



"...opulent, precise and powerful..." - *The Washington Post*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **New Dominion Chorale to Present Washington Premiere of Advent Cantata**

New Dominion Chorale will perform works by Benjamin Britten and Thomas Beveridge in a program entitled "Welcome, Yule!" on Sunday, December 8, 2013, at 4 p.m. The concert, a blend of old and new Christmas traditions, will take place at the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center on the Alexandria Campus of Northern Virginia Community College, 3001 North Beauregard St., Alexandria, Virginia.

Mr. Beveridge, the Chorale's founder and artistic director, will conduct the performance that features his own Advent Cantata, "Welcome, Lord!" and, in observance of the centennial of the birth of Britten, the "Ceremony of Carols."

New Dominion Chorale will be joined by special guest chorus, the World Children's Choir, directed by Sondra Harnes. Soloists include the internationally renowned pianist, Thomas Pandolfi, and several vocal soloists, all well known to Washington audiences: soprano Laura Strickling, mezzo-soprano Linda Maguire, tenors Issachah Savage and Jason Rylander, and bass David Brundage. The Rev. John Wimberly will be the narrator in "Welcome, Lord!"

Mr. Beveridge's cantata, commissioned by Union Theological Seminary in New York City to commemorate its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary, received its premiere in 1986. This will be the second performance, with a new ending. "Welcome, Lord!" is based on the first chapter of the Gospel according to St. Luke, which tells the story of the events leading up to the birth of Jesus: the Annunciation by the angel Gabriel to Elizabeth and Zechariah concerning the birth of their son, John ("the Baptist"), and to Mary, concerning the birth of her son, Jesus. The musical score, which employs an ensemble of solo instruments, includes many familiar chants and carols appropriate for the Advent season, including "O Come Emmanuel," "Come, Holy Spirit," "O Come, All Ye Faithful," and a new setting of Mary's song, "My Soul Magnifies the Lord" (The Magnificat).

The World Children's Choir has performed for many world leaders, including the last four U.S. presidents; at special ceremonies at the White House, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and the U.S. Capitol; and in many foreign countries.

Mr. Savage, who performs the role of the angel Gabriel, is one of America's rising young opera singers. He recently made his debut with the Houston Grand Opera as Rhadames in Verdi's *Aida*.

Ms. Strickling has won numerous awards and competitions in the United States and has been praised in *The New York Times* for her "flexible voice, crystalline diction and warm presence." She will sing the role of Mary in "Welcome, Lord!"

New Dominion Chorale, now in its 23<sup>rd</sup> year, is the Washington area's largest chorus, with 235 singing members. The Chorale has been praised by *Washington Post* critics for singing with "power, but with delicacy and grace," and has been singled out for its unique organizational structure as a "singers' cooperative." In addition to regular performances at the Schlesinger Center, the Chorale has also appeared at Washington National Cathedral, the George Mason University Center for the Arts, and the Concert Hall of the Kennedy Center.

Mr. Beveridge is considered one of Washington's most versatile musicians: singer, instrumentalist, composer, arranger, and conductor. The composer of over 650 works in all media, he was the recipient of the first "Wammie" award given to a composer by the Washington Area Music Association. *Washingtonian* magazine has called him "The Dean of Washington Composers."

Tickets for "Welcome, Yule!" are available online through the Chorale's website ([www.newdominion.org](http://www.newdominion.org)) or at the door on the day of the performance. General admission tickets are \$30, \$25 (seniors), \$5 (students and children), and \$20 for individuals in groups of 10 or more. For more information, visit [www.newdominion.org](http://www.newdominion.org) or call 703-442-9404.

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