



Te
Deum

Matthew Christopher Shepard
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

TRUER WORDS

September 16-17, 2023

te-deum.org

**While you wait for the concert to begin,
or during intermission, please use this
QR code to take a six-question survey
so we can better understand who is in
the audience today.**



Thank you for your time!



Matthew Christopher Shepard
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

PRESENTS



TRUER WORDS

September 16, 2023 | 7:30 pm

St. Mary's Episcopal Church
Kansas City, MO

September 17, 2023 | 3:00 pm

Village Presbyterian Church
Prairie Village, KS

All are invited to join us for a complimentary reception following the performance as we celebrate Te Deum's sixteenth season.



PROGRAM

Inscribed walls within the ruins of the Mivtzah Nimrod (Fortress of Nimrod), Golan Heights, Israel.
Photo: LevT/Adobe Stock

THE POWER OF WORDS

Guard My Tongue

Julia Wolfe, b. 1958

Guard my tongue from speaking evil,
and my lips from speaking deceit.

—after Psalm 34

Os Justi

Anton Bruckner, 1824–1896

*Os justi meditabitur sapientiam,
et lingua ejus loquetur judicium.
Lex Dei ejus in corde ipsius,
et non supplantabuntur gressus ejus.*

—Psalm 37:31–32

The mouth of the righteous
utters wisdom,
and his tongue speaks what is just.
The law of his God is in his heart,
and his feet do not falter.

THE NATURE OF GOD

Rejoice in the Lamb

Benjamin Britten, 1913–1976

Soloists Lucy Conklin, *soprano*
Zachary Cope, *countertenor*

Tom Assel, *tenor*
Ryan Layton, *bass*

Rejoice in God, O ye Tongues;
Give the glory to the Lord,
And the Lamb.
Nations, and languages,
And every Creature
In which is the breath of Life.
Let man and beast appear before him,
And magnify his name together.

Let Nimrod, the mighty hunter,
Bind a leopard to the altar
And consecrate his spear to the Lord.

Let Ishmail dedicate a tyger,
And give praise for the liberty
In which the Lord has let him at large.

Let Balaam appear with an ass,
And bless the Lord his people
And his creatures for a reward eternal.

Let Daniel come forth with a lion,
And praise God with all his might
Through faith in Christ Jesus.

Let Ithamar minister with a chamois,
And bless the name of Him
That cloatheth the naked.

Let Jakim with the satyr
Bless God in the dance,
Dance, dance, dance.

Let David bless with the bear
The beginning of victory to the Lord,
To the Lord the perfection of excellence.

Hallelujah, hallelujah,
Hallelujah from the heart of God,
And from the hand of the artist inimitable,
And from the echo of the heavenly harp
In sweetness magnificent and mighty.
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah.

For I will consider my cat Jeoffry.
For he is the servant of the living God.
Duly and daily serving him.

For at the first glance
Of the glory of God in the East
He worships in his way.
For this is done by wreathing his body
Seven times round with elegant quickness.
For he knows that God is his saviour.
For God has bless'd him
In the variety of his movements.
For there is nothing sweeter
Than his peace when at rest.

For I am possessed of a cat,
Surpassing in beauty,
From whom I take occasion
To bless Almighty God.

For the Mouse is a creature
Of great personal valour.
For this is a true case—
Cat takes female mouse,
Male mouse will not depart,
but stands threat'ning and daring.
If you will let her go,
I will engage you,
As prodigious a creature as you are.

For the Mouse is a creature
Of great personal valour.
For the Mouse is of
An hospitable disposition.

For the flowers are great blessings.
For the flowers are great blessings.
For the flowers have their angels,
Even the words of God's creation.
For the flower glorifies God
And the root parries the adversary.
For there is a language of flowers.
For flowers are peculiarly
The poetry of Christ.

For I am under the same accusation
With my Savior,
For they said,
He is besides himself.
For the officers of the peace
Are at variance with me,
And the watchman smites me
With his staff.
For the silly fellow, silly fellow,
Is against me,
And belongeth neither to me
Nor to my family.
For I am in twelve hardships,
But he that was born of a virgin
Shall deliver me out of all,
Shall deliver me out of all.

For H is a spirit
And therefore he is God.
For K is king
And therefore he is God.
For L is love
And therefore he is God.
For M is musick
And therefore he is God.
And therefore he is God.

For the instruments are by their rhimes,
For the shawm rhimes are lawn fawn and the like.
For the shawm rhimes are moon boon and the like.
For the harp rhimes are sing ring and the like.
For the harp rhimes are ring string and the like.
For the cymbal rhimes are bell well and the like.
For the cymbal rhimes are toll soul and the like.
For the flute rhimes are tooth youth and the like.
For the flute rhimes are suit mute and the like.
For the bassoon rhimes are pass class and the like.
For the dulcimer rhimes are grace place and the like.
For the clarinet rhimes are clean seen and the like.
For the trumpet rhimes are sound bound and the like.

For the trumpet of God is a blessed intelligence
And so are all the instruments in Heav'n.
For God the Father Almighty plays upon the harp
Of stupendous magnitude and melody.
For at that time malignity ceases
And the devils themselves are at peace.
For this time is perceptible to man
By a remarkable stillness and serenity of soul.

Hallelujah, hallelujah,
Hallelujah from the heart of God,
And from the hand of the artist inimitable,
And from the echo of the heavenly harp
In sweetness magnificent and mighty.
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah.

—Christopher Smart, 1722–1771

My Soul, There is a Country

Charles H. H. Parry, 1848–1918

My soul, there is a country
Far beyond the stars,
Where stands a wingèd sentry
All skilful in the wars:

There, above noise and danger,
Sweet Peace sits crown'd with smiles,
And One born in a manger
Commands the beauteous files.

He is thy gracious Friend,
And—O my soul, awake!—
Did in pure love descend
To die here for thy sake.

If thou canst get but thither,
There grows the flower of Peace,
The Rose that cannot wither,
Thy fortress, and thy ease.

Leave then thy foolish ranges;
For none can thee secure
But One who never changes—
Thy God, thy life, thy cure.

—Henry Vaughan, 1621–1695

Hymn to the Eternal Flame

Stephen Paulus, 1949–2014

Soloist Lindsey Lauterwasser, *soprano*

Every face is in you, every voice,
Every sorrow in you.
Every pity, every love,
Every memory, woven into fire.

Every breath is in you, every cry,
Every longing in you.
Every singing, every hope,
Every healing, woven into fire.

Every heart is in you,
Every tongue, every trembling in you,
Every blessing, every soul,
Every shining, woven into fire.

— Michael Dennis Browne, b. 1940

A CALL FOR PEACE

The Fruit of Silence

Pēteris Vasks, b. 1946

The fruit of silence is prayer,
the fruit of prayer is faith,
the fruit of faith is love,
the fruit of love is service
and the fruit of service is peace.

—St. Teresa of Calcutta ("Mother Theresa"), 1910–1997

Eye for an Eye

Shawn Kirchner, b. 1970

Eye for eye and the world goes blind;
And how deep that darkness, and the light nowhere to find.

Life for life (and the killing goes on),
And how deep that darkness, like a night without a dawn.

Hate feeds hate in a bitter feast,
And how deep that darkness, turns humankind into a hungry beast.
Give us light that we may see.

—Mahatma Mohandas Gandhi (1869–1948)

POWER OVER DEATH

Mille Regretz

Josquin des Prez, c. 1450–1521

*Mille regretz de vous abandonner
Et d'eslonger vostre fache amoureuse,
J'ay si grand dueil
et paine douloureuse,
Qu'on me verra
brief mes jours definer.*

A thousand regrets at deserting you
and leaving behind your loving face,
I feel so much sadness
and such painful distress,
that it seems to me my days
will soon dwindle away.

Thou Knowest, Lord, the Secrets of our Hearts

Henry Purcell, 1659–1695

Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts;
Shut not thy merciful ears unto our prayers;
But spare us, Lord most holy, O God most mighty.
O holy and most merciful Saviour,

Thou most worthy Judge eternal,
Suffer us not at our last hour,
For any pains of death to fall away from Thee.

—*Book of Common Prayer*

COMMISSION AND WORLD PREMIERE

Death Be Not Proud

Anthony J. Maglione, b. 1978
Composer-in-Residence, Te Deum

I. Be Not Proud

II. Our Best Men With Thee Do Go

III. Death Shall Be No More

Death, be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;
For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow
Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me.

From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
Much pleasure; then from thee much more must flow,
And soonest our best men with thee must go,
Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.

Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well
And better than thy stroke; why swell'st thou then?
One short sleep past, we wake eternally
And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.

—John Donne, 1571/72–1631


WE RESPOND

My Lord, What a Mornin'

Traditional spiritual
arr. Harry T. Burleigh, 1866–1949

My Lord, what a morning
My Lord, what a morning
Oh, my Lord, what a morning
When the stars begin to fall.

Done quit all my worldly ways
Gonna join that heavenly band.



Te
Deum
the

20
23

20
24

season

Soprano

Lucy Conklin
Paige Flenniken
Sofia Gillespie
Abby Helt
Lindsey Lauterwasser
Sarah Schulte

Alto

Kayla Bradley
Zachary Cope
Rupal Gupta
Nanette Kraus
Cassandra Leon
Ann Lewis Marzette
Julia Kasten Sharp

Tenor

Tom Assel
Matthew Bobela
Jonathan Doram
Tim Gorski
Jeff Jaspersen
Colin Riley

Bass

Ryan Layton
Josh Markley
Benny Martinson
John Ross
Ben Wheeler

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Matthew Christopher Shepard
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Te Deum Inc.

3501 Campbell St.
Kansas City, MO 64109
www.te-deum.org

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of the law.

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Artistic Director

Matthew Christopher Shepard's unique career path has led him to concert halls conducting both professional orchestras and choirs, to collegiate and secondary school classrooms to guest conduct and lecture in musicology and church music, and to communities of faith to lead both Christian and Jewish worship services. His intellectual curiosity, fearless programming, and magnetic leadership have made him one of the most sought-after conductors in the region.

Mr. Shepard is founder and conductor of Te Deum, which has established itself as one of the premier choral ensembles in the midwest. He is frequently engaged as a conducting clinician, most recently with the American Choral Directors Association Kansas State Convention Honor Choir in 2021. With his growing reputation in the Early Music field, Mr. Shepard's work and contributions to the field have twice been featured in the publication *Early Music America*, and has presented lectures on historical chant performance, music history and performance practice. With Te Deum he has given period performances of great pillars of baroque music including Buxtehude's *Membra Jesu Nostri*, J.S. Bach's *St. John Passion*, and Bach's *B-Minor Mass*.

As an orchestral conductor, Mr. Shepard has conducted several ensembles in the area, including The Philharmonia of Greater Kansas City, the Kansas City Civic Orchestra, and the Kansas City Baroque. He has also served as orchestra director at Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas. In the summer of 2018 he was invited to conduct the closing orchestral concert of the American Guild of Organists National Convention in Helzberg Hall at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts.

Beginning his musical studies in woodwinds and voice, Mr. Shepard holds an undergraduate degree from William Jewell College, two master's degrees, studying both choral and orchestral conducting at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music and Dance, and is pursuing Doctoral studies at the University of Illinois where he concurrently holds a teaching assistantship. Mr. Shepard has had additional conducting study as a fellow at the Conductors Institute at Bard College Conservatory under Maestro Leon Botstein and at the Oregon Bach Festival Composers Institute.

Organist

Kurt Knecht is a composer and keyboardist currently living in Kansas City, Missouri. His compositions have been described as “funky” and “joyous” in the Washington Post, and “brilliant in concept” in The Tracker magazine. His music has been performed at the Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall, and the Kimmel Center and by Grammy Award winning groups like the KC Chorale and the Washington Chorale. His music has been performed at the national conventions of the American Choral Directors Association, the Organ Historical Society, ClarinetFest, and the National Flute Association. He has been featured on the American Public Media program *Pipedreams* multiple times as a composer and performer. An eclectic musician, Kurt has been a featured soloist with groups ranging from Smokey Robinson to The Florida Orchestra, and he is the frequent collaborative organist/pianist for the multiple Grammy Award-winning KC Chorale. Kurt regularly appears as a concert organist and collaborative pianist and has performed at the national conventions of the American Guild of Organists and the American Choral Directors Association. He is the organist at St. Paul’s Episcopal in Kansas City and the co-founder of MusicSpoke, a company that is creating the world’s largest marketplace for artist owned sheet music by making it easy for composers to self-publish and monetize their music.

Singers

Tom Assel studied vocal technique with Dr. Stephen Weber at Amarillo College, Texas. Tom earned a Bachelor of Science in electrical and computer engineering and a master’s degree in electrical engineering from the School of Computing and Engineering at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. While there, he sang in the Conservatory Concert Choir under the direction of Dr. Charles Robinson, and University Singers under the direction of Dr. Ryan Board. He and his wife Julie own and operate Assel Grant Services, a grant consulting firm specializing in grant research and proposal writing in a variety of fields. Tom has been singing with Te Deum since fall 2010.

Matthew Bobela is honored to join Te Deum for its 2023-2024 season! Matthew is the Director of Sacred Music and Liturgy and the Elementary Music and Spanish Teacher at St. Gabriel the Archangel Catholic Church and School in Kansas City, Missouri. A St. Joseph, Missouri native, he is currently pursuing a Master of Music Education from Missouri State University. Matthew holds a Bachelor of Music Education with a Vocal Concentration from Missouri Western State University where he graduated *summa cum laude* and served as commencement speaker in May 2022. Matthew greatly enjoys sharing music throughout the Midwest in his parish ministry and in an active sacred and secular performance schedule. In addition to his involvement in vocal and choral music, Matthew serves as the Vice President of the St. Joseph Symphony Board of Directors where he is an active member of their Education and Strategic Planning committees.

Kayla Bradley, a new addition to Te Deum's alto section, is elated to perform again in such a prestigious choir for the first time in several years. Throughout her school years, nothing brought Kayla as much joy as participating in activities like concert and show choirs, concert and marching bands, and school musicals. She went on to receive her Bachelor of Vocal Music Education at Northwest Missouri State University in her hometown of Maryville. Now, she is a third-year vocal music teacher at Smith-Cotton Junior High School in Sedalia, fulfilling a dream of directing her own show choir. Though opportunities to perform have been scarcer in recent years, Kayla recently played the role of Midge Mahoney in Sedalia's 2023 community theater production of *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*. When not directing or performing, Kayla enjoys a night of crocheting, anime, and snuggles from her two cats, Rona and Mimsy.

Lucy Conklin is pleased to once again be singing with Te Deum this season! She holds a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance from the University of Kansas. As a lifelong chorister, Lucy participated in numerous choral ensembles at KU, including Chamber Singers under the direction of Dr. Paul Tucker. Additionally, Lucy sings with KC VITAs Chamber Choir and is a founding member of Ignea Strata, an all-female vocal quartet specializing in genres spanning from medieval to modern. Lucy enjoys bringing sparkle to the lives of Kansas City residents as sales manager at Toner Jewelers in Leawood. She lives in Brookside with her husband, Dave Kaleba, and two wonderful (if a little tubby) cats.

Zachary Cope is overjoyed to join Te Deum for the 2023-24 season. Zachary is a countertenor from Topeka, Kansas. He currently serves as the Associate Choirmaster at Grace Episcopal Cathedral in Topeka, where he leads the Chorister program and assists with the Cathedral Choir as a director and singer. He is a recent graduate of the University of Kansas, under the tutelage of Dr. Genaro Méndez, with a master's degree in vocal performance. During his time at KU, Zachary performed the roles of Oberon (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) and Tolomeo (*Giulio Cesare*). Zachary is also an avid violinist and has served as concertmaster of the symphony and as a violinist in the honors string quartet during his undergraduate studies. Outside of singing, Zachary enjoys late-night horror movie binges, craft beer, all things Lana Del Rey, and a good ol' Kansas thunderstorm.

Jonathan Doram is thrilled to join Te Deum for its 16th season! He currently works as an artist model at the Kansas City Art Institute and as accompanist at Blue Valley High School. He is also a member of the Heartland Men's Chorus and Madrigalia Bar Nonne choir in the Kansas City metro. He recently served as the choral director at Lincoln College Preparatory Academy and Middle School in Kansas City, Missouri, and previously at Forest Heights STEM Academy in Little Rock, Arkansas. In his free time, he enjoys writing, reading, and playing tennis. You may find out more at his website: <https://www.jonathandoram.com/>.

Paige Flenniken is thrilled to start her second season with Te Deum! She received her Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance at Oklahoma State University where she performed the roles of Susanna (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Gilda (*Rigoletto*), Susannah (*Il Segretto di Susannah*), Nella (*Gianni Schicchi*), Isabelle/Madeline (*Face on the Barroom Floor*) and Aldonza (*Man of La Mancha*). Paige enjoys the competition circuit and has won multiple awards from the National Association of Teachers of Singing. She is active in the choral world as a soprano soloist for Messiah at OSU for 3 concurrent years, soprano soloist for Haydn's *Lord Nelson's Mass*, performed twice at Carnegie Hall with the OSU University Singers and soprano soloist for Bach's *Mass in B Minor* with the Midland-Odesa Symphonic Chorale. She moved recently from Texas with her husband, Joe, and is excited to be involved in the thriving Kansas City music scene.

Sofia Gillespie is joining Te Deum for her first season. She has a degree in International Studies and has lived in Latvia as a foreign exchange student and later as a Fulbright Scholar. While there, she sang in two chamber choirs and competed in the World Choir Games, winning gold in the folklore category in 2014. She works for Kansas City University as a Clinical Clerkship Coordinator and for the KC Current as an avid crew member. Outside of singing, her passions include quilting and biking around the city.

Tim Gorski is excited to be joining Te Deum for the 2023-2024 season. He holds a Bachelor of Music in Music Education from Millikin University and a Master of Music Education from the University of Kansas. Tim has been teaching high school choir for five years and is in his second year as the choir director at William Chrisman High School in Independence. Tim and his wife, Christina, relocated to the Kansas City area from Northeast Illinois in the summer of 2022, so they enjoy exploring different parts of the city and completing DIY projects on their house. They live in Grain Valley with their adorable bully, Bishop.

Rupal Gupta, now in her fifth season with Te Deum, initially cultivated her lifelong love of choral music with the Harvard-Radcliffe Collegium Musicum and Chamber Singers. Sacred music compels her in its capacity to connect humanity to the divine. She earned her undergraduate degree in History and Science at Harvard and her medical degree at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. A board-certified pediatrician, Rupal was previously Interim Division Director of General Academic Pediatrics at Children's Mercy Hospital and Medical Director of Operation Breakthrough Clinic. Currently, she is a Clinical Services Director with Kyruus, Inc., a Boston-based Health IT company that aims to connect patients to the right care. She loves baking, reading, and yoga and maintains pediatric ties through roles with the American Academy of Pediatrics. She resides in Leawood, KS with her husband and her favorite and most rapidly growing creative endeavors: their two children.

Abby Helt is excited to sing with Te Deum again this year. Abby is currently teaching third grade at St. Ann Catholic School. She graduated from Kansas State University with a Bachelor of Music Education degree. At K-State, she studied voice under Professor Cheryl Richt and sang in multiple choirs, serving as a section leader, under Dr. Julie Yu and Dr. Joshua Oppenheim. Abby performed as a soloist with K-State's Concert Choir at the 2018 Southwest American Choral Director's Association conference, Grand Chorus Rhapsody 2019, and Collegium Musicum. Abby has also worked with the Flint Hills Children's Choir in Manhattan, Kansas. In addition to singing, Abby enjoys road-tripping, painting, and hanging with her family and friends.

Jeff Jasperson is excited to be singing with Te Deum for a fifth season. Jeff graduated from the University of Kansas in 2013 with a Bachelor of Arts in Music, voice emphasis. At KU, he performed with numerous choirs and was a four-year member of the KU Marching Jayhawks as a trumpet player. From 2017-2019, Jeff was a director of the spring choral variety show *Encore!* at Free State High School in Lawrence. Jeff serves as the tenor section leader of the Trinity Lutheran Church Choir in Mission, Kansas, and works as a paraeducator at Shawnee Mission North High School. He has recently sung the national anthem for the Kansas City Royals, Sporting KC, and KC Current. Jeff and his golden retriever Berkeley live in south Kansas City. In his spare time, Jeff enjoys taking Berkeley on walks, distance running, honing his cooking skills, cheering on the Chiefs, Jayhawks, Royals, Sporting KC, and KC Current, and attempting to win his fantasy football league.

Nanette Kraus is at her musical best when collaborating with others as a pianist and singer. From accompanying musicians at KU, Emporia State University, and Baker University, to school and honor choirs in Kansas and Missouri, from musical theater productions to church, synagogue and community choirs, Nanette enjoys working with each age and stage in the musical process. She currently assists the next generation of singers at Liberty High School and the lifelong learners of the Liberty Community Chorus. Nanette joined the Te Deum alto section in 2013 and serves on the Te Deum board of directors. A native Kansan, Nanette earned degrees from Bethany College and the University of Kansas and resides in the Northland with her husband Brian.

Lindsey Lauterwasser is so excited to be singing with Te Deum in her second season. She graduated from Benedictine College with a Bachelor of Music Education and is in her second year as the choir teacher at Lakewood Middle School in Overland Park, Kansas. She also enjoys teaching piano lessons, and music classes for young children. Lindsey has always loved to sing, especially in a choir, most recently participating in various choirs at Benedictine, as well as leading the a cappella group. Outside of singing, she loves to read, go for walks, play board games, spend time with family and friends, and cheer on the Kansas City Chiefs with her husband, Kyle.

Ryan Layton is a teacher, singer, conductor, and collaborative pianist. Ryan currently serves as assistant choir director at Blue Springs High School and director of music at Barry Christian Church. He previously taught at Marshall High School (MO) and worked with the Choral Arts Alliance of Missouri, serving as conductor of the Columbia Chamber Choir and assistant director/accompanist of the Columbia Chorale. Additionally, he has accompanied numerous school, community, and honor choirs and conference reading sessions. Ryan is the KC Metro district representative and coordinator of the state sight-singing bee for the Missouri Choral Directors Association. He earned a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Music Education from the University of Missouri (2018) and recently started coursework for a Master of Music Education at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. Ryan is an avid New York Times crossword solver, devoted Kansas City and Mizzou sports fan, and reluctant runner.

Cassandra Leon is a mezzo-soprano residing in Kansas City, Missouri. She is a graduate of Northwest Missouri State University and while there attained a Bachelor of Arts in Vocal Music Performance. Some of her most notable solo performances were *Lilacs* by George Walker for voice and orchestra and Moses Hogan's *Deep River* Collection. While Cassandra has a deep love for solo performance, she truly cherishes ensemble work. She has always had a deep passion for the choral arts. Being part of such a world-class ensemble, such as Te Deum, is a dream come true for her.

Josh Markley is thrilled to return to Te Deum. He holds a Doctorate of Musical Arts in voice and has been recognized for his research on the development of the baritone voice in the 17th and 18th centuries, lauded as an "excellent resource" by the Metropolitan Opera Guild. On the opera stage, he has performed Marcello in Puccini's *La Boheme*; Tarquinius in Britten's *Lucretia*; Il Conte in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*; Don Alfonso in Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, among others. His concert soloist experiences include Mendelssohn's *Elijah*; Mahler's *Symphony No. 8: Symphony of a Thousand*; Haydn's *Creation*; Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*; Bernstein's *Arias and Barcarolles*; Vaughn Williams' *Sea Symphony*; Handel's *Messiah*; and the *Requiem* Masses of Mozart, Verdi, and Faure. Currently, he is the Director of Music for the Barstow School—Upper and Middle Divisions, teaching choirs, music theory, music history, music in film and media, and musical theater. He and his wonderfully talented wife Diane, a former orchestra director turned high school administrator, are the proud parents of two amazing girls Nora and Samantha.

Benny Martinson is excited to join Te Deum this year. Benny previously sang with Khorikos in New York City, and in many choirs prior. He holds a Master of Music in Composition from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, and a Bachelor of Music in Composition from Butler University. Benny grew up in Eagle River, Alaska, and moved to Kansas City last year with his wife, his daughter, and his cat, Henry Purcell.

Ann Marzette joined Te Deum Chamber Choir in the fall of 2009 for its first full season. She graduated from William Jewell College in 2009 with degrees in piano performance and church music with a vocal emphasis. In 2013, she completed her Master of Arts in teaching from the University of Central Missouri. She currently teaches at Kearney Middle School, where she serves as director of vocal music. Prior to teaching at KMS, Ann served as the vocal music teacher at Marshall High School (Missouri) for four years and was the director of the Marshall Community Chorus. Outside the music realm, Ann works at Anthropologie to support her dress addiction. She also runs a pie side hustle, Easy As Pie KC.

Colin Riley joined Te Deum in 2019 after arriving in the KC area from Upstate New York. Colin performed with the nationally recognized chamber choir Ensemble Companio from 2014 to 2019 – serving as a tenor, officer, and board member. Colin graduated from Cornell University in 2009 with a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering. While there, he sang with the Cornell University Glee Club under Scott Tucker, with performances including *Ein Deutsches Requiem* in Beijing, Shanghai, and Hong Kong; the 2009 American Choral Directors Association National Convention; and a stage production of Leonard Bernstein's *Mass*. Colin is Vice President of Product and Application Engineering for Rondo, an energy storage company. He also holds a Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering from Georgia Tech and a Master of Business Administration from Clarkson University. Colin lives in Overland Park with his wife and two daughters.

John Ross is a bass with many years of experience singing in ensemble, choral, and opera settings in Kansas City and beyond. Some of the organizations John has performed with include Te Deum, KC Symphony Chorus, Johnson County Chorus, KC Singers, Cathedral Schola at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, BMACC/ Black Musical Artists Community Chorus, Musica Sacra, Madrigalia Bar Nonne, Carolers of Note, KC Metro Opera, Lawrence Opera Theatre, Landlocked Opera and Sweet Accordes. His singing has taken him all over the KC Metro as well as New York, Austria, and Germany.

Sarah Schulte is excited to be singing with Te Deum for a fourth season! She is currently in her third year as director of choirs at Park Hill South High School, and was previously the assistant director of choirs at Blue Springs South High School. She graduated from the University of Missouri in 2018 with a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Music Education, *summa cum laude*. While there, Sarah was active with the University Singers and Show-Me Opera programs, singing abroad in China, Sweden, and Estonia. In addition to teaching in Park Hill, Sarah has previously sung as a section leader in St. Paul's Episcopal Choir and with the Kansas City Symphony Chorus. Sarah loves hiking, house plants, craft beer, and her dog, Ollie!

Julia Kasten Sharp is excited to be starting her fourth season with Te Deum! A graduate of UMKC Conservatory, Julia holds a Bachelor of Music in both Vocal Performance and Music Theory. She can be found around KC singing with different choral groups such as Tallgrass Chamber Choir, Kantorei KC, and Cardinalis. Outside of music, her favorite hobbies include cuddling with her cat, Charlie, and road-tripping across the country with her husband, Jake.

Ben Wheeler joined Te Deum in 2021. He learned to love music as a Suzuki-trained violinist under Alice Joy Lewis in Ottawa, Kansas from age four through eighteen. He has a Bachelor of Music in Music Theater from Oklahoma City University, where he studied with vocal teacher Larry Keller. He sang for two seasons with Light Opera Oklahoma in Tulsa and has performed in many musicals and operas in school and community theaters in Kansas and Oklahoma. He had a blast singing with the Central Standard Barbershop Chorus in KC from 2017-2019. He enjoys volleyball, skiing, live music, and racking up wins with his crew of fully grown adults on Call of Duty.



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