



Horizons 2026-2027



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Our Mission

7

The Choir School has earned a place as the Newport County area's premier children's choir, having trained and performed in England for two weeks in 2018 and in Argentina in 2024, traveled to New York City and Washington, DC, performed at local and regional festivals in its home state including the 2021 through 2025 Newport Folk Festivals, and issued its first commercial recording. Our mission is:

“Forming lives of character and service through the joy and discipline of intergenerational choral music.”

The nonsectarian afterschool program serves a diverse student body from all over Aquidneck Island, rehearsing on Mondays in Newport and occasional Sundays. Choristers receive a modest stipend based on their attendance, training and achievement according to the *Voice for Life* curriculum of the Royal School of Church Music. The RSCM is a world-wide organization devoted to the principle that children are capable of singing the finest choral music in its original form (written for children singing the soprano line in a centuries-old tradition). The boy and girl sopranos are usually joined by adult volunteer and professional singers. A week of intensive residential choir camp in Connecticut each August, group meals and recreation, and educational touring (including to Europe in 2028) are part of the professional chorister experience.

Joyous Music. Skills for Life.



What started as an effort to give a few local youngsters a focal point in their lives, while also introducing them to the incredibly broad world of intergenerational choral music, has mushroomed into a major performing group on the local arts scene.

We offer you this souvenir program as a witness to the breadth of the experience our young choristers now have – from singing on the stage of the Newport Folk Festival or *Messiah at the Mansion* at Rosecliff, to offering a concert in St George's School Chapel or leading a service in the Choir School's logistic home of Trinity Church, Newport.

All this has developed under the truly inspired leadership of the School's founding director/organist/composer, Peter Stoltzfus Berton. Having had a very successful educational trip in England in 2018, and another in Argentina in 2024, plans are now being made for returning to Europe in 2028. And so, another enriching experience for both the young choristers and the adult chaperones and singers who will accompany them.

The other element that has permitted this maturing growth is the huge amount of volunteer time given to making things run smoothly. The School is not a "fee for service" performing group. The modest stipend given choristers and other salaries & logistic expenses are underwritten by generous donors. So bluntly put, we really, really hope you will also help us – first and foremost by referring youngsters who might profit from involvement with the School, and also by your monetary contributions, and patronage of our advertisers. For our tenth anniversary in 2024, we began an endowment to sustain this worthy enterprise, and that endowment's growth now charts the limits of our future horizons.

Looking forward to seeing you at many of our upcoming concerts. Our choristers will make you so proud!

Nicholas Brown

Nicholas Brown
Captain, USN (ret)
Chair, CSNC Board of Trustees

A look back at the first dozen years...



Fall 2017



Fall 2018

Christmas 2015



St. John's Church, Newport, Christmas 2019

St. George's School Chapel, February 2023



Dr. Barry Rose OBE, Guest Director
(second row, second from left)



Hereford Cathedral, England, August 2018

Dr. Barry Rose OBE, Guest Director (second from right)



Buenos Aires, Argentina, Teatro Colón Opera House, August 2024



Mendoza, Argentina at a packed joint-choir concert



Our farthest horizon to date... the Andes mountains

Our typical calendar year begins in late January with rehearsals at Trinity Church, Newport. Here we meet on Mondays in the classrooms of the brand-new Glenn Family Center. We have weekly dinners in Trinity's historic Honyman Hall, or outdoors on the deck.

We participate in occasional services such as a winter Choral Evensong with Trinity Choir, Sunday mornings, and an annual service of Nine Lessons and Carols known as *Christmas on Historic Hill*.

Rented space at Trinity Church provides:

- * Well-lit and ventilated rooms with climate control year round
- * A 75-inch monitor for teaching and for viewing other choirs' videos
- * A safe, inspiring place to call 'home' away from home, with nature nearby
- * A sincere community that values children, education, and inspiration
- * A full commercial kitchen for parents to prepare healthy weekly meals



NEWPORT
*Daffodil
Days*
FESTIVAL



Spring Concerts

The Choir School and St. George's School Chapel Choir with instrumentalists and community guest voices (top right) have performed excerpts from *Missa Gaia (Earth Mass)* in Daffodil Days concerts about every other year. In other years, repertoire has focused on popular and film music, and lighter classical fare around a springtime theme. At right, the 2025 concert at Newport Classical Recital Hall. In 2026 the concert was at St. Columba's Chapel, Middletown as part of its community music series.





2023



2021

devongifillian I want to thank every single one of these students for memorizing "The Good Life" and "Love You Anyway" and performing with me for this @newportfolkfest pop-up. Y'all blew my mind and filled my heart 🥰

A huge shout out to the Newport Folk Festival Foundation for supporting music education for students around the country.



1,127 likes

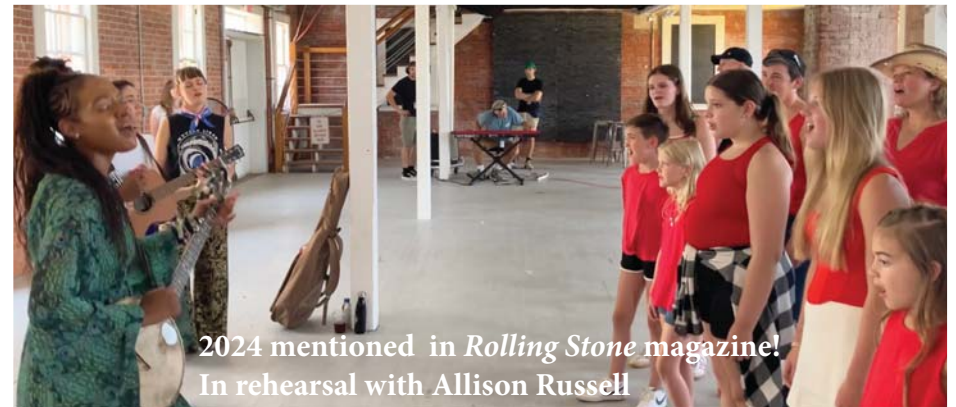
JULY 28

newportfolkfest and newportfestivals
Newport Folk Festival



Liked by catiebenzak and others


newportfolkfest Thank you so much to @nickelcreek for joining #TheChoirSchoolofNewportCounty on the Foundation Stage!



2024 mentioned in *Rolling Stone* magazine!
In rehearsal with Allison Russell



2025 on stage with Snacktime

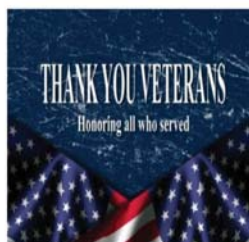
Choir Camp each August provides critical advance introduction of the year's music as well as the team-building that enables our success. In a lakeside haven we play, sing, dream, meet challenges on a ropes course, and connect with nature. Visit our 2025 Choir Camp video: 





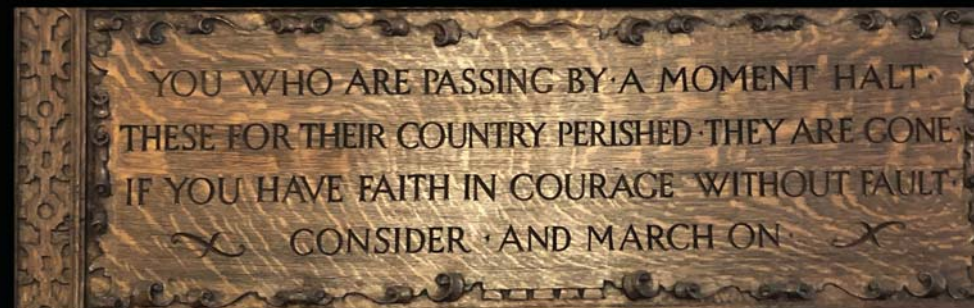
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CHAPTER 15 LAWSON-RAIOLA EAST BAY
 GOD BLESS

Remember



Candlelight Concert of Remembrance

This concert has been held annually beginning in 2017, around Veterans Day. Since 2023 it has been hosted at St. George's School Chapel, with participation by the St. George's School advanced Vocal Ensemble, Trinity Church choir, and orchestral forces. The complete Requiems of Brahms, Mozart, Fauré, and Rutter have been presented in memorable events which raise funds for international humanitarian aid through *Episcopal Relief and Development*.



St. George's School Chapel
 372 Purgatory Rd., Middletown



A candlelight procession concluding Rutter's *Lux aeterna* in 2025

Messiah

at the Mansion



The annual *Messiah* sung by ten selected students presented by Newport Classical with the outstanding voices and orchestra of **Ensemble Altera** is made possible by generous philanthropic support of the Choir School by Cynthia Sinclair.

Thank you, Cynthia!

Handel's masterwork has benefited the cause of children since its association with London's Foundling Hospital from 1750 onward. Our performances encourage audience support for **Lucy's Hearth**, a local shelter for children and their families who are experiencing homelessness due to economic hardship, family crisis, divorce, eviction, and severe shortage of safe, affordable housing. For more information: lucyshearth.org



photos: Lisette Rooney,
for Newport Classical





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Current Students

On most Mondays from 4:30 to 7:30 pm, twenty Professional Choristers (as of Spring 2026, twelve girls and eight boys) meet for rehearsal, dinner, and the Head Chorister's talk time. Occasionally the boys and girls rehearse unique repertoire separately. We learn music theory, repertoire, vocal skills, performance and memorization techniques, and occasionally have discussions about the state of the world and our role as ambassadors of quality and optimism. Our singers will tell you time flies!

Angel Choristers, a feeder choir to Professional Choristers, meet most Mondays from 3:45 to 4:30. Skilled high school alumni meet as their busy schedules permit, when concerts are approaching. Our dinners are held in space shared with Trinity's Community Meals (after community diners have departed) giving all an appreciation of the roles of a bustling campus.



Angel Choir

A love of music and learning starts small. And the earlier it starts, the farther one can travel. We introduce children to the joy of music while exploring foundational elements. Our goal is to build early musical confidence, listening skills, and a lifelong love of making music together.



Angels in performance costume:

“Here comes treble!”

This is the Angel Choir pre-2020, then at Emmanuel Church, Newport, among whom are the current Head Chorister and alumnae.



Where are they now? As alumni, **Teen Leaders** assist at Choir Camp as counselors and theory teachers, and join for concerts and trips.

35

Isaiah Joined at age 8
Rogers High School

Inspiring Optimist

“The choir has enriched my life musically, socially and culturally. Argentina was an extraordinary experience! Through the challenges of adolescence the choir has been an enduring positive connection.”

Peter Joined at age 12
Middletown High School

Bass in Choir of Trinity Church

“When I joined, I was still a soprano and decently a beginner at this kind of advanced music. Transitioning into a bass is almost always a difficult time for a singer but this community helped me learn about my new voice and how to use it.”



Eden Joined at age 4
Saint George’s School

Multi-Instrumentalist

“Being part of this choir has helped me grow in so many ways, and I can’t imagine my childhood without it.”

Ainsley Joined at age 7
Portsmouth Abbey School

Musical Theater Star

“The Choir School is where my love of performing began—and where I learned the discipline behind it. It gave me the confidence to take the stage and the skills to truly own it.”



About the medals and ribbons worn by certain singers

The Choir School uses the curriculum and promotion system developed by the Royal School of Church Music, a world-wide organization. Promotions are decided by the choir director based on: 1) demonstrated progress in regular performances and rehearsals, including tests of musical skills and terms; 2) punctual and consistent attendance, and 3) consistent behavior. Stipends increase with rank. Upon graduation from the choir, a singer keeps the medal and ribbon of the rank held at that time. The levels are:

NOVICE – A singer in training wears a red robe only

SINGER – (White level) adds the white surplice worn over the robe

JUNIOR – (Light Blue level) adds a medal worn on a light blue ribbon

SENIOR – (Dark Blue ribbon)

CHORISTER – (Red ribbon / gold for advanced theoretical knowledge)

LEAD SINGER – (Green ribbon)

HEAD CHORISTER – (Purple ribbon with a special medal)

Joining the Choir

What a child can expect...

- * A monthly stipend is paid for weekday rehearsals and performances, based on your attendance and level. Stipends range from \$12 up to \$40 per month.
- * Singing well is hard work, and also a lot of fun!
- * Making new friends who are excited about music.
- * Travel, non-singing activities, and a fantastic choir camp in August, including a team-building ropes course, swimming, and campfires.
- * Sing the world's greatest choral music in its original form, not simplified versions for "children's choir."
- * Rehearsing one night a week from 4:30 to 7:30 which includes dinner, plus singing an average of one performance per month.
- * Rehearse in a beautiful, safe, inspiring place.

What a family can expect...

- * Refocus your child off the couch and off screens, if necessary!
- * Brain Power! The study of music stimulates and often dramatically enhances a child's intellectual development and academic performance. A choral education teaches problem solving, spatial reasoning, cooperation, and an appreciation of excellence, along with patience.
- * Community. Families will find themselves part of an extended and vital "choir family," proud of the whole team's accomplishments.
- * Commitment. The most important requirement is an unwavering commitment of time.
- * Thanks to the Choir School's generous supporters, there is no tuition fee, for training equivalent to several thousand dollars' worth of music lessons a year. Fees required for camp and some trips; scholarship aid is available.
- * While the ideal admission windows are in January and June, we are happy to receive inquiries at any time. If you know a child who may be interested in this potentially life-changing experience, please fill out the form at choirschoolri.org/contact, or call the Executive Director at (401) 239-9713. You'll be glad you did! A 20-minute family interview is scheduled, which in a relaxed way assesses vocal range, ear, English language reading level, and an ability to commit to the program schedule.

CITY OF NEWPORT

PROCLAMATION

- WHEREAS,** The Choir School of Newport County was established in 2014, with a mission to help form lives of character and service through the joy and discipline of choral music; and
- WHEREAS,** The Choir School's curriculum involves singing sacred and secular music and is open to all, regardless of church affiliation or no affiliation; and
- WHEREAS,** the opportunity for foreign travel and training in the English choral tradition is a special possibility because of The Choir School's curriculum; and
- WHEREAS,** The Choir School is planning a training tour of England in August, 2018, and they have been given the great privilege of singing in the ancient cathedrals that host the Three Choirs Festival, the oldest music festival in Europe; and
- WHEREAS,** the 2018 tour of England will allow The Choir School choristers to serve as ambassadors for Newport County and the United States, sharing the best of what they are learning about other cultures and traditions, and it will educate and prepare them for finer service upon their return home; and
- WHEREAS,** The Choir School choristers will encourage awareness of their program by singing at cultural events such as local music festivals, fundraisers for charities, meetings of arts organizations, tree lightings in December, and summer baseball games; and
- WHEREAS,** The Choir School's production of the NEWPORTOPOLY game celebrates the City of Newport, Rhode Island, and is a fun and informational activity enjoyed by locals and tourists alike. Proceeds from the sale of NEWPORTOPOLY will benefit The Choir School's trip to England. **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT**
- RESOLVED,** that I, Henry F. Winthrop, Mayor of the City of Newport, in the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, do hereby proclaim the month of August, 2018, as

"THE CHOIR SCHOOL OF NEWPORT COUNTY MONTH"

in the City of Newport and call upon all the citizens to join with me in extending our support and best wishes on their August, 2018, tour of England.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the City of Newport to be affixed this 10th Day of October in the Year of our Lord 2017.



HFW
Henry F. Winthrop
Mayor of Newport

Reflections on International Travel

In a chorister's words...

Ever since I was little, my dream was to go to England. When I learned that I could go to England to do the thing I love, singing, I was ecstatic. Mr. Berton had been telling us about traveling to England for four years. He had told us all about **Dr. Barry Rose**, and we even got the chance to sing with him as director before we went to England. By the time the trip came around, everyone was extremely excited. **The churches in England were so beautiful and were perfect for singing in.** Mr. Berton had prepared us for how much work this trip would be, but I don't think any of us fully understood how much we would be doing. There was a day when we sang three services in a row. In between those services, everyone was tired, but while singing them, we all came together to make beautiful music. We all became closer to each other and really started to connect. I enjoyed getting to know the choir members better, and meeting new adult singers was an inspiration. No matter what mood we were in, at the end of the day, after long rehearsals and touring, we all **sang better than we ever had before.** It definitely was a life-changing experience. Singing with Dr. Rose made us all better singers. The trip made me appreciate the art of music more than I ever had before. — *Mack Wallace, alumna*



atop the Malvern Hills
at sunset, August 2018

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Past and Future Touring

In August, 2024, the Choir School traveled to **Buenos Aires and Mendoza, Argentina** for ten days. As with our **2018 England** trip for two weeks, the primary reasons for this travel were:

- * **To educate our choristers** and prepare them for even finer service when they return home.
- * **To serve as ambassadors** representing our state and country, sharing the best of what we are while experiencing another culture.
- * **To encourage awareness of** our choir program in our community, ensuring its strong future.

Why South America? We wanted to travel somewhere other than England, which is not the only justly famous place where children, education, and intergenerational choral music intersect. South America has quite a corner on the formative early music education market as well. We partnered with two institutions that are part of a now worldwide system (literally, “**El Sistema**”) that began in neighboring Venezuela, much as the Royal School of Church Music began in England, for an unforgettable journey of education coupled with a local service project and enthusiastic audiences.

For **Summer 2028**, our Board of Trustees has committed planning and budgeting for another educational tour to Europe. We have engaged ACFEA Tour Consultants, dedicated to music educational travel, and are considering one of two “two-cities” itineraries which will be selected during 2027. Depending on the world situation and the availability at major festivals, we currently expect to travel either to the music capitals of **Leipzig and Prague, or** to the Baltic “choral Olympics” excitement of **Tallinn and Riga**. Details for “groupies” will be available in late 2027.



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Piano Outreach Program

The Choir School's piano outreach program has been made possible by grants from Rhode Island Foundation begun in 2017, and by continuing funding from the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts. The program has provided lessons, high-quality keyboards for home practice, lesson books, a recruiting campaign, meals, transportation, and a logistics coordinator to make a very meaningful impact on students. It is now financed entirely by a donor-advised fund at Rhode Island Foundation. If you know a child who could benefit from this opportunity, please contact us!



This activity has been made possible in part by a grant from the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, through an appropriation by the Rhode Island General Assembly and a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.



Rhode Island Foundation

The Choir School of Newport County does not discriminate on the basis of race, income, national origin, religious affiliation, or any other factor in determining admission to its programs. Children from all of Newport County are eligible.

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Faculty

Peter Stoltzfus Berton (*Founding executive director, artistic director*) graduated from the University of Michigan School of Music (bachelor's degree, organ) and the Yale School of Music (master's degree, organ). A chance occurrence with the men and boys choir of All Saints Church, Worcester, MA in 1988 led him on a journey ultimately landing as Assistant Organist of St. Thomas Church Fifth Avenue, NYC, where for two years after graduate school he was immersed in the country's last remaining residential choir school of epic world-class intensity. Following a return to All Saints, Worcester as music director for seven years, and fruitful posts in Brooklyn, NY and West Hartford, CT, he landed in Newport to found the Choir School. Since 2024 he is also the full-time Director of Music and Cathedral Arts at The Cathedral Church of St. Paul (Episcopal), Burlington, Vermont. He is also Chapel Organist of St. George's School and Adjunct Faculty, working with SG students and his boss Kate Longo.

Kate Longo (*Associate faculty*) has served as the music director at St. George's School since 2019. A native of Newport, she graduated from the University of Connecticut with a bachelor's degree in music and education; the University of Oregon with a master's in choral conducting; and the University of Miami with a doctorate in choral conducting. She began her teaching career at Farmington High School in Connecticut. Following her doctoral studies, Kate served as coordinator of choral studies and choral director at Florida International University, while conducting the training choristers of the Miami Children's Chorus. Though her career took her all around the country, Kate has always been drawn back to Aquidneck Island and is happy to be an active musician here at home with her husband and two Choir School children. When she is not singing, teaching, or conducting, she can be found near the ocean enjoying the breeze and waves year round.

Jennifer Delmhorst Berton *Angel Choir Director*

Richard Lippold *choir camp vocal instructor, diction coach*

Joel McCoy *piano and changed male voice instructor, publicist*



Board of Trustees



Chairman Nick Brown is a scion of the Brown family that has been active in Rhode Island philanthropy and commerce since the mid-17th Century. A 1956 graduate of the US Naval Academy and subsequent 27 years USN active duty, Brown then was named Director of the National Aquarium in Baltimore in 1983, serving in that position for the next 11 years. He moved back to Newport, RI, in 1994 to work in the area of historic preservation as the Executive Director of Preserve Rhode Island.

Finally officially retired at the age of 70, he commenced a round of involvements with various non-profit organizations, such as Emmanuel Church, the New York Yacht Club and the Commanderie de Bordeaux. He also continues to sail on both his own boat and on charters as time permits. Married to the Paris-born Diane Vernes, they have three children and several grandchildren, all of whom now live in Europe.



Meredith Rugg, Secretary, grew up in New York City in a musical, philanthropic family. During her college years, she traveled abroad singing in a small “European” chorus. In 1968 that group traveled to the USSR for a concert tour as well, leaving a lifelong impression of the power of music on both performers and audiences. As an

adult, she has lived in London, Hong Kong and Dallas. For 28 years she served on the Board of The Children’s Aid Society in New York, chairing both the Foster Care and Adoption Committee and then the Arts Committee. She and her husband moved to Newport in 2019 after decades of visiting friends in the community.



Ann Boyer, Treasurer Originally from North Carolina, Ann has lived in Newport several times as she followed her Navy husband to duty stations domestically and abroad, finally settling locally. She then worked as a Navy system and software safety analyst for twenty years before semi-retiring into real estate office administration. She is a member of Boyer Partners, which supports book publishers with copyediting services. She holds a BS in Biology and an MS in Information Systems Science. She has served on the boards of local non-profits, such as the Newport Children’s Theatre, Girl Scouts of Southeastern New England, and Swanhurst Chorus, and as Treasurer and President of the Northeast Chapter of the International System Safety Society. She has been a member of choirs and choruses since the age of five and has been with CSNC as an adult singer since soon after its inception.



Jay Johnson, Vice Chair A lifelong performer, musician, and deep believer in the transformative power of the arts, Jay joined the Trustees soon after he and his chorister daughter traveled with the School to Argentina in 2024. Jay has sung with the Aspen Opera Theater Festival, DiCapo Opera Theater (NYC), and Target Margin Theater (NYC), among others. He is a co-founder of the Ward Studio Theater Company, where he was nominated for a New York Independent Theater Award for his work.

He has also worked in commercial and animated voiceovers, as well as many audiobooks, primarily focusing on children’s educational curricula. His production work includes concerts at Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center, as well as the International Festival of the Aegean, which brings U.S. choirs to Syros, Greece, for a month-long program of rehearsals, tours, and chamber and fully orchestral performances.



Jim Burress recently retired after 32 years as Director of Finance for the Preservation Society of Newport County (the Newport Mansions). He attended St. John's College in Annapolis, MD and received a master's degree in accounting from Georgetown University. Prior to joining PSNC, Jim worked for 11 years for a Congressman in Washington, D.C., and for 10 years in public accounting in Washington and Newport. He is married and

has a daughter who is a therapist in Denver and a son who works for Apple in Seattle. As members of the choir of Trinity Church, Newport, Jim and his wife are occasional collaborators in Choir School concerts.



Ann Conner grew up in a musical family where she and her brother played the piano for many years and sang in a church choir in their youth. After college and working in Boston, she married and moved to Newport where she taught math in a private girls school. She served for many years as a member of the Board of Trustees of Rhode Island Foundation, and established the Ann F. and Robert B. Conner Fund at the Rhode Island Foundation in honor of her parents, for the provision of music

education for children. This Fund perpetuates the Choir School's Piano Outreach Program. Ann's philanthropic and organizational expertise has naturally engaged her for many Boards, most rewardingly that of The Ladd School, a state institution in Exeter, Rhode Island that served people with developmental delays or mental disabilities from 1908 to 1993.

Our Endowment for Future Horizons

When you love someone—or some institution—you take on moral responsibility for its flourishing. The growing edge of our organization is our newest students. After five years of training and experience, they become the leaders of tomorrow's choir. We plan now for fulfilling the promise of their involvement. Accordingly, the growing edge of our fiscal responsibility to these students is an investment in our endowment.

Carefully managed and maintained, organization endowments offer **a permanent source of income while growing the funds**, and help to attract new contributions. In 2024 the Board of Trustees established a permanent endowment in a manner consistent with donor intent as part of Rhode Island Foundation's much larger community portfolio.

Each year, the School must raise over \$180,000 to rent space and run its educational programs, choir camp, and concert season. Incorporated in 2016, The Choir School of Newport County Inc. is a certified and registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable arts organization (EIN: 81-4605806). **Donations are tax-deductible** to the fullest extent allowed by law.

Three ways to give: 1) Make a donation to the Choir School designated for the endowment; 2) Create your own personal fund at Rhode Island Foundation, and designate the Choir School as the beneficiary of its annual grants; 3) Include the Choir School in your estate plans as a direct beneficiary of your retirement assets.



Our preferred payment method for this endowment is via check, payable to Choir School of Newport County, memo Endowment, and mailed to P. O. Box 4324, Middletown, RI 02842. Other forms of payment are available; please contact us. Call (401) 239-9713 or fill out the form at choirschoolri.org/contact. As of 2026, **we have realized 425K of our 2M goal for sustainability** with 250K further pledged through 2028.

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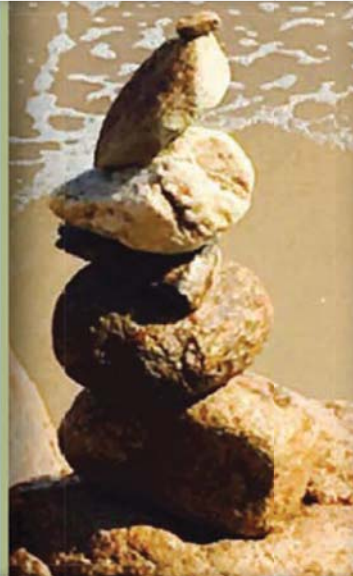
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An Auspicious Launch

One of the UK's most distinguished and experienced choral directors, **Dr. Barry Rose OBE** while still a student, was appointed as the first Organist and Master of the Choristers of the new Guildford Cathedral, out of over 140 applicants. At Guildford he created a men and boys choir from scratch, and within five years they were recording bestselling albums for EMI, as well as regularly broadcasting and touring. It was through the high reputation of the Guildford choir that he was offered the post of **Religious Music Adviser to the BBC** (a post he was to hold for twenty years), and also the post of **Master of the Choir at St. Paul's Cathedral, London**, where he and his family moved in 1974. While at St. Paul's he directed the music on several great State and Royal Occasions, including Her Majesty the Queen's Silver Jubilee Service, and also the Wedding of Prince Charles and Princess Diana in 1981. His last full-time post was as Master of the Music at St. Albans Abbey, where he and his family spent ten happy years before "retiring" to rural Somerset.

Dr. Rose has been a regular visitor to the USA since 1972, advising and directing many choirs, both at parish level, as well as with the prestigious program at Saint Thomas Church, Fifth Avenue, New York. **He trained and directed the Choir School on tour in England in 2018, and returned to us in 2023 to lead a memorable service of Choral Evensong at St. George's School Chapel which may be viewed on our website. Finally, he gave a tea-time talk regarding his Royal experiences, in 2024 to launch our endowment campaign.**



Valuing Chorister Support *Dr. Rose's 2023 address at Evensong*

Of all the sacred liturgies in England, the brightest star among them all in the firmament is the Office of Choral Evensong, sung day in, day out in our Cathedrals and our Collegiate Chapels by choirs who day out in our...

...Cathedrals and our Collegiate Chapels by choirs who are often the envy of the worldwide choral scene. So important is Evensong in my country, that it is broadcast each week, live or recorded, by the BBC. There's a regular Choral Evensong broadcast—it is that important.

For nearly 40 years (that's four-zero years) I was privileged to be part of that tradition, but more importantly, my son Timothy was a chorister with the best church choir in the world, St. John's College, Cambridge, whilst our younger daughter, Nicola, was one of the first pioneers who started England's very first residential Cathedral girls' choir—at Salisbury Cathedral, in September, 1991.

Now, I'm telling you all this, not just as a proud parent of a now 51-year-old and a now 41-year-old, but in appreciation of the **amazing skills that they learned in their time as choristers, not just musical**. Our Tim has never sung a note or played his flute since the day he left St. John's College, Cambridge, but he's learned, as Nicola did, the many non-musical skills: independence, self-reliance, self confidence whilst still being a team member, self-discipline, care for others, an appreciation of beautiful language and how to speak it as well, punctuality—the list goes on and on and on.

Just think about it. From day one in the choir, boys and girls are being asked to be adults. And that is true of singing in this, the Choir School of Newport County. For the treble line here today, this is the one and only thing you are asked to do as a professional singer from day one, from the moment you step into this choir. Let me explain.

If you are a talented instrumentalist, violinist, flautist, trombonist, trumpeter, whatever, you may make it to the school orchestra, perhaps going on to a state-funded youth orchestra and then maybe to music school for several years to hone your craft—after which, if you're lucky, you might make it into one of the professional orchestras. From day one in this choir, and other choirs, you are the equivalent of a member of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, or the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.



If you like, in sporting terms if you want it that way, **you're in the Olympics straight away**—never mind school sports day.

Training such as this is priceless—whether or not you continue to make music after you've sung in the front row of these choirs. But **priceless training comes at a price**—and this is where this choir school needs your financial support, ladies and gentlemen, if it is to continue to give children this priceless education. I know that it also needs parental support, and determination, and an understanding that this is something special, which will **shape your son or your daughter for the rest of their lives**, and give them so many personal qualities they won't get anywhere else.

My wife and I didn't flinch at all when we were asked to pay the full school fees—no scholarship—at Salisbury Cathedral School when our daughter started. We knew it was for her greater good. And times galore we were asked to drive our son up to Cambridge or to some airport or something in the middle of the school holidays so they could go on some choir trip. That's what you do, as a parent. You give it all up for your child, and they get something special out of it.

Now there's nothing more beautiful in church (now, I'm going to be lynched by the clergy for saying this) or chapel than beautiful singing by a well trained choir. Without sounds in them, these buildings are just empty shells. (You go to a French cathedral, it's an empty shell, apart from a clergyman at the front playing a guitar on a Sunday or something like that!) It's music, of course, real music that makes it come to life.

The psalmist said this: he exhorted us to 'worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness' and it's choirs, such as this one, that help you out there to 'worship the Lord in the holiness of beauty'. Turn that 'round. Think about that, and don't let it stop for lack of support—in finances or membership for people to come and learn. **Newport, and the whole of Rhode Island I think, would be poorer without it.**

Planning now to give later

Rhode Island Foundation

Bequests

Making a gift from your will or trust is simple. A charitable bequest can be a specific dollar amount, a percentage of your estate, or what remains after other bequests are made.

Charitable remainder trusts

Charitable remainder trusts appeal to donors with appreciated assets such as real estate or securities. They allow you to receive income (or provide income to another person) for life with the knowledge that the funds remaining when the trust terminates will be used to support our endowment.



Charitable gift annuities

Charitable gift annuities guarantee you (or someone you name) a certain fixed income for life. At the death of the last annuity recipient, assets will be used to support our endowment.

Life insurance

Life insurance can be used as a charitable asset, thereby enabling you to be eligible for a charitable tax deduction based on the current value of the paid-up policy. Or you can support our endowment by making it the beneficiary of part or all of the insurance proceeds.

Retirement fund assets

Donating retirement fund assets from qualified plans or IRAs, upon your passing, is ideal for charitable giving purposes because these assets are often heavily taxed. This option offers an opportunity to avoid income and estate tax.

Qualified Charitable IRA Distribution during lifetime

Annual distributions directly from one's IRA to a public charity (some exclusions apply) are easy to do and those amounts may count toward the donor's required minimum distribution without claiming as taxable income.

What will your role in a school's future enable?



The curious child above, inspired at age 4 at a concert, went on to study voice, piano, and cello, and became Head Chorister of the Choir School at the early age of twelve. At left, at 14, with the Bishop of Rhode Island.

Foundation Support

The Choir School is very grateful to have received support from these foundations in pursuit of its educational mission.

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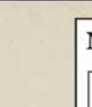


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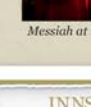
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Thoughts on Philanthropy *from two of our regular donors*

To quote George MacDonald: “*The first question is not how to do good with money, but how to keep from doing harm with it.*” Like you it seems I have spent my adult life working in and for the “non-profit world.” Those words identify what is increasingly *wrong* with our 21st-century world: we identify “good” and “profit” with material things and discount **the necessary meaning and unlimited value of the intangible.**

As I grew older, I grew more and more discontented with what passes for the education of our children and grandchildren. I can see the *huge* contribution being part of the Choir School has made in the lives of children fortunate enough to have parents willing to commit to their involvement in it. Aging has also brought a growing appreciation of doing something relatively small and **watching the ripples go out in concentric circles to have a great impact.** I have also noticed how difficult it is to find worthy causes to support. Our society is tilted toward creating dependency on hand-outs rather than building up individuals to become contributing members. The Choir School is absolutely in the business of doing the latter and I am flummoxed that more people cannot see and actively support that.” *A founding Board member*

“**It’s the least I could do,** and I always do the least I could do.”

James Livengood, Esquire



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To hire the Choir, please fill out the form at choirschoolri.org/contact or call (401) 239-9713.





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