



TeDeum

Matthew Christopher Shepard
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



THE
HEART
CRIES
OUT

SEPTEMBER 18-19, 2021

The Heart Cries Out

I.

Cry Out and Shout Knut Nystedt (1915–2014)

Cry out and shout, ye people of God!
The Lord is strength and song!
Therefore with joy shall ye
draw water from the wells of salvation.

-Adapted from Isaiah 12

II.

Hear My Prayer, O Lord Henry Purcell (1659–1695)

Hear my prayer, O Lord,
and let my crying come unto Thee.

-Psalm 102:1

Gagòt Sydney Guillaume (2013)

*Depi maten m'leve m'ape monte desann,
Mwen kouri toupatou tankou yon chyen ki fou.
Mwen pale, mwen chante, mwen dòmi, mwen leve;
Mwen priye, mwen rele, se gagòt sou gagòt.*

*Gagòt isit, gagòt lòtbò.
Gagòt anwo, gagòt anba,
Gagòt toupatou, se gagòt sou gagòt.*

*Gagòt nan lide mwen,
Gagòt nan zak mwen yo,
Gagòt nan paròl mwen,
Gagòt nan vizyon mwen.*

*Tout bagay yo mele:
Lapenn ak lajwa, ledout ak lafwa,
Degoutans ak lespwa, lebyen avèk lemal.
Tèt mwen vire, li vire,
Tout bagay yo mele.
Gad'on gagòt!*

Since I rose this morning I've gone through ups and
downs, Running around in circles like a crazy mad dog.
I speak, I sing, I sleep, I rise;
I pray, I scream, it's mess upon mess.

It's a mess here, it's a mess there,
A mess up, a mess down,
Mess everywhere, it's mess upon mess.

Messy are my thoughts,
Messy are my actions,
Messy are my words,
Messy is my vision.

Everything is entangled:
Pain and joy, doubt and faith,
Disgust and hope, good and evil.
My head is spinning and spinning,
Everything is entangled.
What a mess!

<p><i>Maten apre matin, m'ap livre yon batay; Kontredans lavi-a rekòmanse chak jou. Mwen chante, mwen danse, Mwen rele: "Viv lavi!" Bridsokou sanzatan mwen tounennan gagòt.</i></p> <p><i>Nan mitan gagòt sa mwen deside chèche, Chèche, chèche konnen, konen sa k'ap pase. Mwen fouye, mwen mande, mwen fini pa trouve Jouk andedan kè mwen Solisyon gagòt sa:</i></p> <p><i>La vie d'ici-bas est un combat de tout instant Que l'on ne peut gagner qu'un moment à la fois.</i></p> <p><i>Aprè lannuit se la jounen. Aprè lapli solèy leve. Aprè gagòt, aprè gagòt... se kè poze. Se jefò nan soufrans ki pote delivrans. Ah! Ainsi soit-il!</i></p>	<p>Morning after morning, I fight a battle; The contredanse of life recommences daily. I sing, I dance, I yell: "Hooray!" Suddenly and swiftly I am back in a mess.</p> <p>In the midst of this mess I decide to search, To search for an understanding to what is happening. I dig, I seek, and I finally find In the very depth of my heart The solution to this mess:</p> <p>Life before death is a battle of every instant That can not be won but one moment at a time.</p> <p>After the night comes the day. After the rain the sun rises. After messes, after messes... the heart settles. It's striving in suffering that brings redemption. Ah! So be it!</p>
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I Want to live. David Lang (2005)

I want to live where you live.
-David Lang

Needful Gifts (World Premiere) James Eakin (2021)

A kindly smile, a gentle touch,
The warm embrace of those we love;
Without these simple, needful gifts
We languish.

Gatherings and celebrations,
Rites of passage passed us by;
With milestone moments missed we cry
In anguish.

But now we stand upon a crossing,
A fleeting chance to change our fate,
A time to heal, the choice to feel,
A reckoning.

We've journeyed alone through the valley of shadow
But upon a new horizon we gaze,
A brighter future on the edge of tomorrow,
Beckoning.

To feel that gentle touch again,
The kindly smile, the warm embrace,
The world to us now turns its face,
Awaiting...

-Charles Anthony Silvestri (2021)

III.

Komm, Jesu, Komm J.S. Bach (1685–1750)

Soloists: Victoria Olson, S1; Paige Flenniken, S2; Nicole Murray, A1; Julia Kasten, A2;
Charles Everson, T1; Bryan Waznik T2; Jon Duncan B1; Nick Gillock B2

<i>Komm, Jesu, komm, mein Leib ist müde, die Kraft verschwindt je mehr und mehr; ich sehne mich nach deinem Friede; der saure Weg wird mir zu schwer!</i>	<i>Come, Jesus, come, my body is weary, my strength wanes more and more, I long for your peace; the sour path becomes too difficult for me!</i>
<i>Komm, komm, ich will mich dir ergeben, du bist der rechte Weg, die Wahrheit und das Leben.</i>	<i>Come, come, I will yield myself to you; you are the true path, truth and life.</i>
<i>Drum schließ ich mich in deine Hände und sage, Welt, zu guter Nacht! Eilt gleich mein Lebenslauf zu Ende, ist doch der Geist wohl angebracht. Er soll bei seinem Schöpfer schweben, weil Jesus ist und bleibt der wahre Weg zum Leben.</i>	<i>Therefore I enclose myself in your hands and say goodnight to you, world! Even though my lifetime rushes to its end, my spirit is nevertheless prepared. It shall soar with its Savior, since Jesus is and remains the true path to life.</i>

Bring Us, O, Lord William Harris (1883–1973)

Bring us, O Lord God, at our last awakening into the house
and gate of heav'n: to enter into that gate and dwell in that
house, where there shall be no darkness nor dazzling, but one
equal light; no noise nor silence, but one equal music; no fears
nor hopes, but one equal possession; no ends nor beginnings,
but one equal eternity; in the habitation of thy glory and
dominion, world without end. Amen.

-John Donne

Abendlied Josef Rheinberger (1839–1901)

<i>Blieb bei uns, denn es will Abend warden; Und der Tag hat sich geneiget, sich geneiget, O bleib' bei uns, denn es will Abend earden.</i>	<i>Bide with us, for evening shadows darken, And the day will soon be over, soon be over, O bide with us, for evening shadows darken.</i>
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-Luke 24:29

IV.

Hark I Hear The Harps Eternalarr. Alice Parker (b.1925)
Bryan Waznik, conductor
Syndey Seratte, soloist

Hark, I hear the harps eternal
Ringing on the farther shore,
As I near those swollen waters
With their deep and solemn roar.

Hallelujah, hallelujah,
Hallelujah, praise the Lamb!
Hallelujah, hallelujah,
Glory to the great I AM!

And my soul, tho' stain'd with sorrow,
Fading as the light of day,
Passes swiftly o'er those waters,
to the city far away.

Souls have crossed before me saintly,
to that land of perfect rest;
And I hear them singing faintly
In the mansions of the blest.

Hard Times Come Again No More arr. Mark Keller (2000)

Let us pause in life's pleasures and count its many tears,
While we all sup sorrow with the poor:
There's a song that will linger forever in our ears;
Oh, hard times, come again no more!

It's the song, the sigh of the weary
Hard times, hard times, come again no more,
Many days you have lingered around my cabin door,
Oh, hard times, come again no more.

While we seek mirth and beauty and music, light and gay
There are frail forms fainting at the door:
Though their voices are silent, their pleading looks will say:
Oh, hard times, come again no more!

-Stephen Foster

Enjoy the Silence Depeche Mode, arr. Eric Whitacre (2014)
Abby Helt, soloist

Silence.	
Words like violence break the silence come crashing in into my little world.	Pleasures remain, so does the pain words are meaningless, and forgettable.
Painful to me, pierce right through me can't you understand, oh my little girl?	All I ever wanted, all I ever needed is here in my arms, words are very unnecessary, they can only do harm.
All I ever wanted, all I ever needed is here in my arms, words are very unnecessary, they can only do harm.	All I ever wanted, all I ever needed is here in my arms, words are very unnecessary, they can only do harm.
Vows are spoken to be broken, feelings are intense, words are trivial.	Enjoy the silence.

and the swallow Caroline Shaw (2017)

How beloved is your dwelling place, O Lord of Hosts?
My soul yearns, faints; my heart and my flesh cry out.
The sparrow found a house, and the swallow, her nest,
where she may raise her young.

They pass through the valley of Bakka.
They make it a place of springs.
The autumn rains also cover it with pools.

-Psalm 84

Unclouded Day arr. Shawn Kirchner (2012)

Oh, they tell me of a home far beyond the skies, Oh, they tell me of a home far away; Oh, they tell me of a home where no storm clouds rise, Oh, they tell me of an unclouded day.	Oh, they tell me of a home where my friends have gone, They tell me of a land far away, Where the tree of life in eternal bloom Sheds its fragrance through the unclouded day.
Oh, the land of cloudless days, Oh, the land of an unclouded sky, Oh, they tell me of a home where no storm clouds rise, Oh, they tell me of an unclouded day.	Oh, they tell me of a King in His beauty there, They tell me that mine eyes shall behold Where He sits on a throne that is bright as the sun, In the city that is made of gold.



Te Deum

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————— Artistic Director —————

Matthew Christopher Shepard is a professional conductor, church musician, and guest lecturer. His 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 to communities of faith to lead both Christian and Jewish worship services. His intellectual curiosity, fearless programming, and magnetic leadership has 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 region. He is frequently engaged as a conducting clinician, most recently with the American Choral Director's Association Kansas State Convention Honor Choir. 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

Geoffrey Wilcken is a prolific composer, conductor, organist, and pianist. He has written for ensembles of all sizes and kinds, including solo, oratorio, concert band, jazz, and liturgical forces. Recent commissions include *One Out Of Many* (2015) for the 40th anniversary festival concert of the Lawrence Civic Choir, *Rosette* (2014) for the dedication of a new organ at Village Presbyterian Church, Prairie Village, KS, and *Music of the Spheres* (2014) for the combined bands and choirs of Johnson County Community College, Overland Park KS. He has also created numerous works for sacred and liturgical use, including *Anthems for the Cross* (2017) for St. Mary's Episcopal Church, and arrangements such as *Angel Noels* (2009) for the Kansas City Fine Arts Chorale, and a number of charts for jazz bands in the Kansas City metropolitan area. He is also the composer of the score for *The Midwest in Panels* (2014), a feature-length documentary about comic book shops.

Dr. Wilcken is an accomplished church musician, jazz pianist, conductor, and organist who can currently be heard on the organ of historic St. Mary's Episcopal Church in downtown Kansas City. In addition, he has performed with various ensembles in Lawrence and the Kansas City area, including the Kansas City Fine Arts Chorale, *Musica Vocale*, and the Moon City Big Band, as well as serving as the artistic director of the *Songflower Chorale*, a semi-professional chamber choral ensemble in Kansas City.

Geoffrey earned his D.M.A. at the University of Kansas in the spring of 2018. He holds a Master of Music degree in choral conducting under Simon Carrington at the University of Kansas, and a Bachelor of Music degree in composition from Iowa State University. He has recently joined the music department of Kansas City Kansas Community College as staff accompanist, and has already begun work on some custom arrangements for ensembles there.

UMKC Graduate Conducting Fellow

Bryan Waznik is a student in the M.M. in Choral Conducting program at UMKC. He comes to Kansas City from Minnesota, where he spent the last 4 years teaching vocal music at Zimmerman Middle/High School in Zimmerman, MN. Along with his regular teaching engagements, he has also served as a section coach for the Minnesota All-State Choirs, and maintains an active career as a performer. As a Tenor, Bryan has performed with MPLS (imPulse) and *The Singers: MCA*, and has had the opportunity to present a number of new works and masterworks around the Twin Cities. Bryan holds a B.A. in Music from Luther College (2015).

Singers

<u>Soprano</u>	<u>Alto</u>	<u>Tenor</u>	<u>Bass</u>
Lucy Conklin Paige Flenniken Abby Helt Kristen Johnson Victoria Olson Sarah Schulte Sydney Seratte	Kaitlyn Connolly Julia Kasten Nanette Kraus Ann Lewis Hilary Morton Nicole Murray Jenna Socha	Tom Assel Nico Caruso Hunter Eisenmenger Fr. Charles Everson Micah Horton Colin Riley Bryan Waznik	Kyle Chamberlin Jon Duncan Nick Gillock Jeff Jasperson Ryan Layton Ben Wheeler

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.

Nico Caruso is excited to be singing (even if it's in a mask) in his 3rd season with Te Deum. Nico recently completed what remained of the coursework separating him and his bachelor's degree of music education from the UMKC Conservatory and is now beginning to explore graduate school options to further his studies in vocal performance. Outside of his Te Deum responsibilities Nico is constantly busy being an exceptional and doting big brother to his younger sister.

Kyle Chamberlin has been singing with Te Deum since spring of 2014 and is thankful to be singing with them for another season. Kyle teaches music in the Shawnee Mission School District. He graduated from Emporia State University with a dual degree in vocal and instrumental music education. He received his Master of Science in Education Administration at ESU in 2019. While at ESU, Kyle appeared in many musicals and operas and presented solo recitals in South Korea and Mexico City. In the past 20 years, he has performed in numerous productions at Great Plains Theatre, a regional theatre in Abilene, Kansas as well as Shawnee Mission Theatre in the Park. Locally, Kyle has sung with Spire, The Ancora Chorale, and Te Deum Antiqua.

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.

Kaitlyn Connolly is over the moon to be singing in her first season with Te Deum. She has been a chorister since pre-school and is excited to be returning to the choral scene for the first time since The Shutdown. She is hoping to return to school this fall to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Psychology. Outside of Te Deum, Kaitlyn is a server and the secretary for Tom's Town Distilling Co. Kaitlyn enjoys cats, being a beer connoisseur with her husband Kyle, playing video games and role-playing games, and making Egg Sandies for her loved ones.

Jon Duncan is in his 9th season singing with Te Deum, and is thrilled to serve as the new Assistant Rehearsal Director. Jon is the choir director at Shawnee Mission South High School in Overland Park, Kansas, and he previously taught at Indian Woods Middle School and Hocker Grove Middle School. Jon received his BME and MME both from the UMKC Conservatory. His teachers have included Charles Robinson, Ryan Board, Aidan Soder, Raymond Feener, Joseph Parisi, Dwayne Dunn, Elise Peterson, Erin Smith, Kathy Bhat, and Karen Flaschar. Outside of choral music, Jon enjoys taking care of his houseplants, raising Pokémon, completing puzzles of all genres, and enjoying the KC foodie scene with his partner Luke.

Hunter Eisenmenger is excited to continue with Te Deum as a tenor. He holds a Bachelor of Music Education from Benedictine College, studying voice under Dr. Kristin Newbegin. For three years, he taught high school music in Lee's Summit, Missouri. Currently, he is pursuing a master's degree in vocal performance at the UMKC Conservatory. At the Conservatory, he is studying voice under the tutelage of Weston Hurt, and will be playing the role of Acis in Handel's Acis and Galatea. Hunter has a deep love for sacred and choral literature, and has sung or played piano for services in Nebraska, Kansas, and Missouri since he was a kid. In addition to singing, Hunter loves spending time with his wife and baby daughter, playing piano, traveling, and collecting plants.

Charles Everson joins Te Deum for his first season. A lifelong chorister, Charles began singing in the children's choir at Village Presbyterian Church. He played French horn in middle school and high school and sang tenor in various ensembles in high school. Charles sang in several choirs at Ouachita Baptist University where he graduated with a degree in Biblical Studies and a minor in music. He worked in banking for 15 years, earning his Master of Business Administration from Baker University. He sang tenor at St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church under Dr. Ken Walker for 10 years, eventually pursuing ordination as a priest. Charles serves as rector of St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Kansas City where he enjoys singing the liturgy of the church each week. He and his husband Jay live in South Hyde Park.

Paige Flenniken is thrilled to start her first 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 Lord Nelsons Mass (Haydn), performed twice at Carnegie Hall with the OSU University Singers and soprano soloist for Mass in B Minor (Bach) with the Midland-Odessa Symphonic Chorale. She moved recently from Texas with her husband, Joe, and is excited to be involved in the thriving Kansas City music scene.

Nick Gillock has been a member of Te Deum since fall 2014. He holds a Bachelor of Music Education from Kansas State University (2014) and a Master of Music in Musicology from the University of Missouri-Kansas City (2021). He recently completed a thesis entitled "Oh, When the Wiz: An Ethnography of Communal Music-Making in Kansas City Soccer Culture" and was named UMKC's Muriel McBrien Kauffman Superior Graduate Teaching Assistant. Prior to his graduate studies, he was the choral director at Indian Trail Middle School in Olathe. He has studied voice with Prof. Dale Ganz and Dr. Bryan Pinkall, choral studies with Dr. Julie Yu and Dr. Joshua Oppenheim, and musicology with Dr. S. Andrew Granade, Dr. Alison DeSimone, and Dr. William Everett. When not singing, Nick enjoys hanging out with friends and cheering on Sporting KC, Tottenham Hotspur, and the KSU Wildcats!

Abby Helt is in her second season with Te Deum. Abby is a first-year music teacher 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.

Micah Horton is excited to return to Te Deum for his fifth season with the choir. He teaches choir at Olathe North High School and serves as the Director of Worship Music at Second Presbyterian Church in Brookside. Micah also gigs on guitar, electric bass, and mandolin. Micah has a Master of Music Education from the UMKC Conservatory. He also holds Bachelor's degrees in Music Composition and Psychology from Eastern Nazarene College in Quincy, Massachusetts. Micah recently served as the Resource Chair for Multicultural Perspectives for the Missouri Choral Director's Association, and was the 2021 Prelude Award recipient for MCDA. He is a New Jersey native, proud dad & partner, and a Philadelphia sports fan.

Jeff Jaspersen is grateful to be singing with Te Deum for a third 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. He currently sings for church services at Trinity Lutheran Church in Mission, Kansas, and works as a paraeducator at Shawnee Mission North High School. Jeff and his fiancée Kayla live in downtown Kansas City with their golden retriever, Berkeley. In his spare time, Jeff enjoys taking Berkeley on walks, distance running, honing his cooking skills, watching KC sports, and attempting to win his fantasy football league.

Kristen Johnson has been singing her heart out since before she could join the church and school choirs as a child. She played violin through high school, even though it meant skipping lunch to also sing in the concert choir. During college, Kristen fell in love with the Anglican choral tradition singing for Dr. Arnold Epley in Wil-

liam Jewell's concert choir, then spent a year abroad cycling to Evensong services all over Cambridge. Kristen has been a soprano in the Grace & Holy Trinity Cathedral choir since 2005, singing under Canon John Schaefer and Dr. Paul Meier. She is thrilled to begin singing again after the great pandemic-induced pause in choral singing. By day, Kristen is an attorney practicing administrative and regulatory law in the Environmental, Energy, Mining, and Transportation division at Stinson. She enjoys gardening, yoga, dancing, and spending spare time with her husband and three children.

Julia Kasten is excited to be singing her third season with Te Deum! A recent graduate from the UMKC Conservatory, she has a Bachelor of Music in both Vocal Performance and Music Theory. Julia works as a church musician and sings with Kantorei KC and the Tallgrass Chamber Choir. Outside of music, Julia loves her cats, Disney, and traveling.

Nanette Kraus joined Te Deum in 2013 and resides in Kansas City, Missouri, where she enjoys a wide variety of music projects as a collaborative pianist and singer. She currently serves as staff accompanist for Liberty High School and Liberty Community Chorus, and accompanied the 2021 KCDA state treble honor choir. From 2009-2016, Nanette served as staff accompanist and piano instructor at Baker University. In addition to Te Deum, she sings with KC VITAs Chamber Choir. Nanette earned a Bachelor of Arts in music from Bethany College and a Juris Doctor from the University of Kansas. When not making music, Nanette volunteers for the A Turning Point, the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, and the Te Deum, Inc. board, and enjoys watching Jayhawk basketball.

Ryan Layton is a singer, conductor, collaborative pianist, and teacher. A graduate of the University of Missouri, he studied voice with Dr. Steven B. Jepson, and performed with Hitt Street Harmony, the Bach Collegium Choir, and University Singers under the direction of Dr. R. Paul Crabb. Ryan worked with the Choral Arts Alliance of Missouri for five years, most recently as the accompanist and conductor of the Columbia Chamber Choir and assistant director of the Columbia Chorale. Additionally, he has accompanied numerous school and community choirs and conference reading sessions. This school year will be Ryan's first as Assistant Choir Director at Blue Springs High School. Previously, he was the Director of Choirs and fine arts chairperson at Marshall High School as well as the assistant director of the Marshall Community Chorus. Ryan is an avid New York Times crossword solver, devoted Kansas City and Mizzou sports fan, and reluctant runner.

Ann Lewis 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 a 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, teaches popular music courses, and assists with the high school vocal music program. Prior to teaching at KMS, Ann served as the vocal music teacher at Marshall High School (Missouri) for four years. She continues to direct 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.

Hilary Morton joined Te Deum in 2019. Hilary recently moved to Kansas City from Lawrence to begin teaching choral music at Shawnee Mission North High School. She previously taught at Lawrence Free State High School in Lawrence and at Oregon Trail Jr. High in Olathe. A Lawrence native, Hilary attended the University of Kansas and sang under the direction of Simon Carrington. She dual-majored as an undergrad, receiving a Bachelor of Arts in Music Education and in Theatre/Voice. She minored in French and holds a Masters of Choral Pedagogy from KU. She has been involved in theatre in Lawrence for almost 40 years, from sketch comedy productions to Broadway cabaret performances. When Hilary's not singing or making others sing, she is nestled with her fur babies, watching scary movies whilst baking cookies and crafting specialty cocktails for her loved ones.

Nicole Murray is delighted to be singing with Te Deum for a fourth season. She also enjoys performing as a soloist, choir member, and choral conductor. As a soloist, she has appeared with the Kansas City Symphony, the Liberty Symphony Orchestra, the Northland Symphony Orchestra, the Heritage Philharmonic, and Kansas City Wind Symphony. Nicole is a member of the choral faculty at William Jewell College, and performs with their Cardinalis ensemble. She has also sung with the Kansas City Symphony Chorus, the Kansas City Chorale, Musica Vocale and the American Guild of Organists' Schola Cantorum ensemble. Her formal training includes music degrees from William Jewell College and the Lamont School of Music at the University of Denver. She works on her high notes each summer by riding roller coasters around the globe.

Victoria Olson is a versatile artist and an active collaborator in numerous concerts, recitals, and large-scale projects with ensembles such as Te Deum, Te Deum Antiqua, Kantorei, Spire, Missouri Choral Artists, and internationally acclaimed choral ensemble Red Shift. Her performance career has taken her through the Heartland to Eastern Europe as a prominent featured soloist. Her most notable roles included Königin der Nacht with Landlocked Opera of Kansas City and Heartland Opera Theatre, and Nella with the Varna International Music Academy. Victoria also holds a strong interest in music education and has served as a highly sought-after clinician, adjudicator, and private voice instructor across the Midwest. She received a Bachelor of Music Education (UNO), a Master of Music, and an Artist Certificate with an emphasis in Baroque Studies (UMKC).

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 a Regional Product Manager with General Electric and 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 toddler, where he divides his time between home improvement projects and pretending to be a robot/dinosaur.

Sarah Schulte is excited to start her first season with Te Deum! Sarah is currently in her third year as the Assistant Director of Choirs at Blue Springs South High School and looks forward to beginning the 2021-2022 school year as the Director of Choirs at Park Hill 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 Blue Springs, Sarah enjoys singing as a section leader at St. Paul's Episcopal Choir and has previously sung with the Kansas City Symphony Chorus.

Sydney Seratte has been a member of Te Deum for not one, not two, but seven seasons! Sydney teaches music at Citizens of the World Charter School in Kansas City, Missouri. Prior to joining the team at CWC, she taught music at Bluejacket-Flint Elementary School in Shawnee, Kansas. She graduated with a Bachelor of Music Education from the UMKC Conservatory. As a UMKC student, Sydney enjoyed singing in university choirs and vocal recitals. Her teachers have included Janeal Krehbiel, Cathy Crispino, Dr. Charles Robinson, Dr. Ryan Board, Dr. Aidan Soder, Corbin Trimble, Debra Raffety, Robert Relly, Joan Hildebrand, and Patrice Sollenberger. Sydney teaches Simply Music piano lessons in the metro area, holds a master's degree in education from MidAmerica Nazarene University, and a master's degree in music education from UMKC. She loves midtown Kansas City, house plants, vegetarian food and her two (too many) cats, Del and Meret.

Jenna Socha is ecstatic to sing with Te Deum in her first season. She recently returned to Kansas City after 10 years, including 5 years in Scranton, Pennsylvania. Jenna is entering her eleventh year as a vocal and choral music educator, settling into her second year at the elementary level following postings in secondary and primary levels. She received a Bachelor of Music Education from Missouri State University where she studied voice with Dr. Andrew Childs and conducting with Dr. Guy Webb. Jenna earned a Master of Music Education from the University of Missouri where she was Teaching Assistant in choral music. In Scranton, Jenna enjoyed participating in Arcadia Chorale and founded and directed Voce Angeli, a women's choral ensemble in Northeastern Pennsylvania. Jenna is happy to be back in Kansas City, closer to family, with husband Matt and daughter Lilly (2), who keeps her busy when not teaching or rehearsing!

Ben Wheeler is excited for his first year with Te Deum in 2021. He learned to love music as a Suzuki trained violinist under Alice Joy Lewis in Ottawa, Kansas from age 4 through 18. He has a Bachelor of Music in Music Theater from Oklahoma City University, where he studied with vocal teacher Larry Keller. He sang for 2 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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Featuring Kirke Mechem's "7 Joys of Christmas," Te Deum's Christmas concert will celebrate the blessing, joys, and happiness of the Christmas season. The program will highlight music for choir and harp, and will also include Abbie Betinis' "In the Bleak Midwinter", Stephen Paulus' Gabriel's Message, and Steve Heitzig's "little tree" with a text by E.E. Cummings.