



# BEETHOVEN

MISSA SOLEMNIS



### Missa Solemnis

Jean-Sébastien Vallée, conductor
Tracy Cantin, soprano
Simona Genga, mezzo-soprano
Frédéric Antoun, tenor
Brett Polegato, baritone
Toronto Mendelssohn Choir
Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony

The orchestra's appearance in this evening's concert is supported by a generous bequest from John Philip Penney.

Run Time: 85 minutes, no intermission

If you enjoyed this evening's performance, please consider making a donation in support of Toronto Mendelssohn Choir.

tmchoir.org/donate-now

Toronto Mendelssohn Choir acknowledges that the land on which we perform is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat peoples, and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit.

We are honoured to share our music across these lands.

#### **PROGRAM**

#### Mass in D major, op. 123, "Missa solemnis"

L.V. Beethoven (1770-1827)

arr. by J. Linckelmann

Kyrie		
Gloria		
Credo		
Sanctus		
Agnus Dei		

#### **PROGRAM NOTES**

"From the heart—may it return—to the heart." After four years of compositional work, these are the words Ludwig van Beethoven inscribed on the score of his completed *Missa solemnis* before presenting it, in 1823, to his patron, pupil, and friend Rudolph Johann Joseph Rainer, Archduke of Austria. Originally commissioned to celebrate Archduke Rudolph's investiture as Archbishop of Olmütz in 1819, *Missa solemnis* ultimately premiered in 1824 in St. Petersburg at a mysterious, little–documented benefit. The Mass had a partial Viennese premiere the same year. However, the full work was not premiered—in Vienna or elsewhere—until three years after Beethoven's death, and recordings and performances of *Missa solemnis* remain, when compared against Beethoven's other major late works, comparatively rare. Yet Beethoven counted his Mass as the greatest of his compositions, and his personal favourite. In addition to his inscription, the score is full of interpretive instructions he wrote for the musicians, among them "with devotion" and "asking for inner and outer peace." Much evidence suggests, then, that *Missa solemnis* was, written from the heart, and is arguably one of Beethoven's most personal and expressive compositions.

Yet in spite of (or, perhaps, because of) the Mass's personal connection to Beethoven, it is notoriously challenging to contextualize within his sacred compositions. The composer only wrote two other large-scale sacred works: the 1803 oratorio *Christ on the Mount of Olives* and 1807's *Mass in C*. Both differ radically from *Missa solemnis*. Some of this is surely due to issues of content, context, and time; the oratorio sets a completely different text and narrative; Mass in C was written for Joseph Haydn's former patron Prince Nikolaus Esterházy II and inspired by (if not fully modelled after) Haydn's late-period Masses; both works are characterized by aspects of Beethoven's early and middle style. Yet there is also much reason to think that one of the reasons that *Missa solemnis* differs so radically from Beethoven's earlier sacred works is because it functions, in many ways, as a statement or expression of faith, or, as music theorist Scott Burnham has suggested, as Beethoven's most direct effort to musically depict the voice of God. Notably, Beethoven was baptized and raised Catholic, and though not a regular church-goer or practicing Catholic, maintained a life-long interest in concepts of God and spirituality.

To directly identify or explain any individual's spiritual worldview and beliefs, particularly when that spirituality is expressed through art, is a daunting and complex task. Spirituality and faith, after all, deal primarily with the intangible and ineffable. Faith is ultimately meant to be felt and experienced and lived, but not necessarily retroactively analyzed. For these reasons—and because I want you, our audience, to feel free to bring your own diverse beliefs, ideas, and worldviews into dialogue with this extraordinary piece of music—I don't want to speculate on what finer points of theology and Catholic or deist spiritual teachings Beethoven might be

trying to communicate through *Missa solemnis*. When it comes to decoding musical meaning in the Mass, and Beethoven's musical interpretation of its liturgical text, I will offer only one, objective hint: Beethoven composed the Mass simultaneously with his Ninth Symphony, and wove musical connections between them, originally intending for them to be performed in a double premiere. In that sense, then, the faith of *Missa solemnis* is meant to be in dialogue with the faith of Schiller's words in the "Ode to Joy," and their triumphant sense of belief in God and humanity alike.

The remarkably exacting musical demands of *Missa solemnis* also require faith (spiritual or otherwise). The original premiere in St. Petersburg was delayed by three months from Christmas of 1823 to early April of 1824 because the choir required more time to rehearse the extraordinarily difficult part-writing. Beethoven's mass is defined, in part, by complex harmonies and extreme contrasts and sudden changes in metre, tempo, dynamic, and affect, all of which make the piece remarkably challenging to perform for singers and instrumentalists. Simultaneously, *Missa solemnis* broke historic nineteenth-century expectations of what a concert Mass was expected to sound like, with its addition of violin solo, recitative, and expressive additions to the standard Mass text. It also more than doubled the then-standard length of a concert Mass. This also means, however, that the Mass followed Beethoven's standard compositional practice, as composition of *Missa solemnis* began after he had already defied standard compositional parameters of form and length in the sonata, symphony, and string quartet, reimagining in the process what all of those genres could be and communicate.

Finally, Missa solemnis also has a personal connection to the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir and its history, as the TMChoir gave the Canadian premiere of the piece in 1927. Almost a century later, as we celebrate the ending of our 130th anniversary season, it seems a fitting touchstone as a piece that brings together history, determination, innovation, complexity, faith, and a touch of the ineffable. On behalf of the choir and its leadership team, I want to offer our gratitude to you, our audience, both for your support of the choir over the years and for sharing this musical journey with us. We look forward to sharing music with you for many years to come!



#### TORONTO MENDELSSOHN CHOIR

**Toronto Mendelssohn Choir** (TMChoir) is proud to be one of Canada's oldest, largest, and best-known choral organizations. The choir presented its first concert on January 15, 1895, as part of Massey Hall's inaugural season, and has been a leader in choral music in Canada ever since, commissioning works by Canadian composers, and presenting world and Canadian premieres. The choir also regularly performs and records with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. In May 2021, Jean-Sébastien Vallée was named as Artistic Director, only the eighth conductor in TMChoir's 130-year history.

Through its performances, educational programs, and community engagement, TMChoir aspires to introduce its audiences to choral masterworks from the past and present—and make both renowned and lesser-known pieces available, accessible, and inspirational to all.

TMChoir includes a core of professional singers and more than 160 auditioned and experienced volunteer choristers. The smaller professional ensemble, the **Toronto Mendelssohn Singers** (TMSingers), was created to deliver more intimate repertoire in a variety of non-traditional venues. This 130th anniversary season includes a commercial recording *Remember: 130 Years of Canadian Choral Music*, available now, by ATMA Classique, and a recording with Canada's National Arts Centre Orchestra and Orchestre symphonique de Québec celebrating the late composer Jacques Hétu.

#### Jean-Sébastien Vallée, Artistic Director and Principal Conductor

Jean-Sébastien Vallée is a renowned Canadian-American conductor, scholar, and pedagogue known for his expertise in vocal, choral, and orchestral repertoires. With a career spanning over several decades, Vallée has conducted numerous ensembles across North America, Europe, and Asia, and has collaborated with some of the world's most prestigious orchestras including the Chicago and Toronto Symphony Orchestras, l'Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, and the National Arts Center Orchestra in Ottawa.



Dr. Vallée is Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of the renowned 160-voice Toronto Mendelssohn Choir and the professional Toronto Mendelssohn Singers. In addition, Jean-Sébastien is Full Professor of Music, Director of Choral Studies, and Coordinator of the Conducting & Ensembles Area at the Schulich School of Music of McGill University. He has previously served as the Director of Choral Studies at California State University, Los Angeles, and was on the choral faculty of the University of Redlands. Dr. Vallée holds degrees from Laval University, Sherbrooke University, the University of California, Santa Cruz, and a doctorate in conducting from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Vallée's recordings have been broadcast internationally and include Remember (ATMA, 2024), Distance (ATMA, 2021), Requiem (ATMA, 2018 – requiems by Fauré and Duruflé), and Lux (ATMA, 2017). His recent and upcoming engagements include concerts at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music in Budapest, concerts with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, and a performance at Carnegie Hall with Distinguished Concerts International New York.

#### Tracy Cantin, soprano

Praised for her "full, gleaming sound" (Chicago Tribune), Canadian soprano Tracy Cantin "has it all - agility, power and dazzling coloratura" (Chicago Sun-Times). Recently, Tracy brought her vocal prowess to Calgary Opera, joining them for Micaela in Carmen, and returned to the Canadian Opera Company for McVicar's new production of Verdi's Macbeth, where she made her role debut as Lady Macbeth, stepping in for an ailing colleague and subsequently performing the remainder of performances in the production's run.



Returning to the stage post-pandemic, Tracy was acclaimed as Donna Elvira in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* with Pacific Opera Victoria, where she "impressed with her judicious displays of vocal heft, offering thrilling upper-register forays that filled the theatre, elsewhere navigating soft passages with exquisite control and a purring vibrato" (Times Colonist).

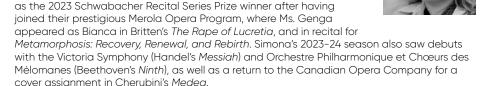
Performances highlights include her debut with the BBC Scottish Symphony under Thomas Dausgaard in Bernstein's Songfest, Verdi's *Requiem* with the Okanagan Symphony, the Immolation Scene in *Götterdämmerung* for the Vancouver Symphony under Otto Tausk and Strauss' *Elektra* for the Canadian Opera Company. Ms. Cantin made a surprise mainstage debut at the Canadian Opera Company in 2018 as the title character in Donizetti's demanding *Anna Bolena*, which garnered her rave reviews.

Chrysothemis in Strauss' *Elektra* marked Ms. Cantin's Canadian debut at the Edmonton Opera. At the Santa Fe Opera, she covered Elza van der Heever in the title role of *Alcina*, while as an Alumna of the prestigious Ryan Opera Center at Lyric Opera of Chicago, Ms. Cantin has been featured in mainstage productions of *Anna Bolena*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Elektra*, *Rigoletto*, and *Parsifal*.

#### Simona Genga, mezzo-soprano

Mezzo-soprano Simona Genga possesses an "exceptional and rare voice" known for its "vocal plushness, amplitude and range" (*Ludwig van Toronto/Opera Canada*).

Of recent note, Simona returned to San Francisco Opera in recital



Simona was a 2022-23 Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition National Semi-Finalist after winning both the Great Lakes Region and Buffalo-Toronto District rounds. The season also included her debut with the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa.

Recent highlights include the title role in *Carmen* for Saskatoon Opera, the premiere of lan Cusson's *Fantasma* with the Canadian Opera Company, Handel's *Messiah* with the Peterborough Singers, Olga in *Eugene Onegin* for Highlands Opera Studio, and Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* with Brott Music Festival.

In recent seasons, Simona appeared as the Second Maid in COC's Elektra and premiered the role of Cindy in their Wow Factor: A Cinderella Story. As a Gerdine Young Artist at Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Simona sang Annina in Patricia Racette's production of La traviata and covered the role of Mother Chen in the premiere of Huang Ro's An American Soldier. In recital, Simona sang in Elora Festival's Shaftsbury Salon Series, won the 2017 Norcop Song Recital Prize, and has held fellowships with the Ravinia Steans Music Institute, The Chautauqua Institute, Highlands Opera Studio, and the Franz Schubert Institut in Baden bei Wein.

#### Frédéric Antoun, tenor

Internationally lauded, Québec-born tenor Frédéric Antoun's voice has been described as "noble and sincere." (Opera Canada) Long associated with the operas of Thomas Adès, Antoun recently made appearances in the British composer's *The Exterminating Angel* at Opéra national de Paris and in his signature role of Caliban in *The Tempest* at Wiener Staatsoper. Highlights of his coming season include returns to the Toronto Symphony Orchestra for Mozart's *Requiem* and Orchestre Métropolitain for Handel's *Messiah* conducted by Yannick Nezet Seguin.



His 2022-2023 season included Caliban in *The Tempest* at Milan's Teatro alla Scala, Gérald in *Lakmé* and Don José in *Carmen* at Paris' Opéra Comique, Narraboth in *Salome* at the Canadian Opera Company, and Mozart's *Requiem* at Berlin's Konzerthaus.

Other recent appearances include Belmonte in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Thespis in *Platée*, Ferrando in *Così fan tutte*, and François in Bernstein's *A Quiet Place* (Opéra national de Paris), Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* (Royal Opera House), Tonio in *La fille du régiment* (Opéra de Lausanne, Opéra de Toulon, and Royal Opera House), Raúl in multiple premieres of *The Exterminating Angel* (Metropolitan Opera, Royal Opera House, and Salzburg Festival), Pylade in *Iphigénie en Tauride* and Nadir in *Les pêcheurs de perles* (Opernhaus Zürich), Prince Charmant in *Cendrillon* (La Monnaie de Munt), and Laërte in *Hamlet* (Theater an der Wien). He is the tenor of choice for esteemed stage directors, including Calixto Bieito, Robert Carsen, Atom Egoyan, Olivier Py, Laurent Pelly, Amy Lane, Robert Lepage, and Barrie Kosky. His extensive discography includes works by Delibes, Saint-Saëns, Gossec, Massenet, Dukas and Ravel.

#### Brett Polegato, baritone

Brett Polegato's artistic sensibility has earned him the highest praise from audiences and critics: "his is a serious and seductive voice" says The Globe and Mail, and The New York Times has praised him for his "burnished, well-focused voice" which he uses with "considerable intelligence and nuance." The Italian-Canadian baritone appears regularly on the world's most distinguished stages, including those of Lincoln Center, the Metropolitan Opera, La Scala, the Concertgebouw,



the Opéra National de Paris, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera, the Teatro Real, Roy Thomson Hall, the Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall and Wigmore Hall, and has collaborated with conductors such as Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Daniele Gatti, Andris Nelsons, Bernard Haitink, Seiji Ozawa, Jeffrey Tate, Marc Minkowski, and Martyn Brabbins. He can be heard as soloist in the Grammy Awards' Best Classical Recording of 2003 - Vaughan Williams' *A Sea Symphony* (Telarc) with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Robert Spano.

#### About the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony

At the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony, we believe that the power of music can bring communities together, inspire joy, and enrich lives in countless ways. Founded in 1945, the KW Symphony has been a cultural touchstone for the Waterloo region and beyond, creating unforgettable musical experiences and a legacy of artistic excellence. In 2023, we faced a challenging moment in our history, declaring bankruptcy due to financial struggles that tested the resilience of our institution. However, thanks to the unwavering support of our community and the generosity of donors, we are ready to rise again, entering a new era with a renewed mission and vision.

Our mission is simple yet profound: to inspire and connect people of all ages and backgrounds through the universal language of music. Under the guidance of a newly appointed board of directors and with the renewed support of our passionate community, we are reimagining what a modern symphony can be. We are committed to preserving the rich tradition of orchestral music while embracing innovative programs and partnerships that reflect the diverse, evolving identity of our region.

This mission extends beyond our performances. We see our role not only as performers but as educators, collaborators, and advocates for music as a transformative force. Through educational outreach, partnerships with local artists and organizations, and accessible performances, we aim to make classical music available to everyone. Our programs are designed to engage students, inspire young musicians, and bring music into everyday life, sparking creativity and building a strong foundation for future generations.

The challenges we've faced have only strengthened our resolve to serve this community with a sense of hope and resilience. We are deeply grateful to all those who have stood by us and believed in our ability to endure. Together, we are building a future that honors our heritage while reaching for new heights. Whether you are a longtime supporter, a newcomer, or simply curious about the symphony, we invite you to join us on this journey.

#### INSTRUMENTALISTS

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Vio	ıın.	

Bénédicte Lauzière, concertmaster

Kenneth Kwan

Julia Dixon

Elizabeth Loewen-Andrews

Kate Unrau

Hua-Chu Huang

Jonathan Garabedian

Anna Luhowy

#### Violin II

Roxolana Toews, principal

Vicky Dvorak

Sophie Drouin

Xueao Yana

Nora Pellerin

Suhashini Arulanandam

Meaan Jones

Lucia Barcari

#### Viola

Natasha Sharko, principal Jody Davenport

ocay Baveripor

David Wadley

Rebecca Diderrich

Brenna Hardy-Kavanagh

Woosol Cho

#### Cello

John Helmers, principal

Rebecca Morton

Miriam Stewart-Kroeker

Nancy Wharton

Sarah Steeves

Brvan Holt

#### **Bass**

lan Whitman, principal

Eric Lee

Daniel Lalonde

Bruce McGillivray

#### Flute

Christian Paquette

#### Oboe

Lief Mosbaugh

#### Clarinet

Ross Edwards

#### **Bassoon**

Ian Hopkin

#### Horn

Marie-Sonja Cotineau

#### Trumpet

Paul Otway

#### Trombone

Rachel Thomas

#### Timpani

Ron Brown

#### Organ

Jonathan Oldengarm

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Celeste Moraan Thordarson lennie Worden Sophya Yumakulov Paulina Zmak

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Ralf Staebler Terrence Tsana Christopher Wenman

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Neil Aronoff\* Shahriar Aslani Jeffrey Baker Alex Chan David Chan Yoosik Choi Scott Crocker Steven Foster Andrew Gilchrist Michael Harrison Kieran Kane\* John Lemke Kai Leuna\* Cliff Liu Doug Long Matt Lozinski Joseph McGowan IV Frederick Mei David Peer David B Powell Milovan Prelević Seymour Stern David Tillmann Karl Tomczak Chia-An (Victor) Tuna Sean van Wvk Jonah Wall Paul Winkelmans\* Albert Wong Isaiah Yankech Amos Yip David Yuna\* Bruce Yungblut

<sup>\*</sup> indicates TMSingers

#### **TEXT AND TRANSLATIONS**

#### **KYRIE**

 Kyrie eleison.
 Lord, have mercy upon us.

 Christe eleison.
 Christ, have mercy upon us.

 Kyrie eleison.
 Lord, have mercy upon us.

#### **GLORIA**

Gloria in excelsis Deo. Et in terra pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis.

Laudamus te. Benedicimus te. Adoramus te. Glorificamus te.

Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam.

Domine Deus, Rex cœlestis, Deus Pater omnipotens. Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe. Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris

Qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis. Qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe deprecationem nostram. Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis. Ah! miserere nobis.

Quoniam tu solus Sanctus. Quoniam tu solus Dominus. Quoniam tu solus Altissimus, Jesu Christe, cum sancto Spiritu in gloria Dei Patris,

Amen.

cum sancto Spiritu in gloria Dei Patris, Amen.

Quoniam tu solus Sanctus. Quoniam tu solus Dominus. Quoniam tu solus Altissimus, Jesu Christe, cum sancto Spiritu in gloria Dei Patris,

Amen.

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Glory to God in the highest. and on earth peace to all those of good will.

We praise you, We bless you, We adore you, We glorify you.

We give thanks to You, according to Your great glory.

Lord God, King of heaven, God the almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son. Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father

You who remove the sins of the world, have mercy on us.
You who remove the sins of the world, receive our prayer.
You who sit at the right hand of the Father,

have mercy on us. Ah, have mercy on us!

You alone are holy.
You alone are the Lord.
You alone are the highest, Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit in the glory of God the Father,
Amen.

with the Holy Spirit in the glory of Father, Amen.

You alone are Holy.
You alone are the Lord.
You alone are the highest, Jesus Christ
with the Holy Spirit in the glory of
God the Father,
Amen.

Glory to God in the highest.

#### CRFDO

Credo in unum Deum, Patrem omnipotentem, factorem cœli et terræ, visibilium omnium, et invisibilium.

Credo in unum Dominum Jesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum, et ex Patre natum ante omnia sæcula. Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero. Genitum, non factum, consubstantialem Patri: per quem omnia facta sunt. Qui propter nos homines, et propter nostram salutem descendit de cœlis.

Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine.

Et homo factus est.

Crucifixus etiam pro nobis sub Pontio Pilato: passus, et sepultus est.

Et resurrexit tertia die, secundum Scripturas.

Et ascendit in cœlum: sedet ad dexteram Patris. Et iterum venturus est cum gloria, judicare vivos et mortuos: cujus regni non erit finis.

Credo in Spiritum Sanctum, Dominum, et vivificantem: qui ex Patre Filioque procedit. Qui cum Patre, et Filio simul adoratur et conglorificatur: qui locutus est per Prophetas.

Credo in unam sanctam, catholicam et apostolicam Ecclesiam.
Confiteor unum baptisma in remissionem peccatorum.
Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum.
Et vitam venturi sæculi. Amen.

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, and born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, True God from True God. Begotten, not made, of one substance with the Father: by whom all things were made. Who, for us and for our salvation descended from the heavens.

And was made flesh by the Holy Spirit from the Virgin Mary,

and was made human.

And was also crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, he suffered, and was buried.

And he rose again on the third day, in accordance with scripture.

and he ascended into heaven, and sat at the right of the Father. And he will come again with glory, to judge the living and the dead, and his reign shall have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and Son is worshipped and glorified together, who spoke through the Prophets.

I believe in one holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the forgiving of sins. And I await the rising again of the dead, and the life of the age to come. Amen.

#### SANCTUS et BENEDICTUS

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Domine Deus Sabaoth,

pleni sunt cœli et terra gloria tua.

Osanna in excelsis!

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts,

the heavens and earth are filled

with your glory.

Hosanna in the highest!

#### Preludium: Sostenuto ma non troppo

Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.

Osanna in excelsis!

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest!

#### **AGNUS DEI**

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei:

Lamb of God, who removes the sins of the world.

have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, who removes the sins

of the world. have mercy on us.

Lamb of God:

#### **DONA NOBIS** (Prayer for inner and outer peace)

Dona nobis pacem.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,

miserere nobis.

Dona nobis pacem.

Grant us peace.

Lamb of God, who removes the sins

of the world, have mercy on us.

Grant us peace.

#### **OUR COMMUNITY OF SUPPORT**

Toronto Mendelssohn Choir gratefully acknowledges the support of our government partners, corporate and foundation sponsors, and individual donors who, through their financial support, make it possible for TMChoir to present outstanding high-quality performances, community engagement programs, and education opportunities.

This list reflects donations from September 2022 to the present. We make every effort to ensure the accuracy of this list, however, if you notice an error or omission, please accept our apologies and contact Devon Klaas as devon.klaas@tmchoir.org

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