



**NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION OF
PASTORAL
MUSICIANS
ARCHDIOCESE
OF KANSAS CITY
IN KANSAS
CHAPTER**

Chapter Director:
Maureen Henderson:
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**MARK YOUR
CALENDARS**

August 16, 12:30
Board Meeting
St. Joseph, Shawnee

September 22,
9-12 am
Choral Workshop
St. Joseph
5901 Flint St
Shawnee, KS 66203

SEE INSIDE

- Cantor Corner 2
- Instrumental Tips 3
- Director's Letter 4

NPM News

Volume 1, Issue 1

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Meet Your Chapter Board

Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas Board

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Our current board members have a year under their belts in their current positions. Just as our music ministers bring a variety of experiences and education to their ministry, so do the board members. Some may wonder why we have two chapters when the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas Chapter and the Diocese of Kansas City/St. Joseph Chapters often work as one—the answer is, national NPM rules. These rules require that a Chapter works under the approval of each bishop and does not cross state lines.

The Missouri Diocese also has some rules pertaining to social media, so we maintain two closed Facebook Pages. Most postings are shared to both pages. Learn more about this on page two of this

newsletter.

Our current Kansas board includes some full-time directors of music and/or liturgical ministry: Kristen Beeves at St. Agnes in Roeland Park; Barbara Leyden at St. Joseph, Shawnee; Vicky Neely at Church of the Nativity in Leawood; John Rudzinski at Good Shepherd, Shawnee; and Denise Slaven at Holy Spirit in Overland Park. Diane Schell works part-time as pianist and cantor for Good Shepherd and Maureen Henderson has retired from a full-time position at Rockhurst University but continues to play regularly for liturgies.

All board members have some sort of music degree, most have a Master's degree and some have education beyond. When asked for a tip, however; most of the tips centered around deep appreciation for our volunteer music ministers and the need for persistence and reliance on our Lord each day. When it comes down to it, we all need a big dose of the Holy Spirit more than anything!

One of the many benefits of attending our NPM workshops, beyond the training offered, is the opportunity to share ideas, concerns, and problems with each other. Music ministry is not just about singing in tune or playing an instrument well. All of us find that we need to continue to expand our skills and regularly refresh our attitudes. Who among us has both musical training and extensive liturgical formation? By coming to meetings, you will meet people who have the training you may be missing.

Choral Formation Workshop Saturday, September 22, 9-12 am

The combined Kansas/Missouri boards determined that this year's training would focus on the building and maintenance of choirs. Choir members and directors will spend the morning honing their choral techniques. Brief sessions by several experienced choir directors will provide variety and information to improve both your own choral singing or the singing of your

choir or ensemble.

The morning will include the opportunity for prayer, networking and camaraderie. Please mark your calendars and forward the information to other singers and directors. St. Joseph Catholic Church will host the workshop, giving you a chance to see their newly-renovated space, new organ and

piano. The address is on the sidebar.

Our January 26, 2019 training will focus more specifically on the ministry of cantors, but the September workshop will also include information on vocal production that will be helpful.

Watch your email for the flyer with additional information and registration coming soon.

St. Rose Philippine Duchesne, St. Cecilia and St. Gregory, pray for us!



Many hands make for light work—and better ideas!

WE NEED YOU!

Our NPM Chapter needs YOU in many ways—both general and specific. Attending the formation workshops and spiritually uplifting concerts we endeavor to present is a great first step. We will better meet our needs as a whole if you share your constructive ideas for future offerings.

We need workers, not just to be in charge or accept a board position, but also to volunteer to assist for a particular event, like the upcoming September 22 workshop. Some specific ways to volunteer are:

Newsletter articles and editing assistance: Do you have a particular area of expertise that you could share in a paragraph or two, or write a short article? Can you help read through prospective articles, edit or do simple layout? Send your ideas for future topics to Barbara Leyden. We plan to publish three issues: July 1, October 1 and February 1.

Membership: Can you host an event at one of our rural parishes? Contact Vicky Neely.

September 22 Choral Workshop: Can you help with registration, set-up, clean-up, or hospitality items? Contact Diane Schell.

Photography: Would you enjoy taking photos or recordings of NPM events? Contact Kristen Beeves.

Data Base: Also contact Kristen Beeves with the names and contact information of other music ministers in your parish—with their permission, of course.

**Have you
joined our
Facebook page
yet? Do it
today and post
your own events
or questions!**

Facebook Pages

To find the Kansas NPM page, go to “National Assoc of Pastoral Musicians Archdiocese of KC in KS.”

To find the Missouri NPM FB page, go to “NPM Kansas City/St. Joseph MO Chapter.”

In both cases, the administrator will accept you into the closed group. Then you can easily post your own events, job openings, need for a substitute, questions or information,

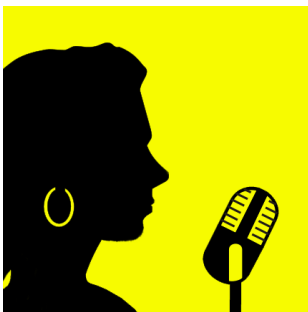
plus keep track of other things going on in our area. Both chapters maintain an email list, but we try not to inundate everyone with too many emails. Our Facebook Page will be as useful as you, the readers and members, make it by your active participation in posting and following.

The group is “closed” to prevent outside, unwanted access and posting.

What can happen when your pastor loves music—St. Joseph, Shawnee recently purchased a beautiful Steinway piano and 3-manual Allen organ as part of their renovation. Harry Reed of Schmitt Music with Father Michael Hawken.



Cantor Corner—The Schwa— □



*“Sing to the Lord a new song”—
one that can be heard and
understood!*

Clear diction is one of the most important skills needed by a psalmist, cantor or song-leader. If the people cannot understand your words, especially when proclaiming the responsorial psalm, nothing else you do really matters. A simple tool can really help make your text sparkle—the schwa vowel (ə) between two consonants. Sounding this neutral “uh” any time two consonants appear in a row makes both first and last consonants pop out and sound clearly. In the refrain of the psalm for the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, note the double consonants underlined: “The queen stands at your right hand, arrayed in gold.” Try it both ways with someone listening, inserting the ə between each spot as marked here: “The queen ə stands at your right ə hand, arrayed in ə gold.” The difference is particularly noticeable in larger worship spaces, where clear diction is even more challenging.

Your singing diction will sound most natural and understandable if you sing the vowel in weak syllables also as a schwa. Examples of such words are receive, believe, defeat and eternal. Rather than a bright “ee,” as is often heard, try rəceive, bəlieve, dəfeat and əternal. Let the schwa be your tool!

Keyboard Tips—the Lift

The “lift”, that split-second of silence, is a crucial tool to leading an assembly in sung prayer. After an introduction played in the tempo at which the hymn is to be sung, that final silence is the signal to burst into song.

The lift is also important between verse and refrain, particularly if a soloist or choir is proclaiming the verses, to signal it is the assembly’s turn to sing, and also to begin each verse in a standard hymn style.

Playing through without a

break is a common error for those just beginning to use those piano skills for liturgical sung prayer, but one that is easily corrected.

Other lifts might also be needed. The pianist/organist should be singing silently while playing and breathing/lifting along with the singers. Contemporary pieces need this as much or more than the older hymn styles. A constant carpet of sound makes it difficult for singers to know when to begin, particularly if there is no choir with director or song-leader.

Songs with more challenging rhythms can benefit from more silence to accent the particular rhythm, too; perhaps a lift right before a triplet or to make a sixteenth note sharp, quick and clean.

Gospel or spiritual style needs a lot of silence as well. Some musicians see the triplets and dotted eighths/sixteenths and start playing a lot of notes, when fewer notes with some silence will lead the piece more powerfully, prayerfully and cleanly.



Which one should I pull today?

All God’s Creatures Got a Place in the Choir

One of the many good reasons for joining NPM National is access to their list of appropriate choral anthems for every Sunday and Feast Day in the 3-year Lectionary Cycle. The list is posted online to members only. The “Choral Anthem Lectionary Project” is a gold mine of tested pieces recommended by experienced choir directors. The last few national conventions have offered a workshop session or two where selected pieces are pre-

sented so you can hear them and take the packet home for your files. These pieces tend to be more useful than the ones presented each year by the big publishing companies. OCP, GIA and WLP also present and attendees come away with a huge packet of music, most of which is read through by the group with appropriate instrumentation. They offer a variety of styles of music, but the pieces are not as time-tested as those on the NPM

website. Another good resource is signing up for the Choral Directors Institute within the convention. All your break-out sessions are spent at the CDI, with the opportunity to have your conducting critiqued and practiced and to see other choral director students in action, all using quality choral literature which participants are given to take home. The CDI also talks about vocal warm-ups, rehearsal techniques, recruiting and more.

The Choral Anthem Lectionary Project—a gold mine of ideas!
Go to www.npm.org and click on “membership.”

Guitar—Guitars Lift Too

The guitar was “invented” long before the organ. Invented is in quotation marks, because small stringed instruments were created and used by virtually every culture in myriad forms. It was so popular for partying, courting and other non-sacred activities, that the Church went with unaccompanied singing for a long time, and then embraced the organ once it no longer had a horribly raucous quality (and they realized how nifty it was

to keep the singers in tune). Then proceeded a long period of time when only the organ and singing were allowed in the church. Vatican II opened the door to new forms of musical expression and the popularity of the guitar in the USA and England brought it into use to lead musical prayer.

The Keyboard article about using “lift” is also appropriate for the guitarist leading the assembly in prayer. The guitar-

ist should stop picking or strumming and momentarily mute the strings to give a moment of silence as the signal for singers to begin singing the hymn.

Along with that, the strumming or picking pattern should not be the same all the way through a piece. Altering it at the end of phrases helps the assembly to breathe and come back in correctly. Silence and/or (continued on page 4)

Guitar—a standard since the lute!



NPM CHAPTER FOR
THE ARCHDIOCESE
OF KANSAS CITY IN
KANSAS

**Sing to the Lord: Music
in Divine Worship**

**USCCB's Guiding Document
for Music Ministry**

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Musing by Maureen—A Note from the KCK Kansas Chapter Director

Hi all,

I hope, with summer here, that you are able to find some much-needed R & R. We've had a busy and productive year as our Kansas Chapter received its permanent status with the National Association of Pastoral Musicians. Thanks to the previous board who worked so diligently to make this happen!

The board has been meeting monthly along with the KCMO Chapter Board. Last November, we had a joint planning and retreat day where we were able to dream and plan a 3-year calendar of offerings to include a major concert, reading sessions, and varied interest workshops each year. In February we studied another section of our guidance document from the USCCB "Sing to the Lord." We jointly hosted Dan Schutte last April at a fabulous concert which many attendees dubbed a "mini-retreat" experience!

Our contact with our local NPM colleagues has been limited to a FB page and group email up to this point—if we have yours! So, this newsletter is our initial attempt to get you needed information about upcoming events and important dates on a timely basis. Eventually, we plan to create a website that would contain much more information for our area music ministers.

We really appreciate and consider every suggestion that comes to us, so please feel free to reach out to myself or any of the Board members listed in this newsletter.

SAVE THE DATE: Saturday morning, September 22, 2018—Skills and Mindsets for Choirs and Directors!

Blessings on you and your work!

Guitar continued

accenting tricky rhythms also help lead.

The classical/folk guitar sounds right in the same register as the human voice. The singers, either leading or in the assembly, will be drowned out as they compete with the sound of the guitar. Consider capoing or playing up the neck often so the sound is above the voice.

Beware also of the guitar and piano competing in the same register with the voice if both instruments are being played. The pianist might double their left-hand bass note, especially if there is no bass guitar, and also play the melody an octave higher to bring it out of the mix if the guitarist is not able to play in a higher register.

NPM National—Even More Resources

Other resources available to National NPM members include podcasts, articles, notices of institutes for guitarists, ensembles, cantors, and directors across the county. Last year NPM put a major effort into improving the website and adding training resources that you can access at your leisure in the comfort of your own home or choir room.

***Lord, grant that what we have sung with our lips,
we may believe in our hearts,
and what we believe in our hearts,
we may show forth in our lives,
all offered through Christ our Lord. Amen.***

Why sing? "In the beginning was the song and the song was with God, and the song was in God's presence, and the song was God...And the song became flesh, and dwelt among us." The beginning of the Gospel of John with "song" substituted for "word" by J. Michael McMahon, former president of NPM an author of "Why Do We Keep Singing?" available at NPM.

Did you find the short tips articles helpful at all? Please give constructive advice and feedback to your new editor, Barbara Leyden at bleyden@stjoeshawnee.org.