



Handel's

Messiah

COMMUNITY ADVENT CHORALE

with Soloists and Chamber Orchestra
Gregory White, Conductor

Cristen Gregory, Soprano • Faith M. Baer, Mezzo-Soprano
Jeffrey Thompson, Tenor • Derrick Smith, Baritone

Orchard Park Presbyterian Church
4369 South Buffalo Street, Orchard Park, New York

Friday, December 4, 2009

7:30 P.M. Concert

At the Door Donation: \$10 Suggested

Baker Memorial United Methodist Church

Main and Center Streets, East Aurora, New York

Saturday, December 5, 2009

7:30 P.M. Concert

At the Door Donation: \$10 Suggested

About the Artists . . .



GREGORY WHITE is Conductor-Music Director of the Advent Chorale, East Aurora, NY, and is harpsichordist with Ars Nova Musicians Chamber Orchestra, the Western New York Chamber Orchestra and member of the Buffalo-based ensemble, Camerata. At the Orchard Park Presbyterian Church, Orchard Park, NY, he is *Director of Music* where he directs the Sanctuary Choir, serves as Organist and administers the Music and the Arts Concert Series. Mr. White is listed in "Who's Who in America" and member of the Executive Board of the American Guild of Organists – Buffalo Chapter. He has performed as harpsichordist and organist in concerts with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, in chamber music recitals with local artists on Opus Classics' Live-WBFO Radio, and in concerts throughout the Western New York Region. His choirs have appeared in performances with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra; his Parkside Choir presented an annual performance of Handel's greatest masterwork *Messiah* with the Ars Nova Musicians Chamber Orchestra. In 1998 the Parkside Choir and Soloists along with the Ars Nova Musicians Chamber Orchestra released a CD of *Messiah*. Mr. White has toured Europe in performances with his choirs; the Mayor and Common Council of Buffalo, NY have honored them with proclamations declaring them *Musical Ambassadors of Buffalo* as part of their European Concert Tour. Currently a *Program Director* at Catholic Charities of Buffalo, NY, Mr. White serves as *Co-Director* of the National Training Institute for the New York Model for Batterer Programs and was an invited presenter at the First World Conference for Women Shelters in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. He frequently serves as a presenter, trainer, and consultant; he has served on numerous judicial committees, a National Think Tank on Batterer Programs, and is former Chair and Executive Committee of the Erie County Coalition Against Family Violence. A frequent trainer/presenter throughout New York State, as well as nationally; he has traveled throughout the Caribbean and South America as presenter, panelist, and trainer for the Washington, DC – Partners of the Americas.

CRISTEN GREGORY, Soprano, has performed with the English Chamber Orchestra, broadcast on the BBC Radio Network; the International Aldeburgh Festival in England; and the International Arts Festival in Bermuda. She has sung solo recitals in London, England and throughout Canada. Cristen has sung with many orchestras throughout the United States and Canada, including Chicago Symphony Hall, the Buffalo Philharmonic, the Rochester Symphony, the Erie Chamber Orchestra, the Toronto Symphony and the Vancouver Symphony. She has sung leading roles with the Canadian Opera Company, the Toronto Operetta Theatre, Opera Sacra, Chicago Opera Theatre, Erie Opera Theatre, and the Greater Buffalo Opera Company, among others. Cristen was the soprano soloist for the world premiere of Persis Vehar's *Peace Requiem* with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra; she sang the American premiere of the complete songs of the renowned British composer, Francis Jackson; the leading role of Hilda in the New York premiere of Richard Shepherd's opera *Caedmon*, the Western New York premiere of Menotti's *Meuro porque no Meuro*, and the Western New York premiere of Reinhold Schmid's *Zehn Madchenlieder*. She is a member of the soprano/cello duo Voci d'Amore. Winner of many awards, including the Opera America Award, the Puccini Foundation Award, the International Festival de Loire Atlantique in France and the Jean Chalmers Award, Canada. She is listed in the Canadian Who's Who for her outstanding cultural contributions. She holds a Bachelor of Music Degree in Voice Performance from the University of Toronto, and an MBA from Medaille College. She is founder and program coordinator of an educational program called *Opera Over Easy* for which she was named the 2004 Educator of the Year. Cristen is a member of the Niagara University voice faculty and is the former Executive Director of the Lancaster Opera House. She is a member of the Lancaster Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and also a member of the Lancaster Area Community Development Corporation Board of Directors. She is married to the internationally acclaimed cellist and conductor, Bryan Eckenrode. Both Cristen and her husband Bryan are realtors with Metro Polis of Western New York.



FAITH M. BAER, Mezzo-Soprano, joins the Advent Chorale for her sixth year as alto soloist. In May 2002, she graduated from Roberts Wesleyan College with a Bachelor of Science degree in Education, with a concentration in Spanish and a minor in Music. During her undergraduate years, Ms. Cicelske studied voice with Mr. Brian Clickner, sang in the RWC Chamber Singers, and was a member of both the Wind Ensemble and Roberts Wesleyan Chorale. After graduation, Ms. Cicelske took part in the Genesee Chorale and worked in the LeRoy Central School District. In August 2004, she received an M.S. Education: Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages degree through SUNY Fredonia and began teaching ESL in the East Aurora and Hamburg Central School Districts. In the fall of 2006, Ms. Cicelske performed the role of Hodel in the Aurora Players' production of "Fiddler on the Roof." Other musical ventures include three years with the Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus, including one year as alto section leader, and 2007 summer travel to the Czech Republic and to Germany with members of the BPC and the Virginia Symphony Orchestra Chorus. During the trip, the choruses performed in Prague, Leipzig, and Berlin. Ms. Cicelske currently resides in Hamburg, NY, teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) for the Hamburg Central School District.

JEFFREY J. THOMPSON, Tenor, is a native of western New York. He studied voice with Kelley Hijeh and organ under Dr. Judy Congdon while attending Houghton College (B.S. biology, class of 2001). He has furthered his study of organ with Dr. David Bond of Buffalo. Mr. Thompson is currently Director of Music and organist at Baker Memorial United Methodist Church in East Aurora, NY, where he also serves as a volunteer youth leader. He is a frequent voice and organ soloist, and can be heard regularly with the East Aurora Advent Chorale and the Villa Maria Chorale. Last winter he made his debut as soloist with the Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus in a performance of Handel's *Messiah* under the direction of Robert Shoup. Currently he is completing a recording as organ soloist featuring all of East Aurora's pipe organs. In addition to his musical ventures, Mr. Thompson holds the Doctor of Medicine degree from the SUNY at Buffalo School of Medicine, where he also completed his residency training in emergency medicine. He currently works full time for Professional Emergency Services at Millard Fillmore Gates Circle and Suburban hospitals, as well as with the emergency medicine residency program. He resides in Marilla.



DERRICK SMITH, Baritone, has thrilled audiences in theaters around the world receiving jubilant praise from critics and numerous standing ovations from audiences. He has triumphed equally performing the dual roles of *Porgy* and *Jake* in *Porgy and Bess* with the Chicago Sinfonietta at Chicago's Symphony Hall, *Crown* in *Porgy and Bess* with the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra, and *Leporello* in *Don Giovanni* with the Malmo Symfoni Orkester in Sweden. Mr. Smith performed with Opera Ebony in the debut of original opera *Harriet Tubman* at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, singing the principal role of *John Tubman*. A frequent oratorio and concert soloist, Derrick Smith has performed in recital with renowned soprano Renee Fleming, as well as performing as a soloist with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, the Rochester Oratorio Society, the Chamber Group of the Toronto Symphony, and many others. His triumphant solo debut in Carnegie Hall was with the New England Symphonic Ensemble, joined by choruses from around the U.S. In 2006, Derrick was joined by Herb Smith on trumpet with Peter DuBois on piano for a glorious holiday concert in Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall. He has performed Handel's *Messiah* each year around the Western New York region. Mr. Smith has performed with the Virginia Consort, singing the Brahms *German Requiem*, as well as beautiful performances of Mozart's *Missa Brevis* in C Major and Haydn's *Pauken Mass*. He is a soloist in Grammy Award winner Jessye Norman's *Jessye Norman Sings for the Healing of*

AIDS, which was held at the famous Riverside Church in New York City and telecast live on PBS. Internationally, Derrick Smith performed roles from *Porgy & Bess* around the world, traveling with the Chicago Sinfonietta in Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, and Russia; with the Norrkerping Symphony in Sweden; and as a part of the VI Festival De Artes De Itu in Brazil, which was televised throughout the country. Mr. Smith performed title role of *Eugene Onegin* in Russian while in Moscow, as well as singing acclaimed performances in *Gershwin* concerts during televised music festivals in both Moscow and Estonia. A graduate of The Eastman School of Music, he has trained and performed with the Glimmerglass Opera Young American Artist Program and the Brereton International Music Symposium in England under Thomas Hampson, Horst Gunter, and Brigitte Fassbaender. In addition, he was a semi-finalist of the American Traditions Competition, and a winner of the Outstanding Young Men of America Award and a winner of the New York Vocal Artist Competition and the William Warfield Scholarship. He is a Senior Associate Instructor of Voice at The Eastman School of Music's Community Education Department, and directs the vocal curriculum of The Eastman School of Music's Music Horizons summer program for gifted teenage musicians.