VocalEssence Vintage Voices and Keystone Community Services Present

SINGING THROUGH THE SEASONS

Thursday, Nov. 12, 2026, 6 PM
Margolis Hall, Mount Zion Temple, St. Paul



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Let the Keystone Community Singers take you on a journey through the seasons that will leave you feeling moved and inspired.

FEATURING

Keystone Community Singers
William Danielson, *cello*
John Jensen, *collaborative pianist*
Rob Graham, *conductor*

VOCALESSENCE

Keystone COMMUNITY SERVICES

WELCOME

Welcome to **Singing Through the Seasons**–the Keystone Community Singers Fall 2026 concert! We are so glad you joined us this evening, here in beautiful Margolis Hall at Mount Zion Temple, for a lovely program of music for choir and piano that highlights the many milestones and holidays we celebrate throughout the Fall season.

Featuring folk songs like "Nine Hundred Miles," anthems of gratitude like "We Give Thanks for Being" by Minnesota composer Elizabeth Alexander, a beautiful setting of the well-known poem "We Remember Them" with words by Rabbis Sylvan Kamens and Jack Riemer, and beloved jazzy and traditional carols, this is program is sure to leave you feeling moved and inspired.

For the past 3 years, Keystone Community Services and VocalEssence have forged a wonderful partnership, together providing opportunities for residents of St. Paul and beyond to continue experiencing the joy and benefits that singing with friends and neighbors can provide. As members of the VocalEssence Vintage Voices program, the Keystone Community Singers know the important role that music plays in our lives. Something incredible happens when we sing together: not only can we create beautiful music while learning and refining our musical skills, but the essential human experience of singing together builds community and fosters connection, friendship, and understanding. At VocalEssence we believe that our entire community benefits when as many people as possible can connect to each other through song. The Keystone Community Singers believe that we become happier and healthier as we sing together–a source of joy that helps us remain active and vibrant through all the seasons of our lives.

As our esteemed audience, we invite you to sit back, relax, and let the sounds of voices and instruments wash over you. Take some inspiration with you today and carry it forward into the seasons that lie ahead.

We look forward to seeing you at our Spring concert on Thursday, May 27, 2027. In the meantime, we would love for you to join us at an upcoming VocalEssence concert, with our Sabathani Vintage Voices fall concert next Thursday (Nov. 19), entitled **Singing Through the Seasons**, followed by performances of **Bach's Christmas Oratorio** with the Minnesota Bach Society Orchestra (Dec. 5 and 6), and our annual **Welcome Christmas** the following weekend (Dec. 11 and 12). If you are interested in learning more about VocalEssence concerts and programs, we invite you to stop by the welcome table in the hallway as you leave today. Interested in singing with the Keystone Community Singers? We would love to have you join us for our Spring 2027 session!

Thank you again for joining us for this evening of music. Wishing you all the joy, peace, and hope of the holiday season.



—Robert Graham
Conductor, Vintage Voices
VocalEssence

PROGRAM

Nine Hundred Miles — American Folk Song, arr. Roger Emerson (2016)

William Danielson, *cello*

Crossroad — arr. Reginal Wright (2023)
an adaption of Robert Frost's poem *The Road Not Taken*

We Remember Them — arr. Susan LaBarr (2019)

Fly Away Home — PinkZebra (2014)

December: Christmas — Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1875)

John Jensen, *piano*

We Give Thanks for Being — Elizabeth Alexander (2021)

Thankful — arr. Tom Fettke (2007)

Dance of the Reed Flutes — Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1892)
from *The Nutcracker*

John Jensen, *piano*

Carols & Audience Sing

It's the Holiday Season — Roger Emerson (2008)

Happy Holiday

It's the Holiday Season

Let it Snow!

A Wreath of Carols — arr. Andy Beck (2014)

I Saw Three Ships

Kling, Glöckchen, Klingelingeling

O Christmas Tree

Deck the Hall

A New Horizon — Greg Gilpin (2021)

TEXTS

NINE HUNDRED MILES

arr. Roger Emerson (2016)

I am walking down this track, I've got tears in my eyes,
And I'm tryin' to read a letter from my home.
If this train runs me right, I'll be home by Saturday night,
'Cause I'm nine hundred miles away from home.

Lonesome road, whistle blow, how I hate to hear that sound.
Oh, I'm nine hundred miles away from home.

I will pawn you my watch, I will pawn you my chain,
I will pawn you my gold and diamond ring.
Oh this train I ride on, is a hundred coaches long,
You can hear the whistle blow a hundred miles.

Lonesome road, whistle blow, how I hate to hear that sound.
Oh, I'm nine hundred miles away from home.

I am walking down this track, I've got tears in my eyes,
And I'm tryin' to read a letter from my home.
Lonesome road whistle blow, how I hate to hear that sound.
Oh, I'm nine hundred miles away from home.

—American Folk Song, 19th century

CROSSROAD

an adaption of Robert Frost's poem *The Road Not Taken*

arr. Reginal Wright (2023)

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

—Text by Robert Frost; "The Road Not Taken"

WE REMEMBER THEM

arr. Susan LaBarr (2019)

At the rising sun and at its going down;
We remember them.
At the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter;
We remember them.
At the opening of the buds and in the rebirth of spring;
We remember them.
At the blueness of the skies and in the warmth of summer;
We remember them.
At the rustling of the leaves and in the beauty of the autumn;
We remember them.
At the beginning of the year and when it ends;
We remember them.
As long as we live, they too will live,
For they are now a part of us as
We remember them.

When we are weary and in need of strength;
We remember them.
When we are lost and sick at heart;
We remember them.
When we have decisions that are difficult to make;
We remember them.
When we have joy we crave to share;
We remember them.
When we have achievements that are based on theirs;
We remember them.
For as long as we live, they too will live,
For they are now a part of us as,
We remember them.

—Text by Rabbi Sylvan Kamens & Rabbi Jack Riemer, adapted from "Gates of Prayer: A New Union Prayerbook"

FLY AWAY HOME

PinkZebra (2014)

I'll ride with the horses. I'll swim through the sea.
I'll climb to the mountain tops, won't you come follow me?
I'll take time to notice, all that I see,
And after I've come so far, you know where I'll be.
I'll fly away, fly away, fly away, fly away home!

Well life is a vision. That's how it should be.
The world is a canvas, and the choices are free.
At the end of the journey, when all is complete,
They'll all wonder where I've gone.
But you know where I'll be!
I'll fly away, fly away, fly away, fly away home!
Our dreams last forever, for all that we know.
The roads come together, and that's where we'll go.
We'll fly away, fly away, fly away, fly away home!

—PinkZebra is the pseudonym for a famous composer and music producer, and it remains a mystery who they are.

WE GIVE THANKS FOR BEING
Elizabeth Alexander (2021)

We give thanks for being.
We give thanks for being here.
We give thanks for being here together.
—Traditional text

THANKFUL
arr. Tom Fettke (2007)

Some days we forget to look around us.
Some days we can't see the joy that surrounds us.
So caught up inside ourselves,
We take when we should give.

So for tonight we pray for what we know can be.
And on this day we hope for what we still can't see.
It's up to us to be the change.

And even though we all can still do more,
There's so much to be thankful for.

Look beyond ourselves, there's so much sorrow.
It's way too late to say, "I'll cry tomorrow."
Each of us must find the truth;
It's so long overdue.

Thanks for prayers God answers,
Thanks for what God does deny.
Thanks for storms we've weathered,
Thanks for all God has supplied.
Thanks for pain and pleasure,
Thanks for comfort in despair.
Thanks for grace unmeasured,
Thanks for love beyond compare.

So for tonight we pray for what we know can be.
And on this day we hope for what we still can't see.
It's up to us to be the change,
And even though we all can still do more:
There's so much to be thankful for.
—Text by August Ludvig Storm, 1981, alt.
Hymn Tune: Dix, Conrad Kocher, 1838

CAROLS & AUDIENCE SING:

IT'S THE HOLIDAY SEASON
arr. Roger Emerson (2008)

Happy Holiday!
While the merry bells are ringing,
Happy holiday to you!

It's the holiday season, and Santa Clause is comin' 'round,
The Christmas snow is white on the ground.
When old Santa gets into town,
He'll be comin' down the chimney down.

It's the holiday season, and Santa Clause has got a toy,
For every good girl and every good boy.
Santa's a great big bundle of joy,
When he's comin' down the chimney down.

He'll have a big fat pack, upon his back,
And lots of goodies for you and for me.
So leave a peppermint stick, for old Saint Nick,
Hangin' on the Christmas tree.

It's the holiday season, so whoop-dee-doo, a dickory dock,
And don't forget to hang up your sock,
'Cause just exactly at 12 o'clock,
He'll be comin' down the chimney down.

Happy Holiday! While the merry bells are ringing,
Happy holiday to you!

Oh the weather outside is frightful,
But the fire is so delightful,
And since we've no place to go,
Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow!

It doesn't show signs of stoppin',
Yet I brought some corn for poppin'
The lights are turned way down low,
Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow!

When we finally kiss goodnight,
How I hate goin' out in the storm,
But if you really hold me tight,
All the way home I'll be warm.

Oh the fire is slowly dyin',
And my dear we're still goodbyein'
But as long as you love me so,
Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow!

Happy Holiday!
—Text first published in 1942, featuring "Happy Holiday," "It's the Holiday Season," and "Let It Snow"

A WREATH OF CAROLS
arr. Andy Beck (2014)

I Saw Three Ships
I saw three ships come sailing in
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day,
I saw three ships come sailing in
On Christmas Day in the morning.

And what was in those ships all three
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day?
And what was in those ships all three
On Christmas Day in the morning?

And all the bells on Earth shall ring
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day
And all the bells on Earth shall ring
On Christmas Day in the morning.

Kling, Glöckchen, Klingelingeling
Kling, Glöckchen Klingelingeling,
Kling Glöckchen kling!
Little bells are ringing, little children singing,
Happiness before us, join the merry chorus!
Kling, Glöckchen Klingelingeling,
Ring, little bells!

O Christmas Tree
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree,
How lovely are your branches!
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree,
How lovely are your branches!
Not only green when summer's here,
But also when it's cold and drear.
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree,
How lovely are your branches!

Deck The Hall
Deck the hall with boughs of holly, Fa la la la la, la la la la!
Tis the season to be jolly, Fa la la la la, la la la la!
Don we now our gay apparel, Fa la la la la, la la la la!
Troll the ancient Yuletide carol, Fa la la la la, la la la la!
—Traditional English carols published mid-19th century

A NEW HORIZON
Greg Gilpin (2021)

I can see a new horizon on a brand new day.
I can see the sun arisin', showing me the way.
And everything will be alright, everything will be okay,
'Cause I can see a new horizon on a brand new day.

I can feel the love of heaven as I walk to the end.
And if I trip, stop or stumble, I can always lean on my friends,
And everything will be alright, everything will be okay,
'Cause I can see a new horizon on a brand new day.

When the mountain is high, and the path is so steep,
And the journey, journey is long.
I'm gonna' lift up my head, I'm gonna' take one more step,
And keep movin', movin', keep movin' on!

'Cause there's a new horizon on a brand new day.
I can see the sun arisin', showing me the way.
And everything will be alright, everything will be okay,
'Cause I can see a new horizon on a brand new day.

I can feel the love of heaven as I walk to the end.
And if I trip, stop or stumble, I can always lean on my friends,
And everything will be alright, everything will be okay,
'Cause I can see a new horizon on a brand new day.
—Words and music by Greg Gilpin

Nurturing Community — With Your Support

At VocalEssence we believe that our entire community benefits when as many people as possible can connect to each other through song. This belief has inspired us for more than 50 years to pioneer ways to strengthen communities through thrilling and diverse musical experiences.

That's why, alongside Vintage Voices, we provide opportunities for singers at every stage of life, including:

- Singers Of This Age, a teenage community that empowers youth leadership and creatively redefines what it means to be a choir
- Our WITNESS program, providing educational programming and concert experiences to students in grades 4-12 at 40+ metro area schools
- Professional development opportunities for Minneapolis Public School choir teachers to help ensure that students across the city continue to enjoy robust choral experiences

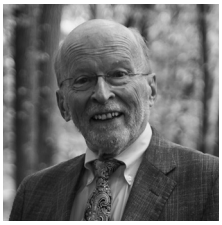
In a choir, every single voice matters, and the same is true in making all of this possible.

Please make your gift of any amount today to nurture community through the power of singing together. Visit vocalessence.org/donate



ABOUT VOCALESSENCE

For 58 years, VocalEssence has provided opportunities for singers from the Twin Cities area to create incredible music together and build connections as part of the vibrant arts community in Minnesota. VocalEssence is known for introducing audiences to music and artists who are not yet known, often welcoming guest artists, composers, and conductors who are emerging, have unknown works, or represent a variety of cultures. Welcoming all members of the greater community, VocalEssence embodies the motto: *Together We Sing.*



PHILIP BRUNELLE
Artistic Director and Founder

Philip Brunelle, artistic director and founder of VocalEssence 58 years ago, is an internationally-renowned conductor, choral scholar, and visionary. Philip has conducted symphonies, choral festivals, and operas on six continents. He holds five honorary degrees, served 9 years as Vice President of IFCM (International Federation for Choral Music), and has been recognized for his commitment to choral music by the governments of Norway, Hungary, Sweden, Mexico, and the United Kingdom. In 2019, he was awarded the American Prize in Choral Conducting and, in 2020, was given the Honorary Member Award by the Society for American Music. Philip was appointed a National Arts Associate of the Sigma Alpha Iota Music Fraternity. Philip is also Organist-Choirmaster at Plymouth Congregational Church, Minneapolis. During the pandemic Philip recorded 300 "Musical Moments" which can be accessed at www.vocalessence.org, and his thoughts on music are at RenaissanceManpodcast.com. Philip and his wife Carolyn, a studio artist, have 3 children (Tim, Christopher, and Elise) and 7 grandchildren.



G. PHILLIP SHOULTZ, III
Associate Artistic Director

G. Phillip Shoultz, III, uses the power of spoken word and song to foster community and inspire action among people of all ages and abilities. Phillip conducts festival choirs and leads workshops across the United States and beyond. He serves on the faculty of the University of St. Thomas and guides the ministries of worship, music, and the arts at Westwood Lutheran Church. An accomplished curator of multidisciplinary community collaborations, Phillip was Artistic Director of Sing Democracy 250 and the University of Minnesota Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Tribute Concert. He is the voice of Songs of Freedom on American Public Media and hosts Young People's Concerts for Minnesota Orchestra. His pandemic-inspired livestream, Take 5 with GPS, continues each week as he rapidly approaches the 800-episode milestone. Phillip has a new choral series launching with National Music Publishers this season, and his published arrangements have garnered the attention of choirs around the country. His numerous honors include winning the ACDA Graduate Conducting Competition and multiple Teacher of the Year awards. In the summer of 2020, he founded "Table for More" to help organizations address issues related to innovation, equity, racial justice, and belonging in the arts. Phillip lives in St. Louis Park with his wife, Michelle; their children, Malachi and Lydia Grace; and two cats, Link and Minnie.



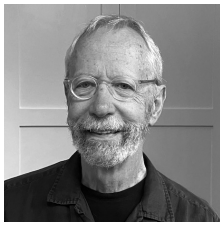
ROBERT GRAHAM
Conductor, Vintage Voices

Rob Graham is a singer, conductor, music instructor and arts administrator. For the past 14 years, Rob has the served as Learning and Engagement Manager at VocalEssence, is Conductor of the Vintage Voices choirs, and oversees the renowned VocalEssence WITNESS School Program. Robert has a Master of Music degree in both vocal performance and choral conducting from Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, and a B.A. in vocal performance from Xavier University of Louisiana. Robert currently sings second tenor in the VocalEssence Ensemble Singers and also performs around the Twin Cities as a solo and chamber musician.



CASEY RAFN
Accompanist

Pianist Casey Rafn enjoys a varied career as a collaborative pianist both in the United States and abroad, in Europe and Latin America. He is a member of 'Trés', whose saxophone-piano trio was nominated for a Latin Grammy for Best Instrumental Album for their album "Romance al Campesino Porteño." Casey often collaborates in concert or recordings with members of the Minnesota Orchestra, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, and University of Minnesota School of Music faculty. As a piano soloist he took top prizes at the International Liszt-Garrison Competition in Baltimore, has appeared with the Duluth-Superior Symphony Orchestra, and has taught at both the University of Minnesota School of Music and the St. Paul Conservatory for Performing Arts.



JOHN JENSEN
Accompanist, Vintage Voices

John Jensen received his music degrees in Southern California, where he attended Occidental College and University of Southern California. While there he free-lanced as a studio musician, playing on the Andy Williams show and touring the country with prominent singers through Columbia Artists Management. He moved to Iowa and taught for 15 years at Grinnell College as an artist-in-residence. In 1990, John moved to St. Paul and has played with VocalEssence, the Minnesota Orchestra, and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. He plays jazz and classical piano around the area, including performances with the Bloomingtones, a traveling senior choir based in Bloomington, MN.

VOCALESSENCE VINTAGE VOICES



Photo © Novart Media

VocalEssence Vintage Voices at Keystone Community Center was formed in 2023 and is an exciting choral program that integrates the arts into the everyday lives of older adults. Guided by a desire to create a welcoming atmosphere and remove barriers for participation, the choir sings to build community, combat loneliness and isolation, and improve physical and emotional wellbeing.

VOCALESSENCE CHORUS



Photo © Bruce Silcox

The VocalEssence Chorus is a group of talented and enthusiastic singers from many different walks of life, united by their love of singing and community. Performing a wide variety of musical styles, premiering new works, and sharing the stage with a diverse array of guest artists, the Chorus is a welcome home for singers who wish to continue making music throughout their adult lives.

THE KEYSTONE COMMUNITY SINGERS

SOPRANO
Bonnie Alton
Julie Borgerding July
Janice Bostrom
Ruthena Fink
Jamie Hubbard
Susanne Lambert
Desiree Long
Barbara McKernan
Karlene Niva-Colgan
Kay Olson-Thomsen
Elena Ostby
Marie Phillips
Julie Poupore
Janice Pyles
Chris Rosenthal
Susan Rybak
Sharon Sinclair
Stephanie Stockton
Kori Winker
Beth Yokom
Phyllis Zumach

ALTO
Barbara Barham
Elsa Batica
Deb Bieging
Therese Buckley
Joy Christiansen
Katryn Conlin
Debbie Connor
Michele Cooke
Eileen Costello
Perri Graham-Raff
Wilma Hazen
Shelley Jensen
Mary Ellen Lane
Marion Lang
Bonnie Lomen
Gail Lundeen
Sheila McGinley
Mary Mollner
Lynn Munch
Mary Joan Murray
Dorie Oase
Joan Pasiuk
Martha Postlethwaite
Laura Raymond
Betsy Reitan
Nancy Schuster
Kay Sorlien
Linnea Torstenson
Claire Tschida
Lois Young
Lynnette Zika

TENOR
Joyce Borgerding
Maureen Davidson
Robin Edgerton
Diane Graham-Raff
Jeanne Hartle
Laura Hutton
Rick Kauphusman
Ruth Kline
Amy Lopez
Marilyn Lopez
Linda McCormick
Dottie Nieman
Bob Pierson
Rhonda Simonson
Mary Tinglov
JP Winker

BASS
Timothy Anderson
Diane Fraser
Ramona Kaszas
Dennis Lambert
Janie Morissette
Walt Myers
Douglas Rose
Ro Shanklin
Steve Shimer
Greg Webster
Bill Wernz

VOCALESSENCE ENSEMBLE SINGERS



Photo © Bruce Silcox

The VocalEssence Ensemble Singers have established an international reputation because of their extensive catalog of recordings and broad range of unique repertoire. This chamber choir, whose members hail from a wide variety of professions, is bound together by their skilled artistry to create what *The Times of London* has described as a "flawless" sound.

VOCALESSENCE SINGERS OF THIS AGE



Photo © Novart Media

The VocalEssence Singers Of This Age (SOTA) is a community of Twin Cities teenagers engaged in expanding what it means to be a choir and, encouraging a wider circle of participation in the artform. Presenting music ranging from classical to hip-hop, they use creativity and collaboration to build an accepting community, equipped with the skills to lead social change in our society.



SIGN UP TO WIN!

Enter to win 2 free tickets to any of our upcoming 2026-2027 Season Concerts.

When you do, you'll also gain access to our email newsletter and get curated music selections, news, and updates right to your inbox once per month.

WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Scan the QR code to take a short survey about tonight's performance.

IN MEMORIUM



We dedicate today's performance to our beloved friend and choirmate, Janice Pyles, who brought so much kindness, warmth and joy to our choir family. May her spirit fly free.

SPECIAL THANKS FOR THE SUPPORT OF THIS CONCERT

Fred and Ann Moore

The Hodder Family Foundation

THANK YOU, VOCALESSENCE SUPPORTERS

VocalEssence has a large group of committed supporters and is honored by the many gifts received in memory, appreciation, and celebration of friends and family that are too many to list in this concert program. Please visit our website to see a full list of supporters and special tributes.

SPECIAL THANKS

Adero Riser Cobb

Teisha Magee

Karlene Neva-Colgan

Robin Eberlein

Joy Christiansen

Keystone Community Services staff

Mount Zion Temple staff and community, especially April Colacci, Elias Pastrana Navarro, and Kate Tucker

2026-2027 VOCALESSENCE SEASON SPONSORS

VOCALESSENCE

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VocalEssence is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

VOCALESSENCE

2026-2027 SEASON

SABATHANI: SINGING THROUGH THE SEASONS

November 19, 2026, 6 PM, Sabathani Community Center

BACH'S CHRISTMAS ORATORIO

December 4, 2026, 7:30 PM, St. Thomas More Catholic Church
December 5, 2026, 4 PM, Westwood Lutheran Church

WELCOME CHRISTMAS

December 11, 2026, 7:30 PM
December 12, 2026, 12-1 PM (Sensory Friendly)
December 12, 2026, 3 PM
Plymouth Congregational Church

WITNESS: THE POET SINGS

February 28, 2027, 4 PM, Orchestra Hall

CHOIR OF KING'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

April 16, 2027, 7:30 PM, Cathedral of Saint Paul

TRILLIUM WOODS SPRING CONCERT

May 7, 2027, 3 PM,

TEMPTATION TO TRANQUILITY

May 14, 2027, 7:30 PM, Ted Mann Concert Hall

SABATHANI SPRING CONCERT

May 20, 2027, 6 PM, Sabathani Community Center

KEYSTONE SPRING CONCERT

May 27, 2027, 6 PM, Mount Zion Temple