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**Con Brio Celebrates its Twentieth Christmas**

**Essex, CT, Date: XX/XX/XX**

**For Immediate Release**

Con Brio, the shoreline’s renowned all-auditioned chorus, is celebrating its 20th birthday! This year Con Brio remembers its past with much loved pieces and looks forward with new ones to the years to come.

The opening words to the Christmas Concert’s featured work, J.S. Bach’s beloved *Christmas Oratorio*, are *Set aside fear, banish lamentation, strike up a song full of joy and mirth!* And indeed Con Brio will!

Directed by Dr. Stephen Bruce, the Con Brio Choral Society, Con Brio Festival Orchestra, soloists: Terrence Fay, tenor and Christopher Grundy, bass, promises an unforgettable, soul-healing concert. In the beautiful sanctuary of Christ the King Church in Old Lyme on Dec. 9 and 11, Con Brio will lift your hearts, and together, the Chorus, Orchestra, Soloists and Audience will fill the church with glorious Christmas music!

Con Brio opens this year’s concert with one of the most celebrated Christmas pieces, performing portions of J. S. Bach’s *Christmas Oratorio*, first performed over the six weeks of the Christmas season in 1734***.*** Con Brio will perform several of the well-known choruses; several chorales, (prototype of the Lutheran hymn); as well as the famous aria, *Mighty Lord*.

Among the variety of familiar and new pieces celebrating the season is Mark Reise’s arrangement of *God Rest Ye Merry* followed by its companion piece, *I Saw Three Ships.* Con Brio’s by now traditional practice of singing “in the round” will this year feature the *Gloria* from Rheinberger’s Mass in E-flat the Kyrie of which moved audiences several years ago. Two of the *Sechs Sprüche* of Mendelssohn will be followed by three new arrangements of familiar melodies: Forrest’s *He is Born*, Halley’s *What Child is This?* and Wilberg’s *Masters in This Hall*. Z. Randall Stroope’s powerfully moving *Winter*, first introduced to audiences a few years ago, is followed by Courtney’s highly entertaining and witty *Musicological Journey Through the Twelve Days of Christmas*. As always there will be familiar Christmas carols for the audience to sing: *We Three Kings* and *Joy to the World*.

In addition to Con Brio’s two Christmas performances, the Spring Concert offers the opportunity to hear the magnificent Beethoven *Mass in C* and Patricia Schuman sing, once again, perhaps Con Brio’s most popular piece: *The Easter Hymn.*

Con Brio thanks its our loyal audience members, sponsors and advertisers, for faithful support over twenty years!

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All Concerts are performed at Christ the King Church, 1 McCurdy Road, Old Lyme, CT.

**Christmas Concerts:** December 9 at 8 pm and December 11 at 3 pm

**Spring Concert:** April 23, 2017 at 4 pm

**Tickets**: online at [www.conbrio.org](http://www.conbrio.org), or from any Con Brio member, or by calling 860 526-5399. $30/$15 students.

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**For more information:** call Becky Coffey, Publicity Manager (203) 804-4835, or email [b.coffey@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mb.coffey@sbcglobal.net)

**Hi-Res Color Photos available:**

Terrence Fay, Tenor

Christopher Grundy, Bass

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