

The William Baker Choral Foundation in Georgia

# Candlelight & Carols With the Festival Singers

## The Lynn Swanson Festival Singers

Founded in 1985 as Gwinnett Festival Singers & Known as William Baker Festival Singers from 1998-2015

The Festival Brass    Herbert Buffington, organ

The Forsyth County High School Chamber Chorus, *Lisa Belk White, Director*

Saturday Evening, 3 December 2016

St. Benedict's Episcopal Church

Smyrna, Georgia

Sunday Afternoon, 4 December 2016

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

Marietta, Georgia

*Never the Morning Star so radiant  
Followed His course o'er eastern skies.*

*What is this Light so fair, so tender  
Breaking upon our wondering eyes?*

*Come in, ye kings, and kiss the feet of God!*

**SOLI DEO GLORIA**

*What wondrous love is this, O my soul?*

# The Lynn Swanson Festival Singers

*Gwinnett Festival Singers 1985-1998*

*William Baker Festival Singers Atlanta 1998-2015*

## **Lynn Swanson, MME**

Music Director & Conductor  
WBCF Executive Associate Music Director

## **William O. Baker, DMA**

Founder & WBCF Music Director

## **Kim Claxton**

Executive Assistant

## **Christine Freeman, MME**

Associate Music Director/Senior Vocal Coach

## **Scott C. Smith**

Choral Associate & Administrator, Atlanta

## **Jamea Sale, MME**

Choral Assistant, Kansas City

## **Amy Thropp**

Director, Zimria Festivale Atlanta

## **Charles Nelson**

Director, Northwest Georgia Summer Singers

## **Thomas Sheets**

Assistant Conductor,  
Lynn Swanson Festival Singers

## **Chris Barnard**

Administrator, Kansas City

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Staff Accompanists

## **The William Baker Choral Foundation, Inc.**

5450 Buena Vista Street, Suite 100  
Roeland Park, Kansas 66205

913.403.9223      Mail@FestivalSingers.org

www.FestivalSingers.org      www.ChoralFoundation.org

www.HealthySinging.org

*\*Terrell Abney '07*

*Karin Banks '10*

*Jennifer Barron '16*

*Joseph Battle '12*

*David Beckers '02*

*Kristin Boyle '14*

*Steve Brailsford '14*

*William Dreyfoos '00*

*George Evans '16*

*Vince Evans '14*

*Marla Franks '03*

*Gerald Freeman '14*

*Dorothy Goodson '03*

*Harley Granville '14*

*Felicia Hernandez '04*

*Ellen Hicks '10*

*Susan Hinesley '11*

*Virginia Jennings '12*

*Paul Kelley '16*

*\*Jody Kershner '09*

*Alexis LaSalle '10*

*Susan Lawton '14*

*Sarah Means '10*

*Marcia Mein '11*

*Charles Nelson '11*

*David Nieland '12*

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*Mary Selano '11*

*Jessica Shepherd '09*

*Scott Smith '94*

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*Andrew Tallant '16*

*Amy Thropp '13*

*Ronald Vaughn '16*

*Ann Vines '09*

*Michael Warrick '09*

*Nancy Warrick '10*

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## *Lynn Swanson, Music Director & Conductor Director of the Institute for Healthy Singing*



**Lynn Swanson** is a native of Atlanta. A life-long resident of the area, she has served the metro community as a leader in the musical arts for nearly 30 years. She holds the Bachelor of Music in Organ Performance from Shorter University in Rome, Georgia, and the Master of Music Education in Choral Pedagogy from the University of Kansas.

She has served as Music Director for several Greater Atlanta churches, building strong and diverse music programs in each. She was appointed Music Director & Organist for the St. Benedict's Episcopal Church in Smyrna, Georgia in August 2011. In less than six months she created a children's music ministry in the young and rapidly growing congregation, and led an acclaimed performance of Handel's *Messiah* with the 70-voice choir and chamber orchestra before a standing-room-only audience from the parish and the wider community. In the five years of her tenure, the Choir of St. Benedict's has performed Antonio Vivaldi's *Gloria* and *Beatus Vir*, Franz Joseph Haydn's *The Creation*, and Gabriel Faure's *Requiem*. The program is now a comprehensive music ministry with graded children's choral and handbell ensembles, in addition to a very active parish choir.

In addition to her service as Executive Associate Music Director of the William Baker Choral Foundation, Ms. Swanson is the Founder of the Northside Young Singers, the Summer Singers of Lee's Summit (co-founder) and the Cobb Summer Singers. In June 2015 she became Music Director of the organization's oldest Festival Singers ensemble. Now called the Lynn Swanson Festival Singers, the chorus was founded in 1985 as Gwinnett Festival Singers.

Recent choral/orchestral masterworks have included Handel's *Messiah*; Mozart's *Solemn Vespers*; Faure's *Requiem*; Schubert's *Mass in G*; Haydn's *Te Deum*, Mendelssohn: *Elijah*; Beethoven's *Mass in C*, Vivaldi's *Beatus Vir*, in addition to Bernstein: *Chichester Psalms & Missa Brevis*; Brahms: *A German Requiem*; Handel: *Dettingen Te Deum & Water Music Suite*, Mozart: *Exsultate Jubilate*, *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* and *Coronation Mass*; Bach: *Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 in F*, *Cantata No. 51 "Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen," Mass in B Minor* and *Magnificat*. Her choral ensembles have been featured recently as headline performers at the Christmas Atlanta Festival, Arts International, and appear annually at the Piccolo Spoleto Festival in Charleston, South Carolina.



# *The Lynn Swanson Festival Singers*

*Gwinnett Festival Singers 1985-1998 William Baker Festival Singers Atlanta 1998-2015*

*Music of Timeless Beauty and Worth in Atlanta for 32 Seasons*



The Lynn Swanson Festival Singers traces its history to the 1985 creation of Gwinnett Festival Singers by founder William Baker and his long-time associate, Janis Lane. The ensemble was known as William Baker Festival Singers from 1998-2015. With the appointment of Lynn Swanson as the second Music Director & Conductor of the ensemble in June 2015 the choir took the name Lynn Swanson Festival Singers.

The 50-voice Festival Singers specializes in short-form sacred a cappella classics and spirituals, in addition to annual performances of masterworks for chorus and chamber orchestra. Major concerts have included a performance of Brahms *Ein deutsches Requiem* with the Gwinnett Symphony Orchestra, and a performance in Spivey Hall of Johann Sebastian Bach's *St. John Passion* and *Mass in B Minor*. Other masterworks over the years have included Stravinsky *Symphony of Psalms*, Bernstein *Chichester Psalms*, Mozart's *Requiem*, *Solemn Vespers*, *Missa Brevis in D*, and *Mass in C minor*; Buxtehude's *Membra Jesu Nostri*, and Britten's *Rejoice in the Lamb* and *Ceremony of Carols*, along with dozens of works from Palestrina to Kodaly. The Festival Singers performed the Ernest Bloch *Avodath Hakodesh* for the rededication of the magnificent pipe organ at The Temple on Peachtree, and at the historic Community Christian Church in Kansas City, a performance broadcast in its entirety by Kansas Public Radio on the eve of Passover 2012.

The ensemble is known for its expressive memorized performances of signature a cappella concerts demonstrating a striking diversity and depth of repertoire. The sound of the Festival Singers has been hailed by music critics and the general public, including The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, "*Sensuous tonal beauty...a level of balance, blend, intonation and expressiveness that puts the average community chorus to shame...*" The Charleston Post & Courier, "*...the South's premier a cappella choir...exceptional tone and ferocious emotion...*" and the New Orleans Times-Picayune, "*...inspiring and exhilarating.*"

The Festival Singers has produced 23 nationally released recordings and has been featured in local television programs across the South, and on national radio programs that include *The Sounds of Majesty*, *The First Art* and National Public Radio's *Performance Today*. They have toured throughout the South and Midwest in the United States and Great Britain, having appeared in Birmingham's Divinity Chapel, Atlanta's Spivey Hall, the DeKalb International Choral Festival, Canterbury Cathedral, and the Bristol (England) Festival, in addition to annual performances before capacity audiences at the Piccolo Spoleto Festival in Charleston, South Carolina, since 1989.



The Festival Singers has become a model for professional-level volunteer choruses that have inspired the creation of similar organizations in the Atlanta area and across the nation. Indeed, the ambitious chorus that met for a first rehearsal in the basement of a Norcross church 32 years ago is now the flagship ensemble of a national arts organization that through the years has created over a dozen choirs involving hundreds of men, women and young people in Georgia, Kansas and Missouri.

## *Lynn Swanson Festival Singers Staff*



**Scott Smith, Choral Associate**, is a native of Chicago, IL. He has made Atlanta his home since 1992. A graduate of the University of Illinois, Scott has enjoyed many different aspects of music. Scott has been a member of many different choirs including The Soul Children of Chicago, University of Illinois Concert & Chamber Choirs, Augustana College Handel Oratorio Society, Chordbusters, The Michael O'Neal Singers, St. Mark UMC Chancel Choir, Summer Singers of Atlanta, Just Voices and the William Baker, now Lynn Swanson, Festival Singers. Scott has performed the role of Joe in "Showboat", Andy Lee in "42nd Street" and Balthazar in "Amahl and the Night Visitors" and he has published a setting of the spiritual "Nobody Knows the Trouble I See" through Amber Waves.

Scott stepped on the podium for the first time as a conductor in 1997 when he took on the role of choral assistant for the 125-member Summer Singers of Atlanta. He continues to serve in the capacity of Trustee Emeritus and Choral Associate for the William Baker Choral Foundation's Atlanta ensembles.

Scott is employed by IBM and lives in Southwest Atlanta with his partner Mark. When he's not singing, Scott enjoys cooking, gardening and growing orchids.



**Thomas Sheets, Assistant Conductor**, grew up on a dairy farm near LaGrange, Georgia. He holds the Bachelor of Music Education from Carson-Newman University, the Master of Music from Columbus State University, and Master of Divinity from the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He has been a full time Minister of Music for 13 years in Southern Baptist churches and as a part-time Minister of Music in Atlanta area United Methodist churches, including Hapeville United Methodist Church where he presently serves. He has also been a music educator in the Cobb County Schools, where he was known for recruitment and program building. He has been a member and soloist with the Savannah Symphony Chorale, the Columbus Civic Chorale and the Lynn Swanson (formerly William Baker) Festival Singers. He makes his home in central Atlanta.

## *Herbert Buffington, Guest Organist*



**Herbert Buffington**, has held the position of Organist and Assistant Choirmaster at the Peachtree Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Atlanta, Georgia since 1996. Immediately prior to this appointment, he was Organist and Choirmaster of Decatur Presbyterian Church in Decatur, Georgia.

Nationally recognized for his refined skill as an improvisateur, he has served on the faculties of church music conferences, as clinician for American Guild of Organists (AGO) chapter workshops and Pipe Organ Encounters, and has been featured on "Pipe Dreams" and Minnesota Public Radio's "Performance Today." At the 2010 AGO National Convention in Washington, D.C., he won second prize in the National Competition in Organ Improvisation, having also received third prize and the coveted audience award in the same competition in 2008.

Mr. Buffington maintains a busy solo recital schedule and has been heard in the United States, Austria, England, Germany and Hungary. He also performs regularly in organ and piano duo recitals with concert pianist Randall Frieling. The duo have performed at such notable venues as National City Christian Church, Washington, D.C., Peachtree Christian Church, Atlanta, Georgia, and the Cathedral of the Advent, Birmingham, Alabama. Their most recent recording features Charles-Marie Widor's Six Duos for Piano and Organ as well as his Symphony VI for Organ, G minor, op. 42. He appeared with The William Baker Festival Singers in April 2013 in Kansas City at the world-renown Herzberg Hall of the Kaufmann Center for the Performing Arts.

Mr. Buffington received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Duke University and his Master of Music degree from the Peabody Conservatory of Music at The Johns Hopkins University. He also studied in Vienna, Austria at the Vienna International Music Center. His organ study has been with Fenner Douglass, Robert Parkins, Peter Planavsky, Ronald Rice, Donald Sutherland and William Weaver. Organ improvisation work has been with Gerre Hancock, Bruce Neswick and David Dahl.

# Candlelight & Carols With the Festival Singers

Saturday Evening, 3 December 2016, St. Benedict's Episcopal Church, Smyrna, Georgia  
Sunday Afternoon, 4 December 2015, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Marietta, Georgia

## The Lynn Swanson Festival Singers

*Founded in 1985 as Gwinnett Festival Singers and Known as William Baker Festival Singers from 1998-2015*

**The Forsyth County High School Chamber Chorus, Lisa Belk White, Director**  
**The Festival Brass Herbert Buffington, organ Lynn Swanson, conducting**

*Please Refrain from the Use of Cell Phones, Text Messaging and Flash Photography*  
*Please Silence All Electronic Devices Please Refrain from Applause until Following the Retiring Procession*

*The appearance of Organist Herbert Buffington is made possible by a grant from Alice & Jorge Blanco*

### *Pre-Concert Selections by The Festival Brass*

**THE GLORY OF THE FATHER** Egil HOVLAND, 1924-2013  
Sarah Means, Laura Youngblood & Ellen Hicks, soloists

**THE WORD WAS GOD** Rosephayne POWELL, Born 1962

**\*PROCESSION** "O Come All Ye Faithful" ADESTE FIDELES  
Audience Please Stand On Cue and Join in the Singing of the Carol

*O come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant, O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;  
Come and behold Him, Born the King of Angels;  
O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.*

*The highest, Most Holy, Light of Light eternal, Born of a Virgin a mortal He comes.  
Son of the Father, Now in flesh appearing;  
O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.*

*Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation, Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above.  
Glory to God, Glory in the highest;  
O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.*

**NARRATION** "At the Manger" by Jane Sullivan, Born 1954, authored for this occasion

**\*ARISE, YOUR LIGHT HAS COME** German Chorale arranged by David Danner

**NARRATION** "Nativity" by John Donne, 1572-1631

**TOMORROW SHALL BE MY DANCING DAY** John GARDNER, 1917-2011

**NARRATION** "In the Holy Nativity of Our Lord" by Richard Crashaw, 1613-1649

**UBI CARITAS** Sung in Latin Renè CLAUSEN, Born 1953  
**TO HIM WE SING** Robert YOUNG, 1923-2011

**NARRATION**                    *“Christmas Carol” by Sara Teasdale, 1884-1933*

**\*A FESTIVAL FOR CHRISTMAS**

R. Douglas HELVERING, Born 1977

*“A Festival for Christmas” was commissioned and premiered by the William Baker Festival Singers in 2007*

**Angels We Have Heard On High, Personent Hodie, Of the Father’s Love Begotten,  
O Holy Night & Joy to the World**

**The audience will stand on cue and join in the singing of “Joy to the World”**

*Joy to the world, the Lord is come. Let earth receive her King.  
Let every heart prepare Him room, and heaven and nature sing.*

*He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove  
The glories of His righteousness, and wonders of His love.*

**\*FANFARE from “Christus Natalis”**

Z. Randall STROOPE, Born 1953

The Festival Brass & Organ

**(Sunday) LOVE CAME DOWN AT CHRISTMAS**

David DICKAU, Born 1953

**(Sunday) STILL, STILL, STILL**

*German Carol arranged by Matthew Culloton*

Joseph Signa & Autumn Perry, soloists

**(Sunday) PAT-A-PAN**

*French Carol arranged by David Conte*

The Forsyth County High School Chamber Chorus, Lisa Belk White, director

*Peyton Ashley, Caya Bennett, Taylor Chevalier, Skylar Collins, Madison Creller, Parker Davenport, Luchia Flores-Arecco, Emma Hammond,  
Jacob Hammond, Caitlin Jahn, Haley Johnson, Brock Jorgensen, Brianna Lapham, Hannab Little, Taylor Mixson, Autumn Perry, Katherine Ruiz,  
Joseph Signa, Anna Strobel, Derika Taylor, Dameion Thompson, Holly Turpin, Ashley Waddell, Madison Walbrun & Aidan Wood*

**CAROL “It Came Upon the Midnight Clear”**

**MIDNIGHT CLEAR**

*The Audience Will Please Rise and Join in Singing*

*It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,  
From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold.  
“Peace on the earth, good will to men, from heaven’s all-gracious King.”  
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.*

*Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled,  
And still their heavenly music floats o’er all the weary world;  
Above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing,  
And ever o’er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.*

*And ye beneath life’s crushing load whose forms are bending low,  
Who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow.  
Look now, for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing,  
O rest beside the weary road, and hear the angels sing.*

*For lo! The days are hastening on by prophets seen of old,  
When with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold.  
When peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,  
And the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing.*

**NARRATION**                    *“In the Bleak Midwinter” by Christina Rossetti, 1830-1894*  
**WHAT IS THIS LOVELY FRAGRANCE?**                    *French Carol arranged by Healey Willan*  
**JESUS CHRIST THE APPLE TREE**                    Elizabeth POSTEN, 1905-1987

**NARRATION**                    *“A Child My Choice” by Robert Southwell, 1561-1595*  
**\*MARY HAD A BABY**                    *African-American Spiritual arranged by Wendell Whalum*  
Justin Scott, soloist

**NARRATION**                    *“A Christmas Prayer” by Fra Giovanni, 1433-1515*  
**GLORY, GLORY TO THE NEWBORN KING**                    *African-American Spiritual arranged by Moses Hogan*  
Jessica Shepherd, soloist

**\*RETIRING PROCESSION**                    *“Hark the Herald Angels Sing”*                    MENDELSSOHN  
Audience Please Stand On Cue and Join in the Singing of the Carol

*Hark, the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”  
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled.  
Joyful all ye nations rise, join the triumph of the skies.  
With angelic hosts proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”  
Hark, the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”*

*Christ by highest heaven adored, Christ the everlasting Lord,  
Late in time behold Him come, offspring of the Virgin’s womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, Hail the Incarnate Deity!  
Pleased as Man with men to dwell, Jesus our Emmanuel.  
Hark, the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”*

*Hail, the heaven born Prince of Peace, Hail the Son of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all He brings; Risen with healing in His wings.  
Mild He lays His glories by; Born that Man no more may die.  
Born to raise the sons of earth; Born to give them second birth.  
Hark, the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”*

---

***The Festival Brass***

*Kevin Lyon & Phil Ehrmann, trumpet                    Travis Cottle, alto horn*  
*Tom Gibson, trombone                    Bill Pritchard, tuba*

\*Recordings by the Festival Singers are available on iTunes, Amazon & Spotify,  
in addition to CDs & DVDs on the Amber Waves Sound Recordings label. [www.FestivalSingers.org](http://www.FestivalSingers.org)  
Over 140 video excerpts from Choral Foundation choirs in concert may be enjoyed on YouTube: WBakerCF

*The Musical Family of the William Baker Choral Foundation  
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*The William Baker Choral Foundation in Georgia Presents*

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Rosanne St. Clair, Accompanist

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Angels We Have Heard On High  
& Mary, Did You Know?*

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# THE LYNN SWANSON FESTIVAL SINGERS

*Gwinnett Festival Singers, 1985-1998    William Baker Festival Singers, 1998-2015*

Lynn Swanson, MME, Music Director & Conductor  
Scott Smith, Choral Associate    Thomas Sheets, Assistant Conductor

*"The Festival Singers is one of the very finest choral groups of any size or genre in the Southeastern United States and beyond. Their annual performances at the Piccolo Spoleto Festival, usually before standing room only audiences, are excellent, breathtaking and inspiring."*

*-Ellen Dressler Moryl, Former Director, Cultural Affairs for the City of Charleston, Founder of Piccolo Spoleto*

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# **The William Baker Choral Foundation**

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**The William Baker Festival Singers**, Prairie Village, Kansas, 1998

**The Summer Singers of Atlanta**, Midtown Atlanta, 1990

William O. Baker, DMA, Music Director & Conductor

**The Cobb Summer Singers**, Smyrna, Georgia, 2006

**The Lynn Swanson Festival Singers**, Atlanta, Georgia, 1985

*Known as The Gwinnett Festival Singers, 1985-1998 & William Baker Festival Singers in Atlanta, 1998-2015*

Lynn Swanson, MME, Music Director & Conductor

**Zimria Festivale Atlanta**, Dunwoody, Georgia, 2014

Amy Thropp, Music Director & Conductor

**The Summer Singers of Kansas City**, Kansas City, Missouri, 1999

William O. Baker, DMA, Music Director & Conductor

**The Summer Singers of Lee's Summit**, Lee's Summit, Missouri, 2014

Lynn Swanson, MME & William O. Baker, DMA, Co-Music Directors

**The Northwest Georgia Summer Singers**, Cartersville, Georgia, 2010

**The Northwest Georgia Festival Singers**, Cartersville, Georgia, 2016

Charles Nelson, Music Director & Conductor

**The Institute for Healthy Singing**, Roeland Park, Kansas, 2015

**The Kansas City Honors Choral Institute**, Bonner Springs, Kansas, 2016

**The Jane Sullivan Choral Resource Library**, Roeland Park, Kansas, 2016

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Kathryn Huey  
Ruth Johnson  
Thomas & Helen Jones  
Mary Ann Kancel  
*in honor of David Sacben*  
Denny Kurogi  
Marlene Link  
Mary & John Lehoczyk  
Judy Martin  
James & Barbara Meadows  
Kathleen Michaud  
Bill Moody  
Todd Allen Moore  
Carter & Hampton Morris  
Pamela Pendergast,  
*in memory of Mildred Popplewell Dumm*  
Bill & Charlene Price  
Mark & Jamie Roberts  
Frances Robinson  
Schleicher Construction & Design  
Jennifer Schoenfeld  
Kathryn Senkbeil  
Edwina Smith  
Gerald Tobia  
Phyllis Vasquez  
*in memory of Leroy Schnorf*  
Michael & Nancy Warrick  
Susan B. Webb  
Drs. Georgia and Jean West  
Ron and Adrienne Wilson  
Fred Zimmerman

### **IN-KIND GIFTS**

George Butler  
Gene Claxton,  
Unisource Document Products  
Congregation Beth Shalom  
Countryside Christian Church  
IBM Corporation  
Eddie Ross  
St. Benedict's Episcopal Church  
Charles St. Clair  
St. Paul's Episcopal Church of Lee's Summit  
Lynn Swanson

*Please report corrections to your  
local Choral Foundation office or  
Mail@FestivalSingers.org*