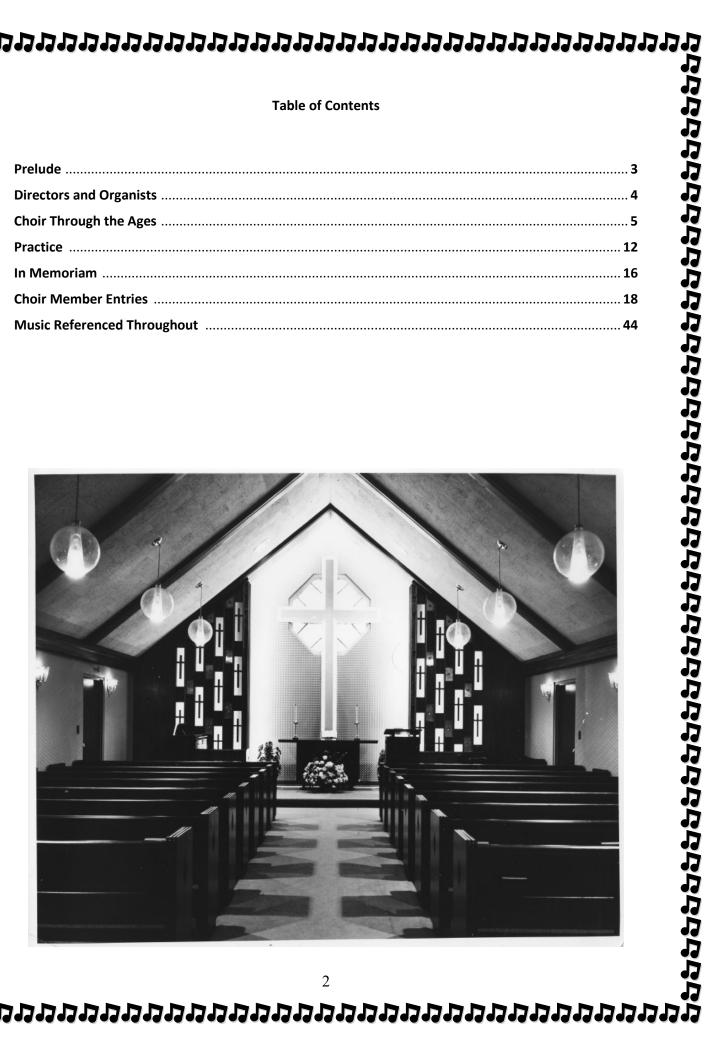




Celebrating 140 years of Excellence



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Prelude

"For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." (Matthew 18:20)

"Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts." (Colossians 3:16)

In the Fall of 2022, I felt called to create a history book that would include memories of days of choir passed, and personal statements from current choir members. This grew out of a desire to know the members of choir better. While many of them are people I grew up seeing every Sunday (and many Wednesdays!), I did not know many of their stories. While the overall goal of this project was to archive our responses for the future, a personal goal was to learn more about the people around me. I was not disappointed.

I encourage you to read each person's responses to fully understand the differences, and similarities, between each. Many people grew up in musical homes or grew up with church being their first experience of music. You will notice that a few names pop up over and over again; while many of them have passed, their influence lives on. Very few songs, however, were mentioned over and over again; only five songs were mentioned more than once!

Most strikingly, you will see that people have found choir to be: a fellowship, a membership, a form of worship, a place of friendship, a place of connection, a small group, a learning experience, fun, uncomplicated, joyful, a home, a blessing, and a family.

I hope that as you read these pages, you recognize the love, joy, and connection that is present when we are all gathered together to sing.

Kathryn Horwath, 2023

Covenanter, 4th generation

First Covenant Church Member, 3rd generation

First Covenant Church Choir Member, 2nd generation

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Directors and Organists



Ray Grabner, Director

Ray is our fearless leader who keeps us on track, encourages us with humor and patience, and picks excellent choral anthems for us each week.



John Cooper, Pianist, Organist, Cellist

John is a talented musician who likes to have fun during practice by starting songs off-key (on purpose!), playing carnival music on the piano, or adding dramatic sound effects to practice.

Past Directors

Ginger Peterson, not

pictured



Pat Ecklund



David Moore



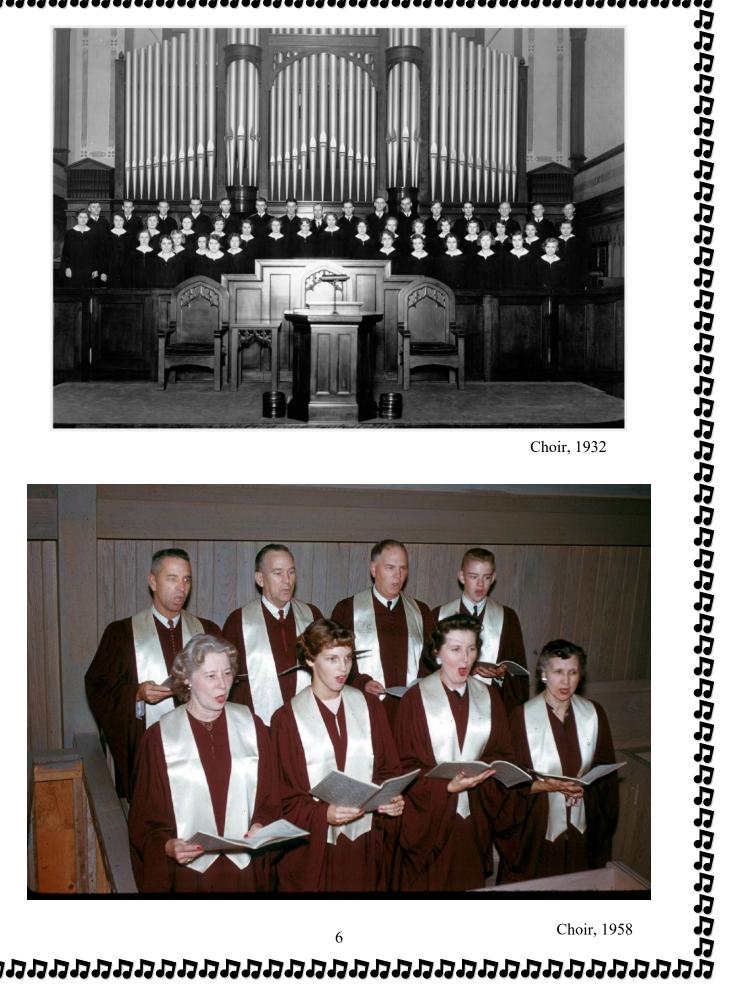
Henry Wiebe

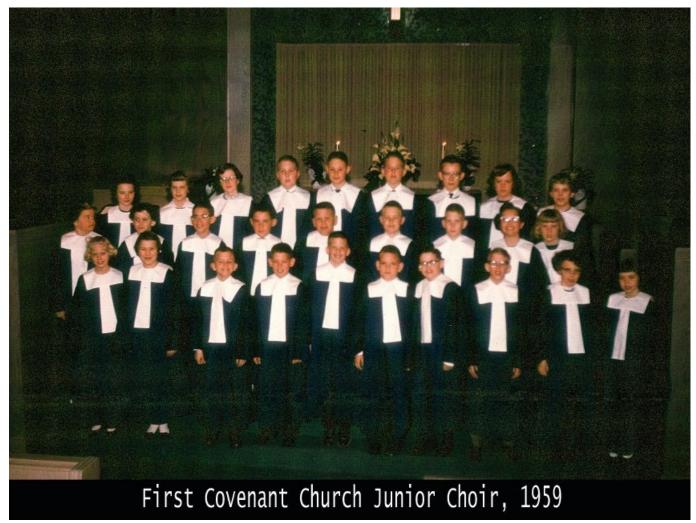
$oldsymbol{n}$, which is the contraction of the contraction $oldsymbol{n}$











Junior Choir, 1959



Choir, 1972



Choir Procession, undated



Choir, undated



Choir, undated



Choir Christmas Concert, 2005

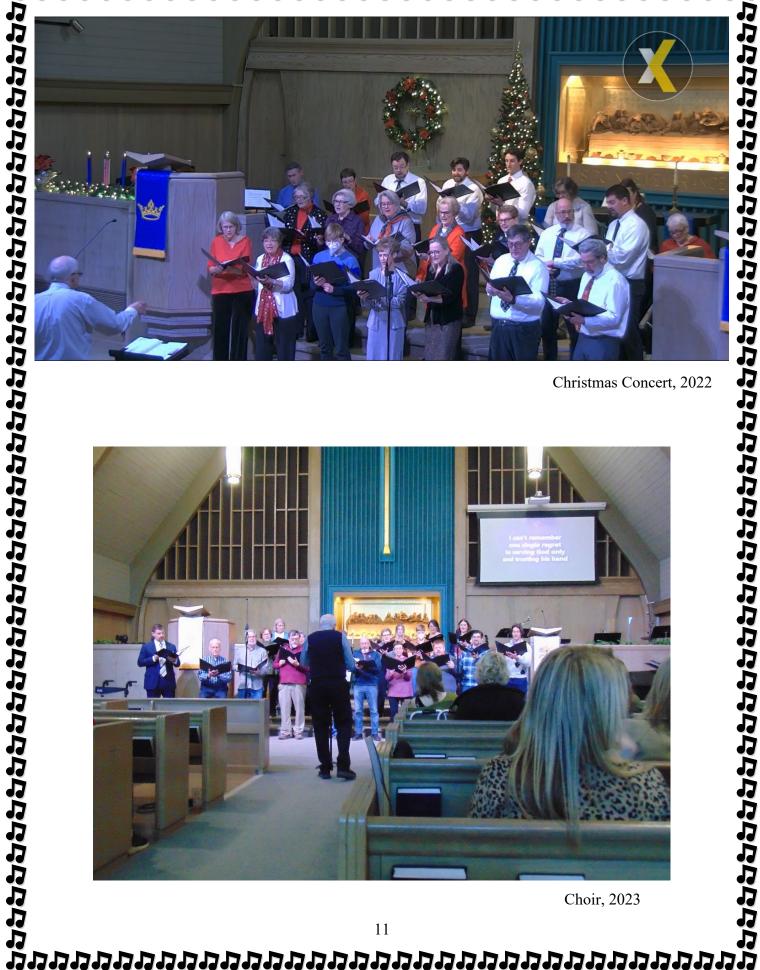
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Choir Christmas Concert, 2010



Choir Christmas Concert, 2016



Christmas Concert, 2022



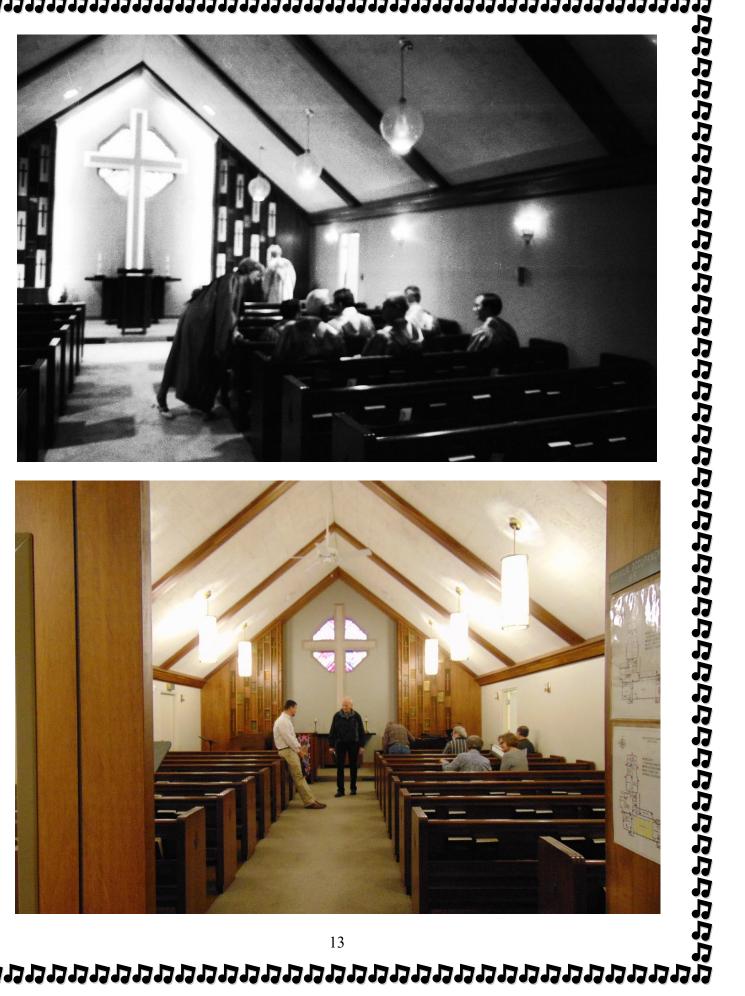
Choir, 2023

Practice



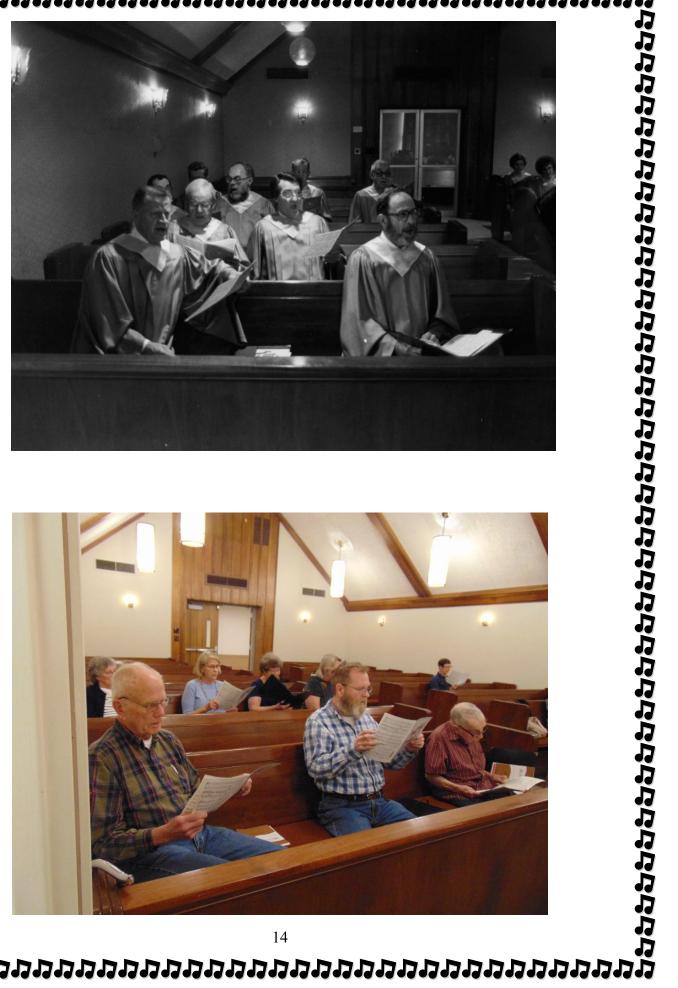
Choir practice is an integral part of being a choir member. Wednesday nights are where members join together in the chapel to sing, laugh, and pray as a group.



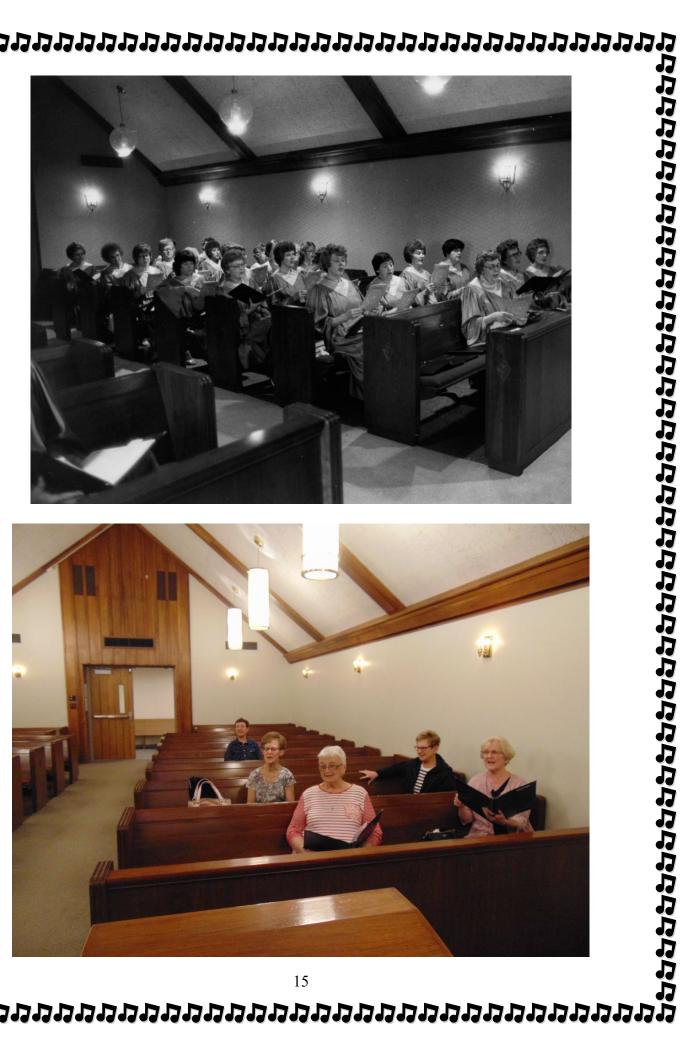




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In Memory of Jim Ressegieu



As reported by Karen Ressegieu

Length of Church Attendance:

Jim moved with his family from First Covenant Church -Sioux City, IA the beginning of his 7th grade. He was confirmed in 1955 under Rev. William Freeman. Jim's dad (Craig) was a former choir director, and his mom (Marion) was the organist at First Covenant Church at Sioux City.

Length of Choir Attendance:

Jim joined the choir when entering high school in 1957 until October 1987. He returned in October 2017 until October 2022. Jim sang in the Community Covenant Church choir from January 1988 to May 2003 when he left that fall to attend seminary at North Park in Chicago.

Vocal type: Bass

What was Jim's first experience with music/singing?

Jim sang first chair bass in the Acapella Choir at Omaha Central High School his junior and senior years. Jim did solo work for both weddings and funerals.

What's was Jim's favorite hymn/song?

Jim had many favorite hymns one being "And Can It Be That I Should Gain" (page 306 in our blue hymnal). He loved four-part harmony.

Who (or what) made Jim want to join choir?

Jim was an avid lover of Southern Gospel music. He always said "when you get to heaven, look for me on Southern Gospel Avenue." I am sure he is loving to sing with the many saints who have gone before in The Gospel Chorus. Again, he loved four-part harmony.

What do you want the people of the future to know about Jim?

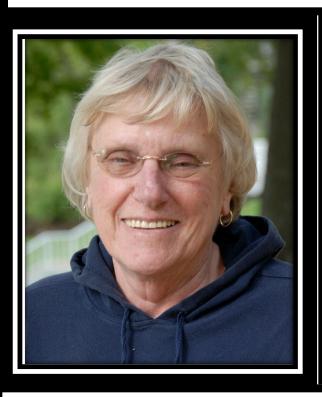
It was always great fun when we went home and we were at my home church worship service, I had Dad on one side of me singing bass and Jim on the other side singing bass. Not that there was any competition going on between the two of them. Great singing!

What did choir mean to Jim, and what would Jim want the people of the future to know about choir?

Music and choir has always been a part of our lives. It has been an enrichment to our lives.

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In Memory of Pat Ecklund



As reported by Bob Ecklund

Length of Church Attendance:

56 years at FCC

Length of Choir Attendance:

From early days of attendance, Choir director for initially 9 years, then fill-in replacement or otherwise occasional director or organist. Also director of children's choir as such existed!

Vocal type: Soprano in early years, later alto

What was Pat's first experience with music/singing?

Age six at piano practice identified as having perfect pitch.

What's was Pat's favorite hymn/song?

I have forgotten her favorite hymn. I was always going to write it down, but didn't. Favorite classical pieces were Barber's "Adagio for Strings" and Sir Edward Elgar's "Nimrod".

Who (or what) made Pat want to join choir?

Long experience in music: Music major in college, then teaching music in Elementary school, giving piano lessons and conducting a children's choir.

What did choir mean to Pat?

Pat considered the choir to be "a little congregation" within the church. The time of devotions and prayer where especially dear to her.

What do you want the people of the future to know about Pat?

Wonderfully delightful, dedicated Christian lady with great musical talent.

What would Pat want the people of the future to know about choir?

Choir was a significant participant in worship. The choir wore robes, processed and recessed after a choral postlude (many of which Pat wrote!).



Greg Applequist

Length of Church Attendance:

2016-Present (6.5 years)

Length of Choir Membership:

2022-Present (1 years)

Vocal type: Average (Baritone)

What was your first experience with music/singing?

My mom was a musician, so I grew up playing violin and piano. I sang in our kid's choir at church and also performed in our church's production of Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat. I haven't really ever sung in a group until I started with the choir in the last year.

What's your favorite hymn/song?

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"Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day". Of the pieces we have sung since I have been here, it is probably "Total Praise".

Who (or what) made you want to do choir?

I do love to sing, and Ray (p. 25) was gracious enough to let me start just jumping in on Sunday mornings. It has been a joy to be at rehearsals this year. It is a wonderful group.

What has choir meant to you?

I love what the choir adds to our worship services, and being a part of something I don't have to lead! Being with the choir members has brought me great joy.

What would you like the people of the future to know about you?

I love being a part of worship, and worship is so big and broad. It isn't just the Scripture, or the sermon, or the songs, or the prayers, it is all of that. I love helping to curate our worship services, and I love participating in worship. Worship isn't a spectator sport, and I don't ever just want to sit and watch. I want to be a part of it!

What would you like the people of the future to know about choir?

Choir isn't a group that performs for the congregation. The choir uses their gifts to usher God's people into God's presence. The choir shows us a different way to encounter God.



Derek Bonin

Length of Church Attendance:

2005-Present (18 years)

Length of Choir Membership:

2007-Present (16 years)

Vocal type: Tenor

What was your first experience with music/singing?

I grew up singing in my grandparents' church, and, in fact, I can still remember singing a solo of Amazing Grace from the pulpit when I was about 6 or 7 years old. Music has just always been a very foundational aspect of my life for as long as I can remember that I can't even begin to imagine a world without it.

What's your favorite hymn/song?

I think because of my grandparents, I have always had a soft spot for the old gospel hymns like "I'll Fly Away", "Amazing Grace", "Standing on the Promises", "The Old Rugged Cross", "How Great Thou Art", and others.

Who (or what) made you want to do choir?

I got involved with the praise band soon after Julie and I started attending FCC, but about a year and a half later, when Julie and I were applying for membership, Bob Palmberg, along with Don Swaggard, approached me and basically said if I wanted to become a member, I had to join the choir! I always loved Bob's playful sense of humor.

What has choir meant to you?

Choir, in general, has given me some of the most amazing, spiritual, and impactful experiences in my life. And just as with my college choir, the choir here at FCC has brought some of the most amazing people into my life who have become mentors, friends, and brothers in Christ.

What would vou like the people of the future to know about you?

That serving the people of First Covenant Church through choir, worship band, and the youth formation team was one of the greatest callings of my life.

What would you like the people of the future to know about choir?

Choir is like food for the soul. No matter our age, gender, race, culture, profession, or any other divisions we might have, music will find a way to bridge the gap and bring people together. Choir especially, because it forces us to be selfless rather than selfish, it forces us to listen to those around us and seek unity over separation. The goal of a great choir is to take all of the unique voices and different parts and weave them together in harmony so tightly that they become one voice, with one heartbeat, breathing and moving together with a purpose, and it's a very beautiful and intimate experience.



Betty Bragg

Length of Church Attendance:

2000-Present (23 years)

Length of Choir Membership:

2000ish-Present (23 year)

Vocal type: Alto

What was your first experience with music/singing?

I've been singing all my life. The church I grew up in had a children's choir, youth choir, and adult choir. Also sang in various groups in my high school and college choir at Trinity in Chicago.

What's your favorite hymn/song?

I have many hymns/songs I love but on that has meant a lot to me is "In Christ Alone"-that is where my hope is found.

Who (or what) made you want to do choir?

I love the choir. The talent of these special people who give of their time and effort from their hearts is awesome.

What has choir meant to you?

The friendship and closeness of the choir group is awesome. Ray's choice of music is really good. I like being able to sing and then go back to sit with my husband.

What would you like the people of the future to know about you?

I sing with my sister, Jan (p. 34).

What would you like the people of the future to know about choir?

They show to others their support and love by words of encouragement and prayer. Also the enjoyment of singing and laughing together is uplifting.

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Cynthia Copeland

Length of Church Attendance:

1970-Present (53 years)

Length of Choir Membership:

1970-Present (53 years)

Vocal type: I began the FCC choir as an alto. After many years, I joined the soprano section.

What was your first experience with music/singing?

I grew up in a musical family and piano lessons were required. There was always singing in our home. I was in my home church's junior choir in elementary grades, took voice lessons, and joined the senior choir in 8th grade. I played in the high school band, (marching and concert) and sang in various singing groups. I sing with my sister Karen (p. 42) even now.

What's your favorite hymn/song?

Too many to pick. I have many favorites.

Who (or what) made you want to do choir?

My own love of music.

What has choir meant to you?

It is family within the family. A group in which to commonly worship.

What would you like the people of the future to know about you?

...that I believe God's Word is constant and unchanging, and that I may continually grow in Jesus.

What would you like the people of the future to know about choir?

Singing is an important part of worship and participation in choir is fulfilling for the soul.

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Diane Drake

Length of Church Attendance:

1969-Present (54 years)

Length of Choir Membership:

1971-Present (52 years)

Vocal type: Alto

What was your first experience with music/singing?

Besides singing with my parents, and I can't remember the earliest time since they sang a lot, it was in the Cherub Choir at church. This was the preschool choir which sang at special occasions such as Christmas.

What's your favorite hymn/song?

"Day by Day" - the hymn in the Covenant hymnal, not more recent songs of the same name.

Who (or what) made you want to do choir?

Sharon Peterson (p. 41) asked me to join and said more altos were needed. Others had mentioned it before, but for some reason, that's the time I remember deciding to try it. It had been years since I had sung in a choir so it took me a while to join, but I've been so glad I did.

What has choir meant to you?

The music is fun and uplifting, and the camaraderie and fellowship have been wonderful.

What would you like the people of the future to know about you?

I can't think of anything specific.

What would you like the people of the future to know about choir?

We had a great time singing praises and enjoying our time with each other.



Dan Erickson

Length of Church Attendance:

1982-Present (41 years)

Length of Choir Membership:

2014-Present (9 years)

Vocal type: Baritone/Bass

What was your first experience with music/singing?

In grade school I began piano and flute lessons, about 5th grade.

What's your favorite hymn/song?

"All Creatures of Our God and King"

Who (or what) made you want to do choir?

Phil Hesselink (p. 27), Don Swaggard and Dal Shalberg all told me to.

What has choir meant to you?

Dad always sang in church and it's a great way to honor Dad's memory.

What would you like the people of the future to know about you?

I have a new cat named Emma.

What would you like the people of the future to know about choir?

It's a great place to have fellowship, release, stress, and come away refreshed.

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Helen Erlandson

Length of Church Attendance:

1974-Present (49 years)

Length of Choir Membership:

1980ish-Present (Over 40 years)

Vocal type: Soprano

What was your first experience with music/singing?

I grew up in Thurston, a small town of 150 people. At Christmas they would set up a trailer stage. As a little girl, I would get up on the trailer to sing. I've always loved to sing.

What's your favorite hymn/song?

"Because He Lives"

Who (or what) made you want to do choir?

I was invited by (I think) Pat Ecklund (p. 17). I sang with the Swedish Band and choir as well.

What has choir meant to you?

Especially now, it is a bright spot of my week. You know you can go and put your troubles away and know and visit with people. It's like a small family.

What would you like the people of the future to know about you?

I've been faithful!

What would you like the people of the future to know about choir?

It's been like a second family. It's a bright spot of my life.



Ray Grabner

Length of Church Attendance:

2001-Present (22 years)

Length of Choir Membership:

2001-Present (22 years)

Vocal type: Bass/baritone acting as

Choir Director

What was your first experience with music/singing?

7th grade all-boys choir at Hastings St. Cecelia.

What's your favorite hymn/song?

"The Majesty and Glory of Your Name"

Who (or what) made you want to do choir?

I love to sing and be challenged with tough selections.

What has choir meant to you?

Great fellowship and rehearsal moments when the song "comes together".

What would you like the people of the future to know about you?

I can't imagine worship without song.

What would you like the people of the future to know about choir?

It can't be beat for combining worship and friendship......both will get you through Tough Times!

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David Hemphill

Length of Church Attendance:

2003-Present (20 years)

Length of Choir Membership:

2003-Present (20 years)

Vocal type: Tenor and Bass

What was your first experience with music/singing?

Grew up with music as my mother was a voice and piano teacher. Sang in college with Univ Neb Wesleyan choir.

What's your favorite hymn/song?

Too many to make a decision....do love a good March style hymn.

Who (or what) made you want to do choir?

I wanted to be a part of choir...since high school I have been part of a choir.

What has choir meant to you?

Just enjoy getting to sing and praise God. Secondly the choir always has fun.

What would you like the people of the future to know about you?

Nothing...what is more important is that they know the Lord.

What would you like the people of the future to know about choir?

I hope we can keep this style of music going in a society that seems to prefer contemporary music over chorale music....believe there is room and a place for both!



Phillip Hesselink

Length of Church Attendance:

1969-Present (54 years)

Length of Choir Membership:

1971-Present (52 years)

Vocal type: Bass

What was your first experience with music/singing?

I was born in Sodus, NY. My family lived in the parsonage. The choir practiced in the parsonage and my mom said that I joined in at the age of three.

What's your favorite hymn/song?

"Open My Eyes"

Who (or what) made you want to do choir?

I have always enjoyed singing.

What has choir meant to you?

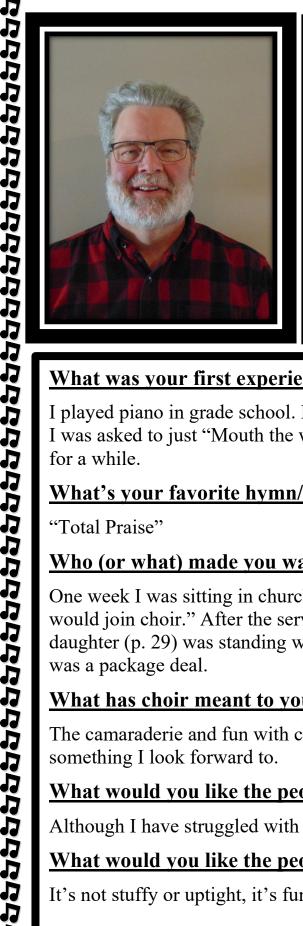
It appeals to my musicianship, and it encourages me to be a part of a group.

What would you like the people of the future to know about you?

I would like people to know that I am a fun and caring person.

What would you like the people of the future to know about choir?

It's a fun organization!



Jim Horwath

Length of Church Attendance:

1964-1986, 2008-Present (37 years)

Length of Choir Membership:

2016-Present (7 years)

Vocal type: Bass

What was your first experience with music/singing?

I played piano in grade school. I did children's choir at First Covenant. One year, I was asked to just "Mouth the words", and that was the end of my musical career for a while.

What's your favorite hymn/song?

"Total Praise"

Who (or what) made you want to do choir?

One week I was sitting in church and I thought, "If someone asked me to, I would join choir." After the service, Ray (p. 25) asked me to join choir. My daughter (p. 29) was standing with me, and I said I would do it if she would. It was a package deal.

What has choir meant to you?

The camaraderie and fun with choir has been a surprise to me. Rehearsals are something I look forward to.

What would you like the people of the future to know about you?

Although I have struggled with faith, God never gave up on me.

What would you like the people of the future to know about choir?

It's not stuffy or uptight, it's fun.



Kathryn Horwath

Length of Church Attendance:

2008-Present (15 years)

Length of Choir Membership:

2016-Present (4 years, non-consecutively)

Vocal type: Soprano

What was your first experience with music/singing?

The first place I remember singing was at church during the traditional service. I loved the hymns and the choral anthems. I wanted to join choir when I was around 10 or 11 but I was told I'd have to wait until I was confirmed. I ended up talking singing classes and doing choir at my middle school.

What's your favorite hymn/song?

"His Eye is on the Sparrow" and "It is Well"

Who (or what) made you want to do choir?

When I was in middle school, Don Swaggard pulled me out of youth group to bring me up to choir. He put me at the front of the room and told everyone that one day I was going to sing in choir with them. I cannot remember and have no idea what prompted him to do so; it had been a while since I had asked to sing in choir. I didn't actually join until Ray (p. 25) asked my father (p. 28) to join. I realized that I was old enough to, and that youth group met at a different time.

What has choir meant to you?

I wanted to do choir for a long time before I actually did. Wanting to join choir is what lead me to singing. I'm pretty bad at sports, so being good at singing was (and is) a great self-esteem boost. I'm a good bit younger than a lot of choir members, and I've appreciated getting to spend time with people older and wiser than I am. It's also been really lovely to sing with people who knew my grandparents well.

What would you like the people of the future to know about you?

I'm the person who put this book together!

What would you like the people of the future to know about choir?

In a complicated time and place, choir is uncomplicated.



Chris Johnson

Length of Church Attendance:

1978-Present (45 years)

Length of Choir Membership:

1998-Present (25 years)

Vocal type: Alto

What was your first experience with music/singing?

I sang in my church choir when I was in high school. I sang in the "Chapel Choir" while at North Park College. I also sang in the choir at Community Covenant.

What's your favorite hymn/song?

I have many, many favorite anthems. We recently sang "Kyrie Eleison" which is a beautiful anthem. I also have many favorite hymns: "Holy, Holy, Holy", "How Great Thou Art", "Day by Day and with Each Passing Moment", "Great is Thy Faithfullness", and "Why Should I Be Anxious".

Who (or what) made you want to do choir?

When my children reached an age where it was easier to go out in the evening, I realized that I'd enjoy singing in a choir again.

What has choir meant to you?

Choir means a lot to me. It's nice to be a part of the worship service. It's also a good way to make even better friends with the people you know.

What would you like the people of the future to know about you?

I've enjoyed being in the choir. It's very important to me.

What would you like the people of the future to know about choir?

Singing in the choir is a lot of fun!

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Everett Kelly

Length of Church Attendance:

1991-Present (32 years)

Vocal type: Tenor

What was your first experience with music/singing?

When I was 5 years old.

What's your favorite hymn/song?

"Amazing Grace"

Who (or what) made you want to do choir?

When I started singing at age 5 I wanted to be a part of choir.

What has choir meant to you?

Lots of love and joy.

What would you like the people of the future to know about you?

That I was born to serve God and the world.

What would you like the people of the future to know about choir?

That we have a good choir with great voices and people.



Abraham Lambert

Length of Church Attendance:

2018-Present (5 years)

Length of Choir Membership:

Off and on since 2020ish (6 months regularly)

Vocal type: Tenor

What was your first experience with music/singing?

Singing with my mom. One event I remember is singing the books of the New Testament while standing on a piano bench with my brother.

What's your favorite hymn/song?

I like "On Eagles Wings"

Who (or what) made you want to do choir?

I always enjoyed singing, I had been away from choir and miss making music with others.

What has choir meant to you?

I love that we all have our parts and make something beautiful together, even though we don't all do it right all the time. It also makes me feel more connected to the church family.

What would you like the people of the future to know about you?

Nothing in particular :) I showed up!

What would you like the people of the future to know about choir?

It's a good place to make a joyful noise to the lord. Key word, 'joyful'!



Andrew Lieben

Length of Church Attendance:

2017-Present (6 years)

Length of Choir Membership:

2018-Present (5 years)

Vocal type: Tenor

What was your first experience with music/singing?

At Dundee Presbyterian Church Joy Choir. "I've Got the Joy, Joy, Joy Down in My Heart".

What's your favorite hymn/song?

Biebl's "Ave Maria"

Who (or what) made you want to do choir?

I wanted to join the choir the first time I heard them sing.

What has choir meant to you?

I always feel closest to God when singing beautiful harmonies with a choir. After joining the choir, I felt truly at home at FCC.

What would you like the people of the future to know about you?

I definitely over-prepared in my audition for the choir.

What would you like the people of the future to know about choir?

We are all jokesters!



Jan Lundgren

Length of Church Attendance:

2007-Present (16 years)

Length of Choir Membership:

2007-Present (16 years)

Vocal type: Alto

What was your first experience with music/singing?

My mother was the organist/pianist at our home church, so I was always at church when she had to practice.

What's your favorite hymn/song?

"Be Thou My Vision" and "In Christ Alone"

Who (or what) made you want to do choir?

My sister (p. 20) asked me to come and sing because they were short on altos, and I was going to another church here in Omaha alone.

What has choir meant to you?

The altos have so much fun, and the choir is my connecting group.

What would you like the people of the future to know about you?

I sing with my sister, Betty (p.20).



Diane Lynn

Length of Church Attendance:

1963-Present (60 years)

Length of Choir Membership:

1965-Present (58 years)

Vocal type: Soprano

What was your first experience with music/singing?

I grew up in a musical family of four brothers and my parents were also involved. My mother played a "tipel" which was a lot like a small guitar and my dad played a banjo (which I never heard him play). In fact, my dad would help take his turn doing an early morning Sunday meditation on the local radio in Thief River Falls, MN. On several occasions my brothers and I would sing and then come back to our 11:00 service and sing there also. We all sang in the choir.

What's your favorite hymn/song?

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I have many favorite anthems that we sing. One of them is "This is My Story and this is My Song". We have done yearly Christmas Concerts and each of them have been presented in a fabulous manner.

Who (or what) made you want to do choir?

My first experience was with Henry Wiebe and we sang some pretty difficult music. I came close to dropping out as it was music that I had never sung before. But then I look back and then that was probably a good challenge for me and I continued to stay with the choir.

What has choir meant to you?

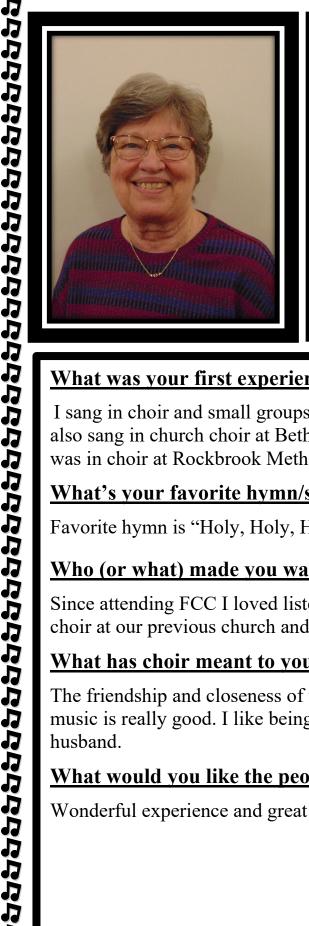
Many of the faithful singers I have sang with have gone to be with the lord. We had probably twice the number that we have now. I have been singing since about 1965 and have been under the leadership of many talented conductors, such as: Henry Wiebe, Ginger Peterson, Pat Ecklund, a music conductor from Westside schools, and of course, Ray Grabner (p. 25). I am sure I have left a few off, due to my memory.

What would you like the people of the future to know about you?

Music has always been a part of my life, at church, at home, and especially when traveling in a car. I was never caught up with worldly music as my father was a pastor and my parents would not allow us to listen to that when we were around them. I do not have any regrets as I wanted to honor my parents, and most of all wanted to honor my Heavenly Father.

What would you like the people of the future to know about choir?

For future new choir members, I would suggest to come and sing along and see if you enjoy our group as much as others do. You do not need to be a concert violinist and let the music move you.



Carol McChesney

Length of Church Attendance:

2019-Present (4 years)

Length of Choir Membership:

2022-Present (1 year)

Vocal type: Alto

What was your first experience with music/singing?

I sang in choir and small groups at Central High and Westside High for 4 years. I also sang in church choir at Bethel Lutheran Church throughout high school. I was in choir at Rockbrook Methodist Church.

What's your favorite hymn/song?

Favorite hymn is "Holy, Holy, Holy". Also "Old Rugged Cross".

Who (or what) made you want to do choir?

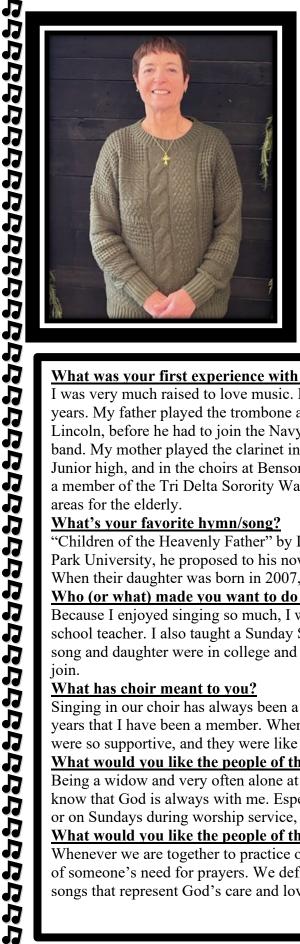
Since attending FCC I loved listening to the music on Sundays. I had sung in choir at our previous church and missed it,

What has choir meant to you?

The friendship and closeness of the choir group is awesome. Ray's choice of music is really good. I like being able to sing and then go back to sit with my husband.

What would you like the people of the future to know about choir?

Wonderful experience and great fellowship. The words bring light to my faith.



Glo McDaniel

Length of Church Attendance:

1986-Present (37 years)

Length of Choir Membership:

2003-Present (20 years)

Vocal type: Tenor

What was your first experience with music/singing?

I was very much raised to love music. My parents played musical instruments in their younger school years. My father played the trombone and only in his freshman year at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, before he had to join the Navy during World War II, was he in the University's marching band. My mother played the clarinet in her high school years. I played piano until college. I sang in Junior high, and in the choirs at Benson high school and Westside High school. I also played guitar as a member of the Tri Delta Sorority Washboard band. We played at parties, restaurants, and housing areas for the elderly.

What's your favorite hymn/song?

"Children of the Heavenly Father" by Lina Sandell. When my son Chad was in seminary at North Park University, he proposed to his now-wife Jodi in front of the Lina Sandell statue on campus. When their daughter was born in 2007, they named her Lina.

Who (or what) made you want to do choir?

Because I enjoyed singing so much, I wanted to join choir but was too busy during the week as a high school teacher. I also taught a Sunday School class on Sunday mornings for young kids. When our song and daughter were in college and I was no longer teaching the Sunday school class, I was able to join.

What has choir meant to you?

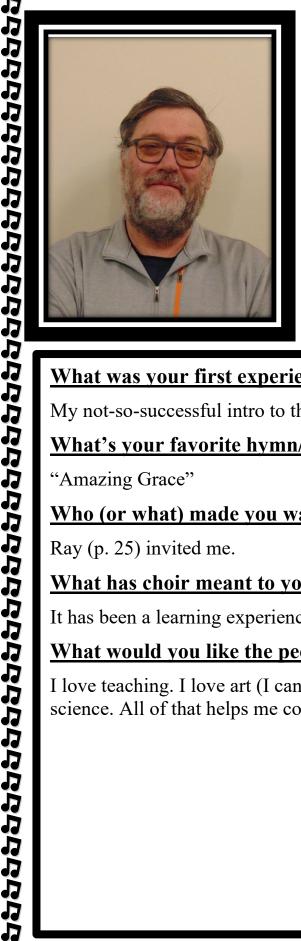
Singing in our choir has always been a blessing and I will always cherish the memories from all the years that I have been a member. When my husband Chuck passed away in 2006, my choir friends were so supportive, and they were like family to me.

What would you like the people of the future to know about you?

Being a widow and very often alone at home can create sadness and loneliness, but it helps me to know that God is always with me. Especially when I am at church singing heartfelt words at practice or on Sundays during worship service, I feel open to His presence.

What would you like the people of the future to know about choir?

Whenever we are together to practice our songs, we are also called to express any knowledge we have of someone's need for prayers. We definitely are a group that enjoys being together and as we sing songs that represent God's care and love for everyone.



Steve Miller

Length of Church Attendance:

2018-Present (5 years)

Length of Choir Membership:

2019-Present (4 years)

Vocal type: Bass

What was your first experience with music/singing?

My not-so-successful intro to the accordion at around age 6.

What's your favorite hymn/song?

"Amazing Grace"

Who (or what) made you want to do choir?

Ray (p. 25) invited me.

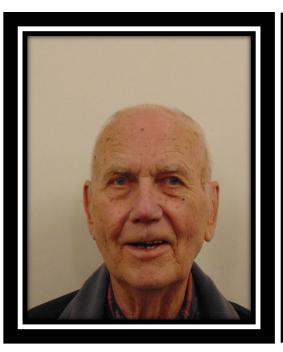
What has choir meant to you?

It has been a learning experience. Trying to stretch myself even in my 60s.

What would you like the people of the future to know about you?

I love teaching. I love art (I can act, sing, and sort of play guitar). I love math and science. All of that helps me connect with God.

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Frank Olson

Length of Church Attendance:

1938-Present (85 years)

Length of Choir Membership:

1973-Present (50 years)

Vocal type: Bass

What was your first experience with music/singing?

Sunday school at church,

What's your favorite hymn/song?

"Holy Art Thou" by Handel

"Day by Day"

Who (or what) made you want to do choir?

The two Marian Petersons.

What has choir meant to you?

It has been an important part of my worship.

What would you like the people of the future to know about you?

I'm the tallest person in choir.

What would you like the people of the future to know about choir?

It's inspiring. We are all on our walk with the Lord.



Mary Palmberg

Length of Church Attendance:

1981-Present (42 years)

Length of Choir Membership:

1995-Present (28 years)

Vocal type: Alto

What was your first experience with music/singing?

High School band, choir, solo.

What's your favorite hymn/song?

"Be Still, and Know I Am GOD".

Who (or what) made you want to do choir?

My husband sang in choir for many years. When our kids got older, I felt I could join him. I've always liked singing.

What has choir meant to you?

Choir has served as a small group for me.

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What would you like the people of the future to know about you?

I am open minded and a thinker.

What would you like the people of the future to know about choir?

You will be blessed!

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Sharon Peterson

Length of Church Attendance:

1971-Present (52 years)

Length of Choir Membership:

Most recently: 2016-Present (22 years,

nonconsecutively)

Vocal type: Alto

What was your first experience with music/singing?

As a young girl, my Covenant church in Stanton, IA had a visiting children's ministry team come and I sang "Jesus Wants Me for a Sunbeam" in front of church.

What's your favorite hymn/song?

"Why Should I Be Anxious"/"Children of the Heavenly Father"

Who (or what) made you want to do choir?

I have always loved to sing.

What has choir meant to you?

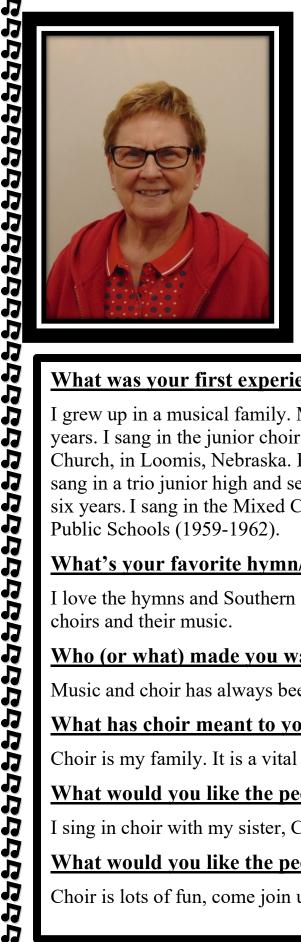
Choir is a place to worship God along with others who love to sing.

What would you like the people of the future to know about you?

I grew up in the church and participated in many church activities. My husband and I raised three sons who are all married and attend church.

What would you like the people of the future to know about choir?

If you love to sing, this is the place for you to get to know others better and it's a wonderful way to praise God!



Karen Ressegieu

Length of Church Attendance: June 1964 - October 1987 (23 years) October 2017 - Present (6 years)

Length of Choir Membership: August 1964 - October 1987 (23 years) October 2017 - Currently 2023 (6 years) Vocal type: Soprano

What was your first experience with music/singing?

I grew up in a musical family. My Dad sang with his brothers in a quartet for 50 years. I sang in the junior choir and senior choir at my home church, Westmark Church, in Loomis, Nebraska. Both Mom and Dad sang in the church choir. I sang in a trio junior high and senior high with Diane Bowman Lynn (p. 35) for six years. I sang in the Mixed Chorus and played in the band (drums) at Bertrand Public Schools (1959-1962).

What's your favorite hymn/song?

I love the hymns and Southern Gospel Music. I love four-part harmony. I love choirs and their music.

Who (or what) made you want to do choir?

Music and choir has always been a part of my life.

What has choir meant to you?

Choir is my family. It is a vital part of my community.

What would you like the people of the future to know about you?

I sing in choir with my sister, Cynthia (p. 21).

What would you like the people of the future to know about choir?

Choir is lots of fun, come join us!



Chris Wright

Length of Church Attendance:

2016-Present (7 years)

Length of Choir Membership:

2016-Present (7 years)

Vocal type: Bass, baritone, tenor

What was your first experience with music/singing?

My first experience in the church was when I was 7 years old. I sang a solo for "special music"- a song by Laura Talley (who was a kid at the time and had just released her first album) on a cassette backing track.

What's your favorite hymn/song?

"Because He Lives"!

Who (or what) made you want to do choir?

My dad was the worship leader and choir director when I was little, and he had me singing in the choir before I was even a teenage! I've sang in a church choir ever since.

What has choir meant to you?

As with praise music, choir has been a consistent avenue of worship and a clean marker of the important seasons of the church. It is also a warm, wonderful reminder of special times with my family, memories I will carry with me my entire life.

What would you like the people of the future to know about you?

My ADHD has led me to be a singer, programmer, coffee snob, band member, guitarist, keyboardist, web designer, reader, and writer, among other things. But the most important thing is to reflect the love of Christ to EVERYONE.

What would you like the people of the future to know about choir?

Choir blesses people of all ages and generations, whether participating through singing or listening! Please keep it going! 43

Hymns:

"All Creatures of Our God and King"

"Be Thou My Vision"

"Children of the Heavenly Father" by Lina Sandell x 2

"Day by Day and with Each Passing Moment"

"Day by Day" x 2

"Great is Thy Faithfulness"

"Holy, Holy, Holy" x 2

"How Great Thou Art"

"I'll Fly Away"

"Old Rugged Cross"

"Standing on the Promises"

"Why Should I Be Anxious"

Anthems:

"Because He Lives" x 2 arr. Jack Schrader

"His Eye is on the Sparrow" arr. Mark Hayes

"It is Well" arr. John Ness Beck

"Kyrie Eleison" arr. Dana Mengel

"Total Praise" X 2 arr Richard Smallwood

Songs: "Adagio for Strings" by Adagio "Amazing Grace" "Ave Maria" arr. Biebl "Be Still, and Know I Am GOD" "In Christ Alone" X 2 "Jesus Wants Me for a Sunbeam" "Nimrod" by Sir Edward Elgar "On Eagles Wings" "Open My Eyes" "The Majesty and Glory of Your Name" "This is My Story and this is My Song" "Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day" 45