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**A FESTIVAL OF PSALMS ALLOWS COMPOSERS TO SHINE**

**State College, PA, October 8, 2018** The 150 psalms of the Old Testament were quite literally intended to be songs: songs of praise, of joy, and even songs of warning or complaint. They have been favorite texts for composers throughout the centuries, with each musician bringing a distinctive touch to the familiar words. On October 20, 2018, at 7:30 p.m. in State College's Grace Lutheran Church, the State College Choral Society will present a concert of nine choral settings of great psalms, ranging from Handel's *Messiah*-like version of Psalm 89 ("Let Thy Hand Be Strengthened") to Abraham Kaplan's sweetly lyrical Psalm 23 ("The Lord is My Shepherd"). With accompaniment by Asa Carns on piano and organ, the songs sweep from grand to dance-able in a concert suitable for all ages.

"The Festival of Psalms is an afternoon of celebrating a diversity of human responses as expressed by composers from various centuries and cultures," says Artistic Director Dr. Russell Shelley. "From the dignity of Handel through the declaration of Ives to the delight of Aguiar, each composer brings a unique reflection of the human experience."

The October concert is the first of three in the Choral Society's 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary season, which will culminate in a gala presentation of Mendelssohn's *Elijah* in the spring. The group is one of the largest and most established community arts organizations in Centre County. Its 140 volunteer members perform in two to five classical choral concerts, many accompanied by professional instrumentalists or a small orchestra, each performance season.

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For more information about the Choral Society's upcoming concerts and its plans for its anniversary season, please contact General Manager Tom Penkala at (814) 404 9223 or at [info@scchoralsociety.org](mailto:info@scchoralsociety.org).