

The Greater Columbia Organist

December 2025

A Publication of the Greater Columbia Chapter of the
American Guild of Organists



January Program - *Zoom Meeting MASTERING DIGITAL SCORES FORSCORE ESSENTIALS FOR ORGANISTS

Tuesday, January 13, 7:00 p.m.

A VIRTUAL PRESENTATION BY Valerie Harris, DMA

*The Zoom link will be emailed prior to the program.

This presentation is a "How to" for downloading scores to your iPad, applying notation, and streamlining performance with hands-free page turning. Discover how forScore can transform your practice, performance, and organization as an organist. Topics will include key features of forScore, from digital score management and annotation to efficient page-turning and setlist creation. Whether you're new to digital scores or seeking to optimize your forScore workflow, join us to learn practical tips tailored to the needs of organists.

Concert organist, church musician, presenter and educator, Dr. Valerie Harris intertwines her passion for musical excellence with sharing her love of music with others. In addition to recital performances in the U.S. and Europe, she has given many workshops and presentations across the country including for the American Guild of Organists 2024 National Convention and various AGO Chapters. She holds the DMA Degree in Organ Performance from Arizona State University, where she studied with Kimberly Marshall. She holds the MM in Organ Performance and Graduate Certificate of Church Music from Shenandoah Conservatory, and the BM degree from Brigham Young University. Currently, she is Dean of the Central Arizona Chapter of the American Guild of Organists and national board member as Arts Advocacy Chair and Media Chair for the National Federation of Music Clubs. She is the Associate Music Director and Organist at First United Methodist Church of Mesa, Arizona, and has served many varied church denominations as Director of Music Ministries and Organist. Dedicated to inspiring organists, Dr. Harris has taught piano, organ, and conducting to hundreds of students. She is committed to promoting the vision of excellently prepared and spiritually reflected music in the Church.



SAVE THE DATES

Watch for more information on these programs that are in the works:

FEBRUARY PROGRAM: SERVICE PLAYING WORKSHOP, with Nicholas Quardokus, Canon Organist and Director of Music at Grace Cathedral, Charleston, SC.

Date/time: Saturday, February 7, 2026, 10:00 a.m. to Noon.

Location: Currently being confirmed; see January Newsletter.

The workshop will address "basics and beyond," and will include hymn playing techniques.

MARCH PROGRAM: 2026 YOUNG ORGANIST COMPETITION

Date: Saturday, March 7, 2026, 10:00 a.m. to Noon.

Location: Shandon United Methodist Church

Join us to hear major pieces of organ literature performed by gifted young organists.

APRIL PROGRAM: Organ Crawl to the Augusta / Aiken area. (Plans underway!)

MAY PROGRAM: End-of-year Dinner (Plans underway!)



Dr. David Michael Lowry
February 21, 1938 - November 18, 2025

David Michael Lowry, of Columbia, died on November 18, 2025.

He was Professor of Music Emeritus at Winthrop University, where he served as organ and musicology professor from 1965 to 2011. He was the founder of the York County Choral Society for which he was artistic director for 31 years. Since 1998, he has been the Parish Musician of The Church of the Good Shepherd (Episcopal) of Columbia. For the last 15 years, he has been a classical music reviewer for Free Times of Columbia.

He was predeceased by his mother Lucille King Lowry and father George Lewis Lowry.

He held the following degrees: Bachelor of Music from Baldwin Wallace University, Cleveland, Master of Sacred Music from Union Theological Seminary, New York, and Doctor of Musical Arts from the University of North Texas. As a concert organist and conductor, he led over 200 appearances in America, Austria, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

A Requiem Mass will be celebrated at The Church of the Good Shepherd (Episcopal), 1512 Blanding Street, Columbia, SC, on Monday, December 29, at 11:00 a.m. Thirty minutes of organ music will precede the Mass. Burial will be private in Asheville, North Carolina. Memorials are appropriate to the Department of Music of Winthrop University or to the Anglican Musicians Foundation.



Catching UP with YOC Alumni

YOC - Where It All Began!

Jacob Reed

Jacob Reed was the First-Place winner of the Young Organist Competition in 2011, the first year of the competition. He has since amassed a stunning career as an organist, harpsichordist, and musicologist.

Presently, he is Lecturer in Harpsichord at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a PhD student in Music History and Theory at the University of Chicago, where he is Organ Scholar at Rockefeller Memorial Chapel. He plays basso continuo on organ and harpsichord with the Newberry Consort, Haymarket Opera, Bella Voce, Bach in the City, and other ensembles across the Chicago area.

In 2023-2024, Jacob played Bach at Bond, a series of thirty recitals presenting the complete organ works of J.S. Bach. The previous year he performed the complete organ works of César Franck.

Jacob received a simultaneous BA/MA in music history and theory (double major in mathematics) from Yale University where he studied organ with Thomas Murray and harpsichord with Arthur Haas. He graduated with an MM in organ performance from Yale's School of Music/Institute of Sacred Music, studying with Martin Jean and serving as Organ Scholar at Grace Church in New York City.

Jacob's performance experience extends to opera of all eras. In addition to playing continuo in Baroque opera productions across the USA, Jacob has served as piano accompanist for the Yale Opera Program and performed in John Cage's *Europera 5* under director Yuval Sharon. Jacob has served as artist-in-residence at the Uncommon Music Festival in Sitka, Alaska. In celebration of the 10th anniversary of YOC, Jacob returned to Columbia in March of 2020 and performed a recital at Trinity Cathedral.



YOUNG **Organist** Competition

Sponsored by the
Greater Columbia AGO Chapter

Saturday, March 7, 2026
Columbia, S.C.

Open to grades 8–12

First Prize \$3,000

Second Prize \$2,000

Third Prize \$1,500

Hymn Playing Award \$1000

For rules and application see
Young Organist Competition 2026
at www.columbiaago.org



SUNDAY,
DECEMBER 7
3:15 PM

Recital by
Paul Thomas
*Director of Music,
Trinity Cathedral*



4:00 PM
Choral Evensong
*followed by a reception on
the Cathedral Lawn*



TRINITY EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL

ORGAN RECITAL AND CHORAL EVENSONG

**Trinity Episcopal
Cathedral**
1100 Sumter St.
Columbia, SC
trinitysc.org/music

Trinity Episcopal Cathedral

Organ Recital and Evensong

Sunday, December 7 at 3:15 p.m.

Trinity Episcopal Cathedral. 1100 Sumter St. Columbia, SC 29201.

Trinity Cathedral's Director of Music Paul Thomas will present an organ recital featuring the works of Bruhns, Muhly, and Reger. The recital will be followed by Evensong, a service of readings, prayers and music with the Cathedral Choir of Adults. After the service, please join us for a reception on the Cathedral Lawn until 5:30 p.m. Free and open to all. Visit trinitysc.org for more information. View the livestream at trinitysc.org/live.

Handel's *Messiah*

Sunday, December 14 at 4:00 p.m.

Trinity Episcopal Cathedral. 1100 Sumter St. Columbia, SC 29201.

Join us for this beloved holiday tradition. *Messiah* will be sung by the combined choirs of Trinity Cathedral, with the North Carolina Baroque Orchestra playing period instruments. Visit trinitysc.org/music for tickets.

Choral Compline

Thursdays, December 4, 11, and 18 at 8:00 p.m.

Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, 1100 Sumter St. Columbia, SC 29201.

Join us for this meditative candlelight service, sung by the Cathedral Singers. Free and open to the public. Visit trinitysc.org for more information. View the livestream at trinitysc.org/live.

Christmas Lessons & Carols

Sunday, December 21 at 4:00 p.m.

Trinity Episcopal Cathedral. 1100 Sumter St. Columbia, SC 29201.

Christmas Lessons & Carols tells the story of salvation from creation through the birth of Jesus. The service is followed by hot cocoa and s'mores on the Cathedral Lawn. Free and open to all. Visit trinitysc.org for more information. View the livestream at trinitysc.org/live.

Christmas Worship Services

Trinity Episcopal Cathedral. 1100 Sumter St. Columbia, SC 29201.

Christmas Eve - Wednesday, December 24

- 4:00 p.m. in the Cathedral - Children's Christmas Pageant & Holy Eucharist
- 7:00 p.m. in the Cathedral - Holy Eucharist
- 11:00 p.m. in the Cathedral - Choral Eucharist. View the livestream at trinitysc.org/live

Christmas Day - Thursday, December 25

10:00 a.m. in the Cathedral - Holy Eucharist

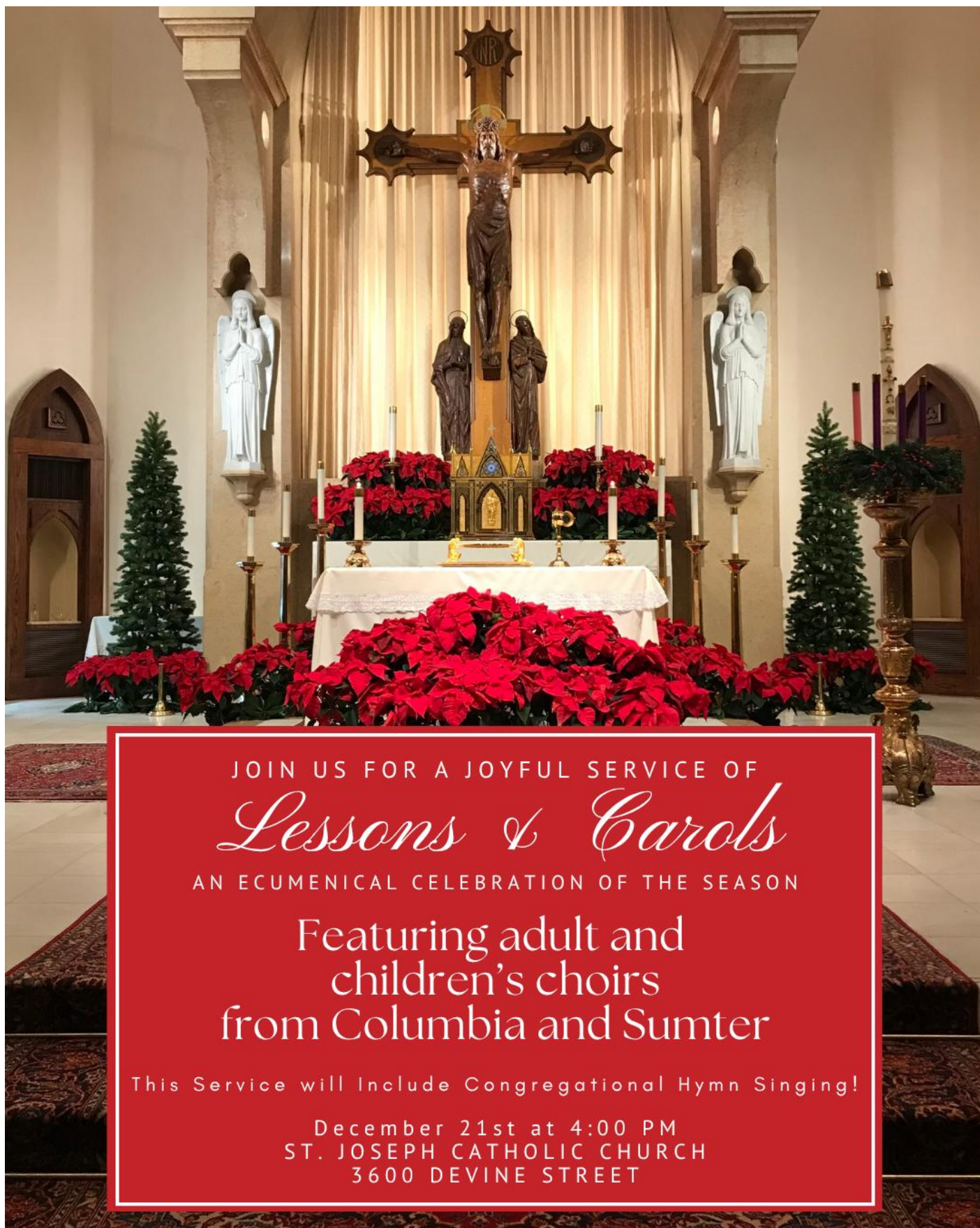
A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

**December 21, 2025
4:00 PM**

Preservice music starts at 3:40 PM



CENTRAL
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
FLORENCE, SC



JOIN US FOR A JOYFUL SERVICE OF

Lessons & Carols

AN ECUMENICAL CELEBRATION OF THE SEASON

Featuring adult and
children's choirs
from Columbia and Sumter

This Service will include Congregational Hymn Singing!

December 21st at 4:00 PM
ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH
3600 DEVINE STREET



THE SC FELLOWSHIP
OF WORSHIP ARTISTS
PRESENTS



A HANDBELL FESTIVAL

*with David Harris
from the Raleigh Ringers*

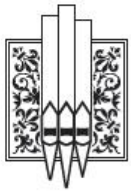


DIRECTORS AND RINGERS:
REGISTER BY JAN. 30 AT
SOUTHCAROLINAFELLOWSHIP.ORG
COST: \$30/PARTICIPANT
\$15/OBSERVER



SHANDON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
4307 DEVINE STREET, COLUMBIA, SC
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2026
9:00AM - 1:00PM

[Click here for more information and to register.](#)



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Newsletter Deadline

The **20th** of every month is the deadline for the following month's AGO newsletter. Information received after that time may not appear in that month's newsletter.



12/03	Catherine Black
12/05	Cynthia Fruth
12/10	Linda Wills
12/20	Jim Hepler
12/21	Beverly Hazelwood
12/26	Pat Blackwell
12/26	Huger Caughman
12/27	Bill Johns
12/27	Robert Jones
12/30	Ginny Holt

2025 - 2026 CHAPTER ADMINISTRATION

DEAN	Don Grice ARCCO C: (520) 481-0037 E: dgrice@alumni.emory.edu
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Our
Awesome
Team!



MEMBERS AT LARGE	Huger Caughman, Jr. C: (803) 924-7619 E: hpcaughman@gmail.com
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NEWSLETTER EDITOR	Tony Roof C: (803) 606-1596 E: email@tonyroof.com
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POSITIONS AVAILABLE

**** NEW LISTING OR CHANGES**

Please contact Susan Sturkie (803-788-6807 or sloopystur@aol.com) to update this information or for more information on these openings.

AUGUSTA, GA

****Covenant Presbyterian Church (U.S.A)**, 3131 Walton Way, Augusta, GA 30909. Opening for Music Director & Organist (3/4 time, benefits negotiable). Serve as primary musician for all Sunday worship services, funerals, weddings, and special worship. Graduate degree in music preferred. Bachelor's degree in music required. Prefer at least three years in leadership position of church music programs. Proficient in organ and conducting choral music. Prefer experience with handbell choirs. 31-rank Zimmer pipe organ, carillon and control unit, pianos, and handbells. The Director of Music and Organist is permitted to teach music lessons using the church's facilities and instruments. Full job description may be seen at the church webpage <https://www.covenantaugusta.org/>.

Position inquires should be directed to Search Committee Chair, Brock Daniels at kcdjbd@gmail.com.

CAMDEN

Lyttleton Street United Methodist Church, 1206 Lyttleton Street, Camden, SC, seeks a part-time organist and/or pianist. Responsibilities include one Sunday morning worship service (9:00 a.m.) and Wednesday evening choir rehearsals, plus seasonal services. There is potential to add accompanying services for the 11:15 contemporary service. For additional information please e-mail Patty Bellus at admin@lsumc.net or see our website, <https://lsumc.net/about-us/employment>. Organ specifications may be found here: <https://www.columbiaago.org/ColumbiaOrgans/Organs/LYTTLETONUMCSumter.pdf>.

COLUMBIA

Ashland United Methodist Church, 2600 Ashland Road, Columbia, SC 29210 seeks a pianist. Responsibilities include one Sunday morning worship service (11:00 am) and Tuesday choir rehearsal, (5:00 pm-6:15 pm), plus seasonal services. For additional information please email Robert Neese at music@ashlandumc.org.

Forest Lake Presbyterian Church, 6500 North Trenholm Road, seeks a part-time organist-accompanist. The applicant should also be well-versed as a pianist/accompanist. Responsibilities include one Sunday morning worship service at 10:00 (preceded by choir rehearsal at 9:15); Wednesday evening choir rehearsals at 7:00 pm; seasonal services; and wedding and funerals (with additional compensation). Instruments: Casavant pipe organ (installed in 2017) with 2 manuals and 25 ranks, and a Yamaha baby grand piano. Interested persons should submit resume and questions to Beth Mears, Director of Music via email: bethmears@flpc.org or hard copy submission: Dr. Elizabeth M. Mears/Forest Lake Presbyterian Church/6500 North Trenholm Road/29206.

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 2200 Lee St., Columbia (Five Points), SC 29205. HTLC is a confessional liturgical congregation in fellowship with the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod and as such we practice closed communion. An organist is needed for our 10:30 Sunday as well as seasonal services. We follow a liturgical order of worship, and have a two manual pipe organ. A permanent commitment is ideal, however, we are willing to consider short-term contracts such as 3 or 6 month. If you are interested in this position please contact Rev. Christopher Burger at (803) 799-7224 or via email at Rev.Burger@gmail.com

Rehoboth Global Methodist Church, located at 6911 Two Notch Road, Columbia, SC, is seeking a part-time pianist/choir director for weekly choir practice and Sunday morning worship and special seasonal services. Email resume to office@rehobothchurchsc.com and for more information.

St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Columbia, a predominantly African American Anglo-Catholic parish, is seeking a ¼ time - part-time Organist and/or Organist and Choirmaster for its 10:00 a.m. Sunday masses. The Organ is a 2-manual Allen Renaissance Quantum, Acoustic Portrait, 58 stops. Choir Rehearsals are on Wednesdays from 6:00pm-7:30pm (the day and time can be adjusted by the new organist). Job duties include leading congregational singing, accompanying and directing anthems, ensembles, and soloists at organ/piano. Also accompanies the Cantor in singing the psalms, and the Gospel Acclamation.

Special services include Epiphany Lenten Wednesdays, Holy Week, Ascension Day, Christmas Eve Mass, etc. The organist also plays for weddings and funerals per church policy. We seek someone with vision, imagination, creativity, flexibility; a self-motivator with the ability to teach and inspire our eight-member choir (four of whom are paid professional staff singers). The ability to work independently and in conjunction with the priest as well as an openness to versatility during special times of the Church year is a must. Hymns used come from *The Hymnal 1982*, *Lift Every Voice and Sing, II*, *Wonder, Love, and Praise*, and other liturgical resources that lend themselves to the appropriateness of the liturgy. Knowledge of the Anglican/Episcopal liturgy, classical solo and/or choral vocal pieces/works, and the literature and works of African American composers is highly desired, but not required. Salary negotiable depending on experience and ability. Please submit Cover Letter and Resumé along with two or three references to fr.raphiell@gmail.com with the word Organist/Choirmaster in the subject line: You may also call the church office (803) 254-2327 to speak with the priest, Fr. Raphiell Ashford, for more information, or email me directly at the email address above if you have any questions regarding the position.

Shandon Presbyterian Church (USA), seeks a part time Chancel Choir Director. The Chancel Choir Director will develop and lead the chancel choir program at Shandon Presbyterian Church in a manner that supports, complements, and enhances the church's Worship and Music Ministry. This work will be completed in collaboration with the Director of Music and Media and Senior Pastor. Masters Degree (or higher) in choral conducting or similar; prior experience successfully leading high-level choral programs in a religious setting. Piano and/or organ competence is preferred, but not required. Compensation is \$13,000 minimum. More information, including full position description is available at www.shandonpresbyterian.org/employment. To apply, submit resume and short cover letter to shandonpersonnel@gmail.com.

Westminster Presbyterian Church, 1715 Broad River Rd, Columbia, SC seeks a part-time pianist/accompanist and/or organist/accompanist. Responsibilities include one Sunday morning worship service (10:30 am) and Wednesday evening choir rehearsals (7:00 pm) plus seasonal services. Instruments: Zimmer pipe organ with 12 ranks of pipes and 12 general programmable pistons, and Yamaha baby grand piano. Interested persons please submit resume and questions to: music@westminsterpres.org

GILBERT

St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 246 St. Paul's Church Rd., Gilbert, SC 29054 is seeking a part-time Music Director for its Sunday worship services.

Our immediate need is for organist/pianist. This position includes Sunday morning services, Wednesday night rehearsals with the praise band, as well as any funerals/weddings, as scheduled. Music should be appropriate for use in the Lutheran service and follow the theme or the lessons appointed for the day. Hymns/Songs from the ELW and the Worship & Praise book should be used. Special programs are normally presented seasonally, i.e. Christmas Cantata/Children's Christmas Program, Easter, Lenten services and following special Lutheran celebration Sundays throughout the year.

St. Paul's would also like to resume the handbell choir and form a vocal choir for Sunday services. This will be discussed at the interview.

Compensation for this position is negotiable based on experience and merit. For more information and complete job description or to apply, contact Janet Boyd at boyd5janet@gmail.com or 803-634-0018.

HARTSVILLE

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, Hartsville, SC, is in search of a part-time Organist. Duties include Sunday services, Wednesday night choir rehearsals, and any special services during the year. Salary is \$300 per week (negotiable) and extra for additional services. The Organist gets two days paid vacation plus sick leave. Our instrument is a 32-rank, two manual, Casavant Freres Limitee. The Organist reports to the Music Director and the Rector. If interested in the position, please send your resume to St. Bartholomew's at 103 Campus Dr. Hartsville, SC 29550 or via email at stbartsepiscopal@gmail.com.

IRMO

Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Irmo, SC, is seeking a part-time Director of Music / Organist. The Director is expected to rehearse and direct the chancel choir and bell choir, and coordinate with the pastor on worship music selections. The salary for the position will be commensurate with the level of education and experience of the applicant. Please send resumes and contact information to Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 10000 Broad River Road, Irmo, SC 29063, or e-mail bethlehemplutheranirmo@gmail.com.

LEXINGTON

****Zion Lutheran Church - Part-Time Music Director**

The Music Director will be responsible for planning, coordinating and developing the worship and music program for Zion Lutheran Church and the position is viewed as a ministry to and for the congregation to the glory of God.

General Description: The Music Director is called to serve through planning, coordinating and developing the worship and music opportunities for Zion Lutheran Church. This position is viewed as a ministry to and for the congregation to the glory of God. The Music Director shall be responsible for the presentation of music for routine and special worship services. Traditional and contemporary music styles are utilized. This part-time position includes Sunday services, holidays and some evenings.

Interested applicants are invited to send resume and cover letter to zionchurch@zionLexsc.com or Zion Lutheran Church, 226 Corley Mill Road, Lexington, SC 29072

ROCK HILL

Ebenezer Presbyterian Church, Associate Reformed, 2132 Ebenezer Road, Rock Hill SC. Director of Music The link below will take those interested to the specifics on how to apply, the specifications of our pipe organ, and the new job description with salary included. <https://ebenezerarp.org/>

SUMTER

The Church of the Holy Comforter, located at 213 North Main St., Sumter SC. is seeking a full-time, 40 hours per week, salaried Director of Music (Organist/Choir Director). The Director will develop and implement a music ministry, under the authority of the rector, that is consistent with Anglican theology and enhances the worship of God and the whole ministry of the church. The Director will also disciple the music teams under the Director's care (through theological reflection, prayer, and mentoring) grounded in the Great Commission. Ultimately, our desire is to worship the Lord in spirit and truth (John 4.24), that we might be filled, ever more fully, with His Holy Spirit (Eph. 5.18-19).

If you are interested in this position, please view the full job description, to include compensation range, & how to apply @ <https://www.holycomfortersc.org/copy-of-david-booman>

WEST COLUMBIA

Our Saviour Lutheran Church in West Columbia, SC, is seeking an organist to begin work in January 2026. The applicant must be accomplished in playing a pipe organ and other keyboard instruments. The church has a small 1974 Zimmer two-manual pipe organ. An electronic keyboard (Clavinova) is also available for occasional services in the Chapel or Fellowship Hall. The applicant should be acquainted with the liturgy and hymns of the Lutheran Church and must be able to provide organ accompaniment for the liturgy, hymns, and choir anthems, as well as preludes and postludes, at each

Sunday Service and at special services during Lent, Easter, Advent, and Christmas. If schedule allows, the organist should also be available to play for funerals and weddings at the church.

The church has one service each Sunday at 10:30 a.m. It is a traditional service using *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* (ELW). Average Sunday-morning attendance is 40.

We are offering to pay \$250 per week for this position.

Please contact the church at 803-794-8180 or email the pastor at pastorjoannagragg@gmail.com.