

# Chorus presents 66th annual Holiday Concert

By *Jody McVeigh* on November 28, 2018

The idea for the Grosse Pointe Community Chorus began one winter in the living room of founder Malcolm M. Johns and quickly grew to 125 members in a few short weeks.

While numbers have waxed and waned, the chorus has withstood the test of time. It performs its 66th annual Holiday Concert at 3:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 9, at First English Evangelical Lutheran Church, 800 Vernier, Grosse Pointe Woods.

The 70-member chorus, conducted by Joseph Palazzolo, will be joined for the first time by Brass Expansion, a brass quartet led by Fred Breitenbucher. For this performance, there will be two trumpets, one French horn and one trombone.

“We’ll be doing carols from around the world and pieces from ‘Messiah,’” said Sandra Mengel, chorus president. “It’s a wide variety of numbers. And the brass quartet is engaging, not only for the chorus, but the audience too. And there’s a sing-along in the middle.”

Mengel, a member since 2011, said members hail from across southeast Michigan. Many of them are longtime members, including one woman who’s been a part of the group 50 years.

“It’s really wonderful people,” Mengel said. “It’s fun. Joseph is a wonderful conductor and our pianist (Ron Pietrantoni) is great. ... And First English is a wonderful place to sing.”

Tickets for the concert are \$15 for adults, \$5 for ages 12 and younger. Tickets are available at Moehring Woods Florists, 20923 Mack, Grosse Pointe Woods; and Posterity Framing & Printing, 17005 Kercheval, City of Grosse Pointe.

All chorus members also sell tickets.

“It’s a wonderful way to spend a Sunday afternoon and get ready for the holidays,” Mengel said. “And it’s early enough in the month so it doesn’t detract from other holiday events.”

For those who miss the concert, the chorus is performing small-group caroling as riders gather for the Holiday Lights Trolley, which departs from Patterson Park the evenings of Dec. 10 through 13.

“One of our members saw mention of it and called the park,” Mengel said. “We’ll go and carol there on a volunteer basis. We’re hoping to have 10 to 15 people at each departure. We’ll be on the ground, not in the trolley. That’ll be fun.”

The trolley departs 6:30 and 7:45 p.m. each night.

“The Holiday Lights tour is already wonderful,” Mengel said. “We’ll be a little added sparkle. There’s no cost for seeing us. ... We’re looking forward to doing it as much as anyone is looking forward to seeing us. We hope it adds to the yuletide ambiance.”

Apart from its annual winter concert, GPCC presents a springtime dinner cabaret, next planned for May 3, at Assumption Cultural Center, St. Clair Shores.

“We pick crowd-pleasing, well-known songs,” Mengel said. “When we look out at the ballroom, we see people singing along.”



The Grosse Pointe Community Chorus during its December 2011 performance. Photo courtesy of J. Richard Dunlap DDS

This will be its fourth cabaret, which also includes dinner by Marchiori Catering and raffles.

The GPCC always seeks new members. Auditions are not required. Its next season begins with rehearsals Tuesday, Jan. 8, at the Grosse Pointe North High School choir room.

A \$50 registration fee covers the cost of music. All are welcome.

For more information, visit [grossepointecommunitychorus.org](http://grossepointecommunitychorus.org).

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