

Harpist bringing soft sounds of strings to St. Peter

By Kurt Hildebrandt
Staff Writer

ST. PETER — Amy Kortuem's fingers dance across the strings of her harp as gracefully as the most elegant of dancers would in a ballet.

Each finger knowing exactly the right amount of pressure to extract a sound so sweet that it wouldn't be surprising if it were revealed that angels themselves were guiding every move.

Kortuem will be bringing her talents for an early holiday season solo harp concert featuring carols and songs "to drive the cold winter away." The concert is set for 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 11 at Union Presbyterian Church in St. Peter. She will be playing both her Celtic harp and concert harp during this show.

"This will be the first time I've performed a solo show in St. Peter, and I rarely get to do solo shows so I'm really excited about it," Kortuem said. "I'll be playing some traditional carols and some songs that will be new to people. I'm looking forward to playing at Union Presbyterian church because it'll be an intimate setting, which I really enjoy."

The concert will feature the talents of Amy Kortuem on the harp and admission to the concert is \$10 at the door. A portion of the proceeds will benefit VINE Faith in Action in

Nicollet County.

"The setting will be intimate, the music will be relaxing, the stories will be inspirational and the experience will be a wonderful way to settle into December," Kortuem said.

Kortuem grew up in rural Mankato and at age 11 began training in classical piano. She would continue lessons on the piano and harpsichord through college, eventually earning a minor in music from Minnesota State University, Mankato.

Kortuem received her first harp as a gift when she was a junior in college. A long-time family friend, Jack McGowan, gave her a Celtic harp and to say her life changed after that would merely be an understatement.

"It was something I took to immediately," Kortuem said. "I soon came to realize I had a passion for it and I loved playing and being able to share it with so many people, which is what Jack wanted for giving me my first harp."

Kortuem, who lives in North Mankato, stays busy either through an ensemble she's a part of or performing with other groups. She also has performed numerous solo



Harpist Amy Kortuem will be performing in her first solo show in St. Peter on Dec. 11 at Union Presbyterian Church. She's shown above playing her Celtic harp while her larger concert harp is in the background.

shows and this time of year is particularly busy.

"My busiest time is the holiday season," she said. "About the only time I set aside for myself this year was Christmas morning, but otherwise I'll be performing quite a bit."

Kortuem recently released her third CD entitled "All Hayle to the Days," which features holiday carols and other music. Her other two CDs were "The Harp Her Soul Required," which is traditional Irish music on her Celtic harp and includes a tribute to Jack McGowan, and her first CD was "The Light and the Lady."

"The sales have gone really well," Kortuem said. "Harp music is universally appealing to people of all ages. Its almost angelic sound is unique and I think people will really enjoy the music."