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Choral Society of NEPA Announces its Silver Anniversary Season New Singers Welcome without Audition

Northeastern Counties, PA: The Choral Society of Northeast Pennsylvania, under the direction of Dr. Alan Baker, is pleased to announce its 25th anniversary season for 2023-2024. Founded in 1999 through merger of the former Singers Guild of Scranton, Wyoming Valley Oratorio Society, and Hazleton Oratorio Society, the Society now provides choral performances and singing opportunities to the whole of the NEPA region. New singers are always welcome without audition, following the Society's twin mottos of "Artistry through Opportunity" and "Excellence through Education." Rehearsals are held on Monday evenings, 6:30-9:00 pm at Langcliffe Presbyterian Church on Main Street in Avoca, easily accessed from I-81. Rehearsals commence on August 28th and the chorus's \$75 semester participation fee is waived for all first-time singers. All singers purchase and retain their scores for the semester's repertoire, though interested singers are welcome to initially borrow the music while they consider joining.

The Society will open this Silver Anniversary Season on Sunday afternoon, November 5th at the First Presbyterian Church of Clarks Summit with music of LOVE & MARRIAGE, including the *Neue Liebeslieder* of Johannes Brahms, early American courtship songs arranged by Alice Parker, the *Wedding Cantata* of Daniel Pinkham, and humorous choruses of Joseph Haydn. A gala reception will follow featuring displays of memorabilia from the Society's first quarter-decade of music-making. The chorus will then prepare a variety of sacred and secular music for the NEPA Philharmonic's "Holiday Pops" concerts on December 1st and 2nd, respectively, at the Scranton Cultural Center and the Kirby Center in Wilkes-Barre. Featured works will include Eric Whitacre's *Glow*, Rosephanye Powell's *Christus natus est*, Randal Alan Bass's *Jingle Bells Finale*, and the setting of Clement Moore's *Night Before Christmas* made famous in the 1940s and 1950s by Fred Waring and his Singing Pennsylvanians.

During spring 2024 the chorus will welcome two guest conductors as part of their search for the Society's next artistic director as founding director, Alan Baker, will retire at the end of the season. Each guest conductor will select, prepare, and conduct in concert a half-length POCKET CONCERT, these to be presented on Sunday, March 10th and Sunday, April 28th, respectively, at St. Stephen's Episcopal Pro-Cathedral in Wilkes-Barre.

For additional information on the season, joining the chorus, or the Society's artistic director search, please call 570-362-0382 or visit the Choral Society's webpage at www.choralsociety.net.

Formed in 1999, the Society's adult chorus performs not only the masterpieces of the choral-orchestral repertoire, but the most recent of contemporary western and world music. The chorus collaborates regularly with the NEPA Philharmonic in the orchestra's popular Holiday concerts, as well as in other choral/orchestral masterworks, including performances of Brahms's *German Requiem*, Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, Mozart's *Requiem*, and Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*. The Chorus is also heard in regional broadcasts on WVIA-FM and has appeared locally with a variety of national-touring shows. These programs are generously supported by state arts funding through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency. This Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts program is managed regionally by the NEIU 19. The season is also generously supported by a Lackawanna County Community Arts and Culture Grant, a program of Lackawanna County Commissioners Jerry Notarianni, Debi Domenick, Esq. and Chris Chermak.

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