

# SING TO THE LORD A NEW SONG!

*The St. Athanasius Orthodox Church Choir sings some of its favorite hymns*

*Valerie Yova, Music Director*



A parish under the authority of His Eminence, Metropolitan JOSEPH  
of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America.



**ST. ATHANASIUS**  
ORTHODOX CHURCH

# THE CHOIR

**Conductor:** Valerie Yova

## **Sopranos**

Catherine Braun  
Melissa Braun  
Stephanie Braun  
Fay Young

## **Altos**

Nancy Gilbert  
Mary Gish  
Jami Stetler

## **Tenors**

Verne Gish  
Doug King  
Jan Speier

## **Basses**

Peter Braun  
John Butler (Assistant Director)  
Mitchell Denny Jr.  
Paul Wintz

## **Guest Singers**

Holly Finley, Alto  
Jim Morrison, Bass

## **Choir members not singing on this CD**

Julianna Ballew, Virginia Braun,  
Anna Grace Butler, Elizabeth Butler,  
Josh Dillon, Garrett Gish, Sydney Hedges

## **The Band**

V. Rev. John Finley, piano  
Verne Gish & John Butler, guitar  
Jim Morrison, bass guitar

**Recorded by Dan Bos of Truetone Productions**



**IT** was a major milestone for the Orthodox Church here in America when a group of several thousand Evangelical Protestants from 19 parishes who referred to themselves as the Evangelical Orthodox Church (EOC) came into the canonical Orthodox Christian Church. The year 1987 saw the culmination of a very long journey led by a group of six extraordinary men who were well known and highly respected in Evangelical Christian circles. If you don't know that story, it has been beautifully documented in the book "Becoming Orthodox," by Fr. Peter Gillquist, of blessed memory.



A significant part of their journey into Orthodoxy was the evolution of the worship music within the 19 churches of the EOC. St. Athanasius Church in Santa Barbara was the hub of the EOC, and at one time, five of the six "founding fathers," and their families were living there. St. Athanasius has a particularly rich

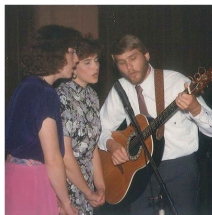
musical heritage, including a vast repertoire of music composed by its parish members. The EOC songs that facilitated the parish's transition into liturgical worship live on at our picnics and family gatherings. We have paid homage to those songs on this recording by including three of the most beloved. There are enough to fill an entire CD!

This CD is both a documentation and a celebration of our rich musical journey. It is also a celebration of "new" music that has been written and/or arranged by American Orthodox composers to fill a specific need in the Church as it has continued to adapt to American culture and the English language.

Fr. John David Finley, a trained musician, dedicated much time, energy, heart and soul to helping the parish make its transition to "a cappella" music. He adapted









Byzantine melodies and created simple, accessible four-part arrangements for a community that LOVED to sing and could sing in harmony! He composed and arranged music for Vespers, Matins and the Divine Liturgy and led the music from 1984 to 1992. We have included on this recording some of our most beloved hymns from his vast body of work.

We also owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. Timothy Heckenlively, Steven Emahiser, and John Forsythe for finding, arranging, and typesetting dozens of hymns for use in the parish, and to Fr. David Anderson, Alice Hughes and Anne Schoepp for their help and encouragement along the way.

We have had the privilege of working closely for several years with Nazo Zakkak, a composer who was “in residence” with us for awhile in 2013, and who wrote a number of hymns specifically for our choir. Many of his hymns are included on this CD. This collaboration was the next logical step for a parish that has always paved the way with regard to exploring home-grown American expressions of the Liturgical arts. The founding of our Liturgical Arts Festival in 2011 and the three festivals that have followed have helped us to grow as a choir, to explore new music, and to push ourselves even more vigorously towards excellence.

The time seemed exactly right in 2016 for us to document our musical history and growth, as we celebrate the 30th anniversary of our parish's entry into the Orthodox Church. Though we work VERY hard, practice a lot, and sing almost every liturgical service



on the parish's full schedule, we really DO love to sing and pray together. Some hymns, we especially love to sing, as a choir and as an entire parish. We offer them here to the glory of God and for the uplifting of your soul.



We dedicate this recording to: those brave founding fathers of our parish who began the long journey towards Orthodoxy; to that original group of believers who followed them into the Faith in 1987; and to all of the competent and dedicated musicians who have contributed to making the worship at St. Athanasius beautiful and prayerful for the past 30 plus years.

Valerie Yova, Music Director

This recording was made with the blessing of our priest, Fr. Nicholas Speier; the endorsement of the St. Athanasius Parish Council; and the support of many private donors.

### **MUSICAL LEADERSHIP at St. Athanasius Orthodox Church**

Valerie Yova (Music Director: 2010-Present)

John Butler (Assistant Choir Director, 2014-Present)

Verne Gish (Matins Leadership: 2014-Present)

Howard Lange (Head Chanter/Assistant Choir Director: 1996-2014)

Laurel Fryer (Choir Director: 1992-2010)

Tim Heckenlively (Chant Leader: 1994-1996, Interim Choir Director: 2003-2004)

Steven Emahiser (Chanter Leader: 1993-1995)

Fr. John D. Finley (Music Director: 1984-1992)



**VALERIE YOVA** received a Bachelor of Music Degree from Baldwin-University and a Master of Music Degree from New England Conservatory in Boston, both degrees being in Vocal Performance. Although she spent 20 years performing in opera, oratorio and concerts, she has been involved in the music of the Orthodox Church from childhood. Valerie's broad experience as a liturgical musician includes working 14 years within the Romanian (OCA) Episcopate in which she was raised and in which her father was first a choir director/chanter and then a deacon. She has also

served briefly in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese and the OCA, and has just completed her 12th year within the Antiochian Archdiocese. Valerie has been actively involved in inter-Orthodox musical ventures, including the formation of a Pan-Orthodox choir in Detroit and on the Board of Directors of PSALM. She is committed to diversity and the exploration of the musical traditions that best serve American culture and the English language, including the encouragement of newly composed music by American Orthodox composers. The invitation in 2010 to join the staff at St. Athanasius Church in Santa Barbara as Administrator and Music Director seemed both an unlikely match



and a perfect fit, in that she was a "cradle" ethnic Orthodox coming to a predominantly "convert" parish. Valerie is extremely grateful for the gift of teaching, leading, singing, laughing and praying with such a gifted, enthusiastic and loving group of singers. She is also thankful for the blessing of being among so many faithful who fought hard to find the Church of the Apostles and who cherish their Faith so much.



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| <p>1) <b>Joyfully with One True Voice</b><br/>V. Rev. John Finley (2:43)</p> <p>2) <b>Christ is Risen</b> (Troparion of Pascha), Vladimir Morosan, dedicated to V. Rev. Jon Braun (1:43)</p> <p>3) <b>Thy Bridal Chamber</b> (Troparion of Bridegroom Matins)<br/>Kievan Chant, arr. A. Arkhangelsky<br/>adapted by V. Morosan (2:14)</p> <p>4) <b>Great Litany</b> by Nazo Zakkak<br/>Celebrant: Deacon Gary Braun (3:29)</p> <p>5) <b>Anaphora</b> by V. Rev. Sergei Glagolev<br/>Celebrants: V. Rev. Jon Braun,<br/>V. Rev. Nicholas Speier (4:58)</p> <p>6) <b>In the Flesh</b> (Exapostilarion of Pascha)<br/>Galician melody, harm. &amp; arr. W. G. Obleschuk (2:53)</p> <p>7) <b>The Jesus Prayer</b><br/>Gornesky Monastery Chant (1:52)</p> <p>8) <b>Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos</b><br/>V. Rev. John Finley (2:10)</p> <p>9) <b>Cherubic Hymn</b> V. Rev. John Finley (2:10)</p> <p>10) <b>Prokeimenon for Feast of the Nativity of Christ</b><br/>V. Rev. John Finley, Chanter: Stephanie Braun (0:56)</p> <p>11) <b>The Wise Thief</b> (Exapostilarion of Holy Friday Matins)<br/>Byzantine melody, arr. V. Rev. J. Finley (1:12)</p> <p>12) <b>By the Waters of Babylon</b><br/>Znamenny Chant, harm. A. Arkhangelsky,<br/>set in English and edited by V. Morosan (4:05)</p> <p>13) <b>Receive the Body of Christ</b> (Communion Hymn)<br/>Original melody John Butler &amp; Madeleine Meyer<br/>harm. V. Yova &amp; N. Zakkak<br/>Chanter: Mary M. Gish III,<br/>Conducted by John Butler (3:25)</p> <p>14) <b>O, Isaiah, Dance Your Joy</b> (Wedding Troparia)<br/>Nazo Zakkak (1:36)</p> | <p>15) <b>Gladsome Light</b> (Hymn of Vespers)<br/>Nazo Zakkak (Dedicated by the composer to<br/>Stephanie Braun &amp; Mary Gish) (2:12)</p> <p>16) <b>Holy God</b>, N. Zakkak (composed for<br/>St. Athanasius Choir) (2:53)</p> <p>17) <b>It is Truly Meet</b>, N. Zakkak (dedicated by the<br/>composer to V. Yova) (1:31)</p> <p>18) <b>Cherubic Hymn</b>, N. Zakkak (4:03)</p> <p>19) <b>Blessed be the Name of the Lord</b>, N. Zakkak (1:03)</p> <p>20) <b>Today is the Beginning of Our Salvation</b><br/>Troparion of Feast of Annunciation,<br/>Nazo Zakkak (1:46)</p> <p>21) <b>Kontakion for the Feast of the Nativity of Christ</b><br/>V. Rev. John Finley (1:39)</p> <p>22) <b>Exapostilarion for the Feast of the Nativity of<br/>Christ</b>, Byzantine Chant (1:28)</p> <p>23) <b>Exapostilarion for the Feast of the Nativity of Christ</b><br/>J. Sakellarides/Gellsinger (1:49)</p> <p>24) <b>Holy God</b>, Original melody Fr. David Wey,<br/>arr. V. Rev. J. Finley (4:32)</p> <p>25) <b>Worthy is the Lamb</b> by V. Rev. John Finley<br/>Solo by V. Rev. John Finley<br/>Chorus: Valerie Yova, Melissa Walker Braun &amp;<br/>Jami Brunner Stetler (4:10)</p> <p>26) <b>I have Seen the Kingdom</b> by Dn. Douglas King<br/>Vocalists: Catherine Braun, Stephanie Braun, John<br/>Butler, Mary Gish, Verne Gish, Jim Morrison (2:35)</p> <p>27) <b>Within These Walls</b> by Dn. Douglas King<br/>Solos: Jim Morrison, Melissa Walker Braun,<br/>Verne Gish, Jami Brunner Stetler<br/>Added in chorus: John Butler, Valerie Yova (2:32)</p> <p>28) <b>Troparion to St. Athanasius</b><br/>Byzantine melody, arr. V. Rev. J. Finley (1:24)</p> <p>29) <b>Memory Eternal</b> by V. Rev. J. Finley (0:55)</p> <p>30) <b>Alleluia</b> by V. Rev. Sergei Glagolev<br/>Chanter: John Butler (1:47)</p> |
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Total Time: 72:15

