

Trinity Episcopal Cathedral *Omaha, Nebraska*



CATHEDRAL CHOIR **HANDBOOK** **2022- 2023**

Welcome to Trinity Episcopal Cathedral!

The Trinity Episcopal Cathedral Choir embodies a long tradition of excellence in choral music. The choir provides musical leadership for Cathedral worship, singing for Sundays and Holy Days, early fall through Trinity Sunday. The ensemble also sings for diocesan occasions such as ordinations and Annual Council. The choir was honored to sing at Washington National Cathedral for Nebraska Day in 2003 and for an Open House Weekend in 1996. Choral Evensong and Compline are offered several times each year, as well as other choral liturgies. Under the leadership of Dr. Marty Wheeler Burnett, the choir developed several innovative outreach initiatives, including an annual Lenten Evensong with combined choirs from three local Episcopal parishes. "Lessons and Carols on the Road " and "Evensong on the Road " carry these distinctly Anglican choral services to parishes throughout the Episcopal Diocese of Nebraska. Collaborations with St. Cecilia Cathedral Choir in the past two decades have included a concert of English cathedral choral repertoire, a performance of the Mozart *Requiem*, and an Evensong with combined choirs. Under the Interim Music Ministry of Alex Hoefling, the choir has revived these traditions post-COVID. Hoefling has rebuilt the choir after the pandemic by structuring regular rehearsals and liturgies, staffing our Schola Cantorum, planning a rigorous and meaningful 2022-23 Season, recruiting volunteer musicians, and organizing ecumenical collaborations with Metro Churches.

Mr. Alexander J. Hoefling, Interim Director of Music Ministry

Alex graduated in 2013, with his Bachelor of Arts in Vocal Music from Briar Cliff University, located in Sioux City, Iowa. Hoefling studied voice with Dr. Mary Day, O.S.F. and Ms. Shannon Salyards, and conducting with Dr. Sean M. Burton. As a trained Operatic Tenor and Countertenor, he has enjoyed a multitude of experiences. He has spent his career singing and conducting in choral, orchestra, operatic, and solo recital settings throughout the United States and Europe. Mr. Hoefling was the Assistant Director of Music for the Archdiocese of Omaha (2013-15), with his primary responsibility being the Archdiocesan Youth Chorale. He served as Assistant Conductor of the Omaha Children's Choir (2015-2017). Mr. Hoefling was the K-12 Director of Vocal Music for Oakland-Craig Public Schools (2016-2019). He has served as a Baritone/ Tenor Section Leader at both St. Cecilia's Cathedral (2014-15) and Trinity Episcopal Cathedral (2015-19). He taught at Lincoln High School (2019-2021) where he directed, prepared and conducted all vocal music ensembles: Mixed Choir, Chamber Choir, Vocal Links (Adaptive Music), LHS Chorale, Momentum Varsity Show Choir, Impulse Preparatory Show Choir and the yearly musicals. Hoefling remains an active vocal coach and adjudicator for contests and show choir competitions throughout the Midwest. He is a member of ACDA and NATS. Hoefling will begin his Masters in Choral Conducting at the University of Nebraska-Omaha this Fall.

Cathedral Choir Section Leaders (Schola Cantorum)

Sopranos	Amanda Stevenson, Tara Cowherd Richardson, & Shelby Sievers VanNordstrand
Altos	Janeen Jensen, To Be Hired
Tenors	Reggie Pifer, To Be Hired
Basses	Ed Perini, To Be Hired

Getting Started

Where to meet

Wednesday rehearsals typically begin in the Choir Room. Sunday rehearsals meet in the Choir Room or the Nave. Check the white board in the vesting room for instructions on where to meet each week.

Things you'll need

Folder and Music

You will be assigned a folder and music number. You are responsible for the music and folder checked out to you. Our librarian keeps track of missing music, so stay on their good side by keeping up with your music and turning it in on time. Sheet music is expensive, and we'd rather spend our budget investing in new music instead of replacing lost copies.

Music is distributed in the music cabinet in the Choir Room. Check the slot with your number prior to each rehearsal and service to pick up music and materials.

After each service, turn in completed music in the basket in the vesting room. Turn in folders at the end of each choir year or semester as required.

Pencil

Bring one to every rehearsal. We have a cup full of pencils in the Choir Room. Take one, and keep it in your folder.

The Hymnal 1982

Extra copies are kept on a shelf in the back of the Choir Room. Choose one, and write your name in the front in pencil. Keep it in your locker, and make notes in it during rehearsal. This will be helpful as we return to hymns in the months and years ahead. As the Cathedral Choir, we seek to know and master the entire hymnal! Some singers prefer using the hymnal on an iPad. Large print copies of the hymns and service music are available upon request for those who need them.

Wonder, Love, and Praise

These green hymnal supplements are distributed when needed and turned in immediately following that liturgy. We keep these in the music library so that they can be used for diocesan and parish events.

Lift Every Voice and Sing II

Copies of this supplemental hymnal are distributed when needed and turned in immediately following the liturgy.

Bookmarks

It's helpful to mark pages in your hymnal. We provide hymnal bookmarks with ribbons in various colors which insert into the spine of the hymnal. The goal is to find your place easily and efficiently, allowing you to focus on worship. After finishing one piece of music, turn immediately to the next one. That way, you'll always be ready to sing!

What to wear

We wear choir vestments for all liturgies. The Cathedral Choir vestment consists of a purple cassock and a white cotta. A gold cross is worn with the vestment throughout the year except during Lent.

You will be assigned a vestment. If we do not have one in the correct size, we will order one for you. See Alex Hoefling or your section leader for assistance. You are responsible for keeping your vestment neat and clean. Wash light and dark colors separately on the delicate cycle (cold water) and dry on the low heat setting. If you hang the vestment promptly, it should not need ironing. Vestments should be laundered at least once a quarter. If you prefer, they may be dry cleaned. **Please do not remove the size tag from the neck of your cassock or cotta.**

We recommend wearing lightweight, comfortable clothing under your vestment. Some singers keep lightweight cotton t-shirts in their lockers for this purpose. Closed toe, black shoes are encouraged; high heels are discouraged. We ask that you save sandals for the summer months. You may wish to keep a pair of shoes in your locker to wear with your vestment.

For casual occasions, we wear a Trinity Cathedral t-shirt. These are available in the Cathedral Shoppe. Shirts are available in two colors, and you may choose either color.

Personal storage

You will be assigned a locker. You may be asked to share your locker with another chorister. Please keep your locker neat and clean, and only use it for storing choir materials and vestments. Lock coats and valuables in the locker during rehearsals and services; unlock the locker when you depart and leave the key in the lock.

Attendance

Regular attendance at rehearsals and liturgies is essential to fulfilling our mission. If you will be absent, please sign out as far in advance as possible. This allows us to adjust repertoire and seating if needed. Sign out through the Choir Absence Google Form, via e-mail, or discussing with the Music Minister. If you are ill, please sign out and avoid exposing others to illness. If any emergency or sudden illness arises, you may call or send a text message to the Music Minister.

We have these expectations in Cathedral Choir

We're here to serve God in God's Church

We strive for excellence as we offer the best sacred music to the glory of God. We consider our role as leaders of worship to be a high calling. Therefore, we commit to doing our best: showing up, being prepared, approaching each rehearsal and liturgy with a positive and joyful attitude, and working collaboratively. We also commit to growth as Christian disciples through worship, study, giving, and prayer. As the Cathedral Choir, we have a unique ministry to the diocese, providing musical leadership and hospitality.

We're here to help each other

We seek to be a welcoming, supportive Christian community. We make a point to be there for one another in life's celebrations and losses. We schedule social time to get to know one another. We pray with and for one another.

We create a positive atmosphere for learning

We encourage one another, enthusiastically trying new things and always seeking to improve our knowledge and skills. We are lifelong learners. We maintain a positive attitude in rehearsals. We teach each person with respect.

We make efficient use of rehearsal time

Our rehearsal, or "call" time in musician terms, is the time the Music Minister begins rehearsal. As Cathedral Musicians, we commit to being in place at the call time, music and materials in hand, ready to sing. In rehearsal, we focus on the task at hand, follow directions, and work cooperatively within our sections. We commit to spending time outside of rehearsal engaging in score study, listening to recordings, practicing our vocal parts, and reflecting on the meaning of the anthem texts.

WE CELEBRATE!

Birthday refreshments

We celebrate birthdays once a month, usually at the first Wednesday rehearsal of that month. Choristers sign up to bring food and beverages. Refreshments are served after rehearsal. All singers are encouraged to stay and participate. Family members and significant others are always welcome to join us.

Choir Parties

We also have several social occasions throughout the year:

- Refreshments following Christmas Eve Midnight Mass
- A Choir Brunch between services on Easter Day
- Occasional choir dinners
- An end-of-the-year party

Housekeeping

Our Cathedral is a busy place! We depend on each chorister to keep our spaces neat and clean, especially since we share our space with other groups and activities. All items (music, folders, pencils, cough lozenges, tissues, etc.) must be removed from the choir seating area after each rehearsal or liturgy. We have trash and paper recycling bins in every room; please use them. Dirty coffee mugs and glasses should be returned to the cart or dishwasher in the Clarkson Center kitchen. Do not leave water bottles, music folders, or personal items in the Choir Room. Your help is greatly appreciated!

Communication and Staying Connected

- Connect on Facebook—Like the Trinity Episcopal Cathedral page. Send Alex Hoefling a friend request, and he can add you to our Cathedral Choir Facebook group.
- Connect on Instagram—Like the Trinity Episcopal Cathedral account.
- We consistently use e-mail. Please check your email regularly.
- Stay informed by signing up for our e-newsletter, *Cathedral Matters*, at <http://trinityepiscopal.org>
- We have a Music Program Directory with contact information for all choir members. Ask Alex Hoefling for a copy, and please make sure that we have your up-to-date contact information.

Cathedral Choir Procedures for Liturgies

In the Episcopal Church, the choir's primary responsibility is leadership of worship. The following procedures are designed to enable effective leadership and to reflect the formality and solemnity of worship in the Anglican cathedral tradition. With our larger choir and congregation, it is necessary to refine our practices to serve as more effective leaders. Through our ministry, we enable the congregation to worship God more fully in the beauty of holiness.

We are leaders of worship

We fulfill our role as leaders of worship by:

- *Offering music of the highest beauty and quality*
- *Maintaining an attitude of reverence and attentiveness*
- *Drawing the focus to God, not ourselves*

Preparing for worship

- Gather in the Choir Room (not the Clarkson Center or the Nave). Anyone who is unable to process should be seated in the choir before the prelude music begins.
- All choristers will be vested and ready to process five minutes prior to the liturgy.
- Your vestment should be clean, completely buttoned, and the gold cross right side up.
- An appointed section leader will line you up for the processional.
- Enter the Nave in procession order 2 minutes prior to the service time.
- Process in pairs with 3-4 pews of space in between pairs. In unison with your procession partner, bow from the waist at the top of the steps. The procession should be in constant motion. Be alert and aware, and adjust your speed accordingly.
- If you are not vested and in place five minutes prior to the liturgy, then please sit and sing in the congregation that day.

Seating

Seating will be assigned to achieve the best choral blend and to facilitate the singing of choral repertoire. Some days, we will sit in sections; on other occasions, we will use mixed seating. For certain choral literature, we will use the traditional, Anglican mixed choir formation—*Decani* (dean's side) and *Cantoris* (cantor's side). The Music Minister will assign seats. Please sit in your assigned seat. If your seating assignment is not working for you, please discuss it with the Music Minister outside of rehearsal. Section leaders are authorized to make changes in seating arrangements if last minute circumstances dictate.

Please keep these points in mind during liturgies

- One chair per person—no overlapping
- Sit with feet flat on the floor and with good posture (no crossed or open legs, no slouching, hands in your lap)
- Be attentive and alert during the service—watch the lectors and clergy if you can see them; if not, look straight ahead. Keep your eyes open during the readings and sermon. Your demeanor invites attention to the Word.
- Remember that you are visible to the congregation and must model good worship practices. Participate in all spoken/ sung responses, the creed, and the prayers as indicated in the bulletin.
- All movement should be done with beauty, elegance, and precision. Be aware of what you are doing and whether it is enabling or distracting from worship. Stand and kneel with one motion as a group; follow your section leaders.
- Talking, reading, and using phones during the service are not allowed. Tablets may only be used when singing if you are using them in place of hymnals.
- Water bottles are not allowed except when needed for medical reasons (for example, if you are recovering from a cold or sinus infection). Speak to the Music Minister, and he will seat you in the back of the choir in this case.
- Everyone is encouraged to go to the altar rail to receive communion or a blessing. You may stand or kneel according to your custom.
- Procedures for processions will be rehearsed at the beginning of each choir year. If you have questions, discuss them with the Music Minister or one of your section leaders.
- All music and personal items must be removed from the choir pews immediately following every service.
- Our goal is excellence, not perfection. We strive to do our best, but everyone makes occasional mistakes. If someone in your section makes a mistake or is not following these guidelines, please discuss it with them after the liturgy. If you cannot resolve the matter, ask one of your section leaders for assistance. If problems cannot be resolved within the section, then section leaders are expected to report this to the Music Minister, who will address the matter.

TRINITY EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL CHOIR CALENDAR

August 2022- June 2023

AUGUST

Wednesday, Aug., 31 Cathedral Choir rehearsals begin

SEPTEMBER

Sunday, Sept. 4 First Sunday of Cathedral Choir
Saturday, Sept. 10 Cathedral Choir retreat (9:00 AM- 12:45 PM)
Sunday, Sept. 25 Compline, 7 PM

OCTOBER

Tuesday, Oct. 4 Feast of St. Francis, Blessing of the Animals
(Cathedral Choirs, OFF; Trinity Youth Chorale)
Sunday, Oct. 9 Sopranos and Altos Only, Tenors and Basses OFF
Sunday, Oct. 16 Tenors and Basses Only, Sopranos and Altos OFF
Sunday, Oct. 23 Compline, 7 PM
Wednesday, Oct. 26 *Fall Break–No Rehearsal*

NOVEMBER

Wednesday, Nov. 2 Cathedral Choir rehearsals resume
Saturday, Nov. 12 American Guild of Organists, Schola Only; 10- 11:30 AM
Friday, Nov. 18 John Rutter's "The Reluctant Dragon" w/ UNO, 7 PM
Saturday, Nov. 19 John Rutter's "The Reluctant Dragon" w/ UNO, 2 PM
Sunday, Nov. 20 Cathedral Choirs OFF, Compline 7 PM
(Trinity Youth Chorale)
Wednesday, Nov. 23 *Thanksgiving Break–No Rehearsal*
Sunday, Nov. 27 Vest and Process, 10:15 AM Call; 10:30 AM Choral Eucharist
Wednesday, Nov. 30 Cathedral Choir rehearsals resume

DECEMBER

Wednesday, Dec. 7 Rehearsal from 7:30- 9:30 PM
Wednesday, Dec. 14 Rehearsal from 7:30-9:30 PM
Friday, Dec. 16 *Lessons and Carols* at Trinity Cathedral, 7 PM
Saturday, Dec. 17 *Lessons and Carols* at St. Mark's Pro Cathedral, 5 PM
Wednesday, Dec. 21 Rehearsal from 7:30- 9:30 PM (Christmas Eve Dress Rehearsal)
Saturday, Dec. 24 Christmas Eve–Two Services, prelude begins 7 PM and 10 PM
Sunday, Dec. 25 Christmas Day: 10 AM Carol Sing; 10:30 AM Choral Eucharist
Wednesday, Dec. 28 *Christmas Break–No Rehearsal*

JANUARY

Sunday, Jan. 1	Vest and Process, Schola OFF
Wednesday, Jan. 4	Cathedral Choir rehearsals resume
Friday, Jan. 6	Menotti's "Amahl and the Night Visitors" w/ Résonance; 7 PM
Saturday, Jan. 7	Menotti's "Amahl and the Night Visitors" w/ Résonance; 2 PM
Sunday, Jan. 8	Choral Eucharist Collaboration with Résonance
Sunday, Jan. 15	Compline, 7 PM
Sunday, Jan. 29	Annual Meeting
Tuesday, Jan. 31	Recovery Eucharist, 7 PM

FEBRUARY

Sunday, Feb 12	Cathedral Choirs OFF, Compline 7 PM (Trinity Youth Chorale)
Wednesday, Feb. 22	Ash Wednesday; 7 PM Service
Sunday, Feb. 26	Lenten Evensong, 2:30 PM Call, 4 PM Service (at All Saints)

MARCH

Sunday, March 12	Vest and Process, Schola OFF, Compline 7 PM
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APRIL

Sunday, April 2	Palm Sunday, 10:30 Choral Eucharist
Wednesday, April 5	Rehearsal from 7:30- 9:30 PM (Easter Dress Rehearsal)
Thursday, April 6	Maundy Thursday, 7 PM
Friday, April 7	Good Friday, 7 PM
Saturday, April 8	Easter Vigil, 7 PM
Sunday, April 9	Easter Day, 8:30 and 10:30 AM Services (7:45 AM Call)

MAY

Friday, May 12	Rodgers and Hammerstein's "The Sound of Music", 7 PM
Saturday, May 13	Rodgers and Hammerstein's "The Sound of Music", 7 PM
Sunday, May 14	Rodgers and Hammerstein's "The Sound of Music", 2 PM (Cathedral Choirs OFF, Cathedral Bells Only)
Thursday, May 18	Ascension Day (here)- 6 PM rehearsal, 7 PM Eucharist
Sunday, May 21	Vest and Process, Schola OFF, Compline 7 PM
Sunday, May 28	Day of Pentecost

JUNE

Sunday, June 4	Trinity Sunday/ End of the Choir Year (Trinity Youth Chorale, Hand Bells, Cathedral Choir, and Schola)
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NOTES:

- Sunday Choral Eucharist Call Times are: 9:30 AM
- Compline Call Times are: 5:45 PM

About Trinity Episcopal Cathedral

The community of Trinity has been worshipping in Downtown Omaha since the city's earliest days. Founded in 1856 by Nebraska's first settlers, Trinity came through a financial crash, a building fire, and the struggles of the frontier before moving into a beautiful building on the corner of 18th and Capitol in 1883. We've been there ever since, making Trinity Cathedral the oldest church building in Nebraska still in use.

That long legacy has given us a love of beauty and history, which shows up in our architecture, our music, and our worship. It's also made us committed to serving the physical, spiritual, and social needs of our neighbors as an inclusive, loving community where everyone can find a home.

Despite our long history, we're also forward-looking. We're open to new ideas and new ways of being, and we love trying out creative solutions to the challenges we face. In the spirit of our founders, we're always ready for the next frontier.

As the Cathedral, we are proud to be the "Mother Church" of the Episcopal Diocese of Nebraska. Our diocese is an organization of over 50 churches located all over the Cornhusker state, our Diocese is a diverse community of people who gather to encourage and support each other in worshipping Jesus, nurture each other through good times and bad, and reach out in service to the larger world.

Trinity Episcopal Cathedral Music Programs

The Cathedral Choir is open to all adults who can sing, read music, and commit to regular attendance at rehearsals. The choir rehearses on Wednesdays at 7:30 pm and sings for the 10:30 am Holy Eucharist each Sunday, September through Trinity Sunday (May or June). Choral Evensong is offered several times each year, and the choir sings for all Principal Feasts and Holy Week liturgies.

The Requiem Choir provides a ministry of musical leadership for funerals at Trinity Cathedral. It is open to adults who have the schedule flexibility to sing for weekday and Saturday liturgies as needed. No long-term commitment required, only a love of choral singing and the willingness to serve.

Schola Cantorum; our Schola Cantorum is a small, select ensemble formed by our Cathedral Choir section leaders and other professional singers in the Omaha community. They provide leadership in the Cathedral Choir and sing for Compline. Members of the Schola provide musical leadership for the 10:30 Eucharist in June and August. They also provide support for the volunteer Summer Choir during July.

The Cathedral Handbell Ensemble rehearses on select Wednesdays at 6:30 pm (September through Trinity Sunday) and plays once every 4-6 weeks for the 10:30 am Holy Eucharist. The ensemble is directed by Janeen Jensen.

Our Choir Prayer:

**O God, who saints and angels delight to worship in heaven:
Be ever present with your servants who seek through art and music
to perfect the praises offered by your people on earth;
and grant to them even now glimpses of your beauty,
and make them worthy at length to behold it unveiled for evermore;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

Amen.

-The Book of Common Prayer, page 819

