



FID CHORAL SOCIETY

Bringing Choral Masterworks to Life Since 1968

Choral Passages Vol. 36, No. 2, October 2025



FROM THE PODIUM

Jacob Pedersen, Artistic Director

A Vision Unfolding — “I dream a world where man no other man will scorn, where love will bless the earth and peace its paths adorn. I dream a world where all will know sweet freedom’s way, where greed no longer saps the soul nor avarice blights our day. A world I dream where black or white, whatever race you be, will share the bounties of the earth and every man is free.” — Langston Hughes (1902-1967)

In preparation for this concert, my goal was in two parts: one, to create a bridge for young passionate people to find common ground with the senior generation, and two, to find literature that educates, motivates, and inspires this wonderful choir. I grew up on an acreage between Manson and Pomeroy, Iowa; the middle of nowhere. Diversity in that community could barely be found. Then, I went to Buena Vista University and experienced a culture change. My first roommate was a student from Saudi Arabia. The diversity I experienced in Storm Lake was a complete difference from my norm. I still enjoy visiting my campus town, going to various restaurants and shops, and trying new things.

After the George Floyd murder in Minneapolis in 2020, I devoted some of my master’s research on how to diversify some systems in Iowa music education, mainly the Iowa High

School Music Association’s Large Group required list. Each year, schools will go to Large Group festival and sing various literature for a rating; they must perform a song that is “required” from a list of literature that the state deems appropriate for students. My research showed that out of the 350+ composers on that list, only 1 composer was both black and female. Since then, I have tried to be a squeaky wheel when dealing with the state’s required list.

Diversity of music spreads further than just Black, Brown, Indigenous, and Asian composers; composers of specific gender, orientation, or disability. Many directors, including me, are getting better at programing diverse music, but we still have a way to go, especially in smaller communities where the music may not be accessible to smaller choirs.

The first song you will hear in the concert is considered the Black National Anthem: “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” arranged by Roland Carter. The opening glissando from the piano invites the audience to stand in recognition. Then, we will go immediately into a piece from the Renaissance era of music, “Ave Maria, Virgo serena.” Composer Josquin Desprez was not a diverse composer, but his music explores a diversity of sounds. Close your eyes and imagine you are in a cathedral with tall, vaulted ceilings and listen to the echoes of voices moving independently from one another and sometimes coming back together in one. What a contrast going from the Renaissance to a piece by singer, songwriter Bob Dylan! “The Times They Are A-Changin’” must be one of his most popular songs written — used for movies, television, and now for choral music. We will close out the concert’s first half with “I Will Walk This Way,” a gospel setting that was written for the “Music That Inspires” Project.

2025-2026 Concert Season

Sunday, October 26, 2025

Themes of social justice, featuring *A Vision Unfolding*
with violin, trumpet and percussion
3 pm, St Paul Lutheran Church
400 S 13th Street, Fort Dodge

Sunday, December 21, 2025

featuring Franz Schubert’s *Magnificat in C*
3 pm, First United Methodist Church
127 N 10th Street, Fort Dodge

Sunday, March 8, 2026

Celebrating the 250th Anniversary of American Independence
with Jive for Five! brass quintet and string ensemble
3 pm, Decker Auditorium
1 Triton Circle, ICCC campus, Fort Dodge

Sunday, May 10, 2026

Music from the big screen
3 pm, Historic Phillips Auditorium
1015 5th Ave N, Fort Dodge

In the second half of our program, we will perform *A Vision Unfolding* by Kyle Pederson. What I enjoy about this work is that it comes from a place of many diverse poets with different backgrounds. It’s not just Kyle’s voice being used to send a message, but many artists employing the same message: “...that each of us might reach out beyond our comfort zone and seek to build bridges of care and connection, finding a better way of being in a community.”
~ Kyle Pederson

With the closure of our concert, we invite anyone interested in singing with the Fort Dodge Choral Society to please reach out to one of our members for more information. We look forward to singing with you!



Kyle Pederson is the Minneapolis-based composer of *A Vision Unfolding*. Kyle was attracted to music and composition early in life. In first grade, he composed “Baalk Baalk Chicken Baalk” on his family’s upright piano, and he never looked back. He studied music, philosophy, political science, and secondary education at Augustana University in Sioux Falls, SD, and taught middle school geography. He shared his classroom with the music teacher

and used the old Baldwin piano to compose musical ditties to help his student learn geography – his first stint as composer-in-residence.

Eight years later Kyle and a colleague founded Learner’s Edge, a company dedicated to helping educators better help their students learn, including integrating arts and music into other studies. In early 2009, he began creating an album that included some prelude pieces he had written for his wedding — a revelation to him that “nothing provided the sheer joy and feeling of aliveness as creating music and hearing it come to life.” In 2013, he moved to a career as a fulltime composer, eventually taking on choral composing, which felt “like a coming home.” In 2017, he earned an MFA in music composition from the Vermont College of Fine Arts.

After numerous awards and prizes in choral composition, today Kyle says of his work: I’m drawn to all sorts of music and texts, but I’m particularly interested in the conversations that are happening at the intersection of faith and music. Much of my own work thus far has been an exploration of the blurring of the line between sacred and secular. In the words of a recent text I set, “Spirit in all and through all, grant us eyes, that we may see everything is a miracle.”

~~ kylepederson.com

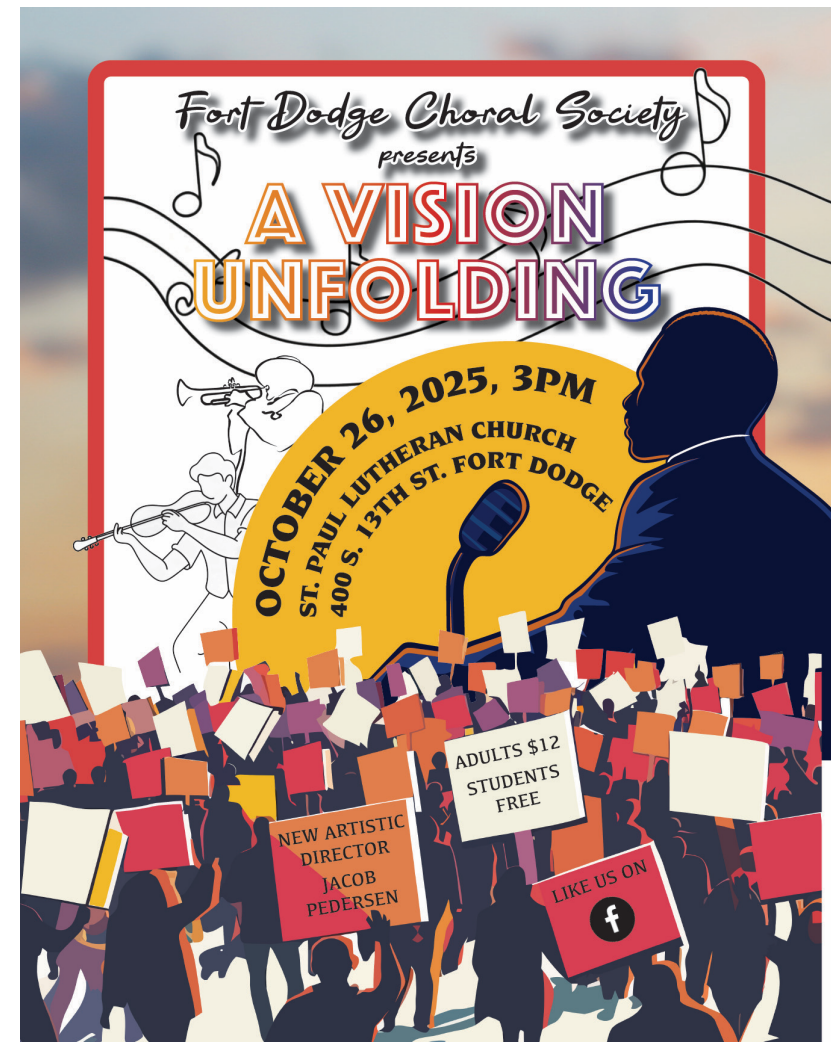
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Fort Dodge Fine Arts Association
on behalf of
Fort Dodge Choral Society
824 N 8th St
Fort Dodge, IA 50501

NOTE: *Twist and Shout* has listed incorrect information for our October concert in their Community Calendar.

The correct date, time and place is:

October 26, 3 pm, St Paul Lutheran Church



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Choral Passages is the official newsletter of Fort Dodge Choral Society, published 5 times per year to inform members of the activities and concerns of the Society. Subscriptions are free by sending your name, address and phone number to:

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Fort Dodge, IA 50501

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