

THE  
**CHORISTERS**

David Spitko, Artistic Director  
Kelly Wyszomierski, Associate Director

REFLECTIONS ON THE COVID EXPERIENCE

REMEMBRANCE

THANKFULNESS

Dan Forrest  
Requiem for the Living

Bach Cantata # 191  
Gloria in Excelsis Deo

Vaughan Williams – The Lark Ascending  
Juliette Kang, Violin Soloist  
First Associate Concertmaster, Philadelphia Orchestra

**Saturday evening**  
**April 30, 2022**  
**at 7:30 pm**

Soloists:  
Collette Anderson, Soprano  
Alexander Mason, Tenor

Trinity Lutheran Church – 1000 W. Main Street, Lansdale, PA 19446



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## Artistic Director's Thoughts

April 2020. Seems like a lifetime ago does it not? Do you remember? Everything shut down in mid-March ... **everything**. The roads were empty. Except for essential workers, we were all literally huddled in our homes. I remember racing to the liquor store Saturday night March 14 upon hearing the State Stores were shutting down due to Covid. My wife and I purchased wine to cover our needs for the shutdown—which most of us thought might last a couple of weeks. What wishful thinking.

Sometime in April, the reality of Covid's severe contagiousness and danger began to sink in. Hospitals started filling up and deaths were happening at an alarming rate. To top it all off, it was determined singing was a perfect way to spread the virus. A 60-voice choir in Washington state rehearsed on March 10. Forty five members contracted Covid, three were hospitalized and two died. I remember thinking, "How long will this last? When will The Choristers be able to sing again? Even when we can sing again, when will our supporters feel safe enough to come to a concert?" It was a difficult and scary time.

In response I did what Artistic Directors do ... I programmed a concert. I wanted to assure the choir, our supporters ... and myself ... that the choir would be back.

I knew our music would need to tackle the emotions surrounding the Covid deaths and the grief of the survivors. A work that has been in my mind for years suddenly became the obvious choice: Dan Forrest's *Requiem for the Living*. A Requiem, at its traditional core, is a prayer for the deceased. However, the five movements of *Requiem for the Living* form a narrative just as much for the living and their own struggle with pain and sorrow.

I also wanted our music to reflect the positive emotions felt after surviving a severe trauma. A curious juxtaposition. I kept thinking of the pictures of joy in Times Square on VJ Day—even though over 400,000 Americans had lost their lives in WW II. I turned to a Bach cantata that, to me, is the definition of unrestrained joy with three trumpets and the choir dancing to the lyrics the angels sang the day Jesus was born. Two other similar works by Palestrina and Haydn were selected to complete the music of thankfulness.

How to make the transition between the two sentiments? I selected an instrumental work I have loved all my life: Ralph Vaughan Williams' *The Lark Ascending*. As a child (before electricity?) I recall listening to the work – imagining a soul (the violin soloist) dwelling among the living (the orchestra) and then leaving behind that life to go to a higher plane of existence. A leaving of sorts.

Much had to pass before the concert could be scheduled. The choir endured a year of zoom rehearsals (Ugh!) leading to four excellent virtual choir videos (Yeah!). By early summer of 2021—we began to see the light at the end of the tunnel. In June 2021, tonight's concert became titled "Reflections on the Covid Experience."

In the fall, in-person rehearsals with masks/social distancing led to a fall concert. But the trials and tribulations were not finished. In January 2022, the omicron strain again forced zoom rehearsals (Ugh!). The first rehearsal in February, planned to be in person, again became a zoom rehearsal due to an ice storm (Double Ugh!). What is going to be next? Locusts? Frogs? But through it all, we persevered and, well, here we are.

I have a new found respect for the term "battle-hardened." The choir you will hear tonight is most definitely battle-hardened. Somewhat smaller than pre-Covid, but clearly ready for come-what-may. I am very proud of them. May you all enjoy the wonderful music The Choristers will present tonight.

***There are some very quiet moments in the music tonight. Therefore, please mute or turn off cell phones. The recording of the concert or taking of any pictures is prohibited. Thank you for your cooperation.***

**About Bach's Cantata 191: *Gloria in Excelsis Deo***

Bach did not shy away from reusing his own music. In 1733, Bach sent the King-Elector of Dresden a petition asking to be appointed the "Saxon Electoral Court Composer". He enclosed an elaborate Latin setting of the "Kyrie" and "Gloria", the first two parts of the Catholic Mass. Dresden was a Catholic principality. Bach received the title of Royal Court Composer in 1736.

The 1733 Gloria, composed for five voices (SSATB) had two spinoffs. In 1748 Bach used it as the Gloria movement in his *B-minor Mass*. In addition, Bach also used the movement to form a cantata for Christmas Day – Cantata 191: *Gloria in excelsis Deo*. Recent archival and manuscript evidence suggest the cantata was first performed in 1742 for a regular Christmas celebration by the University of Leipzig at the Paulinerkirche, but this is not certain. The first performance could have been in 1743 or 1745.

The cantata's first movement is the opening movement of the 1733 Gloria with no notable changes. The second and third movements of the cantata are essentially the 1733's "Domine Deus" and concluding "Cum Sancto Spiritu", but with the text of the "Gloria Patri" or Doxology.

The changes in text were needed because the cantata bookended the sermon. The first movement addresses the theme of the day (Christmas) and the remainder of the cantata followed the Catholic liturgy of that time which called for the Doxology after the sermon.

**Bach Cantata 191: *Gloria in Excelsis Deo***

**J. S. Bach**

Barbara Sauer Prugh, Mary Cappillino, David Brown  
Piccolo Trumpet

**Mvt. 1. Chorus (SSATB)**

Gloria in excelsis Deo.	Glory to God on high
Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.	And peace on earth to all of good will.

**Mvt. 2 Aria (Duet)**

Collette Anderson, Soprano; Alexander Mason, Tenor

Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui sancto.	Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.
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**Mvt. 3 Chorus & Soloists (SSATB)**

Collette Anderson, Julie-Ann Green (Soprano)  
Megan McFadden (Alto); Alexander Mason (Tenor) & Mark Hightower (Bass)

Sicut erat in principio	As it was in the beginning
Et nunc et semper	And is now and always will be
Et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.	And for age after age. Amen.

## **About Palestrina's *Exsultate Deo***

*Exsultate Deo* is a motet<sup>1</sup> for five voices (SAATB) by Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina. Among Palestrina's 375 or so motets, *Exsultate Deo* has always been a favorite with its joyous tunefulness and vivid word-painting<sup>2</sup> depicting musical instruments. Between the years of 1563 and 1584, Palestrina collected and published six volumes of motets. *Exsultate Deo* is located in the fifth volume, published in 1584. Palestrina was working in Rome at that time as Maestro di Cappella of St. Peter's **and** Santa Maria Maggiore. Wanting to retain his employment, both cathedrals raised his salary resulting in Palestrina becoming one of the wealthiest musician in Rome. When *Exsultate Deo* was composed, modern musical notation did not exist. The original was set in a "mode" that somewhat resembles today's key of F. The version you will hear tonight is a fourth higher, in the key of B flat. Palestrina's text is a setting of Psalm 80, vs. one through three.

### **Exsultate Deo**

### **Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina**

Exsultate Deo, adjutori nostro:

jubilate Deo Jacob.

Sumite psalmum et date tympanum:

psalterium jucundum cum cithara.

Buccinate in neomenia tuba:

in signi die solemnitas vestrae.

Rejoice in God our helper:

sing aloud to the God of Jacob.

Take the psalm and bring forth the timbrel:

the merry harp with the lute.

Blow, in the new moon, the trumpet:

even on our solemn feast day.

## **About Haydn's *Te Deum* (Hob. XXIIIc, No. 2)**

The *Te Deum Laudamus* (We praise thee, O God) is a Christian hymn of praise and thanksgiving. Its exact origins and author remain a mystery, although it is often attributed to St. Ambrose (ca. 338-397), an influential fourth century bishop of Milan.

Haydn composed two *Te Deums*. Tonight, you will hear his second which was composed in 1799. One of Haydn's admirers was Empress Marie Therese, the wife of Franz I of Austria. She was an important patron of Haydn and Beethoven. She was anxious to have Haydn write her various pieces of music for the church. However, Nicholas Esterhazy II, Haydn's patron/employer at that time, was most unwilling to have his famous composer write music for anyone other than himself. It is reported that he did not take kindly to the news that Haydn had composed a large scale *Te Deum* dedicated to the Empress.

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<sup>1</sup> A "motet" is a "polyphonic" choral composition on a sacred text usually without instrumental accompaniment. "Polyphonic" means each voice part has its own melody which moves freely but has a relationship with the other voice parts so the sum is greater than the parts. The opposite of polyphonic music is homophonic music in which the voice parts move essentially in lockstep with each other. Older church hymns are homophonic.

<sup>2</sup> "Word painting", also known as tone painting or text painting, is the musical technique of composing music that reflects the literal meaning of the lyrics. For example, in *Exultate Deo*, listen to Palestrina's treatment of the words "Buccinate in neomenia tuba" which means "Blow, in the new moon, the trumpet." "Buccinate" is musically emphasized to imitate the blowing of a brass instrument.

Haydn sets this ancient text in the festive key of C major calling for a large orchestra at that time with flutes, trumpets, strings and tympani which made/makes for a grand musical celebration. There are no soloists and the work's three—part structure makes it, in effect, a concerto for chorus and orchestra.

More important than any technical consideration is the exuberant and whole hearted feeling that Haydn put into this work. Haydn wrote the following about his *Te Deum*, "The thought of God fills me with such confidence, such joy, that I should set even a miserere ('Lord, have mercy') to cheerful music." He starts with a spontaneous and overwhelmingly cheerful opening which is the plainsong chant associated with this text. The chromatic C minor Lento, "Te ergo quaesumus" takes us briefly into a gloomy world of begging for redemption. What follows is an Allegro which just explodes into one of the most magnificent double fugues in the choral repertoire using the final two lines of the text, "In te, Domine speravi" and "Non confundar in aeternum."

## Te Deum in C (Hob. XXIIIc, No. 2)

Joseph Haydn

Te Deum laudamus:  
te Dominum confitemur.  
Te aeternum Patrem,  
omnis terra veneratur.  
Tibi omnes Angeli,  
tibi Caeli et universae potestates,  
tibi Cherubim et Seraphim  
incessabili voce proclamant:  
Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus!  
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.  
Pleni sunt coeli et terra  
majestatis gloriae tuae.  
Te gloriosus Apostolorum chorus,  
te Prophetarum laudabilis numerus,  
te Martyrum candidatus laudat exercitus.  
Te per orbem tarrarum  
sancta confitetur Ecclesia:  
Patrum immensae majestatis:  
Venerandum tuum verum, et unicum Filium:  
Sanctum quoque Paraclitum Spiritum.  
Tu Rex gloriae, Christe.  
Tu Patris sempiternus es Filius.  
Tu ad liberandum suscepturus hominem,  
non horruisti Virginis uterum.  
Tu devicto mortis aculeo,  
aperuisti credentibus regna coelorum.  
Tu ad dexteram Dei sedes,  
in gloria Patris.  
Judex crederis esse venturus.

We praise you, O God:  
we acknowledge you to be the Lord.  
You eternal Father,  
all the earth worships you.  
To you all angels,  
to you the Heavens and all Powers,  
to you Cherubim and Seraphim  
without ceasing proclaim:  
Holy, holy, holy!  
Lord God of Hosts.  
Full are the heavens and the earth  
of the majesty of your glory.  
The glorious chorus of the Apostles,  
the venerable members of the Prophets,  
the shining robed army of Martyrs praise you.  
Throughout the whole of the world  
The holy church confesses you:  
The Father of infinite majesty:  
And praise your admirable, true and only Son:  
As well as the Holy Spirit, our Advocate.  
You are the King of glory, O Christ.  
You are the eternal Son of the Father.  
You, for delivering us, became human,  
you did not disdain the Virgin's womb  
You, having blunted the sting of death,  
you opened to believers the kingdom of heaven.  
You sit at the right hand of God,  
in the glory of the Father.  
You are believed to be the judge of all who come.

Te ergo quaesumus,  
tuis famulis subveni,  
quos pretioso sanguine redemisti.

Aeterna fac cum sanctis tuis  
in gloria numerari.

Salvum fac populum tuum, Domine,  
et benedic haereditati tuae.

Et rege eos, et extolle illos  
usque in aeternum.

Per singulos dies, benedicimus te:  
et laudamus nomen tuum in saeculum,  
et in saeculum saeculi.

Dignare, Domine, die isto  
sine peccato nos custodire.

Miserere nostri, Domine,  
miserere nostri.

Fiat misericordia tua, Domine, super nos,  
quemadmodum speravimus in te.

In te Domine, speravi:  
non confundar in aeternum.

Therefore, we beseech you,  
Come to aid your servants,  
whom you have redeemed with precious blood.

Make them to be numbered with thy saints  
in everlasting glory.

Make your people safe, O Lord,  
and bless your inheritance.

And rule them, and extol them  
continually into eternity.

Through each day, we bless you:  
and we praise your name into eternity,  
and into ages of ages.

Vouchsafe, O Lord, this day  
keep us without sin.

Have mercy on us, O Lord,  
have mercy on us.

Let your mercy, Lord, be upon us,  
just as we have trusted in you.

I thee, O Lord, I have trusted:  
let me not be condemned through eternity.

### **About Vaughan Williams' *The Lark Ascending***

*The Lark Ascending* is a 16-18 minute work (depending upon tempi) by the English composer Ralph Vaughan Williams inspired by an 1881 poem of the same name by the English poet George Meredith. At the head of the score, Vaughan Williams wrote out twelve selected lines from Meredith's 122-line poem:

He rises and begins to round,  
He drops the silver chain of sound,  
Of many links without a break,  
In chirrup, whistle, slur and shake.

For singing till his heaven fills,  
'Tis love of earth that he instils,  
And ever winging up and up,  
Our valley is his golden cup  
And he the wine which overflows  
to lift us with him as he goes.

Till lost on his aerial rings  
In light, and then the fancy sings.

Vaughan Williams composed *The Lark Ascending* for solo violin and piano in 1914 during the early days of World War I. The pastoral scene of a singing bird on the wing seemed far removed from reality giving the work a nostalgic feel beckoning a simpler less traumatic time.

Soon after composing the work, Vaughan Williams set the score aside and enlisted in the army—something he did not have to do as he was a member of the landed gentry. He served as an ambulance driver during the war, shuttling wounded and dying soldiers from the battlefield to temporary field hospitals in France and Greece. Shortly after he came home in 1919, he picked up *The Lark Ascending*, lovingly fine-tuned it, and orchestrated it for violin solo and orchestra. While the basic theme of the work remained pastoral and nostalgic, the orchestration gives it a slight melancholy, which is understandable as the composition of *The Lark Ascending* flanked World War I. The work can be heard as both an allegorical salve for wartime horrors and an homage to a vanishing rural England.

The lark is depicted by a solo violin. The piece opens with a beautiful cadenza<sup>3</sup>, played very quietly and delicately, that describes the hovering flight of the bird. The cadenza avoids any tonal center and is written without bars giving the soloist an almost improvisatory freedom to describe the ethereal minstrel. The cadenza returns in the middle and at the end of the work. In the two intervening orchestral episodes, Vaughan Williams drew on English folk music melodies.

*The Lark Ascending* is one of Vaughan Williams' favorite works. The Choristers is fortunate to have Juliette Kang as the solo violinist.

## The Lark Ascending

Ralph Vaughan Williams

Juliette Kang, Violin

First Associate Concertmaster ~ The Philadelphia Orchestra

Joseph and Marie Field Chair

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## 15 MINUTE INTERMISSION

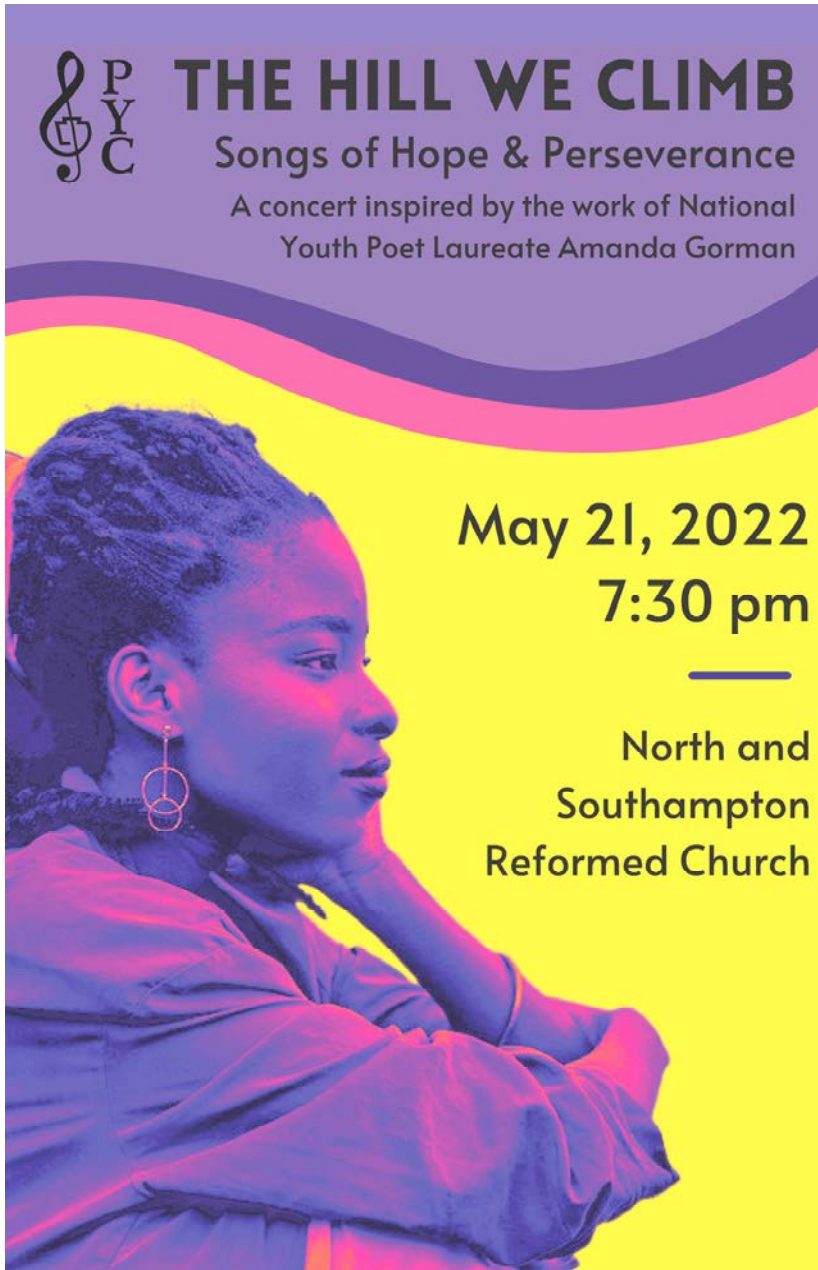
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<sup>3</sup> A “cadenza” is an improvised or written-out ornamental passage played or sung by a soloist or soloists, usually in a free rhythmic style, and often allowing virtuosic display. During this time the accompaniment will rest, or sustain a note or chord. Below is the beginning of the opening cadenza from *The Lark Ascending*.

The image shows the beginning of the opening cadenza from *The Lark Ascending*. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 6/8. It starts with a fermata over a whole note, followed by a measure with a fermata and a bracketed '1' above it. The tempo is marked 'Andante sostenuto' and the dynamics are 'pp sur la touche'. The second staff is marked 'Cadenza senza misura'. The subsequent three staves continue the melodic line with various rhythmic patterns and dynamics.



Funding to help make this concert possible was provided through the 5-County Arts Fund, a Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts program of the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency. It is funded by the citizens of Pennsylvania through an annual legislative appropriation, and administered locally by the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance. The Pennsylvania Council on the Arts is also supported by the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency. For additional information about these grants, visit the Cultural Alliance online. [www.philaculture.org](http://www.philaculture.org)



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# The Choristers

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## **About Dan Forrest**

Dan Forrest (b.1978), a world-renowned pianist and composer, was born in Elmira, New York. He began piano lessons in the fourth grade and served as a pianist at his church in the sixth grade. While in high school, he composed and arranged several songs for piano; however, only when he discovered choral music in college did he become serious about composing.

He attended Bob Jones University where he received a Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance in 1999 and a Master of Music degree in Piano Performance in 2001. It was during his college years that Forrest became “infatuated with recordings of choral music” and what a choir could do musically. In 2007, he earned his Doctorate of Musical Arts degree in Composition from the University of Kansas.

From 2007-2012, he served as a professor and Chairman of the Music Theory and Composition department at Bob Jones University. As his compositions and arrangements became increasingly popular, he left his academic post to become a full-time composer. Forrest’s compositions include choral, instrumental, orchestral and wind band works published by Beckenhurst, where he works as assistant editor. His works are also published by Hinshaw Publishing, Hal Leonard Publishing, and Shawnee Press.

## **About Forrest’s *Requiem for the Living*<sup>4</sup>**

The *Requiem for the Living* was commissioned by the Hickory North Carolina Choral Society in 2013 for its 35th anniversary season. Forrest published three versions of the accompaniment: a full orchestral scoring, an expanded chamber ensemble as well as a smaller chamber scoring. Tonight, you will experience the expanded chamber ensemble.

For the lyrics, instead of strictly following the traditional Requiem Mass of the Catholic Church, Forrest choose to delete certain parts/passages of the Requiem Mass and added biblical texts that spoke to his desire for his requiem to be both a plea for eternal rest for the deceased, and to address the grief and pain of the living.

The opening movement, “Introit-Kyrie”, is a plea for rest and mercy.

The second movement, “Vanitas Vanitatum”, speaks of “the turmoil and sorrow which face humanity, while invoking musical and textual allusions to the Dies Irae.” The Christian faith believes all people will face God for divine judgment when they die: the Dies Irae or Day of Wrath.

The third movement, “Agnus Dei”, is a “plea for deliverance,” with texts that ask the Lamb of God for mercy and rest – which redemption is granted.

The fourth movement, “Sanctus”, is “a response to redemption” and offers “three different glimpses of the ‘heavens and earth, full of Thy glory.’”

The closing movement, Lux Aeterna, “portrays light, peace, and rest - for both the deceased and the living.”

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<sup>4</sup> In the discussion and notes below about the Requiem for the Living, anything in quotes are the words of Dan Forest.

Forrest wrote of his *Requiem for the Living*:

“The work was written over a period of probably 16 months or so, from early 2012 through mid-2013. Frankly, most of my effort was spent discarding ideas that were bad, or mediocre, or clichéd, or decent, or even “pretty good”, in the hopes of only using ideas that were really, truly inspired. It’s a daunting task to set these ancient texts in a modern setting. I tried to write something appropriate to their gravity, and something that would make a lasting impression for some time to come. I hope the end result does, indeed, profoundly affect the listeners – and performers as well.”

## Requiem For The Living

Dan Forrest

Collette Anderson, Soprano ~ Alexander Mason, Tenor

First Movement: The first movement pours out the grief of the Requiem and Kyrie prayers, facing grief head-on and grappling with the sorrow that is common to all human existence.

Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine	Grant them eternal rest, O Lord
Et lux perpetua luceat eis	And let perpetual light shine upon them
Exaudi orationem meam,	Hear my prayer,
ad te omnis caro veniet.	for unto thee all flesh shall come
Kyrie eleison,	Lord have mercy,
Christe eleison,	Christ have mercy,
Kyrie Eleison.	Lord have mercy

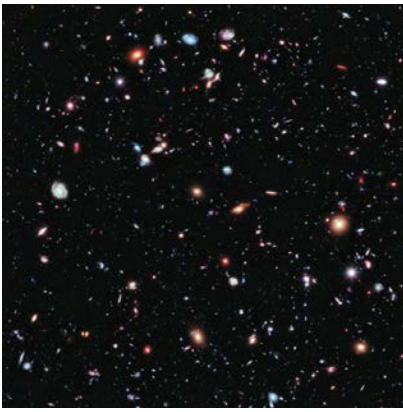
Second Movement: The second movement bitterly portrays the pain with which we all wrestle. It expounds on the "vanity of vanities, all is vanity" refrain from Ecclesiastes, with no small amount of anger and bitterness and "rage against the machine." The middle section quotes Job, who is the best biblical example we have of a human experiencing pain, and even he says, in his darkest moment, "It would have been better if I hadn't been born."

Vanitas vanitatum, omnia vanitas	Vanity of vanities, all is vanity Ecclesiastes 1:12
Pie Jesu Domine, dona eis requiem	Merciful Lord Jesus, grant them rest Ecclesiastes 12:8
Lacrimosa	Full of tears Dies Irae from the Requiem Mass
Et locutus est, "Pereat dies in qua natus sum."	And he said, "Let the day perish wherein I was born. Job 3:2-3

Third Movement: The third movement is the Agnus Dei, out of its traditional order, to portray humankind at all its fallenness seeking redemption. In Forrest's *Requiem*, it is only after having been granted redemption that the Sanctus (which is a hymn of praise) is proper.

Agnus Dei,	Lamb of God,
qui tolis peccata mundi;	who takes away the sins of the world;
Miserere nobis	Have mercy on us;
Dona eis requiem	Grant them rest





Fourth Movement: In this movement, Forrest tackles an imposing task. How does one depict the wonder of the heavens and earth. “My setting of the Sanctus text is literally a depiction of God's wondrous glory in three different places: the universe (inspired by that Ultra Deep Field picture from the Hubble Telescope), earth as viewed from the orbiting International Space Station and finally, humankind, God's wondrous image-bearers, who demonstrate His glory even more directly than all the rest of the wonders of the heavens.”

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus;  
 Dominus Deus Sabaoth;  
 Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua!  
 Hosanna in excelsis!

Holy, Holy, Holy;  
 Lord God of Hosts;  
 Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory!  
 Hosanna in the highest!

Fifth Movement. The final movement is an arrival at rest and peace, not just in the realization of the "eternal light" for the deceased but also for the living. For the living, Forrest quotes Matthew 11:28, "Come unto me all ye who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Forrest directs that this text, unlike all the other text, is to be sung in the vernacular language of the region of the performance. Forrest then ends the movement and the entire *Requiem* with “dona nobis pacem” (grant us peace) from the Agnus Dei, ending the work with a feeling of tranquility and hope.

Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine,  
 Cum sanctis tuis in aeternum.  
 Quia pius es  
 Et lux perpetua luceat eis  
 Come unto me, all ye who labor  
 Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine  
 Et lux perpetua luceat eis

May eternal light shine upon them, O Lord,  
 In the company of thy saints forever.  
 For Thou art merciful  
 Let perpetual light shine on them  
 and I will give you rest.  
 Grant them eternal rest, O Lord  
 and let perpetual light shine upon them



Thankfulness



Remembrance

## **FINANCIAL SUPPORTERS OF THE CHOIR (November 21, 2021—Present)**

We want to thank those who have graciously donated to The Choristers this concert season. By sharing their treasure, the following individuals have made a statement that live performance of significant and challenging choral works is important. We applaud their statement and thank them for these gifts.

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Kathy Rohall  
Cheryl Sprouse  
Antoinette Uffner  
Donna Watson

\*In honor of my parents' anniversary, John & Treva McLaughlin



## The Choristers Endowment Fund

The choir has created an unrestricted endowment fund to anticipate the retirement of the current Artistic Director who provides his efforts without compensation. To replace him will result in a sudden and substantial increase in the budgeted expenses of the choir. Hence this fund to absorb that increase. All donors who make a donation or pledge to this fund of \$10,000 or more will be listed on the choir's programs and website as a supporter of The Choristers Endowment Fund in perpetuity.

Lindsey Robinson	Long term member of the alto section of the choir and Secretary to the Board for nearly two decades
John O'Hara	In memory of his wife Lindsey Robinson
David & Sue Spitko	Respectively, the founding Artistic Director, a founding member of the alto section and the first and still only Treasurer to the Board
Bob & Caryl Adamson	In honor of their daughter, Sue Adamson Spitko
Mic & Dianna McGoldrick	She a long term alto and President of the Board, he a roadie extraordinaire, but both lovers of and believers in The Choristers
John E. Spitko, Sr.	In honor of his son, David, who founded The Choristers in 1978
Peter & Karen Eller	In honor of our grandsons, Ian McNeill, Alexander Jacob, Aiden Maxwell Eller, and their parents Michael and Stephanie Eller .
Barbara Lyons	In honor of my mother, Barbara Koban and her sister, Lois Smith – two beautiful voices.

*Thank you all. Your support is deeply appreciated.*

## ABOUT THE CHORISTERS

The Choristers is an auditioned, semi-professional concert choir formed in 1978 by several alumni of Ursinus College who missed the fellowship they had enjoyed in the choral program at the college. The mission of The Choristers is to foster an appreciation of music within the community by offering performances of challenging and/or unjustly neglected choral works at a high standard of musicianship. The choir accomplishes this mission by:

- Promoting the sense of community that the arts can create when people come together to rehearse, perform, hear and experience a concert.
- Providing singers the opportunity to use and expand their musical abilities through rehearsals, education and performances of great choral works.
- Maintaining a high level of choral competence within a supportive environment that acknowledges the discipline needed to learn and perform such works.
- Placing programmed works in their historical, cultural and musical context for the audience's greater understanding and appreciation of music.

Major works the choir has performed include *Elijah* by Mendelssohn, *Bach's Magnificat* and *St. Matthew Passion*, *Requiem* by Brahms, Fauré and Mozart, *Dvořák's Stabat Mater*, Ellington's *Sacred Concerts*, *Chichester Psalms* by Bernstein, Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem*, and Masses by Bach, Beethoven, Brubeck, Bruckner, Dvořák, Gjeilo, Haydn, Mozart, Palestrina, Robert Ray, and Vaughan Williams, as well as a concert version of Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*. The choir was the first non-professional, non-collegiate choir to present Kile Smith's *Vespers* and was accompanied by Piffaro, the renaissance wind band which commissioned *Vespers*.

Rehearsals are on Friday evenings from 7:30 to 10:00 PM and are held at Supplee Presbyterian Church in Maple Glen, PA. Performances are held here at Trinity Lutheran Church in Lansdale, PA. For more information or to schedule an audition, contact the Artistic Director, David Spitko, at 215-542-7871 or [DSpitko@TheChoristers.org](mailto:DSpitko@TheChoristers.org).

### **Members of the Board of Directors**

Maggie Hasani, President	Sarah Folsom-Kovarik
Nathan Folsom-Kovarik, Vice President	Kathie Hart
Susan Spitko, Treasurer	Tom Hasani
Eileen Erinoff, Recording Secretary	Richard Limburg, Esq.
Gloria Pugliese, Development	Dianna McGoldrick
Linda Marie Bell	Al Stimson
Laurie Ciasullo	David Spitko, Ex Officio

### **Others Who Helped To Make This Concert Possible**

Collaborative Pianist:	Astghik Sakanyan	Associate Director:	Kelly Wyszomierski
Graphic Artist:	Carol Wolf		
	Chorister Roadie Extraordinaire:		Mic McGoldrick



THE  
CHORISTERS

David M. Spitko, Artistic Director  
Kelly Wyszomierski, Associate Director  
Astghik Sakanyan, Collaborative Pianist

Soprano I

Layla Bair  
Nichole Dantoni  
Sarah Folsom-Kovarik  
Julie-Ann Green  
Robin Henry  
Jennifer Schwing  
Tracy Sturgis

Soprano II

Anita Burgher  
Kathie Hart  
Judy Inskeep  
Gloria Pugliese  
Shelby Tipling  
Karen Work

Alto I

Mary Bachman  
Ann Brentano  
Laurie Ciasullo  
Leslie Engle  
Maggie Hasani  
Megan McFadden  
Dianna McGoldrick  
Cheryl-Ann Sprouse

Alto II

Linda Bross  
Marissa Chalker  
Eileen Erinoff  
Barb Frankl  
Julie Lopes  
Trevia McLaughlin  
Nancy Neiman-Hoffman  
Karen Sawyer  
Sue Spitko  
Meghan Williams

Tenor I

Tom Hasani  
Dugan Morgridge  
Al Stimson  
George Somerville

Tenor II

Nathan Folsom-Kovarik  
John Lewis  
Richard Limburg

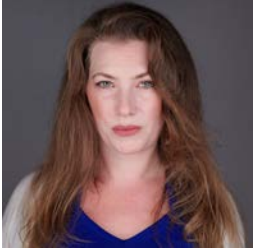
Bass I

Ron Davis  
Michael Henry  
Tom Sweitzer  
Jon Timmons  
Peter Ward

Bass II

Mark Hightower  
John McLaughlin  
Steve Pribis  
Dan Schauble  
Bob Schuettler  
Nolan Spade  
Al Tenney

## About the Vocal Soloists



The Choristers welcomes **Collette Anderson**. Ms. Anderson was born and raised in King of Prussia, where she quite literally grew up on the King of Prussia Players stage (or more often than not in a playpen tucked into the Orchestra pit). She was active with many local groups growing up - as a performer, choreographer, or flautist. She received her Master's in Vocal Performance from Westminster Choir College, and shortly after graduation sang the role of Nedda in Pagliacci with Opera Lancaster and John Fowler of the Metropolitan Opera. More recently she performed the trio from Elijah with the Wayne Oratorio Society at the National Cathedral and joined The Choristers as a Soprano section singer for its Messiah concert last December. She currently resides with her two children – along with a few cats and chickens – in Pennsburg. She would like to thank her mother Carol for watching the kids through all the rehearsals and to dedicate this performance to her father, Dr. Larry “Poppy” Anderson, who was lost during the beginning of the pandemic.

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The Choristers welcomes back **Alexander Mason**, tenor. Alexander earned a M.M. in Voice from the Manhattan School of Music and a B.M. Music Performance – Flute/Secondary Voice from The College of New Jersey. He has performed with Opera Delaware, Harlem Opera Theater; as well as the Philadelphia Orchestra and the New York Opera Orchestra with the Mendelssohn Club and The College of New Jersey Chorale respectively. Alexander has won first prize in the Harlem Opera Theater Competition Collegiate Division, first prize in NJNATS, and has appeared as a featured soloist in venues in New York and New Jersey.

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## About the Instrumentalist Soloist



The Choristers welcomes **Juliette Kang**. Appointed First Associate Concertmaster of The Philadelphia Orchestra in 2005, Canadian violinist Juliette Kang enjoys an active and varied career.

Previously Assistant Concertmaster of the Boston Symphony and a member of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, Ms. Kang's solo engagements have included the San Francisco Symphony, l'Orchestre National de France, the Baltimore Symphony, the Boston Pops, the Omaha Symphony, the Syracuse Symphony, and every major orchestra in Canada. Internationally she has performed with the Czech Philharmonic, the Vienna Chamber Orchestra, the Singapore Symphony, the Hong Kong Philharmonic, and the KBS Symphony in Seoul. She has given recitals in Philadelphia, Paris, Tokyo, and Boston. In 1994 she won first prize of the 1994 International Violin Competition of Indianapolis and was presented at New York's Carnegie Hall in a recital that was recorded live and released on CD. She has also recorded the Schumann and Wieniawski violin concertos with the Vancouver Symphony for CBC Records.

After receiving a Bachelor of Music degree at age 15 from Curtis Institute of Music as a student of Jascha Brodsky, Ms. Kang earned a Master of Music degree at the Juilliard School under the tutelage of Dorothy Delay and Robert Mann. She was a winner of the 1989 Young Concert Artists Auditions, and she subsequently received first prize at the Menuhin Violin Competition of Paris in 1992.

Ms. Kang has been involved with chamber music since studying at the Curtis. Festivals she has participated in include Bravo! Vail, Bridgehampton (Long Island, NY), Kingston (RI), Marlboro, Moab (UT), Skaneateles (NY), and Spoleto USA. In New York she has performed with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center; at the Mostly Mozart Festival with her husband, cellist Thomas Kraines; and at the Bard Music Festival. With Philadelphia Orchestra colleague violist Che Hung Chen, pianist Natalie Zhu, and cellist Clancy Newman she is a member of the Clarosa Quartet, dedicated to exploring and enriching the piano quartet repertoire.

Ms. Kang serves on the Central Board of Trustees at Philadelphia's Settlement Music School. She lives in Queen Village with her husband and two daughters.

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### **About The Artistic Director**



As a child, David Spitko studied piano with Dorothy Heebner and participated in his church choir under Marian Archibald. Both experiences were instrumental in developing his love of music. During this time, when his church was in need of a summer organist, he taught himself to play the organ.

In his college years, while studying political science at Ursinus College, he learned conducting from Dr. William Phillips and served as a student director of the college choirs for four years. After his college years, David experienced theatre enjoying roles in *Music Man*, *Showboat*, *South Pacific*, *Yeoman of the Guard* and *Mikado*.

In the busy year of 1978, he accepted the position of Organist/Choir Director at Upper Dublin Lutheran Church in Ambler, PA and formed The Choristers. In the mid 1980s, David took an 18-month sabbatical from his positions at UDLC and The Choristers to assist and receive advanced training in conducting from Robert Carwithen at First Presbyterian Church in Germantown. In 2004, David retired from his position at UDLC to concentrate on his position with The Choristers. "Through the years, I have been incredibly blessed to have the experience of programming, preparing and directing the amazing music the choir has presented."

David practices law as a sole practitioner in North Wales where he lives with his wife, Sue (the choir's Treasurer) and **five** (yes ... 5) cats: Braveheart, Friar Tuck, Midnight, Chip and Shadow. Sue & Dave stepped in to stop, in a no-kill fashion, a multi-generational semi-feral cat colony that had developed in their backyard. "Although sometimes it seems like it, we did **not** adopt them all..."

## **About The Associate Director**



Kelly Wyszomierski has been working with The Choristers as its Associate Director since 2014. She holds a bachelor’s degree in Music Education from Penn State University, where she studied piano, and a master’s degree in Choral Conducting from Temple University. She spent five years teaching middle school choir in West Hartford, CT and returned to her home state of Pennsylvania to attend graduate school. Kelly now teaches choral music to students in grades 6-12 at Philadelphia Performing Arts: A String Theory Charter School. She is also the Artistic Director of the Pennsylvania Youth Chorale, a community children’s choir based in Abington. In her spare time, Kelly enjoys cooking and baking, skiing, Penn State football, the San Francisco Giants, and spending time with her husband Steve, sons Travis and Connor, and cat Cocoa.

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## **About The Collaborative Pianist**



The Choristers welcomes Astghik “Astrik” Sakanyan as its Collaborative Pianist – joining the artistic staff of the choir in spring 2021. Astrik started her piano career at Yerevan’s Sayat Nova School of Music in Armenia. She thereafter attended the Joaquin Rodrigo Conservatory of Music in Valencia, Spain receiving her Bachelor of Arts degree in piano performance with honors. During the last year of her undergraduate studies, she was awarded a full scholarship to study under Dr. Sándor Falvai at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest, Hungary.

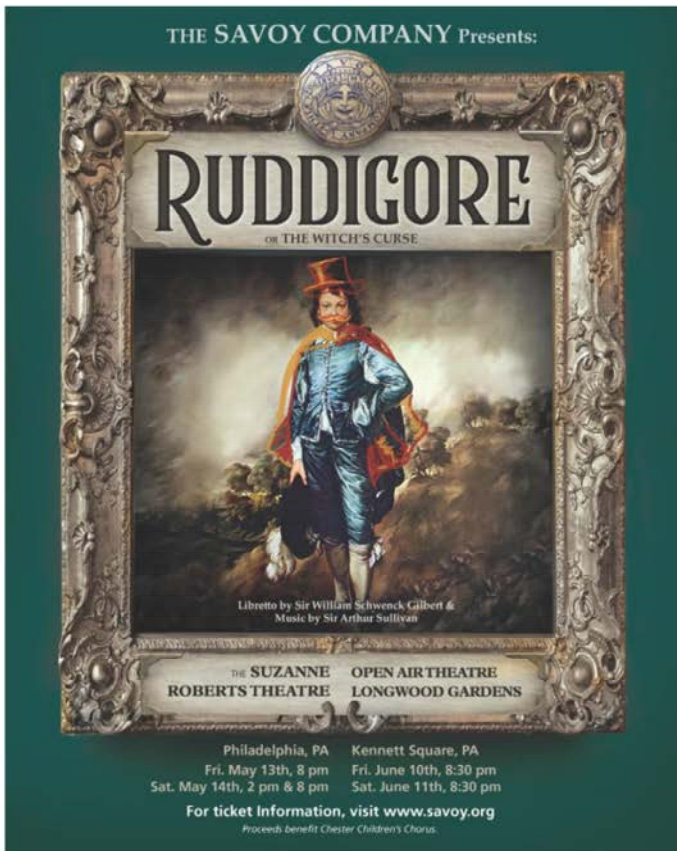
Continuing her international studies, Astrik then moved to California to attend the San Francisco Conservatory of Music studying Collaborative Piano under Dr. Timothy Bach, the Chair of the department. Astrik received her Master’s in May 2017 – again graduating with honors. While at SFCM, Astrik also served as a piano teacher at Berkeley’s Golden Key Piano School.

Upon graduation, Astrik served as a school pianist at San Francisco Ballet, a collaborative pianist for the San Francisco Girls Chorus and at Acalanes High School in Lafayette, and piano teacher at The Hamlin School in San Francisco.

Throughout her musical career, Astrik has collaborated with many outstanding musicians. Among them are Isabella Moore (Soprano), Jeremiah Shaw (cello), Keisuke Nakagoshi (piano), Evan Kahn (cello), Ani Bukujian (violin), Joseph Christianson (violin).

Astrik now lives in the Philadelphia area with her husband and child – working as a professional freelance musician and maintaining a private studio teaching piano.





The Savoy Company of Philadelphia, Resident Company of Philadelphia Theatre Company, is pleased to present ***Ruddigore, or The Witch's Curse***. Gilbert & Sullivan's satiric musical operetta is fully-staged, featuring a stunning, professionally designed set, beautiful costumes, and a live professional orchestra.

The Baronets of Ruddigore are cursed. Anyone who succeeds to the title must commit a crime every day — or perish in inconceivable agony. A witch's curse, a shy farmer, his supposed best friend, a prim and proper girl, a bad Baronet, a wild, mad girl, and a terrible secret upend this musical melodrama. Will Good become bad? Will Bad become good? Only the ghosts will tell.

*Proceeds benefit  
Chester Children's Chorus.*

| Peter Hilliard, Music Director | Deb Schrager, Stage Director | William Kader, Producer |

**| For tickets visit [www.savoy.org](http://www.savoy.org) |**

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Fri. May 13th, 8 pm, Sat. May 14th, 2 pm & 8 pm

Ticket prices: \$40-\$55 Note: Tickets are subject to \$4.50 per ticket handling fee.

Visit <https://philadelphiatheatrecompany.org/covid/> for the latest COVID protocols & instructions.

Open Air Theatre Longwood Gardens, Kennett Square, PA

Fri. June 10th, 8:30 pm & Sat. June 11th, 8:30 pm

ALL DAY ADMISSION TO THE GARDENS IS INCLUDED. Note the Rain Date policy.

Ticket Prices: \$29-\$39 Note: Tickets are subject to \$4.50 per ticket handling fee.

Visit <https://longwoodgardens.org/visit/covid-19> for the latest COVID protocols & instructions.

## Members Of The Orchestra

Violin I - Principal	Emily Nicholl Jean Puleo Ellen Strange Deirdre Edgell Jen Bolcar	Flute - Principal	Monica Buffington Kathy Brown
Violin II - Principal	Nina Vieru Zubaidi Elisa Mata Stefan Xhori Hanna Pak Jennifer Repper	Oboe - Principal	Meghan Woodard Janet Easlea
Viola - Principal	Amy Leonard Emma Hey Jhonnatan Mata Lorenzo Raval	Clarinet	John Frazier
Cello - Principal	Ross Beauchamp Pat Daniels Ezgi Yargici	Bassoon	Bing Li
Bass - Principal	William Zinno Liz Cochran	Horn	Kristina Mulholland
		Trumpet - Principal	Barbara Sauer Prugh Mary Cappillino David Brown
		Harp	Donna Cooper
		Organ - Portativ	Astrik Sakanyan
		Organ - Trinity	Emily Brands
		Tympani	Enid Horowitz
		Percussion	Keith Wilson

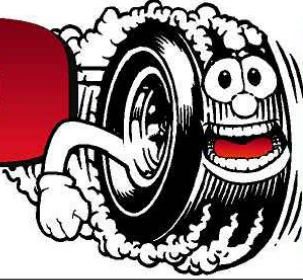
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healthier than drinking,  
and more fun than working out!*



# THE CHORISTERS

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**20th Century Choral Music From Both Sides Of The Pond**



One of America's Cathedrals

Music of  
Barber, Whitacre  
Ticheli, Thompson  
Vaughan Williams,  
Finzi, Stanford  
And Many More



One of Britain's Cathedrals



**Sat. April 29, 2023**

**At 7:30 PM**

**Music from Vienna**

Mozart  
*Vesperae solennes  
de Confessore*  
Haydn  
*Harmoniemesse*

**Concerts At Trinity Lutheran in Lansdale**

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information ~ go to [www.TheChoristers.org](http://www.TheChoristers.org)

# THE CHORISTERS

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(Please print clearly. Thank you.)

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Please include my name on a Choristers' **mailing list** so I can receive information about future concerts.

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I prefer receiving information through the **mail**.

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I would like to **support** The Choristers' in their mission of bringing under-performed choral music to our community. *(please see reverse for additional information)*

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www.TheChoristers.org ~ Info@TheChoristers.org ~ (215) 542-7871

# Support The Choristers

The mission of *The Choristers* is to foster an appreciation of music within the Greater Philadelphia community by offering performances of challenging or neglected choral works at a high standard of musicianship. **We rely on members of our community to help us continue to bring the joy of music to our audiences.** Thank you for your consideration of support!

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## Donation designation:

- Unrestricted donation**—for the choir to use in funding its concerts. Your contribution will be recognized in the next two concert programs.
- The Choristers Endowment Fund**—a donation to this fund significantly impacts the long-term financial stability of *The Choristers*, making it possible for us to continue making music for many years to come. All donors who make a donation to this fund of \$10,000 or more will be listed in the concert programs and on the choir’s website as a supporter of The Choristers Endowment Fund in perpetuity. This fund was created after a generous bequest from a beloved former alto and long-term Board member, Lindsey Robinson.

Donation amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- Friend: Up to \$74
- Contributor: \$75 to \$149
- Sponsor: \$150 to \$249
- Patron: \$250 to \$499
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Please recognize \_\_\_\_\_ for this gift.

I wish this gift to remain anonymous

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<sup>1</sup> *Donations of stocks/securities is helpful. While the stock transfer is income to the donor, generally the donor may be able to deduct 100% of the value of the stock without consideration of the basis. The Choristers receives 100% of the value. For those aged 70½ and older and who are facing a Required Minimum Distribution from an IRA, a donation can be made to The Choristers and it is not recognized as income to the donor. Please contact your financial planner or the choir at [info@TheChoristers.org](mailto:info@TheChoristers.org) to receive information about both of these advantageous methods of financially supporting The Choristers.*