

Lift Every Voice

The Palouse Choral Society is off to a great start for our 27th season as an independent non-profit choir! It is always a joy to get to welcome new singers to our roster and build community with a group of dedicated musicians. To go along with our season title, **Lift Every Voice**, we are seeking out ways to grow choral singing in our communities beyond just the concerts that we share. I am so grateful to see the growth of our organization – from **Summer Choir** to **BeLove Notes** to **Sing for Unity**, we've found new ways to connect with our region. That said, with our first concert just around the corner, we're excited to perform too.



**Artistic
Director
Dr. Matthew
Myers**

We hope you will join us for this poignant and exciting concert. We are honored to share the stage with some wonderful orchestral musicians, making this concert one of the biggest events we've been able to host in recent years.

Our fall concert, An American Dream, explores the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. We will perform two large-scale works as part of the Sing Democracy 250 project, which made these pieces available to us and many other choirs across the country.

When we were initially invited to participate, I was a bit hesitant. In today's fractured world, would singing about political themes feel culturally insensitive? Would it be difficult for our singers and audience to process? Will we be able to balance the various emotions that singing about these topics brings up? Fortunately, once I looked into the pieces, I realized that they explore these questions quite beautifully.

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Chamber Choir will perform the first of the two works:

“US” by Michael Bussewitz-Quarm. The piece is based on *The Bill of Obligations: The Ten Habits of Good Citizens*, by Richard Haass. The text of the piece features quotations from Americans throughout history, including presidents, senators, and everyday people living in the country. The first movement quotes both Barack Obama and Ronald Reagan – showing different political perspectives from the start of the piece. Bussewitz-Quarm’s perspective on national issues as one of the few trans choral composers in the country who is able to sustain a full-time composing career provides a thoughtful and hopeful view of our ability to live up to the promises of the nation.

Symphonic Choir will perform “Redeem the Dream” by Brandon Boyd. The text for this piece comes from the Declaration of Independence as well as the poem “Let America Be America Again by Langston Hughes.”

Boyd serves as director of choral activities at the University of Missouri but is also a highly successful composer and gospel pianist, and that gospel training comes through in the orchestration’s rhythmic groove and energy. The text explores Hughes’s experiences as a Black man in the early twentieth century of the US: his experiences of both hope and discrimination deeply influenced his experience – and this is amplified by Boyd’s own experiences today.

We’ll also share two anthems, “The Star Spangled-Banner” and “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” along with a world premiere: “A Psalm of Life” by Zach Busch. Busch is the co-winner of our 5th annual composition contest. **For the first time, we’ve had a tie for first place, so we’ll perform one winning piece in November and another winning piece in December.** Busch also won the contest in our 2nd year with his work “Julian’s Benediction” in fall 2023. **Thank you for your support of PCS!**

- Dr. Matthew Myers, PCS Artistic Director

Meet some of the new singers we've welcomed this fall!



New Member

Zach Mayberry (Bass)

I joined PCS because I love to sing! I love choir. I love being in a place where we can make music together in such an immediate way with this instrument that's been with us and inside of us since the beginning of time. I'm a pianist and I've been studying music for seven years now as a composer. There's just something about the human voice I think is so beautiful.



New Member

Christina Fangman (Alto)

I joined PCS when I was having a particularly rough time in college. PCS offered me a safe, happy place to sing without judgment or stress. 4-ish years later I am so happy to be back, it is an amazing group to be a part of where musicians of all levels come together to make incredible music.



New Member

Lindsay Ewan (Soprano)

My family is full of musicians and, naturally, I became one, too. After singing in college (2001-2005), I began looking for a place to continue a craft that became a sort of therapy for me. I stumbled upon the Palouse Choral Society when I moved to Moscow in 2009 and immediately auditioned and joined. It was just what I needed to alleviate the stress of work and life and I enjoyed every moment. I took a break for a few years to start a family, but

always felt pulled to re-audition. I took that step earlier this year and haven't looked back. This choir is even more welcoming than it was in 2009 and the quality of music, instruction, and support has been amazing. I am very thankful for this group and cannot wait to continue making music!

New Member

Alejandro Valdiva (Tenor)

I joined PCS because I love to sing and I wanted to join a community of singers. It's been really nice to both meet the people that I sing with and also to challenge myself in learning how to sing choral music with other people because I've never really done that before.





Sing for Unity

*In celebration of the United Nations International Day of Peace we were joined by area choirs to participate in the second annual Sing for Unity event. **Singers across the globe joined together to create a sound wave of hope, unity, peace and community.** With ten choirs and numerous community members, we **filled the University of Idaho's Administration Auditorium** with wonderful music performed by the choirs and communal singing for everyone. As requested by the organizers, we ended with *What a Wonderful World*.*



Gillian Sharma
PCS Board President

So many people singing together brought a sense of profound joy. It was transcendental. I felt waves of 'good vibrations.'

- Debbie McLaughlin, Community Member

Sing for Unity was so much fun this year and I'm looking forward to doing it again in 2027. **These times when we get to collaborate with other musicians really highlights the vastness of our choir community.** Feeling the impact of our voices here on the Palouse and also knowing that this is an international event just reminds me how **powerful of a tool music is for bringing folks together.**

- Lizzie Stedman, PCS Board Secretary



Photo by
Sasha McLarty

Summer Choir

This past July, Palouse Choral Society started rehearsals for a new non-auditioned summer ensemble, aptly titled “Summer Choir”. We ended up having an amazing turnout of over 50 singers, a lot of whom were new to PCS or new to singing in choir entirely! Rehearsals took place July through August at the welcoming Unitarian Universalist Church of the Palouse. The ensemble gave three rewarding performances: singing during a UU service in gratitude for hosting us, followed by full concerts in Colfax and at Cordelia Church alongside fellow local groups Tapestry and Capillas.

Overall, Summer Choir was a great success for PCS. We were able to provide the community with a non-auditioned PCS experience, we created new relationships in the area, and we were able to share great choral music with new audiences. -

Kobe Hagen, Summer Choir & Youth Choir Director



Sadie Lenssen | PCS Board Member



*Last month, I had the joy of stepping in to direct a Youth Choir rehearsal while their director was traveling. What these young students bring to our community is something special. **Their love of music goes beyond the school experience** as they rise up to new challenges, make new friends, and enjoy the teamwork and support the choir brings. **They have fun each moment they can, whether cracking up at silly warmups, to stepping up to sing complete solo pieces during opportunities at concerts.** These kids want to show our community how much music matters to them, and I hope you all can see that each time they perform.*

Our deepest gratitude to our newest partners!



This year's Summer Choir was made possible in part by support from **ArtsWA**



BeLoveNotes is made possible in part by support from **Friends of Hospice**

BeLoveNotes

Hello from BeLoveNotes!

This new group within the Palouse Choral Society is taking shape, and we're learning that the heart of our mission can find us in unexpected places. In summer, we began rehearsing and coming together around our shared purpose, to ease those nearing their final moments with the comfort of music. We've established a partnership with Friends of Hospice, and have just received our first referral.

Although our bedside work is just beginning, we were recently called on for a truly unique service, honoring 28 individuals whose remains went unclaimed, laid to rest at Colfax Cemetery on September 16, 2026.

Despite extensive efforts to trace relatives, no family had come forward to claim these individuals. So, on this day, the Whitman County Coroner's Office & Corbeill Funeral Homes held a service. The community gathered to remember, to honor, and to become family. Craig Corbeill, owner of Corbeill Funeral Homes, offered these moving words: "No fault of their own, they were never claimed by family or given a proper burial. Today, we are their family."

Every life matters. Every person deserves dignity, tenderness, and the simple gift of being remembered. And music, even in the quietest moments, can help us express what words alone sometimes cannot.

We were honored to share our voices with this gathering, surrounding these 28 souls with song as they were laid to rest. Though our calling is often imagined at the very end of life, this experience reminded us that our purpose is also about connection, compassion, and recognizing our shared humanity.

We are grateful to the Whitman County Coroner's Office, Corbeill Funeral Homes, Friends of Hospice, and all those who made this meaningful service possible for allowing us to be part of a moment that affirmed a simple but powerful truth: no life is without meaning, and no one should be forgotten.

With love and song,

BeLoveNotes

SING
DEMOCRACY
250

PALOUSE
CHORAL
SOCIETY

SAT, NOV 7

7:30PM

SUN, NOV 8

4:00PM

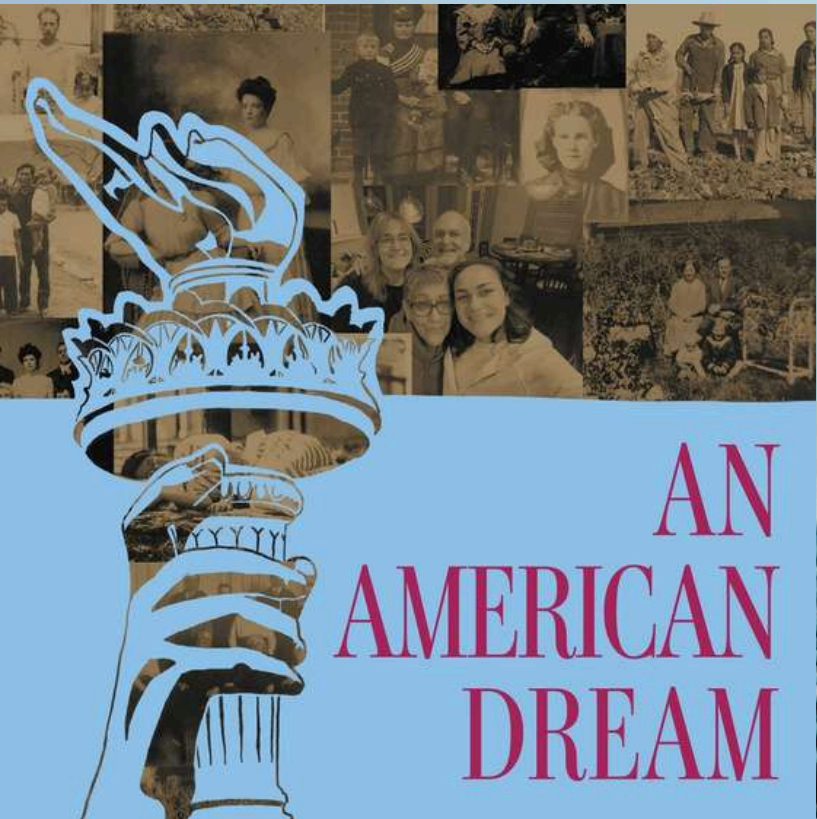
*Simpson United Methodist
Pullman, Washington*

AN AMERICAN DREAM

PALOUSE
CHORAL SOCIETY

LIFT EVERY VOICE

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IN THE
LIGHT

HOPE
LINGERS
ON

WALK
IN BEAUTY,
WALK IN LIGHT

