

SVS Concert: Come, Follow That Star

W. Gibb - Leader staff

WILLIAMSBURG — The members of the Seaway Valley Singers, under the direction of Robert Jones, with accompanist Margaret Whisselle, held their annual Christmas concert on Sunday, December 6. *Come Follow That Star* welcomed the arrival of the season of joy.

The Christian Reformed Church in Williamsburg was full as the 42 voice choir performed some of the best-loved carols and popular songs of the Christmas season.

With Dr. Gerry Rosenquist returning as the MC for the event, narrating background to the music, the Singers delighted their audience with a wide range of songs.

The concert celebrated Advent, the Annunciation, the glad arrival of the Baby and the visit of the Magi in a number of lovely sacred songs. The choir also recognized and sang of the season of Hanukkah, which this year begins on December 22.

“I Saw Three Ships A-Sailing” adapted by John Rutter, was a charming number during the performance.

However, as Dr. Rosenquist, tongue in cheek commented, “Originally, the male voices were to whistle the chorus, but despite the best efforts of the men in the Seaway Valley Singers, it was decided that a better result would occur if Frances Reid played the recorder instead.”

Frances and Margaret Reid added both flute, drums and the recorder to the piano and vocal arrangements of some of the selections. The results were lovely.

The audience was invited to join in on two of the carols particularly “Angels We Have Heard On High”, which featured a descant especially arranged by director Jones. The Flemish carol, “Quittez Pasteurs”, where the men ‘chanted’ the background and the women carried the melody was

particularly memorable.

Near the end of the concert, however, as they often do to entertain the audience, the Seaway Valley Singers added a jazzy and very unexpected little twist to three upbeat modern Christmas songs.

Robert and Margaret joined

hands, literally, to accompany the choir on the funny and lively “Jingle All the Way.” (Most of us, incidentally, do not remember a chorus of Yeah!Yeah!Yeah! in “Up on the Housetop.”) But MC Rosenquist did say this was a chance for the choir and audience to “let their hair down and have

some fun.”

The audience thoroughly enjoyed *Come Follow That Star*, as the Choir musically ushered in the 2019 Christmas season.

Many are already looking forward to the Seaway Valley Singers next public concert, their Spring performance in May, 2020



Ushering in the season

Following a very successful concert at the Williamsburg Christian Reformed Church, some members of the Seaway Valley Singers gathered around the piano. In front, seated, left to right, are SVS accompanist Margaret Whisselle and Karen Gilroy, who is in her first year with the Choir. Standing are conductor Robert Jones, Don Vreman, also in his first year, Elizabeth Temple, who is a charter member of the Choir and Michael Ouellette, president of the Choir.