



Notable News

July 2021
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Singing a New Song Together

This past year, over 100 young singers filled the parking lots of Blossom Hill Mennonite Church and Neffsville Mennonite Church with music each Tuesday night from late August through mid-May. MCCL staff and singers rehearsed together learning excellent choral music from around the world and across time. They met outside, used specially designed singing masks made by a grandparent volunteer, and maintained physical distance. It all created challenges, yet also brought positive surprises of musical growth and community among singers.

Along with learning the choral music,

singers learned accompaniment to each piece including West African drumming, body percussion, sign language, solfege hand signs, tuned water glasses, mallet instruments, tone chimes, Latin dance, and upcycled percussion instruments. Singers invested hours in rigorous learning during Tuesday rehearsals and weekly at-home practice. They submitted their individual audio recordings which were compiled into rich choral unity. The resulting music shared at our fall and spring concerts was full of beauty, hope, and joy!

"I've never seen anything like this in my life. I'm amazed. Thank you for sharing this incredible music with us."

- Concert Attendee



Learning from Guest Artists & Clinicians



A highlight this year was meeting and working with professional musicians. In the fall, MCCL singers met Andrew Peterson and Randall Goodgame, singer-songwriters from Nashville, TN, on ZOOM and created virtual choir projects with them. Singers also

learned West African drumming from Tammi Hesson, local drum professor, and body percussion from Matthew Woodson, local percussionist.

This spring, singers partnered with The Walking Roots Band, a folk band from Harrisonburg, VA, and Bryan Moyer Suderman of Ontario, Canada. Matthew Woodson returned to help singers deepen their understanding of percussion through upcycled instruments and to learn more complicated layers of body percussion. Emily Grimes, local music teacher at Lancaster Mennonite School, taught Latin dance steps for one piece.

This breadth and variety of musical instruction and experiences provided singers with holistic musical development. Each singer grew in musicianship and confidence.

"This was an awesome choir year despite all the challenges we faced as a choir. All the new ways we learned to make and share music this semester were amazing, and I think that all of our concerts turned out great. I can't wait to make music again next semester!"

- Jared Rothenberger, high school singer

Summer Tour 2021

MCCL singers in grades 6 through 12 toured Lancaster and Dauphin counties for two days. On June 10, they hiked at House Rock Nature Preserve, shared an outdoor concert with Oak Leaf Manor South residents, saw *Esther* at Sight and Sound, and enjoyed Peruvian food from Frisco's Chicken. On June 11, singers engaged in team-building activities at Camp Hebron and performed concerts for Camp Hebron summer staff, as well as for parents and guests at Lititz Springs Park. Each day also held small group times for devotions and games, along with informal time to hang out with peers. Summer tour is an amazing way to wrap up a year of hard work!



Top left: Chamber Choir singers at Camp Hebron
 Bottom left: MCCL performing at Lititz Springs Park
 Top right: Concert Choir singers at Camp Hebron

Music & More Camp

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**MCCL SUMMER CAMP
 MUSIC AND MORE**

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MCCL will host our first-ever summer camp for 46 children in kindergarten to grade 5 on June 22, 23, and 24. The focus of the week is fun, friendships, music and more. Campers will experience woodworking, cooking, hiking, gardening, folk dance, art, and of course singing! Seven current high school MCCL singers will serve as junior counse-

lors leading games and providing support for workshop leaders. Each junior counselor brings excitement to help lead MCCL's new camp.

"I am excited to inspire and help convey the joy of music to a younger generation. I also enjoy children and how they interact with each other and the world."

- Abrianna Nissley, high school singer

Looking Ahead to 2021-2022 MCCL Choir Season

MCCL anticipates a regular choir season which will begin in late August 2021. MCCL will continue to monitor recommendations of the national choral community, local schools, and CDC related to Covid 19. Registration will open in July 2021. Key highlights for next year will be:

- Engaging weekly rehearsals with MCCL staff and guest clinicians focused on excellent choral singing and community!
- Spanish-themed Christmas concerts with local guest artists featuring marimba, harp, and guitar.
- MCCL GO! Czech Republic summer tour for high school singers with Eastern Mennonite Missions.
- Music in the Park at Hershey Park and summer tour to Philadelphia, New Jersey, and Delaware for middle school singers.
- A fun-filled second annual summer camp for elementary singers!

Visit www.mennonitechildrenschoir.org for more information about MCCL's 2021-2022 choir year!

Staff & Advisory Board Transitions

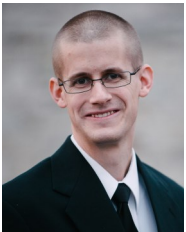
A Fond Farewell



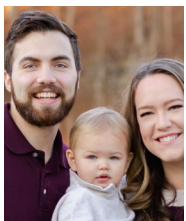
Donna Hershey became MCCL's first bookkeeper in 2013. All four of her children sang in MCCL, and her youngest graduated this year. Her gifts of organization, attention to detail, and accounting knowledge strengthened MCCL financial systems. Donna said, "I enjoyed the people I've rubbed shoulders with in MCCL (parents, staff, and board). I will miss the warm friendships. MCCL is wonderful organization teaching the highest quality of choral singing." Donna, thank you for serving with excellence and joy. We will miss you!



Melody Martin directed the Choristers program for two years. Previously, she sang in MCCL for seven years, served as an accompanist/chaperone for domestic and international tours, and was the Prelude Music assistant. Melody and her husband, Benji, also an MCCL alum, recently welcomed their first daughter, Aletheia, born in June 2021. Reflecting on her time with MCCL, Melody shared, "MCCL shaped my life through providing great community, opportunities for growth and learning, and rich musical experiences." She looks forward to staying connected with MCCL in the years to come. You will be missed, Melody!



Jonathan Shoff joined as Chamber Choir accompanist in fall 2009. In his time with MCCL he directed Men's Ensemble, assisted with the start of the Choristers programs, and served as interim Prelude Music director. His skills at the piano, his humor, and his passion for excellent music brought joy and challenged singers to grow! We will continue to see Jonathan around MCCL since his children will continue singing in MCCL. Jonathan shared, "I have been so blessed in my time with MCCL. The singers and staff are such caring people who truly believe in glorifying Jesus Christ through excellent choral singing." We express deep thanks to Jonathan for his commitment to the mission of MCCL and his care for MCCL singers. Jonathan (aka Mr. Shoff) you will be greatly missed!



Noah Martin served on the advisory board for five years. As the first alumni on the board, he played a significant role in strengthening connection to alumni. His skills in development increased MCCL's business sponsorship partnerships. Noah credits his time on the board to "providing a learning environment where he grew in leadership." His words for MCCL singers are: "You are a part of something special with MCCL. Keep up the good work!" Noah, we will miss your voice!

A Warm Welcome



Nancy Stauffer joined MCCL as a volunteer bookkeeper this spring. Currently retired, she, along with her husband Leon, co-founded Mennonite Your Way Tours 35 years ago, where she also served as bookkeeper. Nancy's grandsons sang in MCCL, and she is happy to see another generation of children and youth continuing to learn excellent choral music. We are grateful for her passion for numbers and willingness to serve MCCL. Welcome, Nancy!



Elisa Chodan joined MCCL as an assistant for the 2020-2021 choir year and is delighted to become the new Choristers director and Carol and Concert choirs rehearsal assistant. She is the music director at Veritas Academy and directs the women's chorus at Lancaster Bible College. She shared that "working for MCCL has been a source of absolute refreshment and rest. Though the students and staff are constantly striving toward musical excellence, it is clear that cultivating a loving community is of utmost importance to this group. I'm thrilled to have a small part in this beautiful organization!" Elisa, we look forward to the expertise and nurture you will bring!



Mark Williams comes to MCCL as the interim Men's Ensemble Director. Currently, he is Director of Music at First Presbyterian Church in Lancaster. Mark retired as Director of Choral activities and Chairperson of the Music Department at Pequea Valley High School after teaching for 36 years. In addition to his choral work, he directed the annual musical and taught Music Theory, Music History, Class Piano, Musical Theater, Voice Class, and Applied Music. He is in demand as a clinician, leading masterclasses for high school choirs throughout the area. He has served as a MCCL guest clinician several times in the past eight years. Mark is "looking forward to working with the fine singers and staff of MCCL." We are excited about the passion and excellence Mark Williams will bring to MCCL's choral program next year.



Carissa Sherer will become a new board member in July. She sang in MCCL for five years and is currently a NICU nurse at LGH. She sang four years in college at Eastern Mennonite University, served in India with Eastern Mennonite Missions, and is an accomplished violin player. Carissa said, "I'm looking forward to joining the board so I can give back to an organization that gave so much to me—including friendships, choral education, and the value of self discipline—throughout my high school years." Welcome, Carissa, to the MCCL board!



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...training children and youth to glorify Jesus Christ through excellent choral music that represents the global church around the world and across time.



Parents, if this is addressed to your child who has established a new address, please send updated address to mccl@lancastermennonite.org. Thank

Thank you! Join the MCCL Song!

Each year, local businesses invest in the lives of MCCL singers through business sponsorships. We are grateful for these spring 2021 business sponsors. Your voice in our chorus of support allowed us to keep making music during a difficult and challenging year. Thank you for believing in MCCL!



Register for classes

Prelude Music: K & 1st grade
Choristers I: 2nd - 5th grade
Choristers II: 6th - 8th grade

Audition for choirs

Carol Choir: 2nd - 5th grade
Concert Choir: 6th - 8th grade
Chamber Choir: 9th - 12th grade

For more information or to schedule an audition visit:
www.mennonitechilrenshoir.org/join/register



Mennonite Children's Choir OF LANCASTER