



INDIANAPOLIS SYMPHONIC CHOIR

ANNUAL REPORT

Who We Are

Mission

We bring people, communities, and cultures together through performance, the creation of new choral works, outreach, and education in Indianapolis and beyond.

Vision

To share the unparalleled joy, beauty, and transcendent power of choral music, enriching lives in our community and inspiring audiences abroad.

Values

- Excellence
- Big Fun- Fostering Positive Energy
- Belonging
- Relevance
- Accessibility
- Sustainability
- Intentional Partnership



Leadership Welcome Letter

Dear ISC Family,

Music has the power to bring people together, and this year reminded us just how much our community values those shared experiences.

The Indianapolis Symphonic Choir reached several important milestones this past season. We exceeded pre-pandemic audience levels, welcomed significant audience growth, completed our administrative team, and continued to make meaningful progress on our strategic plan, all while deepening our connections throughout Central Indiana. Through our Pay-What-You-Can performances and continued investment in educational initiatives such as our Fellowship Program, Spotlight Choir, and InChoring Minds, we remain committed to ensuring that more people can experience the joy and connection that the ISC is able to bring through our shared voices.

None of this happens without our donors, patrons, singers, volunteers, and community partners. Thank you for believing in our mission and for helping us create a community united through the power of choral music.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jennifer Cooper,
Executive Director

Dr. Eric Stark,
Artistic Director

The Very Rev. Dr. Gray Lesesne,
President, ISC Board of Directors



By The Numbers

Number of Performances

10

Choir's Volunteer Time

31,000+

Pieces Performed

51

Places Performed

5 Venues

Members in the Choir

140

Miles ISC Travelled

60,000

Hours in Rehearsal

225



Strategic Plan: Where We Are

Goal I

Musical Excellence and Artistry

- Donor support strengthened the artistic excellence that defines the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir by making possible a season that paired beloved sacred masterworks with diverse, socially relevant contemporary works. Investments in new music through the nationally recognized Holiday Carol Commission Competition, expanded educational pathways through the Conducting Fellowship and Spotlight Choir initiatives, and collaborations with distinguished guest artists and community partners enriched the artistic experience while cultivating the next generation of choral leaders.
- Completed a comprehensive succession plan, securing a new five-year agreement with its artistic leadership. This ensures artistic excellence for years to come and provides continuity of vision and organizational stability.
- Created a new Artistic Reserve Fund dedicated to collecting donations specifically for the artistic quality and production expenses. The Choir also established a dedicated Artistic Reserve Fund to support future artistic innovation, commissions, and production expenses, creating a sustainable investment in the exceptional performances our audiences have come to expect.

Goal II

Audience Engagement

- Donor support helped the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir exceed pre-pandemic attendance levels while generating \$161,550 in ticket sales, achieving 102.57% of budgeted revenue. Investments in audience development and accessibility expanded the Choir's reach through innovative programming, including its inaugural Pay-What-You-Can performance, which welcomed a full-capacity audience by reducing financial barriers to attendance. A free Community Sing engaged more than 150 participants of all ages and musical backgrounds, creating meaningful opportunities for connection, belonging, and shared music-making. Expanded educational programming, pre-concert discussions, and community partnerships also deepened audience engagement and welcomed new participants into the Choir's mission.





Goal III

Increased Visibility

- Generated more than 12.1 million earned media impressions through strategic public relations, expanded digital marketing and storytelling, completed a comprehensive website redesign to enhance patron accessibility and donor engagement, and implemented audience analytics to better understand patron behaviors. These efforts increased community awareness, strengthened regional partnerships, and further positioned the Choir as a leading cultural organization and regional leader in choral music.

Goal IV

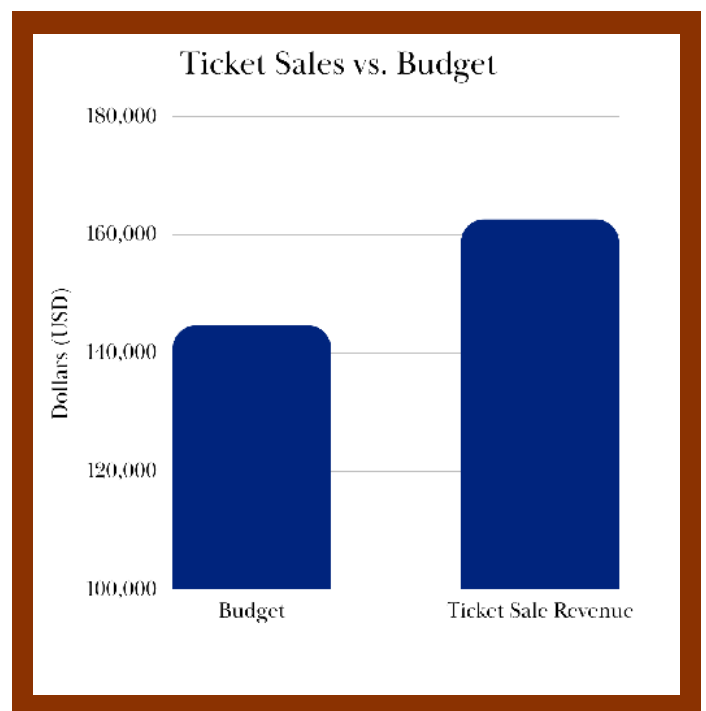
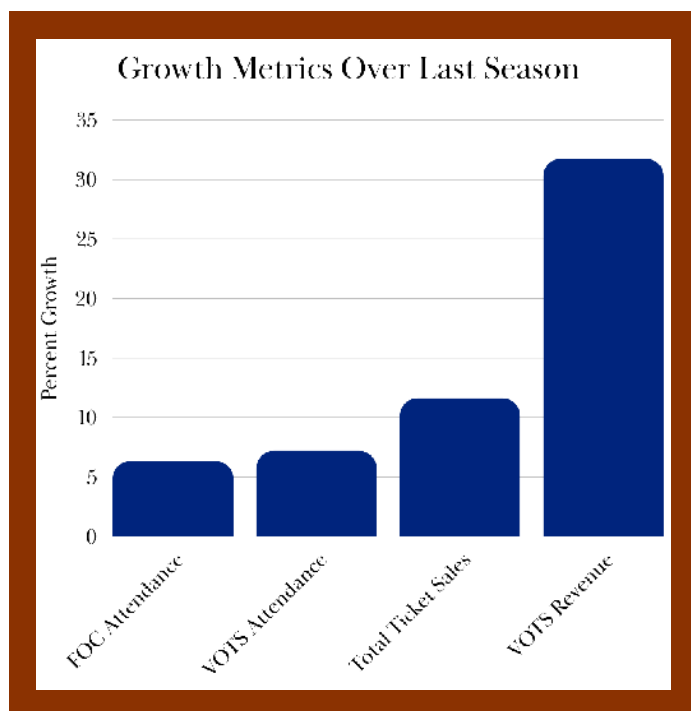
Organizational Sustainability

- Donor investments strengthened the Choir's long-term financial resilience by supporting the hiring of a full-time Director of Development, expanding fundraising capacity, and enhancing donor stewardship. These efforts contributed to a 9.45% increase in contributed revenue, a 72% increase in corporate support, a 39% increase in matching gifts, and a 37.6% reduction in development expenses, while upgraded fundraising systems and strengthened governance positioned the organization for sustained growth.
- To ensure long-term organizational sustainability, the Choir completed an endowment feasibility study, engaging more than 30 donor households to assess community support for future philanthropic investment. The study confirmed strong interest in growing the endowment and provides a clear roadmap for building lasting financial stability to support artistic excellence and community impact for generations to come.



How Does Our 89th Season Compare?

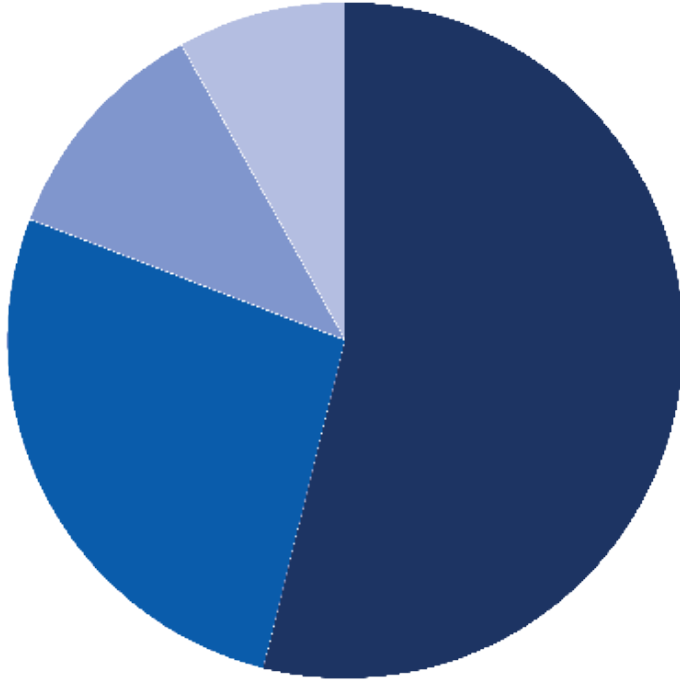
FOC: Festival of Carols, VOTS: Voices of the Spirit



Season Breakdown

Income

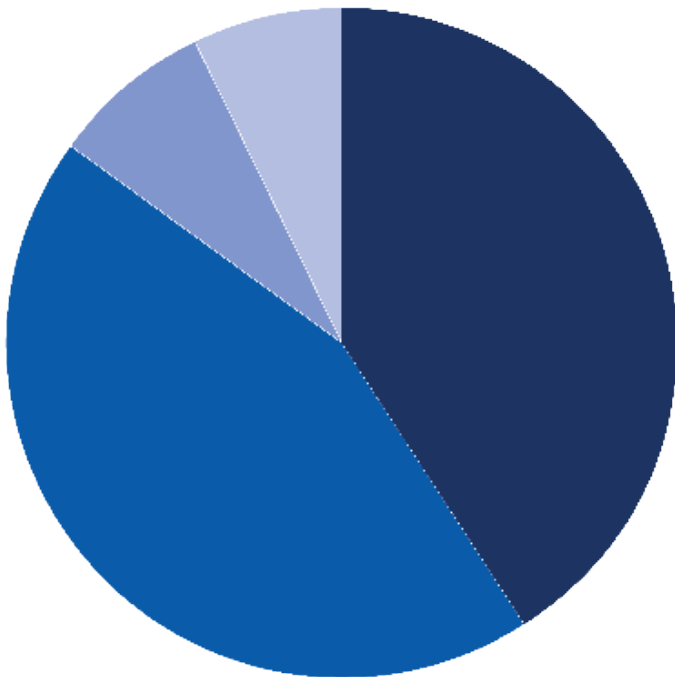
\$688,273.21



- 54% Individual & Corporate Giving
\$374,718.74
- 27% Ticket Sales & Contracted Services
\$183,841.00
- 11% Foundations and Grants
\$76,900.00
- 8% Other Income
\$52,813.47

Expense

\$823,847.75



- 41% Artistic and Program Expenses
\$335,060.38
- 44% Admin
\$360,387.67
- 8% Marketing and Promotions
\$67,535.51
- 7% Fundraising
\$60,873.19

Profit Loss Statement

Income	
DONATION AND GRANT INCOME	
4100 Individual Contributions	\$202,713.10
4101 Artistic Reserve Fund	13,043.60
Total for 4100 Individual Contributions	\$215,756.70
4110 Matching Funds	8,875.00
4120 Corporate Contributions	9,082.82
4130a In-Kind	\$17,984.85
4140 Arts Council Grant	10,800.00
4142 City of Carmel Grant	5,000.00
4143 Foundation Grants	\$61,100.00
4147 Endowment Draw	29,888.47
4154 Other Fundraising Events	10,000.00
Total for DONATION AND GRANT INCOME	\$368,487.84
OTHER INCOME	
4202 Interest/Dividend Income	14,865.73
4210 Miscellaneous Earned Income	\$36,445.91
Total for OTHER INCOME	\$51,311.64
TICKET SALES	
4002 Voices of the Spirit Tix Sales	17,969.88
4003 Festival of Carols Tix Sales	132,530.40
4004 Additional Concert Series	12,149.00
Total for TICKET SALES	\$162,649.28
Total for Income	\$582,448.76
Gross Profit	\$582,448.76
Expenses	
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES	\$360,378.67
ARTISTIC PERSONNEL EXPENSE	\$244,810.58
EDUCATION/OUTREACH EXPENSES	\$11,400.96
FUND DEVELOPMENT EXPENSES	\$60,873.19
PRODUCTION EXPENSES	\$78,849.80
PROMOTIONAL EXPENSES	\$67,535.51
Total for Expenses	\$823,848.71
Net Operating Income	-\$241,399.95

Other Income	
7001 Endowment Transactions	
7001a Endowment Donation	115,519.37
7001d Endowment Account Realized Gain	37,648.24
Total for 7001 Endowment Transactions	\$153,167.61
7100 Unrealiz Gain/Loss on Investmnt	\$47,542.46
Total for Other Income	\$200,710.07
Other Expenses	\$3,886.45
Net Other Income	\$196,823.62
Net Income	-\$44,576.33

Development Report

Statement of Gratitude

From the Director of Development

The 2025–2026 season was one of remarkable growth and generosity for the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir. Thanks to the dedication of our donors, sponsors, volunteers, and community partners, we experienced record-breaking support that strengthened our artistic programs, expanded access to performances, and invested in our future. Every gift, large and small, helped ensure that the power of choral music continues to inspire, connect, and enrich our community. Thank you to everyone who helped support the Choir this season.

Allie Boles, M.A., CFRE
Director of Development



Keeping Up

Endowment Update

This season demonstrated extraordinary momentum in building both immediate impact and long-term sustainability. Supporters contributed more than \$115,000 in new endowment gifts, resulting in an increase of more than 1,000% in endowment cash raised over the previous year. The Choir's endowment now holds over \$820,000 in cash assets, primarily with Central Indiana Community Foundation. The legacy continues with more than \$3.5 million in planned gift commitments to secure the Choir's future. For the first time since 2019, a modest 5% distribution of just under \$30,000 was withdrawn from the endowment to help support the artistic programs that audiences experienced throughout this season. This is an important step forward because ISC leadership believes that Endowments are not only meant to grow, but they are meant to be used, carefully and responsibly, to sustain and strengthen the organization over time.



Moving Forward

Strengthening Relationships and New Connections

Philanthropy is built on meaningful relationships. Throughout the season we created new opportunities to celebrate, thank, and engage with our supporters. From our Season Sneak Peek and Maestro Reception to Legacy Society gathering, Festival of Carols celebrations, celebrating ISC's birthday, and post-concert receptions, donors experienced the impact of their generosity firsthand while connecting with fellow music lovers.

These moments of stewardship complemented a season committed to accessibility, including our continued Pay-What-You-Can performance with Considering Matthew Shepard, ensuring that exceptional choral music remains within reach for everyone. Every concert, every volunteer hour from our 140 singers, and every donor interaction helped strengthen a community united by the belief that choral music has the power to inspire, connect, and transform lives.



Looking Back

Growing Our Community of Support

The 2025–2026 season was a transformational year for philanthropy at the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir. A record 430 donors invested in our mission, including 219 first-time supporters who joined our community for the very first time. Together these generous supporters helped raise over \$450,000 in contributions.

Contributions reached new heights, helping the Choir achieve a 53% increase in contributed revenue in addition to a 20% increase in earned revenue, primarily through ticket sales, over the season. Corporate support increased by 82% and matching gifts increased by 18%, heavily reinforcing the infrastructure required for future institutional growth. These results reflect our growing community of supporters, who believe in making exceptional choral music accessible in Indianapolis.

This season, we expanded our online fundraising efforts and were thrilled by the enthusiastic response from our community. Many of you joined the fun during our IndyChoir 500 campaign, where Assistant Artistic Director Michael Davis raced to victory by receiving the most votes. During the holiday season, your generosity helped us raise more than \$74,000 in December through Giving Tuesday, online giving, and support for our Battle of the Carols campaign during Festival of Carols. The incredible participation and engagement we saw throughout the year reaffirmed the strength of our online community and the meaningful impact we can make together.



Development Breakdown

By the Numbers

Behind every number is a person who believes in the mission of the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir. This year, hundreds of individuals, businesses, foundations, and public partners chose to invest in the transformative power of music. Together, their generosity fueled extraordinary growth and created lasting momentum for the future.

Total ISC Donors

430

Corporate, Foundation,
Government Supporters

28

First Time
Donors

219

Increase in
Earned Income

20%

Total
Contributions

\$451,619

Increase in Contributed
Income from Last Year

53%



Impact Overview

Feeding Curiosity

InChoiring Minds

An event held to strengthen our Vocies of the Spirit programming, In-Choir-ing Minds expanded our educational reach by offering the community deeper engagement with the themes and histories that shaped our season's repertoire. This year's event, led by guest presenter Audrey Johnson, exemplified how music can be a bridge to understanding complex topics. With over 100 attendees and eight ISC singers assisting, Johnson's immersive program, "Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory" blended storytelling, historical imagery, and participatory singing to illuminate the lived experiences of Americans during the Civil War. By offering this event free to the public and livestreaming it for broader access, ISC removed barriers to arts learning and created a welcoming space for audiences of all ages to explore history through song. The program strengthened the Choir's commitment to community-centered artistry, inviting dialogue, fostering curiosity, and ensuring that choral music remains a catalyst for shared learning across Indianapolis.



Raising Awareness

Considering Matthew Shepard

As part of our commitment to presenting choral music that strengthens community, Considering Matthew Shepard offered audiences a powerful space for reflection and belonging. Craig Hella Johnson's moving concert work, rooted in poetry and news accounts, invited listeners to confront the legacy of Matthew Shepard's story while embracing a message of compassion and unity. Presented as a Pay-What-You-Can event, we ensured broad access. ISC's partnership with Trinity Haven, Indiana's only housing program for LGBTQ+ youth experiencing homelessness, extended the impact beyond the performance by raising awareness, connecting audiences to critical resources, and amplifying the needs of vulnerable young people. A post-concert reception deepened these connections, turning the evening into a shared act of remembrance and hope while honoring community partner Trinity Haven. With this event, ISC demonstrated how choral music can illuminate urgent social issues and bring Indianapolis together with purpose.



Cultivating

Holiday Carol Commission Competition

Benjamin David Knoedler, ISC's 2025 Holiday Carol Commission Competition winner, exemplifies our drive to nurture the next generation of choral composers. Selected from emerging artists across the country, Knoedler brought a strong record of creative achievement, with more than 50 published works and performances spanning the US, Europe, and Asia. His winning carol, Ding Dong, Merrily on High! premiered at the 2025 Festival of Carols, an opportunity that propels winners toward national publication and broader recognition. By elevating promising voices like Knoedler's, the competition continues to strengthen the future of choral music and reinforces our role as a catalyst for new artistic creation.

Experience Building

Conducting Fellowship

Hannah Guo, the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir's 2025–2026 Conducting Fellow, embodies the Choir's mission to cultivate the next generation of artistic leaders through its nationally distinctive Conducting Fellowship. A dual M.M. student in composition and choral conducting at Butler University, Hannah brings both international perspective, having grown up in Beijing, and a deep local commitment as a two-year member of the Choir. Her fellowship appointment provided hands-on experience with one of the nation's oldest symphonic choirs, from podium leadership to artistic planning and community engagement. By investing in emerging conductors like Hannah, the Fellowship strengthens the Choir's long-term artistic vitality and reinforces its role as a training ground for future leaders in large-scale choral-orchestral performance.



Opportunity

Spotlight Choir

Mount Vernon High School's choir, led by Leigh Anderson, is the latest beneficiary of the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir's Spotlight Choir program. This program deepens our educational impact by inviting local high school ensembles to share the stage at the beloved Festival of Carols. This side-by-side experience places young singers directly within the Choir's 140 voice ensemble, offering valuable access to professional-level rehearsals, artistic mentorship, and the thrill of performing with an orchestra in a major concert hall. Students consistently describe the program as transformative, citing growth in musicianship and confidence. By opening its artistic process to emerging musicians, the Spotlight Choir initiative strengthens our commitment to community engagement and ensures that the next generation of choral artists feels seen, supported, and inspired.



Donors

Recognition Thank You

Every performance begins long before the first note is sung at our opening concert. It begins with the generosity of individuals, families, businesses, foundations, and government partners who believe in the transformative power of choral music in Indianapolis. We are deeply grateful for your investment in the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir and proudly recognize the supporters whose gifts made this extraordinary season possible.

It is our privilege to recognize the following donors who have contributed to our annual fund or endowment between August 1, 2025- July 31, 2026.

Visionary Circle (\$10,000+)

Anonymous
Gay Burkhart
Judy Roudebush
Sherry Stark and David Tiede
Dr. Thomas Woo
Linda and John Zimmermann

Allen Whitehill Clowes Charitable Foundation, Inc
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Symphonic Circle (\$5,000+)

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Choir Circle (\$2,500+)

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Jessica White
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Accompanist (\$500+)

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 Jeri and Michael Griffith
 Tabitha Hardy
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 in honor of Nate Shadday.

Lilly Endowment, Inc.
 Singing Crust

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 Paul Drew
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Thomas Fretz	Cory Kausch	Heidi Morrow
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Elizabeth Frisch	Samara Kester	Don and Deb Nedza
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 Daniel Wheeler
 Lettie Williams
 Mark Williams
 Rachael Williams
 Jarod Wilson
 Sandy Winter
 Jennifer Wolfe
 Kristen Wolfred
 Phil and Mary Jo Wright
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 in honor of Olesya Darienkoe.
 Jennifer Yumibe
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Endowment

*Members of the Martha & Paul Schmidt Legacy Society and planned gifts are designated with an asterisk**

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 Dr. Thomas Woo MD*
 Mary Jo Wright
 Alex and Andrea Yovanovich
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Staff and Singers

Board of Directors

* Denotes a singer in the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir

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Karen Mangia

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Dr. Heidi Schmidt

*Stephanie Shaw

Linda Zimmermann

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Ann Carlson, Librarian

Christina Merriott, Attire Coordinator

Donna White-Daniel, Mentor Coordinator

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Dr. Eric Stark, Artistic Director

Dr. Michael Davis, Assistant Artistic Director

Allie Boles, MA, CFRE, Director of Development

Mary Robinson, Manager of Production and Operations

Hannah Guo, Conducting Fellow

David Duncan, Keyboard Artist

Abi Eutsler, Administrative Assistant

Manuel Mata, ISC Intern

Riley Kelly, ISC Intern

Section Leaders

Suellen Williams, Soprano

Deb Habing, Soprano

Susan Kniola, Alto

Laura Howie-Walters, Alto

Tom Nichols, Tenor

Jared Gaddis, Tenor

Bill Paraskevas, Bass

Nicholas Kohne, Bass

Soprano I

Savannah Atkins
Shallen Atkins
Marilyn Baumgardt
Brionna Coats
Jennifer Cole
Cindy Colter*
Emily Carson Dunn
Brenda Ganeng
Rio Garza
Deb Habing
Colleen Hancock
Naomi Jackson
Quay Kester
Olesya Savinkova
Emily Schlorf
Stephanie Shaw
Natalie Spruell
Madalyn Stancik
Davina Steele
Yolanda Valdivia
Suellen Williams
Mary Jo Wright

Soprano II

Clare Bain
Laura Brueckmann
Lindsay Couvion
Sharon Cruz
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Christina Merriott
Theresa Neff
Emily Pollen
Joanna Luisi Reinhardt*
Ingrid Rockstrom*
Deborah Smith*
Xindi Sun
Emily Waits
Judith Ann Wilson*

Alto I

Camilla Anderson
Heather Becker
Deana Beecher*
Marie S. Butz
Cindy Carr
Rachel DeMuth
Kimberly DiCamilla
Holly Beasley Erickson*
Jane E. Gosling*

Ruth Smith Green
Kate Hilton
Laura Howie-Walters
Julia Huber
Shannon Joyce
Susan Kniola
Ursula Kuhar-Gejji
Mary Leslie Ordo
Nicolette Mantica
Emily McIntire
Vanessa Von Essen
Darla Werner
Terran Williams

Alto II

Reba Baker*
Janice Bilby*
Ann Carlson*
Elisabeth Gawthrop
Catherine Hoelscher
Kristin Ingersoll
Rose Massela
Carol Oberbroeckling
Kathy Martin O'Neil*
Syd Schafer*
Yvette Schubert
Roberta Schweitzer
Carol Gossett Thorne*
Dana Luetzelschwab-Voigt
Donna K. White-Daniel*
Dixie Williams
Sandy Winter*

Tenor I

Daniel Azar
Joseph Brown
John Champley
Michael Davis*
Jeff Ford
Brett Habing
Andrew Miller
Andrew Nichols
Cameron Oehler
Andy Reel
Alejandro Reyna
Roland Schaffer
Rick Schueler
Asa Smith
Nolan Thompson
Jarod Wilson

Tenor II

Lee Bowman
David Doty
Jared Gaddis
Susan J. Markle

Tom Nichols
Eric Oehler
Nate Shadday
Karl E. Snider*
Alden Wagaman

Bass I

Robert Bolyard
Aidan Crowley
K. Allen Davis
Timothy Doak
Franklin R Drumwright*
Charlie Gardner
William Haeberle
Jared Hancock
Andrew Hoff
Nicholas Kohne
Timothy Kroeker*
Dave Lewis
Mark Lund
Patrick McHugh
Duane Nickell
Greg Padgett
Patrick Pauloski
Luther Pierson
David Rosenfield
Tim Salamandyk*
Chuck Schafer*
James Seebeck
AJ Strange
Gary Wallyn

Bass II

James Boettger
Brett Deery
Daniel Dixon*
Rene Eaton
Ethan Ferrer
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