



# Music Ministry



August 2020



I hope that you're all staying well despite the current pandemic. This virus has changed the ways we're used to doing things and our activities at church are no exception.



## So, what's the good news?

Our Music Ministry will embrace some new ways of serving our congregation this program year. While in-person singing will not be possible, hymns and choral music will continue to be offered on Sunday mornings during our 10:30am Virtual Worship service. While the majority of the congregation has responded that they are not yet ready attend in-person services within the limits of local regulations, a short in-person worship service will be offered this fall that will provide some opportunities for music-making by instrumentalists (including handbell ringers!). First Church's ReTurn team is in the process of finalizing plans that will keep church gatherings safe and provide clarity and consistency regarding church building use. Church leadership are eagerly awaiting the approval of these plans so that plans for socially-distanced gatherings can be coordinated.

## What can I look forward to?

- Delivery and pick-up of hymnals to members of the congregation to support engagement in worship. Other music resources are available [here](#).
- Sleeping in on Sunday mornings and worshipping with your favorite beverage from your couch at 10:30am!
- **Choir rehearsals resuming on September 9** and the kickoff of our program year on September 13 (both virtual).

Below you'll find **updates** on each of our choirs as well as an overview of our 2020-2021 **schedule** with important dates:

## Virtual Choir

During our time apart, we'll refer to ourselves as the First Church Virtual Choir since the Chancel Choir implies us being physically together making music in our sanctuary. The

Virtual Choir is open to everyone in our congregation and our community and singers may participate as they're available. Choir rehearsals will take place remotely using Zoom on **Wednesdays at 7:30pm**. What will be different? Well, Zoom fatigue is a thing and so the following plan attempts to provide opportunities for music learning and fellowship while avoiding burnout:

1st Wednesday 7:30-8:30pm Rehearsal of the music for the month ahead (all voices)

*\*These rehearsals will be recorded and made available throughout the month.*

*\*\*Knowing the choral repertoire weeks in advance, you can select which pieces to record.*

2nd Wednesday 7:30-8:00pm Sectionals (led by section leaders)

3rd Wednesday 7:30-8:00pm Sectionals (led by section leaders)

4th Wednesday 6:00-8:00pm Coachings by appointment with Brian & Cody

We're welcoming back Cody and all of our section leaders and I hope these brief online gatherings will be an uplifting moment in your week as we get to see one another and join our voices in song. Some anthem recording projects will involve video while others will have the option of audio-only and tutorials on recording will be made available to make the process easier and less stressful for all of us. Our first rehearsal (9/9) will include music for September AND October so that we can be rehearsing an recording in advance.

### **Handbell Choir**

This will likely be the first of our choirs to resume in-person rehearsals and playing for worship! An announcement will be made regarding exact plans once the ReTurn team has finalized the church plan. This choir can accommodate 16-20 ringers and we have enough tables to ensure social distancing. Most ringers play just 2 bells (one in each hand) and during the pandemic ringers will stick to the same bells (ex: C4 & D4) throughout a given gathering. We have lots of great handbell ensemble music in our library so I hope that you can join us!

### **Festival Choir**

Since our spring concert of Beethoven and Vierne was cancelled by the pandemic, we'll resurrect these choral masterworks for virtual performances this fall. Vierne's *Messe solennelle* will be broadcast online on Friday, October 9 at 7:30pm with recordings due by October 1. We'll use the Gloria movement from Beethoven's *Mass in C* as part of our Christmas Eve prelude and those recordings will be due by December 1. Spring performances will be announced in by January.

### **Gospel Choir**

The Virtual Choir will sing a variety of choral music from all eras and traditions including Gospel and Spirituals. See our schedule of repertoire on the music page of our website and join our Music Ministry Facebook group to stay updated.

### **Children's Choir**

Short, 30-minute rehearsals will take place on a weekly basis during the program year on

weekday evenings via Zoom. Similar to the Virtual Choir (adults), the Children's Choir will rehearse together at least once each month and then in a series of smaller groups (3-5 children). The large group rehearsals will be recorded for members of this choir to access and smaller groups will allow for a variety of late-afternoon meeting times to accommodate various family schedules.

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## 2020-2021 Schedule Overview

(all worship services are pre-recording, virtual services until further notice)

October 9, 2020 Fall Concert (Friday) @ 7:30pm Vierne: *Messe solennelle* (streaming)

December 13, 2020 Pageant Sunday

December 24, 2020 Christmas Eve (Thursday) incl. Beethoven: Gloria from *Mass in C*

December 27, 2020 Christmas Lessons & Carols @ 10:30am

February 17, 2021 Ash Wednesday ...BYOA – Bring your own ashes?

March 28, 2021 Palm Sunday ...Don't touch your face(palm) Sunday?

April 1, 2021 Maundy Thursday ...April Fools?

April 2, 2021 Good Friday ...Was it ever "good"?

April 3, 2021 Easter Vigil ...These were the ashes we needed on Ash Wed!

April 4, 2021 Easter Sunday ...It's going to be egg-cellent!

Spring Concert: TBD

Aug. 29 – Sep. 7, 2021 Chancel Choir Trip to sing at General Conference in Minneapolis \*our exact 1-3 day trip TBD

Rehearsals will not take place on the following Wednesdays:

Sep. 30, Oct. 28, Nov. 25, Dec. 30, Jan. 27

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Finally, thank you to everyone who has participated in our virtual worship at one time or another! May we continue to be the church and inspire hope in our world.

Dr. Brian Schoettler  
Minister of Music & Organist

