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# Tower Chorale: Here comes the music of the Beatles

By: Dorothy Andries | For Sun-Times Media





Patrick Godon, director of the Tower Chorale

#### Facts

**'Here Comes the Sun: Music of the Beatles'**

**The Tower Chorale of Western Springs**

**When:** 7:30 p.m. May 3 and 3 p.m. May 4

**Where:** Nazareth Academy, 1209 W. Ogden Ave., LaGrange Park

**Cost:** \$20 adults, \$17 seniors/students; free children 10 and younger

**Contact:** [Towerchorale.org](http://Towerchorale.org), (708) 505-9570

Here come the Beatles along with the sun, of course, and many other of the group's greatest hits. In observance of the much-observed anniversary of the first visit of the Fab Four to the United States in 1964, the 80-voice Tower Chorale, under the direction of Patrick Godon, will present more than 20 Beatles songs, including "I Want to Hold Your Hand," which the Fab Four sang to such acclaim on the Ed Sullivan Show.

"It was a defining moment in musical history," said Godon, "and so we decided to celebrate it."

The Chorale, now in its 28th season, is particularly versatile, the director continued. "We have a holiday concert in December and in March we did Brahms 'Requiem,'" he explained. For the first time in the ensemble's history that monumental piece was done in German, its original language.

The Tower Chorale always includes a night of popular music in its season, and so this year it's the 90-minute program highlighting the Beatles.

At age 35, Godon is too young to have grown up with the Beatles, but he is a fan. "Patrick is giving the music a lot of attention," said board chairman Mark Miner, who has been singing in the chorale's tenor section for about 15 years. "He is really studying it and passing that on to us."

Miner and his wife Barbara, a soprano, began singing in the choir under its founder and music director James Winfield, who retired after 25 years. "I'm in my fifth year on the board," Miner declared, "and we had a six month search for a choral director and oversaw the hiring of Patrick. He has such extensive knowledge, we are very pleased with him as our director."

Miner believes that the chorale's three-concert format provides variety and interest not only for the singers, but for the audience. "We have a sacred and secular holiday concert, one large classical work and then a pops concert," he said. "It's fun for all of us."

Accompanist for the program is pianist Dennis Zimmer, now in his 16th year with Tower Chorale. In addition to playing with the Tower Chorale, Zimmer has been a church musician for more than 30 years and currently serves at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Lockport.

The Tower Chorale rehearses in Western Springs but performs in various venues. "We've had some consistency," Miner said. "This is our fifth year at Nazareth Academy. Acoustics are the important thing."

"We also sing patriotic music during the morning service on Memorial Day at the Tower Park in Western Springs," said Godon, who has been the chorale's music director since July of 2011. He is also director of music at St. Gregory the Great Church in Chicago, and with members of the chorale and his church choir made a tour of Italy in last spring. "We were able to visit the Vatican music library, it was the 500th anniversary of the establishment of the Vatican choir."

During that time his choir gave a concert in the Church of the Gesu, the mother church of the Society of Jesus in Rome and found themselves in the Eternal City at an historic moment. "Just by good luck we were in Rome when Pope Francis was elected," he said, obviously pleased.