

PODIUM

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President's Message

Amy Branahl

IL-ACDA President
New Trier High School

Restoration, Renewal, and Connection Ahead

Today, I am incredibly thankful for our entire board and their consistent efforts to move Illinois ACDA forward. All our conductors and singers have gone through the December musician's life, and it is my hope that you were able to get some rest after the busy season. Something I have been reflecting on these days is just how difficult our jobs can be, and how we need to carve out time to connect with one another to be encouraged. As I look back over my experience directing church choirs, professional singers, children's choirs, or school ensembles, these early months of the new year frequently put a choir's endurance to the test. The weather is often sub-zero, the excitement of December programming has passed, and now what remains is our commitment to the choir, and our passion for singing together. As conductors, this is a time when we may struggle to maintain momentum, even as the new year demands us to continue recruitment.

Add financial concerns, fundraising or marketing efforts, and it's easy to see how much this time of year asks of us. Although I am lucky to have wonderful colleagues who run alongside me, this time can also feel lonely and isolating. We face discouragement when systems that exist in our organizations and schools bring unexpected challenges and roadblocks for singers to join us. We all develop our own toolkits for coping with these setbacks and although it might sound cheesy, I have been listening to Taylor Swift's "Death by a Thousand Cuts," and finding energy in the upbeat tune, even as the message is one of heartbreak. In my daily effort for personal growth, I have been reminding myself that instead of seeing only the hurdle, try to find one thing that I can appreciate about that day or situation. How can I be more generous today? How can I change my outlook on this situation and change my mindset? How can I find times to connect with my colleagues?

When I try to answer those questions, it leads me back to ACDA. I always find that when I attend an ACDA event, I am renewed recharged and excited to go back to my choirs and be able to have a deep appreciation for the music we make together and the future. It was great to see so many people at the IMEC convention and please Save the Date for the following events!

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Two-Year College Choirs

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- [Treble North Festival](#)
- [ACDA Midwestern Convention in Milwaukee, WI. February 25-28, 2026](#)
- [IL-ACDA Summer ReTreat. Bloomington-Normal, IL. June 25-26, 2026](#)

May you be encouraged during these winter months and excited to see Illinois ACDA continues to grow and thrive for all our conductors and choral musicians across the state.

With gratitude,

Amy J. Branahl
President, Illinois ACDA

Now What?

Jen Reece

District 2
Dunlap High School

After thirty-five years, the final chord of a choral teaching career is more than a conclusion; it is a transition from a life of synchronized voices into a new, unfamiliar silence. For decades, your entire being was set by the school calendar and the rhythmic demands of the rehearsal hall. Your identity was literally tied to the podium, where you were responsible for the breath, pitch, text, and harmony of an entire community. Stepping away in 2026 means letting go of that all-consuming role to rediscover who you are when you are no longer the one holding the baton.

Finding joy in this new chapter begins with reclaiming your own voice. For thirty-five years, your relationship with music was pedagogical—listening for vowel shapes, correcting cutoffs, and selecting repertoire based on how many tenors you have versus curriculum needs. Retirement offers the extraordinary freedom to return to music as a personal hobby rather than a professional duty. You can now explore songs and styles for the sheer pleasure of singing, free from the pressure of a looming concert or a grading deadline. In this quiet, unrestricted space, you rediscover the simple "flow" of making music purely to fill your own cup.

Outside the rehearsal hall, you can finally enjoy the music and the fellowship without having to be the one in charge. You can join a community ensemble or a local choir, standing on the risers rather than in front of them. This shift from leader to participant allows you to enjoy the camaraderie of collaboration without the administrative headaches of school leadership. You may also find purpose in quieter ways, like attending performances as an audience member, mentoring a young director, or volunteering on a local arts board. Your value is no longer measured by your productivity, but by your presence and your ongoing love for the art.

Ultimately, this transition is a shift in perspective. Your purpose is no longer defined by the trophies on the wall or the precision of a spring concert, but by the daily pursuit of your own interests and growth. In music, a "rest" is not the absence of sound but a vital, rhythmic preparation, allowing something new to begin. After thirty-five years of helping others find their voice, it is finally time to listen to your own.

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Changing School Culture Through an Open Door Policy in Choral Education

Mitchell Barrett

District 7
Twin Groves Middle School

One of the many lessons I have learned as an early-career music educator is that the success of a program often depends on how well others understand the work happening inside the classroom. When I first arrived at my school as a newly-hired teacher, choir was an after-school club, one that many students, staff members, and even administrators were largely unaware of. As music educators, we are unfortunately not always at the forefront of everyone’s minds and have to constantly advocate for the value of what we do. As the only general music and choir teacher in my building, I often felt that no one fully understood the scope of my work or the limited resources available to me, compared to other teachers.

As I began to build relationships with staff members in my school, people started to wonder what would happen in my classroom. If anyone ever asked about how things were going with a student or were just curious about what music was like, I invited them to check it out for themselves. Over time, this evolved into what I now call my open door policy: a commitment to welcoming others into my classroom whenever possible.

These visitors would get to experience firsthand the many successes and struggles that were happening every day. Whether I was looking for audience members when students were preparing to perform or wanting advice on how to handle behavior for a certain student, I always made sure to bring individuals into my classroom so they could understand the culture that I was creating. This included inviting social workers, secretaries, language specialists, coaches, other teacher colleagues who were on their lunch or plan time.

This open door approach even applied to other students. I found that something as simple as a “bring your friend to choir day” was far more impactful than an announcement or poster. Once other students started to become aware of choir being a place to sing with your friends and make fun music, it spread like wildfire. That growing visibility eventually led to me inviting administrators and highlighting the lack of access students had to choir during the school day. These discussions led to proposing choir as a curricular class.

Because of these relationships I built with staff and administration, I was able to create more opportunities that would continue the growth of my program. One significant example came when I was asked to serve on a task force that examined the lack of opportunities students had for choice within their current school day schedule. Alongside the other task force members, I presented our findings at a school board meeting, resulting in approval for choir to be offered as a curricular class the following year.

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Please reach out to Amy Branahl if you are interested in any open positions at amyacda@gmail.com

If you have any questions or comments, please reach out at www.il-acda.org/contact-2

Changing School Culture Through an Open Door Policy in Choral Education continued ____

As music educators, it can be easy to keep our door closed both figuratively and literally as we are always keeping busy and can get caught up in solving the problem ourselves. However, the more people we make aware of the musical excellence within our school community, the more others want to support the hard work you are doing and help you grow. This open door policy can even be taken beyond the walls of your own classroom. From performing the national anthem at school sporting events, to bringing your choir to the surrounding elementary schools, you are introducing to someone the value of your program and why it matters to your students. By intentionally opening our doors to our administrators and colleagues, we are fostering advocacy that elevates choral experiences and shifting the school culture to recognize choir as an essential part of our students' education.

Impostor Syndrome in the Choral Classroom _____

Carol Munn

Middle School/Junior High
McHenry Middle School

Impostor syndrome is a term I did not even know existed early in my career, but the feeling itself was very familiar. As a choral director, those feelings often surfaced during my first years in the classroom, conducting concerts, or speaking in front of colleagues. Over my 30 year career in music education, I have experienced impostor syndrome many times. What I have learned is that these feelings do not necessarily indicate a lack of ability. In many cases, they signaled my desire to do the work well and to continue growing as an educator.

Early in my career, I worried that I did not know enough to be leading a choir. I feared that someone would eventually realize I was not as capable as I appeared. Looking back, I now realize that acknowledging what we do not yet know can be a strength rather than a weakness. The willingness to ask questions, listen to others, and remain open to learning is what helps teachers grow. A sense of humility and curiosity allowed me to improve and better serve my students, even when self-doubt was present.

My undergraduate training in music education focused on piano and flute, and I felt unprepared to direct a choir when I began teaching. Despite this, every position I have held required choral instruction in some form. To compensate for my feelings of inadequacy teaching middle school chorus, I spent many summers studying choral repertoire by listening to recordings, reading scores, and figuring out what would work for my students. Over time, I began to understand what types of music were too simple, unrelatable, or ineffective, and which pieces truly engaged both my middle school singers and myself. As I developed my own sense of style and built a repertoire library I believed in, my confidence slowly grew. Teaching music I felt passionate about helped both my students and me enjoy the rehearsal process more fully.

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I also learned that my confidence came from developing a teaching style that reflects who I was. Early in my career, I worked alongside veteran teachers whose classroom management styles differed greatly from my own. When I tried to replicate their methods, they failed miserably in my classroom. I quickly realized that choir rehearsals cannot be run like traditional academic classes. Singing requires trust, vulnerability, and a sense of safety. When I focused on building relationships and meeting students where they were, rehearsals became more collaborative and productive. My students were more engaged, and I felt more comfortable being myself in front of them

One of the most helpful shifts I made was learning to focus less on myself and more on those I was teaching. My sense of impostor syndrome tends to grow when attention turns inward and becomes centered on fear or my own self-judgment. When I redirected my focus toward my students and the musical experience we were creating together, my nervousness eased. The truth I found was that my students and colleagues did not want to judge me, rather, they wanted meaningful, authentic experiences. Over time, I have learned that when I teach with passion, authenticity, and a genuine desire to serve my students, confidence follows. To those of you feeling any sense of inadequacy, know that questioning yourself is not a sign that you do not belong. It is often the path to becoming a more passionate and authentic teacher and musician.

The Importance of Warm-Ups in an Elementary Children's Choir

Marianna Kosaya

Children's Choirs
Campanella Center

Vocal warm-ups are one of the most important and helpful parts of any children's choir rehearsal. They serve as a gentle way to wake up young voices and prepare singers for healthy, confident music-making. Whether warm-ups are done with the full choir or in smaller groups, dedicating 15–20 minutes to this process helps establish focus, unity, and a positive rehearsal atmosphere.

It can be tempting to change warm-up exercises frequently, but consistency is essential. If a musical or technical goal has not yet been achieved, it is far more effective to repeat familiar exercises rather than constantly introduce new ones. Children learn best through repetition, and stable warm-up routines help them develop reliable vocal habits and growing confidence in their singing.

Well-planned warm-ups offer many benefits. They gradually activate and strengthen the vocal apparatus, helping young singers avoid strain and fatigue. Warm-ups also teach children to listen carefully—to themselves and to others—and to recognize healthy tone quality.

Over time, this attentive listening helps choirs overcome vocal and ensemble challenges more efficiently when working on repertoire. In addition, regular warm-ups support the development of musical memory, pitch accuracy, and a strong sense of rhythm.

In my own work, I rely on a small set of favorite exercises that combine technique with playfulness. Singing on the syllables “cou-cou” in a descending pattern (G–E, G–E, G–E, D–C) helps singers experience the descending minor third and encourages natural vocal release. The exercise “Beady, beady, beady, beady eyes!” sung stepwise (C–D–E–F–G–F–E–D–C) is especially effective for developing clear diction and reinforcing stepwise motion both ascending and descending. For vowel unification, “mee-mo, mee-mo, mee-mo, mee-mo, ma” (in D major: A–F, G–E, F–D, E–C, D) on descending intervals supports healthy vowel shaping and smooth transitions between vocal registers. I often begin rehearsals with a playful movement exercise such as “Lean forward, lean backward,” which helps warm up the body, release tension, and bring energy and focus into the room.

A successful warm-up routine progresses from simple to more complex tasks, with clear demonstration from the conductor and regular, thoughtful practice. In the end, warm-ups form the foundation of a choir's sound, helping young singers develop healthy voices and a lifelong joy in making music together. As conductors and educators, we can see how these warm-ups build not only technique but also focus, confidence, and fun in our young singers.

Treble Repertoire

Ali Kordelewski

Treble Choirs

Plainfield East High School

“Repertoire is the choral educator’s textbook.” This quote is something that is consistently talked about in the field of choral music education. One of the biggest challenges that we face in music education is finding the repertoire that can best serve the needs of the students in our beginning treble and bass ensembles. It is often difficult to find music that has great depth for those beginning ensembles. One of my goals as the Treble R&R Chair is to make a large resource for those looking for repertoire for all treble ensembles. I began this project last year, and am seeking help from other educators to share their favorite treble works. I plan to release this running document this spring to ACDA members and leave the form open throughout my time as treble chair. This way, when educators find a piece that they enjoy and has worked well for their ensemble, it can be shared through our resource.

We are seeking a variety of repertoire selections. Although the form only has 3 suggestions, please feel free to make as many selections as you wish, filling out the form as many times as you would like. One of my goals also as a rep is to provide teachers in all areas with resources. Though my inspiration was to find a large selection of treble repertoire for beginning treble ensembles, I am hoping that this resource will be a guide for those who teach elementary, middle school, high school, and college.

To contribute to the resource, please click on the following link: [Treble Choir Repertoire Suggestions](#).

I am looking forward to sharing with you the resource that is created in the spring!



**Check out IL-ACDA's Favorite Choral
Works on pages 12 and 13!**

Puja Ramaswamy

Secretary

Lake View High School

As choral directors, we often shoulder the primary weight of decision-making, including repertoire choices and scheduling. However, intentionally delegating responsibilities allows us to move beyond a top-down approach. This cultivation of leadership invites students into the process, ensuring their voices are heard and they are invested in the learning process.

To begin fostering a culture of ownership, consider these foundational methods for integrating student leadership into your daily rehearsals.

1. Fostering Ownership Through Student Leadership Roles

Walking into a choral rehearsal for the first time can be a daunting experience for any student. For those of us who teach beginners, we know that the key to a successful year lies in creating an environment where singers feel safe, respected, and empowered to explore their voices. One of the most effective ways to establish this culture is by providing a structure that promotes ensemble ownership.

The “Weekly Job” System

To integrate leadership into the daily routine, I implement a system where every student is responsible for a weekly “job.” These roles are designed to gently push students toward the front of the classroom, transitioning them from passive participants to active contributors.

Roles can be tailored to various personality types and comfort levels:

- **Administrative & Support:** Positions like Attendance Taker or Materials Manager provide a sense of responsibility without requiring high-profile performance. These are often ideal for more reserved students.
- **Physical & Creative:** Roles such as the Stretcher (who leads physical warm-ups) or the Section Leader cater to students who are already comfortable in the spotlight.
- **The “Assassin”:** A unique role that adds an element of engagement and play to the classroom dynamic.

Scaffolding for Success

By requiring students to sign up once or twice per quarter, we ensure that leadership is a shared experience rather than a privilege for a select few. Because these roles are accessible regardless of musical ability, they provide a low-stakes environment for students to expand their comfort zones. Over time, this consistent exposure builds the confidence necessary for vocal performance.

While student choice is a priority in this process, a student will be assigned a role if they haven’t selected one by the deadline to ensure that every learner is included in the rehearsal culture. This approach guarantees that everyone has the opportunity to develop their leadership identity.

4th Period Advanced Choir Jobs SIGN UP 2 TIMES										
	week of 1/6	week of 1/12	week of 1/20	week of 1/26	week of 2/2	week of 2/9	week of 2/17	week of 2/23	week of 3/2	
Attendance Taker: take attendance										
Stretcher: lead stretches										
Materials: lead stretches										
Soprano Section Leader: lead small group 2x a week										
Alto Section Leader: lead small group 2x a week										
Tenor Section Leader: lead small group 2x a week										
Bass Section Leader: lead small group 2x a week										
Assassin: take someone's job if they're absent										

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2. Empowering the Ensemble Through Repertoire Selection

One of the most impactful ways to validate student identity is to involve the ensemble in the repertoire selection process. As educators, we have the unique opportunity to program music that reflects our students' diverse backgrounds, cultures, and musical interests.

The Selection Process: A Collaborative Framework

To integrate student voice into our curriculum, I dedicate space for the ensemble to select one piece for each concert program. This process not only increases engagement but also develops critical listening skills.

1. **Exploration:** We begin by setting aside a class period to research various publishing sites. Students identify pieces that resonate with them and compile a shared document of recording links.
2. **Pedagogical Review:** I review the list to ensure each selection is developmentally appropriate regarding vocal ranges and technical difficulty.
3. **Critical Analysis:** After listening to the narrowed-down selections, students engage in a structured analysis by answering the following prompts:
 - *Classification:* What are the language, genre, and stylistic characteristics of this piece?
 - *Texture:* How do the vocal parts interact?
 - *Assessment:* What will be the most significant technical or musical challenge of this song?

From Discussion to Decision

Following the listening session, students engage in a "turn-and-talk" to defend their choices and share insights with their peers. This peer-to-peer dialogue culminates in a vote.

The results of this process are often surprising; students frequently gravitate toward more challenging or complex works and witnessing their investment in a piece they "discovered" is the most rewarding aspect of this collaborative approach.

3. Scaffolding Independent Practice for Small Group Rehearsals

A common realization for many educators is that students do not instinctively know how to practice effectively on their own. Purposeful practice is a skill that must be explicitly taught and refined through successful experience. While we model these strategies during full ensemble rehearsals, students often struggle to transfer those skills to a student-led sectional.

To bridge this gap, I developed a structured Small Group Protocol designed to support independent group learning through a three-step implementation:

Phase 1: Modeling of Strategies

To provide necessary context, I utilize a visible "Practice Strategy Checklist" during full rehearsals. As we encounter musical hurdles, I explicitly name the strategy we are using (e.g., "Slow down the tempo" or "Sing on solfege") and check it off on the list. This helps students recognize which specific tool is appropriate for a particular musical challenge.

Phase 2: Role Distribution

Running a sectional can be a daunting task for a single student leader. To ease this pressure and encourage collaboration, I created multiple roles to distribute the workload. I model each role within the full ensemble to ensure everyone understands how they contribute to a successful rehearsal.

Phase 3: Facilitated Small Group Work

Finally, students transition into their voice parts to begin their independent work. The first task of each group is to assign roles. During this time, my role shifts from "director" to "facilitator." I circulate among the groups to offer targeted assistance and ensure the groups remain focused and productive.

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<u>PRACTICE STRATEGIES -</u>	<u>SMALL GROUP ROLES</u>
PICK 1 or 2 for your sectional to help master the section	→ Pitch Professor: _____ <small>Give starting pitch by using the music keyboard on the chromebook</small>
<input type="checkbox"/> Speak the lyrics in rhythm	→ Conductor: _____ <small>Establish and maintain the beat by tapping it</small>
<input type="checkbox"/> Sing on solfege	→ Section Leader: _____ <small>Establish the practice space and encourage students to stay engaged</small>
<input type="checkbox"/> Practice with a metronome	→ Doctor: _____ <small>Identify specific areas of challenge and pick a strategy to use</small>
<input type="checkbox"/> Mark the score (breath marks, dynamics, etc.)	→ Checklist Checker: _____ <small>Identify the strategies used on the checklist and return it to the teacher</small>
<input type="checkbox"/> Sing on a neutral syllable (isolate pitch and rhythmic accuracy)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Slow down the tempo	
<input type="checkbox"/> Match vowel shapes (unified sound)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Listen to a recording	

Building a culture of student leadership is a continuous journey. I hope these strategies offer a helpful starting point for fostering ownership and agency within your own program. I look forward to continuing this conversation and supporting our collective growth as music educators.

The Exciting World of the IL-ACDA Treasurer

Paul Nielsen

Treasurer

Grayslake North High School (retired)

I'm finding that the role of treasurer is morphing as technology changes the scope of the treasurer's tasks and I'll share the interesting changes and happenings in IL-ACDA. From switching to a new domain host to helping members plan successful events, the treasurer does a lot of work behind the scenes.

While finances are a big part of the job of my position as treasurer (depositing money in the bank, writing checks, paying bills), I also work with ADCA members in planning successful events. Each year, the event organizers submit a proposed budget to me one year out. The goal is to have each event break even. If IL-ACDA makes too much money on an event, then that event budget may need lower registration prices. If too much money is spent, then the discussion begins about needing to raise registration prices or find ways to trim expenses. Most of our events are well established and consistently come in at the break-even mark. The trickiest events to forecast are the Summer ReTreat and Fall Conferences.

The treasurer also works with National ACDA on a number of things. The IL-ACDA's monthly bank statements are sent to National as well as the quarterly check register. The wonderful financial folks at National double check the treasurer's work and administer occasional audits. They provide us as well with liability insurance for our fun IL-ACDA events, which many sites often require. National also takes care of the annual issuing of 1099s to the clinicians that we pay \$600 or more. On my end, I have to provide a current W9 form to National for each hired clinician and accompanist.

In recent months, several changes occurred which are worth mentioning. IL-ACDA has moved over to Zeffy from PayPal. Zeffy is designed for non-profits and there are no fees for transactions unlike PayPal, where fees were about \$1000 annually. That is a very significant saving for us. Zeffy has also enabled us to receive some corporate donations, which is always very appreciated. Since our domain host retired last year, we have moved over to a new host. Although our costs have gone up a bit with the new host, the transition was seamless. Being treasurer also meant that I had to go through the process of confirming our not-for-profit status with PNC bank. They required copies of our board minutes, a statement from National, and some other pieces of information. It took three meetings at PNC to take care of this issue, but fortunately, my wife and I pass the branch on our walks to the coffee shop in town. I should note that our status as an organization is Not For Profit (NFP), but we are not tax-exempt. It is not possible for us to be tax-exempt due to being under the financial umbrella of National ACDA.

Outside of watching over all the electronic transactions, the treasurer also records the financials in Quicken and balances the account monthly. At quarterly board meetings, I provide a report on the finances, including current budget vs. actual figures and event recaps. Annually, I will also work on and present next year's fiscal budget to the board for consideration. Since our main source of income comes from membership dues, this is always a work in progress.

For those of you that have read this far, I applaud you. If you ever have any questions about IL-ACDA finances, I would be more than happy to answer them. This is work I really enjoy doing, especially for this wonderful organization.

Invitation to Participate in the Music in Worship Festival 2026

Keith Hampton

Music in Worship

Chicago Community Chorus

In May 2025, Sean Newman shared with members of the Illinois ACDA Board the planning document he and Michele Hecht used for the Music in Worship Festival they presented in 2018. I expressed my full support for the idea of hosting a Music in Worship Festival in 2026.

In June 2025, Sean J. M. Newman, Jeff Hunt, and I met to begin planning an Illinois ACDA Music in Worship Festival. As of this writing, the details are as follows:

Music in Worship Festival

Saturday, November 7th, 2026 from 8:30am-6:00pm

Pilgrim Congregational Church: An Open and Affirming Church since 1998

460 Lake Street

Oak Park, IL 60302

- There is a large lockable room for people to store their belongings upstairs.
- There is a parking lot available for 110 cars and a wheelchair lift.
- There are four rooms for voice part sectionals, each including a piano.

This invitation is open to church and community choirs/choruses along with any singers or choruses that have an interest in sacred music.

- The preliminary plan is for all the music to be sung as a mass choir
- We will encourage the mass choir singing verses on hymns (with congregational singing), diverse repertoire, testimonials from church choir members' experience
- Tentatively, Keith Hampton, Jeff Hunt, and Sean J. M. Newman will serve as Mass Choir conductors
- Stephen Uhl will serve as the festival accompanist. He will also run a sectional.
- Lunch will take place at Pilgrim Congregational Church
- The goal is for this to be an annual event, regardless of who is on the IL-ACDA board.

If you are interested in participating or need more information, please contact:

Keith Hampton: khampton@chicagocommunitychorus.org

Sean J. M. Newman: seanjmnewman@gmail.com

Jeff Hunt: mmsdir1@aol.com

Favorite Choral Works

Various Repertoire & Resources Chairs

Two-Year Collegiate Choirs (submitted by Patrick O'Shea):

For choirs that can navigate some divisi, René Clausen's beautiful "Prayer" (Roger Dean Publishing / Lorenz Corporation 15/2708R-3, 2009) presents an extremely sensitive setting of a prayer by Mother Teresa of Calcutta. The text emphasizes selfless service and a desire that others see not the person, but the divine within that person. The work builds to a moving dynamic peak on the text "let them look up and see," with first sopranos reaching a sustained A5 (though one or two singers would be sufficient in a chamber group). Second basses are called upon to produce E2 and D2, but these may be omitted if too low for the ensemble. Mostly homorhythmic, the setting does present some lovely imitative writing as well, particularly well suited to emphasizing key words in the text, such as the repeated statements of "flood my soul."

"Prayer" is a stretch for many choirs, but its fine compositional craft and heartfelt connection to the deeply referent text is certainly worth the effort.

Children's Choirs (submitted by Marianna Kosaya):

Clever Chameleon

Andy Beck

Whimsical original text (about a chameleon)

Alfred Publishing

J.W. Pepper ID: 10514796

Supplier ID: 00-43339UPC: 038081488806

Two-Part

Shoo Fly!

Arr. Greg Gilpin / Emily Crocker (American folk)

Based on American folk songs ("Shoo Fly, Don't Bother Me" + others)

Hal Leonard

J.W. Pepper ID: 10752237

Supplier ID: 46372UPC: 038081527512

Two-Part

The High Barbary

Arr. Emily Crocker

Traditional folk text (16th-century sea shanty)

Hal Leonard

J.W. Pepper ID: 11366140

Supplier ID: 00373181UPC: 196288016137

Two-Part

I Have a Dream

Kim Noller

Inspiring original text (MLK Jr. theme)

Excelcia Music Publishing, LLC

J.W. Pepper ID: 11393035

Supplier ID: UTP2203E

Two-Part

Collegiate Choirs (submitted by Cory Boulton):

A World Gone Quiet
By Chris Maunu
SATB
chrismaunu.com

Community Choirs (submitted by Jennifer Whiting):

North
by Ryan O'Neal (a.k.a. Sleeping at Last)
arr. George Chung
SATB, with vocal solo, piano, and optional violin

This tender song speaks to the universal yearning for home. Ryan O'Neal's personal experience inspired his lyrics, which resonate with anyone searching for a permanent place to live. The refrain, "Give us bread, give us salt, give us wine," settles in the heart as a poignant prayer.

Sheet music for George Chung's arrangement of "North" by Ryan O'Neal (a.k.a. Sleeping at Last) is available for free, provided you make a donation to a charity. This is part of a special tradition set up by the artist. To participate in the "North" tradition and receive a score of George Chung's arrangement, fill out the following request form (via Vancouver Youth Choir):
<https://forms.gle/mTcL9yXzYYGJNneu7>

Video - Santa Fe Desert Chorale, Joshua Habermann conducting: <https://youtu.be/QUTwigITrQM>

Senior High School Choirs (submitted by Roland Hatcher):

Over the Rainbow - arr. Jacob Narverud (SATB div)
<https://www.jwpepper.com/over-the-rainbow-11504102/p>

With all the Wicked For Good craze, I stumbled across this incredibly tasteful arrangement of the classic Wizard of Oz tune. The voice leading is outstanding, making dense divis relatively accessible, the harmonization is excellent, and students love it! Couldn't recommend more!

Down by the Riverside - arr. Robert T. Gibson (SATB or SAB)

<https://www.jwpepper.com/down-by-the-riverside-11393276/p>

A super refreshing take on a classic spiritual. Features low voices on the melody, has a really cool middle section that uses parallel minor to provide a little contrast. Have used in festival formats, middle school step up day formats, and for regular old concerts and is always a hit. Add drums and bass! SATB and SAB both excellent arrangements!

Diversity Initiatives (submitted by Nythia Martinez):

Užaugo Liepa (Up Grew the Linden Tree)
Abridged Festival Version
Music by Kęstutis Daugirdas
Text source: based on a traditional Lithuanian part-song
Publisher: Daugirdas Music



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IL-ACDA leads and sponsors events to support all aspects of the advancement of choral arts in the state of Illinois. Please refer to our website (www.il-acda.org/events and www.il-acda.org/awards) for more information on the events and award opportunities listed below:

Illinois ACDA Reception at the ACDA Midwestern Regional Conference

Thursday, February 26th, 2026

6:00-7:00pm

Milwaukee Brat House

1013 N. Doctor Martin Luther King Jr Drive

Milwaukee, WI

Treble Fest “North”

April 17th, 2026

College of DuPage

Glen Ellyn, IL

Coordinator: Ali Kordelewski, Treble Choir Repertoire and Repertoires Chair

IL-ACDA Summer ReTreat 2026: “Voices of Leadership: Cultivating Unity and Inspiration in Choral Music”

June 24th-25th, 2027

Normal, IL

Headliners: Kristina MacMullen and Dan Davison

IL-ACDA Music in Worship Festival

November 7th, 2026

Pilgrim Congregational Church

Oak Park, IL

Coordinators: Sean J. M. Newman, *Podium* Editor and Keith Hampton, Music in Worship Chair

ACDA National Conference

March 7th-10th, 2027

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Please look for additional events and opportunities on our website (www.il-acda.org) and in future editions of the Podium.