

Fox Chapel Area High School Music Department

presents

“The Light Within”



East Liberty Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh, PA

Sunday, October 26, 2025

3:00 p.m.

Cover artwork by Oliver Seibert, Fox Chapel Area Junior

Program Order

The Unexpected Early Hour (from *A Winter Breviary*)

Reena Esmail

Unexpected Early Hour is the third and final movement of “A Winter Breviary” by composer Reena Esmail. The collection traces the emotional and spiritual journey through the winter solstice, with this final piece celebrating the sun’s long-awaited return. Poet Rebecca Gayle Howell’s text explores themes of rebirth, renewal, and the cyclical rhythm of nature. Esmail blends Western choral writing with the rich melodic language of traditional Indian raags, creating a luminous soundscape that feels both ancient and new.

- Emma Smith, Junior

O Morning Star

***Wie Schon Leuchtet*, arr. Kyle Pederson**

Kyle Pederson’s arrangement of *O Morning Star*, *Wie Schön Leuchtet* reimagines the well-known Lutheran chorale by Philipp Nicolai (1599), often called the “Queen of Chorales.” Pederson blends the hymn’s timeless melody with lush modern harmonies and rhythmic energy, creating a setting that feels both reverent and radiant. The piece celebrates light, renewal, and the enduring hope that shines through even the darkest times.

Birdsong

Paul Read

Composed by Paul Read, Director of Jazz Studies at the University of Toronto, *Birdsong* sets a poem written by an unknown child imprisoned in the Terezin Concentration Camp during World War II. Rather than dwelling on the surrounding horrors, the text reflects on the beauty of the natural world—a poignant reminder of the human capacity for hope amid despair. Read’s music captures both the tragedy of the child’s circumstances and the innocence of their vision, creating a melody that feels at once tender, haunting, and deeply moving. This poem, the child’s enduring message to the world, reveals more about the spirit and resilience of those who suffered than history alone ever could.

- Audrey Seiler, Freshman

Orion

Susan LaBarr

Orion invites us to reflect on our own inner worth. The text, written by Faith Zimmer and set to music by Susan LaBarr, speaks of the strength and resilience we discover within ourselves, especially in life’s most difficult moments. The constellation Orion, visible in the Northern Hemisphere throughout the coldest months, serves as a symbol of endurance and quiet strength. No matter how harsh the season, Orion rises each night, steadfast against the darkness. This piece reminds us that, like the stars that shine through winter’s longest nights, it is the light we find within ourselves that carries us forward.

- Alana Calig, Senior

A free will offering will be collected at the concert, and online donations are being accepted at

tinyurl.com/fcmajorworks

Program Order (continued)

Illuminare

Elaine Hagenberg

"This work will be narrative in nature, exploring themes of distress and turmoil transforming to hope and peace. . . . Texts will be sacred Latin with possible English texts as well. . . . I'm eager and inspired to use lesser known hymn texts from centuries ago. These powerful texts are rich and descriptive--steeped in beauty and offering hope. Then my aim is to create an inspirational work relevant to our generation and current culture." - Elaine Hagenberg

In the opening movement, *Splendor*, of Elaine Hagenberg's significant work, *Illuminare*, Hagenberg illustrates the fountain of life, dictated with text from the Hymns of St. Ambrose. In D Major, the composition is joyful, with interlocking layers of flowing and thrashing melodies that embody the formless mass of light symbolic of the biblical universe at its beginning. Hear the bells that echo through the strings? These celebrate the first day of creation. As the choir sings of illumination, multiple Latin words meaning "light" are used. Thus, Hagenberg demonstrates the abstract nature of the ancient language. This opening movement is reminiscent of Psalm 36:9:

"For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light."

We move to a cello solo, a soliloquy of sorts, that delights quietly in the glory around it. This quiet reflection is overtaken by a celebration of victory once more. The melodies from the opening are repeated with intensified grandeur.

The Light introduced in *Splendor* is overflowing in *Caritas*, as it fills the Universe with the bounty of humanity. Hagenberg portrays a feeling of serenity in the strings, the lines are subtle-- but far from stagnant. After an orchestral introduction, the choir joins, singing the namesake of the movement, "Caritas". As the choir sings a hymn based on the works of Hildegard von Bingen, the orchestra's resonant melody is reminiscent of the glint of constellations far in the sky. Listen for string solos in this movement, as Hagenberg utilizes a single melodic voice in excerpts throughout. Notably, the most thematic phrase in the hymn sung is a reference to a "kiss of peace". *Caritas* translated most directly into English is "Charity", but with investigation of its original use, a more fitting synonym would be "Love". Hagenberg encapsulates a most wholesome form of love for all things. *Caritas* explores the infinite and abundant bounty of the Universe, not yet defined in any way by darkness. This movement is not without dissonance however, as we reach its end we find that gradually, night is closing in.

Movement III, *Nox*, is a stark contrast to its preceding movements. The orchestra begins this movement in g-minor. This is a haunting beginning-- Can you feel the tension in the hall? Quickly, we experience catharsis as the suspense is released into an explosion of panic. *Allegro Con Fuoco*: "fast with passion", is what Hagenberg notates here. The choir's exclamation of "Nox", meaning night, immediately transports us into the antithesis of the previous movements. Here Hagenberg reminds us that Light can only exist with its counterpart close behind. The choir sings of a "dark gloom beating and stabbing the sun", it seems almost as if this force chases the music as well.

The fourth movement, *Munera Pacis*, opens with a melody echoed throughout the strings. We have survived, and finally, it is dawn. As we open our eyes, the sun signals safety, the fearful events of the past night far off, almost forgotten. Hear it first in the violins, then the cellos-- all seem to breathe a sigh of relief. We return to the resonance of the second movement, yet now with melancholy tonality. The upper strings float, as the violas, cellos and basses sound a resonant line beneath them. Throughout *Munera Pacis*, the key changes multiple times. The first time this happens it seems almost as if Hagenberg is recalling the tension of *Nox*. The memory of strife has returned. Hagenberg effectively uses minor tonality, along with the aforementioned reverberating melody, to create this recall. Singing text from a Gregorian Chant, the choir begs for a banishment of guilt and asks for peace. The tension in the melody builds and builds until, at last, it breaks with a final key change-- the music is once again at peace with itself. A vocal soloist promises "peace I give to you". The theme of this movement is repeated and the meaning is fully illustrated: reflection, forgiveness, and repentance.

In *Illuminare His*, the fifth and final movement, the momentum of *Splendor* returns. We have been granted forgiveness, and bask once again in light. This movement is not as wholly joyful as *Splendor*. It retains some of the dissonance from *Nox* and *Munera Pacis*, however it takes on a new meaning. Old melodies are sung with a new maturity. This music reflects wisdom gained, and a lesson learned. Old melodies are sung with a new maturity. The bells of *Splendor* ring once again, the music unifies, and the piece concludes with a return to glorious light.

Illuminare (translations)

I. Splendor

Saint Amrbose (340-397)

Splendor paternae gloriae,
de luce lucem proferens,
lux lucis et fons luminis,
diem dies illuminans.

Splendor of God's glory,
brings forth light from light,
light of light, light's living spring,
Day, all days illuminates.

II. Caritas

Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179)

Caritas abundat in omnia,
de imis excellentissima
super sidera,
atque amantissima in omnia,
Quia summo regi
osculum pacis dedit.

Love abounds in all,
from the depths most excellent
to beyond the stars,
and loving toward all,
she has given the highest king
the kiss of peace.

III. Nox

Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison.

Lord have mercy. Christ have mercy.

Aurelius Prudentius Clemens (348-413)

Nox et tenebrae et nubila,
confusa mundi et turbida.
Caligo terrae scinditur,
percussa solis spiculo.

Night and darkness and fog,
confused world and turmoil.
Dark gloom tears the earth,
beats and stabs the sun.

IV. Munera pacis

Saint Gregory (540-604)

Kaitlyn DiNatale, vocal soloist

Ecce jam noctis tenuatur umbra,
Lux et aurorae rutilans coruscat:
Supplices rererum Dominum canora
Voce precemur:

Behold, already night and shadows taper off
Light and dawn sparkle and quiver
We humbly beg the Lord through song
Our voices pray:

Ut reos culpae miseratus, omnem
Pellat angororem, tribuat salutem,
Donet et nobis bona sempiternae
Munera pacis.

Though we are guilty, view us with compassion
Banish anguish, bestow health,
Grant us everlasting goodness
Give us peace.

John 14:27

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you: not as the world giveth, give I to you.
Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

V. Illuminare his

Canticle of Zechariah (Luke 1:68-79)

Illuminate his qui in tenebris
et in umbra mortis sedent:
ad dirigendos pedes nostros in viam pacis.

Illuminate those in darkness
and in the shadow of death are seated
direct our footpath in the way of peace.

MADRIGAL SINGERS

Mr. Benjamin Murray, Director

Cascie Banachoski	Maisie Hays	Evangeline Sereno
Cameryn Brindza	Nathan Johnson	Ben Shuttleworth
Alana Calig	Maggie Jones	Emma Smith
Xing Carlough	Warren Kerstetter	Robert Svenson
Bree Cheatham	Hunter Lisotto	Niko Vavpetic
Dan DeMotte	Gavin Lynch	Margot Walter
Greta Erdner	Alejandro Motschman	Emily Wilson
Shane Giel	Faye Muller	Neve Zed
Grace Gouwens	Ari Padnos	Owen Zed
	Lincoln Rowley	

VULPES CANTANTES

Mr. Benjamin Murray, Director

Mr. Benjamin Bliss, Collaborative Pianist

Maddie Acquaro	Maggie Handron	Audrey Seiler
Cascie Banachoski	Maisie Hays	Aislynn Senn
Adella Boy	Maggie Jones	Evangeline Sereno
Cameryn Brindza	Kassidy Joyce	Emily Shaw
Alana Calig	Morgan Kiley	Anaia Shehzad
Mia Carl	Karlyanne Kushon	Hannah Shuttleworth
Bree Cheatham	Gia Mort	Giselle Silva
Ana Sofia Davit	Faye Muller	Addison Smith
Emily Dwyer	Brooke Nalevanko	Emma Smith
Greta Erdner	Emily Olifson	Sophia Tai
Anita Fava	Abigail Ornelas	Mona Trebak
Noelle Fouron	Mary Clare Owens	Phoebe Van Gehuchten
Sophia Geraci	Ellie Passavant	Margot Walter
Ane Giguere	Cate Pastoor	June Webb
Avery Graham	Olivia Schooley	Emily Wright

ORCHESTRA

Ms. Mairi Cooper, Director

Violin I

+ Ryan Wang, concertmaster
+ Zinta Jacob, asst. concertmaster

Jesutofunmi Bamidele

Jane Dering

Isabella Gray

Rishi Krishnamurthy

Lime Park

Lilah Rivera

Violin II

+ Molly Classen, principal
+ Bailey Mack, asst. principal

Martalicia Christlieb

Autumn Ewing

Arika Kuchhal

Darshen Jayaratnam

Marleigh Marcussen

Henry Matthews

Dyutit Patro

Maris Silva

Sabrina Stiles

Cecilia Sumrok

Gabby Weidner

Amie Wang

Elisabeth Wissner

Magdalena Wissner

Julia Yannotti

Viola

+ Xing Carlough, principal

Hazel Clifford

Jane Maurer

Marlowe Schmidt

Lillian Shaffer

Anaia Shehzad

Megu Shima

Anais Wang

Cello

+ Linden Trac, principal

Graham Carlson

Claire Conti

Maelie Conti

Grace Cooper

Axel deBruyn

Clara Drahnak

Holden Driver

Ava Henderson

Willa Meyer

Stella Miller

Micah Ramirez

Anderson Resek

Mageda Ritz

+ Aislynn Senn

Alessandra Sirio

Emma Smith

Ella Ziegler

Bass

Abby Hughes, principal

Roya Alborzi

Dylan Paserba

Harp

Aislynn Senn

Percussion

Jack Murray-Krezan

Luke Dancy

Piano

Mr. Benjamin Murray

+ Denotes performing solos

CONCERT CHOIR

Mr. Benjamin Murray, Director

Joselynn Abbott	Cassidy Fitzpatrick	Hunter Lisotto	Lillian Salva
Madelyn Acquaro	Brianna Francis	Gavin Lynch	Olivia Schooley
Felicity Anderson	Abigail Freyvogel	Megan Lynch	Audrey Seiler
Sydney Asher	Lillian Geeting	Mimi Malik	Evangeline Sereno
Stella Avondolio	Sophia Geraci	Julian McDonald	Emily Shaw
Jesutofunmi Bamidele	Shane Giel	John McGough	Logan Shirk
Reva Bamne	Ane Giguere	Sofia Melani	Ben Shuttleworth
Cascie Banachoski	Fenix Goldberg	Rigel Meyers	Hannah Shuttleworth
Kaileigh Barclay	Izzy Gongaware	Emily Miller	Giselle Silva
Adella Boy	Grace Gouwens	Giuliana Miller	Addison Smith
Jillian Bradley	Avery Graham	Gia Mort	Arianna Solari
Cameryn Brindza	Wilhelmina Grashow	Alejandro Motschman	Maia Stern
Penelope Bruno	Eduardo Guirola Diaz	Faye Muller	Altrian Story
Anya Butler	Abigail Haas	Brooke Nalevanko	Jackson Sudbury
Alana Calig	Maggie Handron	Josh Nawrocki	Robert Svenson
Maeve Carey	Jazmine Hardeman	Zev Nelson	Div Thirumala
Mia Carl	Maisie Hays	Ianna Ochai	Mona Trebak
Veda Catone	Abby Hughes	Emily Olifson	Presley Turner
Bree Cheatham	Adelynn Hunter	Abigail Ornelas Barajas	Phoebe Van Gehuchten
Rory Clouse	AJ Johnson	Ari Padnos	Sammy Van Kirk
Ilaria Conte	Nathan Johnson	Ellie Passavant	Niko Vavpetic
Glitch Cook	Maggie Jones	Cate Pastoor	Margot Walter
Keury Da Mata	Kassidy Joyce	Olivia Pinizzotto	Brooklyn Wan
Ana Sofia Davit	Warren Kerstetter	Alyssa Poole	Cora Watters
Brianna Dellomo	Morgan Kiley	Maggie Qiu	June Webb
Dan DeMotte	Kaeli Kobylinski	Lydia Ramberg	Joseph Weber
Tommy Dial	Gwenyth Kramer	Logan Rapp	Keira White
Kaitlyn DiNatale	Jordan Krysik	Teaire Reynolds	Izzalana Whiteside
Kai Dunn	Karlyanne Kushon	Anna Rhoades	Emily Wilson
Emily Dwyer	Aristia Laing	Emma Ritz	Emily Wright
Solomon Edwards	Isabella Lavelle	Lilah Rivera	Neve Zed
Greta Erdner	Corrine Leas	Taylor Roles	Owen Zed
Anita Fava	Claire Lesnik	Lincoln Rowley	Sasha Ziegler
Ella Ferry	Holden Link	Isabella Rymer	



About the Major Works Concert

The *Major Works Concert* is a unique performance presented in alternating years with our *Kaleidoscope Concert*. Unlike *Kaleidoscope*, which highlights a wide variety of shorter, diverse performances, the *Major Works Concert* focuses on one large-scale composition written for choir and orchestra. These works often span 25 minutes to an hour and represent some of the most significant repertoire in the choral–orchestral tradition.

Performing a major work is both a challenge and a privilege. It provides our students with the opportunity to collaborate across ensembles, engage deeply with complex music, and experience tremendous artistic and emotional growth. The themes of these works, light and darkness, grief and hope, life and faith, invite performers and audiences alike to reflect on the shared human experience.

Supporting Our Program

This concert represents months of preparation and an extraordinary level of commitment from our students and staff. While attendance is free, we gratefully accept *free will donations* at tinyurl.com/fcmajorworks. Your generosity directly supports events like this one, helping us to secure necessary performance materials, purchase music, provide transportation and bring these powerful works to life.

Donations also help sustain future events, including our beloved *Kaleidoscope Concert*, held every other year. Your support ensures that we can continue offering these transformative musical experiences to our students and community for years to come.



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For more information, contact Dr. Ed Moore at EdM@coh.net

Sunday, November 16, 2025 at 3:00 PM

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Friday, December 12, 2025 at 7:30 PM

Christmas in East Liberty

Sunday, January 4, 2026 at 3:00 PM

Cody Conley, violin

Devin Arrington, violin

Grace Burns, piano

Sunday, March 1, 2026 at 3:00 PM

On a Sunday - Music of Sondheim

Sunday, April 12, 2026 at 3:00 PM

Nathaniel Gumbs, Organist

Presented with the Organ Artists Series of Pittsburgh

Sunday, May 17, 2026 at 3:00 PM

The Arsenal Duo - Organ and Piano

Thank you to the ELPC Friends of Music for their support of Cathedral Concerts.

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The Fox Chapel Area High School Music Department is proud to be the recipient of an “Exemplary Educational Program Credential” in music from the Middle States Association. Fox Chapel Area is the first public school in the country to be recognized with this honor.



Fox Chapel Area School District was named one of the 2025 Best Communities for Music Education by the National Association of Music Merchants Foundation. For more information, visit www.nammfoundation.org.

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Program Principal (A-L): Michelle Young, Ph.D.
Program Principal (M-Z): Nicole Smith, Ed.D.

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Amy Beresik, Dorseyville Middle School
Joshua Bryan-Branker, Fairview & Kerr Elementary School
Jeff Bryer, Dorseyville Middle School
Mairi Cooper, Fox Chapel Area High School
Christy Ehman, Kerr Elementary School
Candace Erb, Fairview Elementary School
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