The University of Mount Union Concert Choir

Dr. Grant William Cook III, conductor

The University of Mount Union Concert Choir is among the oldest collegiate choirs in the United States, tracing its roots to 1896. The distinguished legacy of the choral program at Mount Union is one that is deeply rooted in the very history of the institution, encompassing the contributions of several distinguished American conductors, including Robert Fountain (1942-1946), who went on to lead renowned choral programs at the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music and The University of Wisconsin, and Bruce Browne (1972-1976), emeritus professor of choral studies and voice at Portland State University and conductor laureate of the Portland Symphonic Choir. Under the direction of Cecil "Pop" Stewart (1946-1972) the Concert Choir gained international acclaim. In 1966, the beloved Stewart led the Choir on an around-the–world-tour. Dubbed "Peace Through Understanding," the 48-day tour visited Alaska, Japan, Southeast Asia, Near East, Greece, Italy, England and France. Professor Stewart was known for his exacting standard, inspired leadership and, above all, unwavering devotion to Mount Union.

Open by audition to all students on campus, the Concert Choir comprises musicians from a wide variety of academic disciplines and thus truly represents the University's strong liberal arts foundation. Serving as an ambassador of the University, the Concert Choir performs annually throughout the continental United States and undertakes an international tour every four years. The Concert Choir is dedicated to the rehearsal and performance of the highest quality choral literature from the Renaissance through the 21st century, including spirituals, gospel music, folk songs and music celebrating a global perspective. Recent performances include Joseph Haydn's Mass in B-flat, the so-called *Theresienmesse*, Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 2 ("Resurrection") and Ludwig van Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 in D minor, op. 125 and "Choral Fantasy" in C minor, op. 180 with the Canton Symphony Orchestra and Chorus under the baton of Maestro Gerhardt Zimmermann. In May 2015, the Concert Choir enjoyed a ten-day concert tour of Austria (Vienna, Linz, Salzburg, and Innsbruck), giving performances in some of the Europe's most historically important, visually captivating, and spiritually inspiring cathedrals, churches and abbeys. http://www.mountunion.edu/choir.

The recipient of the University of Mount Union's 2016 Great Teacher Award, Dr. Grant William Cook III, professor of music and director of choral activities, conducts the Concert Choir and Cantus Femina, teaches choral conducting and literature, and administers the University's choral program. Choirs under Dr. Cook's direction have performed by invitation at state and regional meetings of the American Choral Directors Association and the National Association for Music Education, toured nationally and internationally, appeared in concert in Washington National Cathedral and performed with the symphony orchestras of Toledo and Canton. Active as a musicologist, Dr. Cook's research has been published in *The Choral Scholar*, *Choral Journal* and *The Beethoven Journal* and presented by invitation at meetings of the American Musicological Society and the Ohio Choral Director's Association. In addition, he has served on the National Research and Publications Committee of the American Choral Directors Association and the State Board of the Ohio Choral Directors Association. Prior to his appointment at the University of Mount Union, Dr. Cook served as associate professor of choral music and music history at Heidelberg University (Tiffin, OH). He currently resides in Alliance with his wife, Susan, and daughter, Jane. cookgr@mountunion.edu.

The University of Mount Union, founded in 1846, is a four-year, private institution grounded in the liberal arts tradition. Mount Union offers an array of broad-based and career-specific undergraduate and graduate programs to its 2,300 students who experience outstanding opportunities for success after graduation. Ranked as one of America's Best Colleges by ***U.S. News & World Report, the University is committed to providing a student-centered approach and an exceptional educational experience, as evidenced by its mission to prepare students for fulfilling lives, meaningful work and responsible citizenship.*** The University's 123-acre campus is located in Alliance, OH, 80 miles from both Cleveland and Pittsburgh, and more than $110 million has been invested in the construction and renovation of modern facilities throughout the course of the past decade. For more information, visit www.mountunion.edu.