

Choir excels in varied program

By PAUL B. SCHMID

NEWS CONTRIBUTING REVIEWER

The Vocalis Chamber Choir presented another fine concert Saturday evening in St. Joseph's University Catholic Church.

The group, continuing its mission of a capella chamber music, breathed the same air at the same time, returning it to the audience within the perfect space of the church.

The effect was one in which the sound coming from behind was just as important as the sound from the front. It was all one.

"Plainsong," by 17th century composer Thomas Weelkes, began the evening, followed by 20th century composer Hylton Stewart's "Psalm 23" and back to "Salva nos Domine," by 17th century

CONCERT REVIEW

Vocalis Chamber Choir

St. Joseph's University Catholic Church, Saturday evening.

composer Thomas Lupo.

The 300-year musical round trip was excellent. Works by Bruckner and Holst closed the first half.

Eric Whitacre's "Sleep" marked the first work after intermission, with Vocalis maneuvering the tricky inner harmonies and demonstrating a fine ear.

But it was Randall Thompson's "Alleluia" that was the most effective offering of the evening. It seemed to be the fulcrum between the old and the new.

The arrangement of "Yesterday," by John Lennon and Paul McCartney, was fantastic, with

the lead ably sung by Robert Pacillo. The pianoless rendition of Billy Joel's "And So It Goes" would have pleased the Piano Man. The concert came to a close with John David's "You Are the New Day" and a well-deserved encore, "If I love You," from the musical "Carousel."

Director James Burritt has a good thing going. Fine ideas are followed up with fine execution. Everyone seems to enjoy themselves and is at the top of their game.

That feeling easily reached the audience, especially in the perfect space that everyone shared.

This Vocalis performance will be repeated at 8 p.m. April 9 in Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church, 1029 Delaware Ave.