



MEDIA RELEASE

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PEMBROKE COMMUNITY CHOIR WELCOMES NEW VOICES IN 2019

PEMBROKE, ON – Members of the Pembroke Community Choir can be forgiven if they are still humming Christmas songs all day—it’s been a very busy season for them. In addition to performing concerts in both Pembroke and Renfrew, some members also sang at Marianhill Seniors’ Home, the Santa Claus Parade of Lights, Pembroke Regional Hospital’s Festive Home Tour, and the Downtown Shop Hop. It’s no wonder then, that Christmas music keeps running through their heads.

Still, the choir has been planning ahead and is looking forward to having new and returning

voices join them this January for their next season. Choir director Gerald LaRonde has chosen *Stabat Mater*, a work by Welsh composer Karl Jenkins, for its April concert. The choir previously performed a Jenkins piece in 2013 called *The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace* which was well-received by the community.

Jenkins’ *Stabat Mater* composition is based on an ancient prayer from the 13th century which imagines the crucifixion of Jesus and particularly the suffering of his mother, Mary. The text has been put to music by many different composers over the years and has been recorded well over 200 times. Jenkins’ own composition features additional poems and text, stirring choral and solo parts, and unique arrangements and instrumentation. The Pembroke choir will be accompanied by an orchestra and feature mezzo-soprano Danielle Vaillancourt as soloist for this Easter performance.



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Almost 600 people attended the two performances of *A Night of Silence* in Pembroke and Renfrew this year. Above, Jessica Belanger of Renfrew shared her beautiful voice in the solos at both concerts and cellist Marion Arthur was one of the talented string players. Now the choir is thinking ahead to its upcoming rehearsals that begin January 7th.

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Mr. LaRonde was pleased with the number of new male voices who joined last year and encourages more men to consider being part of the choir. “If you like to sing, I think you’ll enjoy both the challenges and rewards of a large ensemble doing harmony singing. If you’re new to choirs, you can see what it’s like by coming to any of the choir’s first three rehearsals.”

Registration nights for the new spring season are Monday, January 7, 14, and 21 at 6:30 p.m. followed by a 7 p.m. rehearsal. The choir practices every Monday at Wesley Community Church, 210 Renfrew Street in Pembroke and performs a concert each April and December.

Because the choir is a registered charity, members receive an income tax receipt for the amount of their membership fees. Fee for the spring session is \$50 for adults and \$30 for students 25 years and under.

For more information about the choir, contact PCC president Linda Clark at 613-735-6604 or visit their website at www.pembrokecommunitychoir.org.



Pembroke’s community choir always welcomes new members each January and September. Members range in age from high school and college students, to retirees and senior citizens. In this photo, Director Gerald LaRonde leads the choir at this year’s Christmas concert at Our Lady of Fatima Church in Renfrew, while cellist Marion Arthur provides a haunting accompaniment. Registration and practice for the spring session begins Monday, January 7th at 6:30 p.m. at Wesley Community Church.

Visit the choir’s website at: www.pembrokecommunitychoir.org