

On **February 7<sup>th</sup>** the St. Paul's Music Guild will present **The Tudor Choir** of Seattle in a full concert at 2:00 p.m. There is no Evensong service this day. The Tudor Choir, under the direction of Doug Fullington will sing a varied program of sacred choral music from the Renaissance era, moving to American Sacred Harp and Shaker Songs.

Hailed as "a superb choir" (*Gramophone*, Nov, 2005), as well as "a choir to watch" (*Fanfare*, Sept/Oct. 2001), the Tudor Choir has performed extensively throughout the Pacific Northwest, including concert appearances in Vancouver, British Columbia, and Portland, Oregon. The choir presents an annual subscription series in the Seattle area, where it is both an Artist-in-Residence at St. Mark's Cathedral and a Resident Ensemble at St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Medina. The Tudor Choir has collaborated numerous times with Seattle Baroque Orchestra and appeared on the Early Music Guild's International Series. The choir has also performed with Pacific Northwest Ballet and Mark Morris Dance Group and in conjunction with Seattle Opera. The choir has recorded for Seattle Symphony



Orchestra's *Musically Speaking* series and performed live on National Public Radio's *A Prairie Home Companion* broadcast. Doug Fullington, the founder and Artistic Director of the Tudor Choir, is a specialist in the music of Tudor England and early American music. As a countertenor, he performs with the Tudor Choir under guest conductors and has sung with the London-based Tallis Scholars in England, France, and the United States.

Originally located in England, the **Shakers**, otherwise known as "The United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing," was a Protestant religious sect which developed from the Quakers. Believing music and dance to be important expressions of spiritual gifts, they composed thousands of songs and developed many dances which they used in worship. Probably the most famous Shaker tune is "Simple Gifts," used by Aaron Copland in his ballet score, *Appalachian Spring*.

The earliest roots of **Sacred Harp** singing can be traced to rural parish music in England early in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. The style was carried to the United States, where composers such as William Billings took it up. With its unusual voicing and harmonic structure, Sacred Harp music was taught in the singing schools which proliferated in the years before the Civil War. These

singing school masters developed a method of reading music which relied on notes of different shapes to represent different notes of the scale. Shape-note hymnals were still in widespread use in the South well into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Many Sacred Harp melodies have found their way into more traditional hymnals, as well. Some of the more familiar Sacred Harp tunes include Holy Manna, Restoration (Jesus Calls Us) and Middlebury (Come Away to the Skies).