

Introducing....

ALEXANDER RUGGIERI

We are pleased to introduce our new Choir Director at SOPC, Alexander Ruggieri. Alex is an experienced conductor of both choral and instrumental ensembles, with degrees from the University of Southern California and Wayne State University (Detroit). He has studied with such noted teachers as Charles Hirt, Valter Poole, Gustav Meier, Hans Beer and Helmuth Rilling.



Alex comes from a family who were music lovers but not active musicians. His Italian father taught him a love for opera and vocal music, while from his mother he inherited an appreciation of ballet and the choral music of the Russian Orthodox Church. Both his god-parents were accomplished musicians who studied piano at the Conservatories of Music in Moscow and Kiev.

Alex has been involved with the music of the Eastern Orthodox Church for nearly 35 years. He began his career as director of the choir at Holy Virgin Mary Russian Orthodox Cathedral in Silverlake, where he had sung as a teenager. At age 24, after founding the Orthodox Concert Choir of Los Angeles, he directed the ensemble in the west-coast premiere performance of Rachmaninoff's *All Night Vigil*. A subsequent recording of the work, on VOX-Turnabout records, has been the only performance of this work in the composer-sanctioned English edition in the catalogue.



Alex was one of 12 choral music experts from around the world--working under the guidance of renowned cellist Mstislav Rostropovich and musicologist Dr. Vladimir Morosan--to compile the most important liturgical music written over the last 1,000 years. The first volume of *Monuments of Russian Church Music* was published by Musica Russica in 1991. He subsequently co-edited the volume on the *All Night Vigil* by Rachmaninoff, and continues to edit and perform the little-known music from Russia and Eastern Europe.

Alex's composition *Madrigals* was awarded first prize in the South Bay Master Chorale's National Composition Competition in 1998. In 1995, he appeared along with his ensemble, The Cambridge Singers, with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir on the nationally broadcast program *Music and the Spoken Word*.

In addition to serving here, Alex is also the Music Director of the famed Gilbert and Sullivan repertory company Opera ala Carte, as well as Music Director for the 29 -year old University Campus Choir in Westwood. For five years he was also the Artistic Director of the Los Angeles Bach Festival.

Alex's other interests include classic movies, old-time radio, dance band music from the early 20th century, traveling, racquetball, NPR, museums, theater and reading biographies.

We are very thankful and blessed that the Lord has brought Alex to us to teach and guide our choir. I believe that you'll be encouraged and inspired by the music that he brings to our choral program!

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Zachary Kintner'.

Zachary Kintner, Pastor

Sherman Oaks Presbyterian Church