and San Francisco. Since that time, the ensemble has offered an annual concert series in Portland, featuring works ranging from medieval chant and polyphony to 20th-century choral and chamber music. In the winter of 1993, the group also began offering a series of concerts in Seattle, Washington. These concerts, which have included numerous world and American premieres, have been consistently praised by critics in both Northwest cities for their unusual and innovative programming.

Founder and director, Alexander Lingas, is an active performer and scholar of Western and Byzantine music. After receiving a B.A. with a double major in music composition and Russian language from Portland State University, he continued his studies at the University of British Columbia, where he is presently a Ph.D. candidate in historical musicology. Mr. Lingas has received a number of academic awards, including a Fulbright Student Grant for musical studies in Greece with noted cantor Lycourgos Angelopoulos and a three-year Social Services and Humanities Research Council of Canada Doctoral Fellowship. During the 1995-96 academic year he will be a Fellow in Byzantine Studies at Harvard University's Dumbarton Oaks Research Center in Washington, D.C. Mr. Lingas has also composed music for the Orthodox Church and has served as a cantor in Portland, San Francisco, and Vancouver, British Columbia ✚

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Rejoice, O Virgin

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This recording features hymns to the
Mother of God which express her
role in our salvation and the Church's
love for her. The music is drawn from
various traditions and includes sev-
eral new Byzantine arrangements.

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Directed by

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