

## Spring springing



Winter aconites, among the earliest bloomers, show their stuff in a 5500 block of Kenwood Avenue garden.

Marc Monaghan

## Chorale Bach

### Masters to join in J.S. Bach's Mass in B minor

By DASCHELL M. PHILLIPS  
Staff Writer

The Chicago Chorale will celebrate its 10th Anniversary Season by performing J.S. Bach's Mass in B minor April 3 at Rockefeller Memorial Chapel. Bruce Tammen will conduct the performance and high profile musicians will join the chorale.

Now celebrating its 10th year anniversary, Hyde Park-based Chicago Chorale is a 60-voice ensemble that performs repertoire from the 16th century to the present day, from well-loved choral works to overlooked masterpieces. Members of the chorale commute to Hyde Park from as far away as Lake Forest, St. Charles and Culver, Ind., to

rehearse and perform with the group. Past performances include appearances with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Symphony of Oak Park and River Forest and the Baroque Band. Chorale has appeared numerous times on "Live from WFMT" with host Kerry Frumkin and has recorded four CDs, the latest of which, Rachmaninoff's "Vespers," was featured on WFMT.

"As someone who has been with the choir virtually from its start, I am very proud of how far Chorale has come in only 10 years," said Jana French, who said the chorale is also releasing a new CD during its 10th anniversary season. "We

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have a unique mission in the city as a volunteer choir with professional performance standards and a reputation for presenting sensitive and thought-provoking performances of great choral masterpieces, both well loved and little known."

In April, the chorale will present the mass with an orchestra of period instruments, led by concertmaster Rachel Barton Pine and featuring the best Baroque musicians in the Midwest. Vocal soloists will include Baroque specialists soprano Ellen Hargis, alto Angela Young Smucker, tenor Christopher Cock, and bass-baritone Ben LeClair.

The mass is regarded today as one of the supreme achievements in Western classical music. It stands as a summation of Bach's deep lifelong involvement with music for Lutheran worship, as well as his assimilation and synthesis of Western European musical traditions up to and including his own time, said Bach scholar Christoph Wolff.

Wolff said the work represents "a summary of Bach's writing for voice, not only in its variety of styles, compositional devices, and range of sonorities, but also in

its high level of technical polish ... Bach's mighty setting preserved the musical and artistic creed of its creator for posterity."

Tammen said he hopes the performance makes us all better people.

"My own greatest wish is that we all come to understand, through this experience, that the B Minor Mass is not only the best we humans can come up with, but that it is transcendentally good, and that we are a part of this transcendent goodness," he said. "There is more to us, more to hope for and plan for and celebrate, than the brutality, the violence, the hatred, which we daily confront in one another."

The Chicago Chorale's Bach's Mass in B Minor, BWV 232, performance will take place at 3 p.m. Sunday, April 3, at Rockefeller Chapel, University of Chicago, 5850 S. Woodlawn Ave. Martin Marty, Fairfax M. Cone, distinguished service professor emeritus in the Divinity School at the University of Chicago, will present a free pre-concert talk at 2 p.m. at Ida Noyes Hall, 1212 E. 59th St.

Tickets are \$30 general admission and \$15 students and are available online at [chicagochorale.org](http://chicagochorale.org) or call 773-306-6195. A 10 percent discount is available for groups of 10 or more; call 773-306-6195 to arrange group sales.

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