

# music at St. John's

## Gloriae Dei Cantores

On Tuesday, October 28 and on Thursday, October 30, Columbia was treated to a unique musical experience. Through the joint sponsorship of St. John's, Mt. Tabor Lutheran Church, and Ebenezer Lutheran Church, the singers of the internationally acclaimed choral ensemble *Gloriae Dei Cantores* visited the city for a workshop in the singing of Gregorian chant and for a marvelous concert of sacred music ranging from works of the fifth century after Christ to the compositions of living composers.

*Gloriae Dei Cantores* is a unique choir that has grown out of the ministry of the Church of the Transfiguration, on Cape Cod. The church is home to both an abbey and a monastery, and the services are attended by local laity as well. The choir, which leads worship weekly at the Church of the Transfiguration, is composed of nuns, friars, and laypersons. Elizabeth Patterson, the choir's current director, has continued to lead the ensemble to greater prominence through extensive national and international tours, and by virtue of a discography that now numbers some forty-five titles. Under Ms. Patterson's leadership, the choir has consistently been praised for its interpretive vision and musicality.

### Gregorian Chant Workshop

The Tuesday night event was a primer in the singing of Gregorian Chant and was open to all members of the general public. The evening was attended by approximately seventy-five guests, all desirous of learning the basics of reading chant notation and performing chant in a church setting. The workshop was led by members of the *Gloriae Dei Cantores Schola*, a small group of singers drawn from the larger choir who specialize in the study and performance of Gregorian chant. Under the able and good-humored leadership of *Schola*, guests first learned to read and understand the somewhat unusual notation of Gregorian chant, a skill *Schola* presented as knowing "The Gregorian Highway Code."

Many of us, whether musicians or not, see the music printed in our church hymnal without giving much thought to what the lines and dots mean or how that method of notating music actually arose. The development of chant began before there was any form of writing down the music or any ideas about its performance. So chant was learned by hearing and performed from memory. That is why the members of the *Schola* assured guests that "if you can talk, you can chant." Workshop attendees learned several pieces of chant, in Latin, that would later be used in a sung service of Compline. St. John's Chancel Choir, with all members in attendance, learned a chant suitable for performance in the Christmas season. The sung Compline, lead by *Schola*, with all workshop attendees chanting responses and hymns, was a deeply moving experience that was in no way hindered by its being sung in Latin. Following the workshop, a delightful reception was offered by St. John's Choir for *Gloriae Dei Cantores* and all workshop guests. One of the most rewarding aspects of the social time together was that it allowed choristers and visitors to get to know many of the *Gloriae Dei Cantores* musicians personally, and learn more of their wonderful ministry through music.

### Concert

On Thursday night, the entire ensemble performed a concert of sacred music at Mt. Tabor Lutheran Church in West Columbia. Singing with beautiful technique and mastery of several styles and languages, the choir offered a program that ran literally from Gregorian chant to music of the twentieth century, from a text of the fourth century after Christ, to sacred works of still-living composers. Of particular beauty and interest were sections dedicated to English composers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, William Byrd, Thomas Tallis, and Richard Dering, and to great Russian composers of the Orthodox tradition, Pavel Chesnokov, Pyotr Tchaikovsky, and Sergei Rachmaninoff. Throughout the extraordinary performance, it was inspiring to reflect on the fact that all of the music produced in the Christian experience, from the mighty masses of the Russian Orthodox Church to the hymns we sing each Sunday at St. John's are constructed on the single foundation of Gregorian chant.



# parish life

## Happy Birthday Isaiah Knight!

Mr. Isaiah Knight has been our Sunday sexton for many year's. Dec. 13 he will celebrate his 80th birthday. On Sunday, Dec. 14 immediately following the 9:00 a.m. service St. John's will have a reception honoring him. It will take place in the Barr Center Dining Room. There is no adult Sunday School that day. Please come celebrate the life of this faithful man.

### Connections

*St. John's young couples group* will gather on Wednesday, Dec. 10, 7 p.m at the home of Ashley and Scott Jaillette, 618 South Woodrow Street. Everyone is invited to bring a covered dish and a gift for a white elephant exchange. Newcomers always welcome. Contact Ashley Jaillette at 331-5491.

### Keenagers

Keenagers luncheon will be Tuesday, Dec. 16 featuring - *Gospel Sextet-Spirit's Call*.

*Spirit's Call* is a gospel sextet from the Irmo area. They have travelled extensively bringing their upbeat music to many up and down the Eastern seaboard. You will not be able to keep your feet from tapping as they sing both new tunes and old gospel favorites. Bring your friends to hear this most excellent group. If you missed making lunch reservations, you're invited to come listen to this wonderful group! Everyone is invited regardless of age!

### Feast of Lights

The Feast of Lights pageant is St. John's annual celebration of the Epiphany. The arrival of the Magi in Bethlehem and the manifesting of the baby Jesus as the Messiah are the highlights of this wonderful pageant.



## Christmas Decorations



Everyone at St. John's has an opportunity to contribute to our Christmas decorations and to remember loved ones. The church will order poinsettias at a savings to you.

**In order for the names of the persons remembered to be published in the Christmas bulletin, the form must be received by the deadline.**

Please make checks payable to St. John's Episcopal Church, fill in the form below and mail check and form to:

Carol Fowles  
6314 Briarwood Rd.  
Columbia, SC 29206

Poinsettias/\$10\_\_\_\_ Christmas Greens/\$5\_\_\_\_ Wreaths/\$25\_\_\_\_

Name of Donor:\_\_\_\_\_

In memory or honor (please circle one) of:\_\_\_\_\_

Check one:

\_\_\_\_The church may deliver my poinsettia to a sick or shut-in member after the service on Christmas Day.

\_\_\_\_I will pick up my poinsettia after the 10:30 service on Christmas Day.

**Deadline Monday, December 5, 2008**

### Scholarships for St. John Women's Retreat

*Women:* Please mark your January 2009 calendar to attend the Auction/White Elephant Sale on January 25 at 5:00 p.m. at King's Grant Clubhouse! This annual function promises a lively evening as we raise money for scholarships for women to attend the St. John's Retreat in the spring. There is no cost to attend, and you will eat, drink, and make merry as you bid on vacation homes, jewels, spa packages, and art. We will also have our usual white elephant room, but this year's offerings will be bigger and better than ever. DO COME AND BRING ALL YOUR FRIENDS! For information, call Pam Hodnett, 252-7578.



### Kanuga Parish Weekend February 13-15, 2009

**Telling Our Story Making scripture come alive !!**

*Our speaker: Tracy Rodosevic, Dean of the Academy for Biblical Story Telling*

Adults, youth and children will experience the deeper message behind the stories of the bible through Tracy's special brand of humor, insight and faith !! Check her out at - Tracyrad.com .

Registration forms will be available in December.

Gift certificates will be available at the Annual Meeting - do your Christmas shopping early!!!