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## Collegiate Choir to Perform Tour Home Concert

March 10, 2005

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. - The Illinois Wesleyan University Collegiate Choir will present a concert at 8 p.m. Tuesday, March 22, at St. John's Lutheran Church, 1617 E. Emerson St., Bloomington, Ill.

This concert, which is free and open to the public, is the final of nine appearances the Collegiate Choir will make during its 2005 concert tour. The tour itinerary includes performances in Missouri, Kansas, Colorado, Nebraska, Iowa and Illinois, beginning March 12.

The Collegiate Choir has established a long history of excellence through its on-campus performances, annual tours and recordings. The choir also sponsors the IWU Choral Commission Series, which in its 53-year history has added many significant works to the choral repertoire and resulted in a number of important world premieres at Illinois Wesleyan.

The 52-voice choir is composed of student musicians representing the School of Music and other areas of the University, and is dedicated to the performance of the finest sacred and secular choral music of the past five centuries. Students in the choir are selected by audition and maintain a rigorous rehearsal schedule in preparation for their concert tour and other engagements throughout the year.

The choir is under the direction of J. Scott Ferguson, director of choral activities at Illinois Wesleyan. Dr. Ferguson's choral ensembles have received critical acclaim for their "exquisite discipline, enthusiastic singing and total responsiveness." Upon hearing a recent tour concert, a conductor from New York noted, "Full, clear voices full of joy in ensemble singing. Go where they are and listen and revel in outstanding choral singing." Another wrote, "The Illinois Wesleyan University Collegiate Choir, under the direction of Scott Ferguson, exemplifies what I feel is the best of the best in choral singing. The Collegiate Choir sings with impeccable intonation, with precise articulation and superb musicianship." Programs have been called "wonderfully well-selected, versatile, interesting and musical."

This year's tour program will begin with motets from the Renaissance and Baroque periods by Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck, William Byrd and Heinrich Schütz. Then follow three Renaissance secular compositions by Claude Le Jeune, Thomas Ford and Orlando di Lasso. The featured work on the first half of the program will be the great double-choir motet, *Singet dem Herrn*, BWV 225, by J. S. Bach.

The second half of the concert is devoted to contemporary choral music, beginning with two compositions by two of the most well known contemporary Estonian composers Urmas Sisask (*Omnis una*) and Arvo Pärt (*Bogoróditse Djévo*). This is followed by the haunting *Song of Cherubim* by Krzysztof Penderecki. The Choir will then sing *Two A Cappella Choruses* by György Ligeti and *Morning Prayer* by Ben Allaway, composer-in-residence at Graceland University and First Christian Church of Des Moines, Iowa, where the Choir will be performing

on March 18. The program will conclude with *Whispers* by Steven Stucky and *In Praise of Apollo* by Dominick Argento.

For more information about the Collegiate Choir Tour, contact the Illinois Wesleyan School of Music at (309)556-3061.