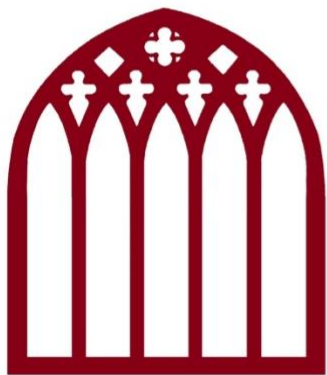


*Arts at St. Luke's* 

CHORISTER  
HANDBOOK  
2023 – 2024



ST. LUKE'S  

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EPISCOPAL CHURCH

## About the Chorister Program at St. Luke's Episcopal Church:

**The Children's Choir** (kindergarten-2nd grade) meets Wednesdays, 5:15-6pm, August-May. This lively group focuses on developing music literacy, building ensemble skills, and growing in faith and community through the joy of music making in age-appropriate literature. This group will present music on several occasions during the school year.

**The Youth Choir** (3rd grade-8th grade) meets Wednesdays, 5:15-6pm, August-May. This ensemble fosters continuing musical growth for young singers through a variety of quality repertoire for developing voices. The Youth Choir will present music at Sunday liturgies on several occasions during the school year.

**TeenVoices** is a new opportunity for teens in the Salisbury-Rowan community and beyond to explore vocal music in a wide-range of styles. Open to all students ages 12-high school senior, TeenVoices will provide professional vocal training in a collaborative, fun environment. The program will also offer performance opportunities at St. Luke's and in the community. Weekly rehearsal times TBD based on participants' schedules.

REGISTER FOR ALL CHOIRS AT [www.SLS.church/music](http://www.SLS.church/music)

We hope that you will find singing in these remarkable choirs an enjoyable experience and that you will develop a love of great choral music, which will last forever.

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### A. STAFF

## Stephen Williams, Director of Music Ministries

Stephen previously served as Canon for Music and the Performing Arts at Cathedral Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem PA, and Artist in Residence at Moravian University. Academic pursuits have included Brevard College, Westminster Choir College of Rider University, The Juilliard School, and West Chester University. He served long tenures at St. John's Lutheran Church in downtown Allentown PA and concurrently at Muhlenberg College. As a soloist and accompanist, he has toured France, England, The Netherlands, Canada, and the US with favorite recitals at St. John the Divine and Alice Tully Hall in NY, Rouen Cathedral and The American Cathedral in Paris, Bristol, Wells, Salisbury, and Exeter Cathedral in England, The Crystal Cathedral (now Christ Cathedral), and St. Phillip's Cathedral in Atlanta. Notable projects have included performances of the complete organ works of J. S. Bach, the six organ symphonies of Louis Vierne, the complete organ works of Johannes Brahms, and his CD Platinum. Professional affiliations include the American Guild of Organists, RSCM America, and the Association of Anglican Musicians.



Contact email: [swilliams@SLS.church](mailto:swilliams@SLS.church)

## Caroline Stephenson, Director of Communications and Engagement

Caroline works in communications, parish life, community programs, and formation at St. Luke's. She was previously an Instructor of Music at Catawba College, Rowan Cabarrus Community College, and Central Piedmont Community College, and assists with the chorister program as needed. She also enjoys singing with the Evensong Choir at St. Luke's. Caroline studied music performance and education at Winthrop University and completed the Certificate in Theology and Ministry from Princeton Theological Seminary. Caroline is married to Mark, with two children, James and Emma, who are members of the choir program.



Contact email: [cstephenson@SLS.church](mailto:cstephenson@SLS.church)

## Heather Duncan, Coordinator for Children, Youth & Family Ministries

Heather assists with programming for children, teens, and families at St. Luke's. She was baptized at St. Luke's in 1997 and earned a Bachelor's Degrees in Literature and Creative Writing from Catawba College. She is a self-taught artist with a passion for dressing up and inspiring others to be authentically themselves. She believes that one of the best ways to spread love is through art and volunteer work.

Contact email: [hduncan@SLS.church](mailto:hduncan@SLS.church)

## Robert Black, Rector



Father Robert has served as the Rector of St. Lukes since September 2014. He holds degrees in religious studies from Wake Forest (B.A.), Virginia Theological Seminary (M.Div.), and The University of the South: Sewanee (D.Min.), and is also adjunct professor at Hood Theological Seminary. Before St. Lukes, Robert served as the Assistant Rector at St. Francis Episcopal Church in Greensboro, NC (2010-2014) and St. Johns Episcopal Church Lafayette Square in Washington, DC (2009-2010). He is married to Tyler with two daughters, Eleanor and Rowen, who are members of the choir program.

Contact email: [rblack@SLS.church](mailto:rblack@SLS.church)

## Assistants

Volunteers from St. Luke's church membership and Chancel Choir (adult choir) as well as Choral Scholars (college students pursuing music studies), may assist with rehearsals and liturgies. Parent/grandparent assistants are also welcome.

### B. BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Below are listed general but necessary rules for our life together that are in addition to the common courtesies, good manners and simple kindnesses we expect and consider of primary importance.

- Choristers are expected to demonstrate leadership at all times, modeling exemplary behavior in rehearsals, services, performances, and social times. A difficult but necessary opportunity for leadership requires choristers to encourage each other to reach the highest standards of behavior and following rules.
- Choristers will wear vestments provided by St. Luke's during liturgies.
- Cell phone usage is not allowed at rehearsals. It inhibits group participation and distracts from musical growth and performance.
- Choristers are expected to follow all safety procedures put in place by staff or chaperones.
- Choristers may not engage in any type of physical contact, conduct or behavior.
- Choristers may not leave established boundaries without knowledge of and permission by the staff or adult chaperones either during rehearsals, liturgies, or performances.
- Choristers are expected to not commit theft or be violent.
- Choristers may not use, possess, or be under the influence of tobacco, alcohol, illegal or non-prescribed drugs of any kind. The consequence of violating this rule is immediate dismissal from the choir program.

### C. ATTENDANCE

Attendance at all rehearsals and performances is vitally important to achieve the high level of musicianship expected of members of the Choir. The Choir cannot perform well unless every member is present and knows his/her music. Choristers and their families maintain busy schedules and conflicts are inevitable. However, **the only acceptable reasons for missing rehearsals and concerts are illness, special school functions and family emergencies.** Provide in advance AND as soon as possible, a note or e-mail explaining any anticipated absence. In case of a last-minute illness or other emergency, call, text or email Stephen Williams.

**Arriving on time and staying to the end of rehearsal are vitally important.** Missing any part of rehearsal keeps the chorister from performing and learning up to their potential and thus affects the group as a whole. Arriving late also distracts other singers from the instruction occurring in the room. Please have your child arrive **early** so he/she can be in their seat **BEFORE** it is time for rehearsal to begin.

A calendar with rehearsal and performance dates is provided in this packet and any changes will be communicated promptly. Transfer them to your personal calendar **now** to avoid any potential conflicts. Communicate with Stephen Williams now of any known conflicts.

### D. REHEARSAL GUIDELINES

The Choirs learn a great deal of music each year. It is essential that every minute of rehearsal time be used wisely. This enhances everyone's feeling of accomplishment and maximizes the quality of performances. Choristers are expected to observe these guidelines:

- **Any music distributed and taken home must be returned to rehearsal each week.**
- Prior to rehearsal, use the bathroom, get music, a pencil and be ready for class to begin. To avoid unnecessary interruptions of rehearsal. **All members of all choirs should be in their seat, ready for class or rehearsal and with memorization testing complete, five minutes before the start time.**
- All singers must be on time, attentive and participating fully throughout rehearsal.
- Bring a water bottle to rehearsal. Soft drinks or other beverages are NOT to be brought to rehearsal.
- **Chewing gum and candy are never allowed!** This includes rehearsals, performances, and liturgies.

## E. CARE OF MUSIC

The Choir rehearses many pieces of music in the course of a year. Music is very expensive and is often difficult to replace. You will be assigned copies of the music you need, an envelope or folder to keep it in. Be careful with the music assigned to you so that it does not get damaged or lost. You may be billed for music damaged or lost. You are encouraged to mark your music in pencil. Make your markings neat and legible so that the chorister who uses the music after you will be able to read them.

## F. PERFORMANCE GUIDELINES

Performances and liturgies require the very best in conduct, appearance, behavior, and musicianship.

Other performance guidelines:

- Keep hair out of the face and avoid jewelry or other distracting accessories.
- Do not wear perfumes or cologne (this includes rehearsals as some members have significant allergies to scents.)
- Arrive at least five minutes before the designated time.
- Be responsible for keeping track of all the parts of your vestments.
- Pay attention to instructions given by adults.

## G. ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS/RIBBONS

St. Luke's Episcopal Church happily acknowledges the accomplishments of its choristers. Each chorister is evaluated on his/her progress in musical skills, attendance, personal decorum, positive contribution in all Choir activities (especially rehearsals and performances), and knowledge of the music in the Choir's repertoire. The Royal School of Church Music curriculum will be used throughout the program year. This is one of the unique benefits of our program: music theory instruction for all.

All medals and ribbons are awarded at Youth Sunday in May. Please reserve Sunday **May 19, 2024** for this special event. At the completion of Level One, a specially designed medal on a light blue ribbon is awarded. At each successive level, a different color ribbon - dark blue, purple, red, green or gold—is awarded. Medals and ribbons are worn whenever the Choir wears vestments.

## H. PRIVATE KEYBOARD INSTRUCTION

Stephen Williams offers private, weekly instruction on the St. Luke's campus in piano and organ to choristers, subject to scheduling availability. These lessons are an excellent supplement to the chorister curriculum. **Lessons are offered at the subsidized rate of \$15/half hour lesson to committed members of the chorister program only. Lesson books and other materials are paid for by the student/family.** *First-time* choristers are offered one semester of piano instruction at no cost. There will be 14 lessons in the fall semester. Contact Stephen via email or phone to inquire about scheduling lessons.

## I. FEES & PARENT DONATIONS/FAMILY FINANCIAL POLICY

The St. Luke's choir experience is enriched for every chorister because our choirs are comprised of talented children from every walk of life. Currently, we do not require families to pay tuition. We do ask families to financially support the program as you are able:

- We ask that parents cover a portion of the cost of your child's participation in the program.
- Make a donation (payable in installments) equal to or above the Fair Market Value (\$250/semester) to music programming at St. Luke's Episcopal Church. This helps make it possible for us to maintain the highest standards of excellence and keep all the benefits of arts education accessible to the broader community.
- If your family is a pledging member of St. Luke's Episcopal Church, we are grateful that you have already made a financial commitment to our ministries, and ask that you give to this specific programming only as you see fit.

*\*St. Luke's Episcopal Church is a nonprofit organization. If you have questions about the tax deductibility of any contribution to St. Luke's Episcopal Church, please contact your tax advisor.*

Parental support is vital to the success of the choral program at St. Luke's Salisbury. Please evaluate your family's financial situation and support this program that is important to your child and family. Each chorister receives **over 50 hours of excellent instruction, rehearsal and performance time each year in choir alone.** Parents supporting at the fair market value level (see above) pay under \$10 per hour for direct contact time. Compare this amount to other activities such as instrumental music lessons, karate, dance, etc. Please support at a level commensurate with the valuable experience they receive. Please complete the financial commitment form so we can plan for the year.

**Your financial support will always remain confidential.**

**For your convenience!** Recurring donations may be made online on our website through credit, debit or electronic transfer from your account to ours. If you would like to donate on a monthly or weekly basis, you can set this up and not have to remember each payment time. Recurring payments may be set up through your financial institution. Contact our Office Manager, Mark Bias at [mbias@SLS.church](mailto:mbias@SLS.church) or 704-633-3221 for assistance.

One-time donations may be made at [www.SLS.church/give](http://www.SLS.church/give) (choose MUSIC MINISTRY from drop-down menu). Checks may be mailed to 131 W. Council St., Salisbury, NC 28144 made out to St. Luke's Episcopal Church with "choir program" in memo line. Checks may also be brought to rehearsals and delivered to Stephen Williams.

**A financial commitment from your family will have a significant impact in the life of your child and in the lives of all the diverse and talented young people who study, perform, and grow at St. Luke's Episcopal Church Salisbury, NC.**

## St. Luke's Episcopal Church Choir Program K. 2023-2024 Tentative Schedule

*Choristers and their families are always invited to our Parish Meal on Wednesdays at 6pm,  
directly following rehearsal*

### August

16<sup>th</sup>, 5:15-6pm - Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse  
 20<sup>th</sup>, 4pm- TeenVoices information meeting/ rehearsal \*Rehearsals TBD  
 23<sup>rd</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse  
 30<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse

### September

3<sup>rd</sup>, Choristers sing for 10:30am liturgy, 9:30am call time for rehearsal  
 6<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse  
 13<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse

20<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse  
27<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse

### **October**

1<sup>st</sup>, Choristers sing for 10:30am liturgy, 9:30am call time for rehearsal  
4<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse  
8<sup>th</sup>. 4pm- Blessing of the Animals outdoor liturgy. Choristers possibly sing.  
11<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse  
18<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse  
25<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse

### **November**

1<sup>st</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse  
5<sup>th</sup> Choristers sing for 10:30am liturgy, 9:30am call time for rehearsal  
8<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse  
10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>, Chorister Festival, Atlanta GA  
15<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse  
22<sup>nd</sup> - No Rehearsal  
29<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse  
30<sup>th</sup> Performance with Salisbury Symphony Youth Orchestra at St. Luke's, 6pm, call time TBA

### **December**

3<sup>rd</sup>- Choristers sing for 10:30am liturgy, 9:30am call time for rehearsal  
Lessons and Carols, 5:30pm, Choristers sing  
6<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse  
13<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse  
16<sup>th</sup>- Caroling to nursing home and home-bound members and family, time TBA  
20<sup>th</sup> Children's & Youth Choirs rehearse, Christmas Party & Pageant rehearsal to follow  
24<sup>th</sup>- Christmas Eve Pageant, 4pm

### **January**

10<sup>th</sup>- Rehearsals resume  
17<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse  
24<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse  
31<sup>st</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse

### **February**

4<sup>th</sup> Choristers sing for 10:30am liturgy, 9:30am call time for rehearsal  
7<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse  
14<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse  
21<sup>st</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse  
28<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse

### **March**

3<sup>rd</sup> Choristers sing for 10:30am liturgy, 9:30am call time for rehearsal  
6<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse (possible cancel due to Spring Break)  
13<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse  
20<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse

24th- Palm Sunday, Choristers sing for 10:30am liturgy, 9:30am call time for rehearsal  
27<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse

### **April**

3<sup>rd</sup> Choristers sing for 10:30am liturgy, 9:30am call time for rehearsal  
7<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse  
10<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse  
17<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse  
24<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse

### **May**

1<sup>st</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse  
5<sup>th</sup> Choristers sing for 10:30am liturgy, 9:30am call time for rehearsal  
8<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse  
15<sup>th</sup> Children's and Youth Choirs rehearse, Party to follow  
19<sup>th</sup>- Youth Sunday, Choristers sing for 10:30am liturgy, 9:30am call time for rehearsal