

Fauré Requiem to be featured in 2019 Remembrance Concert

By Constance Scrafield

In keeping with their annual tradition, the Amaranth Chamber Choir, under the director of John Wervers, are performing their In Remembrance concert at Westminster United Church on Sunday, November 3 at 7:30 p.m.

The major work will feature Gabriel Faure's renowned 'Requiem' featuring Nancy Sicsic on the organ. Gabriel Fauré wrote this requiem in stages from the mid-1880's, finishing it in 1900, but it was not then the full orchestral and choral masterpiece it has become.

He wrote it, so he said, not for a reason, as might have been thought since his parents died in the course of the mid-1880's but for the pleasure, as it were, of the piece itself. Written in D minor, the requiem is in seven movements and is led by solo performances of a baritone and a soprano.

Singing as the soloists are Dr. Robert Hall, baritone, and Nancy Claridge, soprano. It's a performance of about 40 minutes.

The work of Mark Sirett, his choral composition for the poem After the War, is part of the second half of the performance.

'This is a new piece for us,' commented Mr. Wervers. 'It's very beautiful music. And there will, in addition, be a variety of short works that reflect on the theme of Remembrance.

'There is a piper, Scott Buchanan. And we'll do Flanders Fields by Alexander Tilley,' he added.

Mr. Wervers also conducts the Orangeville-based Dufferin Concert Singers and Alliston's New Tecumseth Singers. For their Christmas concerts, the choirs will team up to perform, here in Orangeville, at the Broadway Pentecostal Church on Saturday, November 30, at 7:30 p.m.

Said Mr. Wervers, 'We will be preparing a Christmas cantata by Joel Raney and Mary McDonald consisting of new as well as familiar material and a variety of short seasonal selections to round out the Christmas concerts. Special guests will include Kim Stevenson on flute and Sean Derraugh on clarinet.

'We've never done this Cantata before,' he added. 'It's half the program? I like doing something that's half the program. It's really coming together nicely and I think the audiences will enjoy it very much. There is some of the familiar and a nice balance of new material, rhythmically and harmonies that will grab your ear. It offers the options for the audience to join some of it.'

Titled Sing Christmas, this concert will be a collection of new material, composed work, weaving it with some traditional material? a nice balance of new and old coming together, with a chance for the audience to sing as well.

There will also be some short works by the clarinet and flute soloists.

'We'll be singing some John Rutter, a few newer works, relatively speaking. He's been writing music for a very long time? very prolific. And we'll do lighter Christmas musics.

'This is our second time at Broadway Pentecostal,' Mr. Wervers remarked. 'We performed Messiah there last year to a sold-out audience. We like the church for its capacity? it's big enough to hold a lot of people.

'And the people are very nice too, of course.'

It stands to reason that the winter/spring concerts are in the decision-making stage. Verdi and Puccini are both to be part of those concerts. Most importantly, rehearsals for the upcoming performances will begin January 15, 2020 at Covenant Alliance Church in Orangeville.

?The winter term will consists of a major work accompanied by orchestra, plus some short works,? Mr. Wervers told the Citizen.

Asked if new voices are welcomed to join the choir, Mr. Wervers assured us, ?Always.?

The Christmas concert at Broadway Pentecostal Church, 556 Broadway, Orangeville on November 30 will be at 7:30 p.m. The choirs are also singing this concert in Alliston on Sunday December 1 at Knox Presbyterian Church at 3:00 p.m.

Tickets for In Remembrance are available at BookLore now with the Christmas Concert tickets to come soon.

For more information or to inquire about joining one or other of the choirs, go to the website which is somewhat in transition, we were told, but John Wervers' email is in the body of it: www.thedufferinconcert-singers.com