

# SSS ST. GEORGE "50 YEARS OF SINGING"



Front Row: Stephanie Boyat, Alisa Kiprof, Bess Morrison, Pattie Thompson, Amanda Soberg, Fr. Zoran Savic, Shirley Balach, Lori Ulvi, Luanne Zobenica Back Row: Sam Miscевич, Andy Nygren, Don Dicklich, Kim Coleman, Georganne Churchya, Paul Kiprof, Mary Lawrence, Simeona Nygren, Marlene Balach, Carol Griak

Throughout the past 50 years the St. George Choir has played an important and integral part in the activity and history of the St. George Church and the Serbian community in Duluth and our surrounding area. Actually, the roots of the choir go back farther than these past 50 years. Since the ground breaking for the St. George Church over 84 years ago there was an informal group of singers who sang responses regularly for Divine Liturgy in the church and in many ways played the part of an organized choir. It was not until a choir meeting held during the fall of 1956 that the choir discussed and finally petitioned the Serbian Singing Federation

of America for admission as a member choir. This historic event took place in the fall on October 12 & 13, 1957 with the induction ceremony taking place at the old historic Steel Plant Goodfellowship Club in our neighboring Morgan Park. At our induction ceremony into the Serbian Singing Federation of America the Duluth choir officially became known as the Serbian Singing Society St. George or "St. George Choir!". This induction ceremony was celebrated by having the sponsor choir or "kumovi choir" being none other than S.S.S. Sloboda of South Chicago, Illinois. This well noted and respected choral group has been singing and perform-



Front Row: Anna Torgerson, Judy Marnich, Mary Olbin, Muriel Howard, Shirley Balach, Mary Zanula, Helen Hammer, Marlene Balach, Very Rev. Nikanor Kalik  
 Second Row: Dorothy Fluyeras, Ruby Soderberg, Katie Bruich, Lillian Colich, Violet Colich, Marie Colich  
 Third Row: Molly Fredrick, Sara Howard, Dorothy Sjenic, Carol Griak, Mary Lawrence, Saya Kovich  
 Fourth Row: Sam Miscevich, Diane Colich, Milan Matetich

ing for over 80 years all over the United States. Now, on this golden celebration, we are honored to have as our guest choir the SSS Stevan Sejacki of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Welcome to all of our honored guests, former singers, former supporters and friends who are here today to help us celebrate these past 50 years of glorious singing and in promoting the Serbian culture and heritage that we so proudly inherited from our families and ancestors past.

Since the past 50 years have so rapidly passed by we

Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Nebraska, Kansas, Ontario Canada, Florida, Arizona, Pennsylvania, Texas, Indiana and Nevada. Our choir has performed many times at the local level having sung with the Duluth Symphony Orchestra, Duluth Folk Festival, Christmas caroling at Miller Hill Mall, Christmas caroling at our local nursing homes and at parishioners homes, Duluth's Wade Stadium and at countless other civic and philanthropic events. It was the distinct pleasure and honor of the choir to sing at the Bicentennial Celebration of Nations at the St. Louis County Heritage and Culture Center (The Depot) in 1976.



Ron Pete, Marlene Balach, Helen Hammer

still remember with fondness the activities that have taken our choir to numerous places. These events have made our choir the very well known group that it is throughout the many parts of the Midwest. Concerts and church service responses have been sung at all the Serbian Orthodox Churches in Minnesota, as well as in

Over the years, the choir has been blessed with a number of talented and dedicated directors. The late Mrs. Anna Torgerson was the directress at the time of our induction into the SSF in 1957. Since that time the following persons have been brought in to lead our choral group: +Ruth Emerson Molyneau, +Kay Arimond Blankush, +Professor Allan Downs and +Louis Stretar. From within the ranks of our own choir, we have been doubly blessed with four conductors who shared their talents with us: Muriel Kay Howard Strand, Nancy Dragicevich Colokovic, Elliot Zurich and our current and long time director Stephanie Boyat. With great respect and pride for our director, in 2006 she received the Episcopal Gramata from his Eminence Metropolitan Christopher for 30 years of continuous directing of our

church choir and for her outstanding musical dedication to the Serbian Orthodox Church and to its traditions and customs. Congratulations Stephanie on a job well done! Hvala! Zivela Na Mnogaja Ljeta!



Stephanie Boyat was born and raised in Duluth, and has 3 children; Samuel, Christina, and Nick Maida and 2 grandchildren; Camden and Calli Rose Glass. She received her Bachelor's Degree from the University of Minnesota, Duluth majoring in Music (Choral Conducting), and continued her education earning a degree in Elementary Education with certification as a Reading Specialist.

Stephanie has taught in the Duluth Public School system for the past 20 years, holding positions as Kindergarten Teacher, Reading Teacher, Reading First Literacy Coordinator and K-12 Reading Specialist. She currently serves in the New Teacher Mentorship Program and is Vice-President of Northern Minnesota's Arrowhead Reading Council.

Stephanie has been active in the St. George Church since her youth, participating in Sunday School and the Junior Choir. She is an original member of the Djevojacke Tamburitza Orchestra from the early 1970's. She has held the position of Vice-President of the St. George Church Council for the past 10 years and has been directing the St. George Choir for the past 31 years. In October of 2006 Metropolitan Christopher awarded Stephanie the Episcopal Gramata in honor of her years of service and dedication to her church and choir.

Stephanie is the Director and a soprano.

Let us not forget that during these past 50 years our choir has responded to many wonderful, dedicated and talented clergy who have served our church and choir. These Reverend Fathers are: †Very Reverend Nikanor Kalik, †Reverend Alexandar Dimitrijevic, †Very Reverend Bozidar Dragicevic, Reverend Gary Monafu, Reverend Lazar Kostur, †Very Reverend Vladimir Suka, Reverend Slobodan Jovich, Reverend Varnava Minich, Reverend Dobrovoje Milunovich, Reverend Daniel Simon, Very Reverend Milan Zbiljich and our current pastor Reverend Zoran Savic. To these Reverend clergy we offer our sincere thanks and sincere appreciation of their work towards our choir.

Under the direction of these people the choir has presented many fine concerts and has dedicated thousands of hours in rehearsal to the perpetuation of our church and our Serbian culture. Do not think, however, that every rehearsal or concert has been pulled off without a hitch! This choir like every other one, has had its problems, too! Rehearsals have been held with very few members in attendance, sections have suffered periods when there weren't enough people to fill them and like every other Serbian organization, there have been times when not all members could agree on certain subjects. However, also like other Serbian organizations when the "chips were down" the choir always and we mean always, came through. To the Priests and Directors we offer our profound thanks!!

It is important to note that not only did our choir have good musical directors throughout these past fifty years but the organization itself has had good leadership from its past and current presidents and officers. Male presidents slightly outnumber the female ones, but much progress was made during every term of their office. Serving as Presidents of the S.S.S. St. George Choir since 1957 to the present have been the following:

1957 - 1971	Sam Miscevic
1972 - 1973	Ronald Pete
1974 - 1976	Sam Miscevic
1977 - 1978	Dushan Rod Knezevich
1979 - 1980	Ronald Pete
1981	Elliot Zunich
1982 - 1983	Marlene Howard Balach
1984 - 1988	Sam Miscevic
1989	Donald Dicklich
1990	Jennifer Radjenovich
1991 - 2004	Sam Miscevic
2005	Mary Skorich Lawrence
2006 - 2007	Lori Ulvi