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ITC WELCOMES THE FIRST CHRISTMAS CONCERT OF THE YEAR TO THE ATLANTA UNIVERSITY CENTER The Anticipation of Hope



Atlanta, GA (November 25, 2008) This year's Advent Concert is a "beautiful cantata full of soul stirring music—peaceful, thoughtful, and poignant selections that will begin to help us prepare our hearts for the coming of the Christ child," said Dr. Lisa Allen, Assistant Professor of Church Music and Director of the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC) Chorus. The choir will present Joseph Martin's "The Winter Rose," which incorporates both traditional carols and newly composed anthems that visit the timeless Christmas story with fresh insight from the prophecy to the passion. All are welcome to join the ITC Choir for Concert Chapel hour on Thursday, December 4, 2008. The Advent-Christmas concert is free and the chapel, at 700 Martin Luther King Jr. Dr., SW, Atlanta.

Advent, derived from the Latin word *adventus*, which means "coming" designates the beginning of the Church Year for most churches in Western society and begins the fourth Sunday before Christmas Day. This year advent lasts from November 30, 2008 – December 24, 2008. The Advent season is marked by a spirit of expectation, of anticipation, of preparation, of longing. As depicted in biblical history, there is a yearning for deliverance from the evils of the world, first expressed by Israelite slaves in Egypt as they cried out from their bitter oppression. It is the cry of those who have experienced the tyranny of injustice in a world under the curse of sin, and yet have hope of deliverance by a God who has heard the cries of oppressed slaves and brought deliverance!

It is that hope, however faint at times, and that God, however distant God sometimes seems, which brings to the world the anticipation of a King who will rule with truth and justice and righteousness over His people and in His creation. It is that hope that once



anticipated, and now anticipates anew, the reign of an Anointed One, a Messiah, who will bring peace and justice and righteousness to the world.

“ITC’s Advent Concert will spotlight some of the excellent singers, seminarians that are very dedicated and committed to music ministry and to the choir’s success,” said Dr. Allen who joined the ITC staff in 2005 where she specializes in African American worship, worship and theology and multicultural worship.

Dr. Allen is a phenomenal pianist with a long musical history that started with her mother who also played the piano. At the age of five years old, Dr. Allen started playing the piano, at nine years old she was playing for Sunday school and at 12 years old she was playing for the entire church. She had been a church musician all her life but felt a pull to something else and the revelation came to her that it was a call to ordained ministry. Though Allen grew up Baptist, she was ordained a minister in the United Methodist Church in July, 2007.

Today the world renowned musician says she still loves music because of the realms it takes you into. “It brings you into communion with God and the universe and really expresses that which can’t be expressed.” Her love for music has taken her into many local, national and international venues. ITC invites the community to join Dr. Lisa Allen and the ITC Choir for this Advent Concert and usher in the Christmas season.

The ITC is a consortium of six different denominational constituent seminaries and two affiliate fellowships; Morehouse School of Religion (Baptist Affiliate), Gammon Theological (United Methodist Affiliate), Turner Theological Seminary (African Methodist Episcopal), Phillips School of Theology (Christian Methodist), Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary (Presbyterian Affiliate) and Charles H. Mason Theological Seminary (Church of God in Christ Affiliate). Richardson Ecumenical Fellowship is comprised of several other denominations beyond the six affiliate schools and other students also attend the Lutheran Center at ITC.

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