The Choral Foundation Presents

The William Baker Festival Singers

Music of Timeless Beauty and Worth from Kansas City Since 1998

Dr. William O. Baker, Music Director & Conductor Christine Freeman, MME, Associate Music Director & Senior Vocal Coach Dr. Jamea J. Sale, Executive Associate Director Dr. Sean Sweeden, Composer in Residence Emily Fish, Choral Intern

Milwaukee Tour



SOLI DEO GLORIA

What wondrous love is this, O my soul?

The William Baker Festival Singers

William O. Baker, DMA	*Daniel Baker '22	Donovan Jones '23
Founder & Music Director	Laura Rene Baker '99	Amanda Kimbrough '08
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	Kelsey Dingman '23	Martina Pezzino '16
	Eric Edman '12	Jamie Roberts '12
Andrew Phillip Schmidt, MM Music Director, Summer Singers of Atlanta	Emily Fish '18	Jamea Sale '02
	Christine M. Freeman '06	Erica Seago '17
Amy Thropp, MM Music Director, Zimria Festivale Atlanta	Emily Freeman '21	Cindy Sheets '09
	Kristin Gaddis '22	Pratima Singh '06
	Jonathan Gohdes '22	Monty Smith '22
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	Jill Holtkamp '07	Leilani Velasco Vaughn '20
	Daniel Huxman '19	Ted Williams '18
Christine M. Freeman, MME Associate Music Director/Kansas City	Jim Jandt '01	*Niccole Williams '14
	*Gary Jarrett '02	Ann Woodyard '01
	Donna Johnson '22	Doug Woolery '17
Scott C. Smith, MBA	*Section Leader	

Sean Sweeden, DMA

Composer in Residence

Choral Associate & Administrator, Atlanta

Emily Fish

Choral Intern

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The William Baker Choral Foundation, Inc.

5450 Buena Vista Street, Suite 100 Roeland Park, Kansas 66205 913.488.7524 www.FestivalSingers.org www.ChoralFoundation.org www.HealthySinging.org www.ChoralCreativity.org

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Dr. William O. Baker, Music Director & Conductor

William O. Baker has earned a reputation as an entrepreneurial conductor and creator of choral organizations. He founded the DeKalb Choral Guild in 1978 at the age of 19. By the age of 21 he had conducted Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem*, Vivaldi's *Gloria*, Schubert's *Mass in G*, and Handel's *Messiah* with professional orchestras, launching a career of ambitious artistic leadership that now has extended over 45 years. In the last few years alone he has conducted the *St. Matthew Passion* and the *Mass in B minor* of Bach, and the *Sacred Service* of Ernest Bloch, at the time of the performances the only Kansas City-based conductor to lead the works in over a quarter-century.

Baker created the Atlanta-based William Baker Festival Singers, originally called Gwinnett Festival Singers, in 1985, and established the William Baker Choral Foundation in 1990. In 1998 the conductor moved his home to the Kansas City area and created the Kansas City ensemble of the Festival Singers. The Choral Foundation has created over a dozen ensembles based in four states, involving hundreds of musicians each year. His ensembles have performed for conventions of the American Choral Directors Association, the National Association for Music Education, and the American Guild of Organists, in addition to the 1982 World's Fair and music festivals in the United States and Great Britain, most notably appearances before capacity audiences at Charleston's Piccolo Spoleto Festival since 1989. He has led the Festival Singers in the production of over two dozen nationally released recordings and in television and radio appearances across the nation, including *The First Art, The Sounds of Majesty* and National Public Radio's *Performance Today*.

No stranger to the orchestral podium, William Baker created the Mountain Park Wind Symphony in 1994, the Kansas City Wind Symphony in 1998 and Kansas City Bronze in 2018. Primary orchestral performances have included Vivaldi: *The Seasons*, Sibelius: *Finlandia*, Bach: *Brandenburg Concerto No. 2*, Bizet: *Suite L'Arlesienne*, Haydn: *Symphony No. 59 "Fire*," Mozart: *Symphony No. 41*, Beethoven: *Symphony No. 7* and *Symphony No. 9*. Choral collaborations have included projects with members of the Kansas City Symphony, the Kazanetti Chamber Orchestra, the Atlanta Youth Symphony Orchestra, the Kansas City Civic Orchestra, the Baton Rouge Symphony, the Gwinnett Symphony Orchestra, the Charleston Symphony Orchestra and the Orchestra of the American Heartland.

Dr. Baker served as Minister of Music for significant Lutheran, Presbyterian and United Methodist congregations across the South and the Midwest. Major appointments have included the historic Grace United Methodist Church in Midtown Atlanta and The Village Church in suburban Kansas City, the nation's second largest Presbyterian congregation. He presently serves as Music Director for the historic St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Lee's Summit, Missouri. He is the author of two devotional books: *Hearts & Hands & Voices* and *Wonder*, *Love & Praise*. Dr. Baker is co-host of *Choral Conversations*, a monthly podcast with Dr. Jamea Sale.

An Atlanta native, Dr. Baker studied voice and choral conducting at Mercer University and the University of Georgia before culminating his formal education at the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago where he earned the Doctor of Musical Arts in Choral Conducting. His accomplishments have been recognized in his home states through proclamations by two Georgia Governors, Joe Frank Harris and Sonny Purdue, by Kansas Governor Jeff Colyer, by United States Congressman Phil Gingrey, by proclamations from the cities of Kansas City, MO and Roeland Park, KS, by the Johnson County (KS) Commission, and by a 2015 proclamation by the State of Georgia House of Representatives. In 2012 he was honored for his contributions to the cultural life of his hometown by the Pro-Mozart Society of Atlanta. In 2015 he was named Conductor Emeritus of The DeKalb Choral Guild. Dr. Baker, his wife Laura and their three grown children, reside in Roeland Park, Kansas.

The William Baker Festival Singers

Second Place National Winner of the 2021 American Prize in Choral Performance Second Place National Winner of the 2021 Ernst Bacon Award for American Music



The William Baker Festival Singers has been hailed by *The Kansas City Star* as "The best of the several volunteer choirs in the city..." Though the membership of the 50-voice semi-professional chorale is comprised entirely of volunteers, a large majority of the singers hold music degrees and many are vocational musicians. It is the mission of the Festival Singers to bring the highest standards of musicianship and professionalism to the realm of volunteer choirs. Celebrating its 25th Anniversary Concert Season, the metro Kansas City-based ensemble has enjoyed numerous triumphs through a tradition of ambitious concerts, recording, touring and broadcasting.

Tours have included performances in some of America's most prestigious venues, including Trinity Wall Street Church in New York City, The National Cathedral and the Basilica of the National Shrine in Washington, DC, the Cathedral Basilica in St. Louis, St. James Cathedral in Chicago, St. Louis Cathedral in New Orleans, the Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Atlanta, and the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts in Kansas City. Their richness of tone, diversity of programming and expressiveness has won praise from audiences and critics alike. In their debut performance in Helzberg Hall of the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, a performance that featured the *Requiem* of Maurice Durufle presenteded with members of the Kansas City Symphony, John Heuertz, in *The Kansas City Star* said, "It's hard to know where to begin praising this chorus' performance... What came across above all was the great warmth in this chorus' singing. It was almost like hearing a family."

The signature repertoire of the William Baker Festival Singers is short-form sacred a cappella classics and spirituals from all eras and cultures. The chorus also performs a major choral/orchestral masterwork each spring. Recent concerts have included the *Requiems* of Faure, Durufle, Mozart, Brahms and Rutter, the *Dona Nobis Pacem* of Vaughan Williams, the *Ninth Symphony* of Beethoven, and the *Laudes Organi* of Kodaly. The Festival Singers own the distinction of being the first Kansas City-based ensemble to perform the *Mass in B minor* and the *St. Matthew Passion* of Bach, in addition to Ernest Bloch's *Avodath Hakodesh (Sacred Service)* in a quarter century.

Please Follow, Subscribe and Like Us: Facebook (William Baker Festival Singers)
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The Festival Singers is an ensemble of The William Baker Choral Foundation, a national organization based in Roeland Park, Kansas, that presently sponsors choral ensembles based in five states involving hundreds of men, women and youth. The Foundation also sponsors Amber Waves Music Publishing, the Jane Sullivan Choral Resource Library, the Institute for Healthy Singing & Voice Research, the Institute for Choral Creativity, the Choral Conversations Podcast, and an ambitious continuing education program for Choral Interns.

For additional information, please call the Home Office of the Choral Foundation at 913.488.7524, or email Mail@FestivalSingers.org. www.WilliamBakerFestivalSingers.org

CHRISTINE M. FREEMAN, MME, Associate Music Director & Senior Vocal Coach

Christine M. Freeman was appointed Associate Music Director of Kansas City ensembles and Senior Vocal Coach for the William Baker Choral Foundation in August 2011. She is a native of Topeka, Kansas. Mrs. Freeman holds a Bachelor of Music Education, emphasis Voice, and a Master of Music Education in Choral Pedagogy from the University of Kansas in Lawrence. She was appointed to membership in The William Baker Festival Singers in 2006, and served as Student Intern for the Choral Foundation in the 2007-2008 season, where she conducted Foundation ensembles in Kansas City, Atlanta, and at the Piccolo Spoleto Festival in Charleston. Christine Freeman has conducted the Festival Singers and the Summer Singers of Kansas City, along with members of the Kansas City Symphony, in performances of Vivaldi Beatus Vir, Haydn Te Deum, and Mozart Regina Coeli. She recently conducted the Festival Singers in performances at the National Cathedral, the Basilica of the National Shrine, and at the historic Christ Church in Alexandria, Virginia. She appears as soloist on recordings of the Festival Singers and as conductor on A Festival for Christmas, Promised Land, The Sacred Fire, and True Religion. She has been a featured soloist for the Lee's Summit Summer Singers and the Hark! Christmas Spectacular.



In addition to her work with the Choral Foundation, Mrs. Freeman is a Music Educator and is in her tenth year in the Blue Valley School District instructing middle school choral music. She previously taught

elementary and middle school music for eight years in the Archdiocese of Kansas City, Kansas. She has been a clinician for honor choirs in Kansas and Missouri. Mrs. Freeman was awarded the honor of Master Teacher in her building for the 2021-22 school year. She is active in professional organizations and was recently awarded by her colleagues the (ECKMEA) East Central Kansas Music Educators Association "Outstanding Middle Level Choir Teacher of the Year" Award. She was previously nominated for the (KCDA) Kansas Choral Directors Association "Prelude" Award. She was the KCDA Repertoire and Standards Chair for Children's Choirs from 2012-2015 where she organized the Statewide Treble Honor Choir. She is a Fellow of the Institute for Healthy Singing & Voice Research. With her husband Daniel and their two children, she makes her home in Olathe, Kansas.

DR. JAMEA J. SALE, WBCF Executive Associate Director Director of the Institute for Healthy Singing & Voice Research



Jamea Sale is a native of Colby, Kansas. She graduated from Kansas State University in Manhattan in 1987 with a Bachelor of Music in Voice and Instrumental Music Education, and in 2012 she completed the Master of Music in Vocal/Choral Pedagogy at the University of Kansas in Lawrence. She earned her Doctor of Philosophy in Music Education/Choral Pedagogy in 2022. She met rigorous requirements for membership to the International Voice Care Network at St. John's University in 2010. Other memberships include ACDA, NAfME, NATS, the Voice Foundation, and Pan American Vocology Association.

Jamea has been a member and soloist with the William Baker Festival Singers and the Summer Singers of Kansas City since 2002, and served as Student Intern for the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 concert seasons. She was appointed as Choral Assistant in Kansas City in August 2012, Education Director for the Institute for Healthy Singing & Voice Research in 2016, Executive Associate Director of the William Baker Choral Foundation in

2017, and Director of the Institute for Healthy Singing & Voice Research in 2018.

With a certification in Preschool Musikgarten Education, Jamea led experiential music programs for parents and toddlers for five years. She served as Assistant Choral Director and Vocal Coach at St. James Academy High School in Lenexa, Kansas, for 3 years and has taught Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade music in the Olathe School District. She serves as the Vocal Coach for the Allegro Choirs of KC. In her voice studio (JameaSale.com), Dr. Sale works with singers of all ages, including persons needing vocal recovery treatment.

In cooperation with the Institute for Healthy Singing & Voice Research and Allegro Choirs of KC, and in collaboration with the Zhuhai Classical Children's Chorus and the University of Kansas' Dr. Melissa Grady, Dr. Sale is conducting a Longitudinal Examination of the Progression of Voice Change in Adolescent Females. The study in progress is documenting 100 young female singers' vocal development over the course of 9 months. In March of 2023, Dr. Sale and Institute for Healthy Singing & Voice Research fellows recently returned from Kapkemich, Kenya, where they helped establish music education in the schools and observe vocal development among adolescent female singers. Jamea is available for group workshops and private consultation through the Institute for Healthy Singing & Voice Research.

Leaving a Legacy of Immortal Music Through the Choral Foundation The William Baker Choral Foundation Endowment Fund, Inc.

Have you considered remembering the work of the William Baker Choral Foundation in your will, estate plan or through a donor advised fund? At the Choral Foundation we are working to build an organization that will connect people with music of timeless beauty and worth for many generations to come. Your gift through your estate will help WBCF bring the life-changing joys of participation in the performance of great music to thousands of men, women, and youth.

Please advise your will preparer, estate planner, or attorney of your desire to support the work of the William Baker Choral Foundation through a legacy gift. Our office staff will gladly provide the necessary information to ensure that your gift is received and properly applied. Please call 913.488.7524 or email us at Mail@FestivalSingers.org.

Dr. Sean Sweeden, Composer in Residence



A native Arkansan, **Sean Sweeden** began studying music with his parents at a young age, singing in church choirs, various ACDA honor choirs, and musical theatre. He studied percussion with Philip Parker, voice with Dr. Jon Clements, and saxophone with Kenneth Futterer at Arkansas Tech University, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts in Percussion and Vocal Performance. While there, Sean performed in a wide variety of ensembles including percussion ensemble, band, choir, jazz band, theatre orchestra, music theatre workshop, and opera workshop. In May 2013, he earned the Master of Music in Percussion Performance from the University of Arkansas, where he studied percussion with Chalon Ragsdale and composition with Dr. Robert Mueller. Sean received the Doctorate of Musical Arts in Percussion Performance at the University of Missouri at Kansas City in

May 2018. While there, he studied with principal percussionist of the Kansas City Symphony, Christopher McLaurin, as well as Dr. Nick Petrella. Sean is published with C-Alan Publications, won the Lee University Percussion Ensemble Composition Contest in 2014, and the VocalEssence Welcome Christmas Carol Contest in 2016. Dr. Sweeden plans to compose for a variety of ensembles, but is especially interested in creating works that combine percussion and chorus. Sean continues to perform, teach, and study percussion, sing, and also further his compositional style. Sean was appointed to membership in The William Baker Festival Singers in 2016 and has been a featured soloist in numerous concerts and recordings. He was appointed Composer in Residence in 2020 and serves as a fellow of the Institute for Choral Creativity.

Emily Fish, Choral Intern



Emily Fish has been a member of the William Baker Festival Singers since 2018. She graduated *summa cum laude* with a Bachelor of Music Education from Kansas State University. During her time at KSU she participated in Women's Choir, Collegiate Choral, Grand Chorus, and a jazz ensemble. Mrs. Fish was the treasurer and secretary for the KSU chapter of the American Choral Directors' Association, and she conducted University Chorus and the Manhattan Community Choir her senior year. She is currently enrolled at Baker University working on her Orff-Schulwerk certification. Emily teaches general music at Leawood Elementary school in the Blue Valley School district. She also leads the school's 4th and 5th grade chorus and teaches guitar lessons. She is hoping that this experience as the 2021-2023 choral intern will strengthen her conducting and leadership skills for choruses of

all ages, and further develop her study in her upcoming master's work.

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The William Baker Festival Singers

Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Concert Season - Milwaukee Tour Saturday Afternoon, 29 April 2023, The Basilica of St. Josaphat Sunday Morning, 30 April 2023, St. Paul's Episcopal Church Sunday Afternoon, 30 April 2023, St. Joseph Chapel, with Chant Claire

Repertoire for Liturgies and Concerts Will Be Chosen from the Following

Classic Works from the Choral Canon

FAIRE IS THE HEAVEN O GLADSOME LIGHT

William HARRIS, 1883-1973

Alexandre GRETCHANINOV, 1864-1956 Conducted by Associate Music Director, Christine Freeman

F. Melius CHRISTIANSEN, 1871-1955

Conducted by Ms. Freeman

Works from Composers of Our Generation

ALL YOU WORKS OF THE LORD

Kenneth JENNINGS, 1925-2015

Emily Freeman, soprano

Daniel Huxman, tenor

Daniel Baker, organ John TAVENER, 1944-2013

SONG FOR ATHENE

With Chant Claire Conducted by Ben Bedroske

STARS

PSALM 50

Ēriks EŠENVALDS, Born 1977

SUNWARD

Sean SWEEDEN, Norn 1989

Megan Moore & Dr. Sweeden, soloists Commissioned and Premiered by The William Baker Festival Singers 2021

Early American Folk Hymns, African-American Spirituals & Gospels

AMAZING GRACE

American Traditional arranged by Janis M. Lane

Ms. Freeman, soloist

HEALER IN THE HOUSE

PRAISE HIS HOLY NAME

Randy PHILLIPS, Born 1957

MY SHEPHERD WILL SUPPLY MY NEED

American Traditional arranged by Virgil Thomson

MY SOUL'S BEEN ANCHORED IN THE LORD

Spiritual arranged by Moses Hogan Gospel Song by Keith HAMPTON, Born 1957

Karen Kay Hall, piano

Choral Intern Emily Fish, conducting

Spiritual arranged by Joseph Jennings

STEAL AWAY

Dr. Sweeden, soloist

THREE AMERICAN HYMNS

American Traditional arranged by Alice Parker

Watt's Lyre (Begin My Soul) * Suffield (Teach Me the Measure) * Worthy the Lamb

The William Baker Festival Singers express our deepest affection and appreciation to the staff and members of Chant Claire for their gracious hospitality and assistance in making our first visit to Milwaukee a reality. We offer special thanks to Music Director Ben Bedroske and Event Coordinator (and Festival Singers alum) Elizabeth Fairfield Carlson

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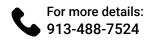


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William Baker Choral Foundation Center

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William Baker Festival Singers, Prairie Village, Kansas, 1998

New South Festival Singers, Atlanta, Georgia, 1985 Lynn Swanson, MME, Music Director & Conductor

Summer Singers of Atlanta, Midtown Atlanta, 1990 Andrew Phillip Schmidt, MM, Music Director & Conductor

Summer Singers of Kansas City, Kansas City, Missouri, 1999 William O. Baker, DMA, Music Director & Conductor

> Cobb Summer Singers, Marietta, Georgia, 2006 Lynn Swanson, MME, Founder & Music Director

Summer Singers of Lee's Summit, Lee's Summit, Missouri, 2014 Jennifer Lahasky, MME, Music Director & Conductor

> Voces Festivas, Roeland Park, Kansas, 2021 Leilani Velasco Vaughn, Music Director

Kansas City Bronze, Roeland Park, Kansas, 2018

Vox Venti, Chicago, Illinois, 2022 Ed Frazier Davis, MM, Music Director & Conductor

Institute for Healthy Singing & Voice Research, Roeland Park, Kansas, 2015 Jamea J. Sale, PhD, Director Lynn Swanson, MME, Founder

> **Institute for Choral Creativity,** Chicago, Illinois, 2020 Ed Frazier Davis, MM, Director

Choral Conversations Podcast with William Baker & Jamea Sale, Roeland Park, Kansas, 2018

Jane Sullivan Choral Resource Library, Roeland Park, Kansas, 2016



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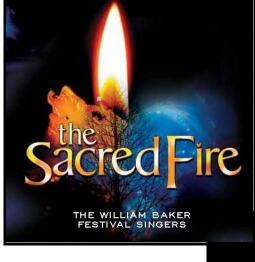
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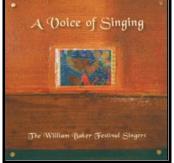
THE SACRED FIRE January/February 2020



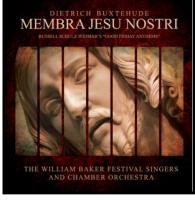
Both lauded in The American Record Guide

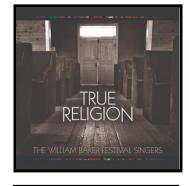


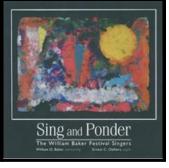


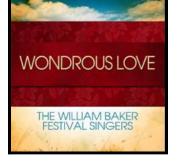














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