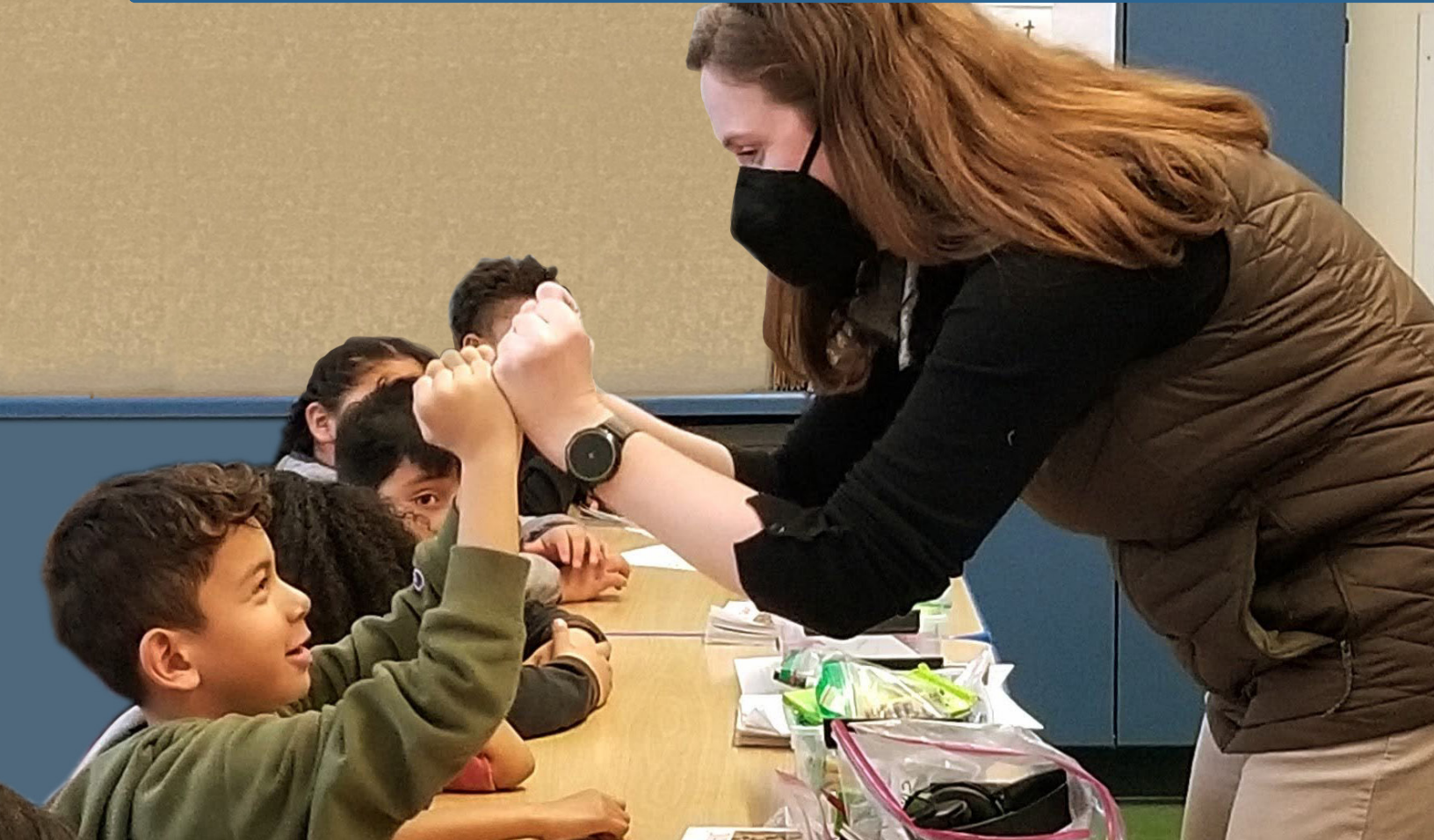




Annual Report 2022-2023



Vision

Inspiring people to live in harmony, treating one another with dignity.

Mission

Cantare seeks to foster a diverse community of compassion and understanding across generational, cultural, and economic boundaries through the beauty and power of choral music.

Work

Through our work with our adult choirs, youth choirs, and more than 3,000 underserved youth, Cantare is committed to advancing social change and cultural equity by building bridges where there is division.



Letter from the Board President

Dear Cantare Friends,

There is never a dull year for Cantare! But what a year, full of successes, pleasant surprises and visible impact in the lives of so many Oakland students! It is such a privilege to serve with a wonderful group of directors, staff, board members, and supporters. I am very grateful for everything you have contributed, both financially and in other ways.

Later, Julie and Conway describe some of extraordinary highlights of our Children & Youth programs. Standing out for me are the accomplishments of Nova on their Southern California tour, and an amazing summer camp at which I was privileged to help. The adult programming season was also stunning, including a unique concert of music from the Asian Pacific Rim, with songs from eight countries, in nine languages. The partnership with the Great Wall Youth Orchestra in that concert, along with so many of our children and youth singing with both adult choirs, expressed so well what Cantare is all about.

Financially, we have had another good year, despite substantial additional expenses as we expanded our programming and had our first full year for a while with an Executive Director. Al's report goes into more detail on how beautifully our network of donors, foundations and government grants have stepped up to enable this growth.



The one sad part of the year is saying farewell to Mary Finch after a short, but highly impactful tenure as our Executive Director. She left for her successor a great foundation for further growth and maturity.

A past OUSD school principal says about Cantare school programs: "I have witnessed students who would never raise their hands or read in front of the class gain confidence through the choir and perform in front of the large crowd for their concerts. This experience became the highlight and the thrill of a lifetime for them."

This is Cantare. This is our unique symbiotic blend of adult, youth and children's music with the common goal of promoting equity and inclusion for all. And it works! Thank you for helping us make it happen!

Graham Seel, Board President



Letter from the Artistic Director

Our 2022-23 season featured the Chorale, Chamber Ensemble and Summer Adult Choir performing six highly diverse concerts. Our summer choir concert featured selections from Broadway musicals spanning nine decades. Our Chamber Ensemble offered sell-out performances of fabulous choral arrangements of The Beatles songs. The Chorale and Ensemble along with Nova and Youth Honor Choir presented their spectacular annual December Holiday Concert, which is the finest of its kind in the Bay Area. In March, the Chorale and Ensemble performed a concert of Jewish music featuring Ernest Bloch's *Sacred Service* at Oakland's Scottish Rite Center. These same adult choirs collaborated with Nova, Youth Honor Choir, our Lincoln Elementary School Music Stars and the Great Wall Youth Orchestra in offering choral arrangements of songs from Asia's Pacific Rim countries. With Bay Area renowned Wendy Tokuda as our Emcee, this concert raised historical and cultural awareness, increasing appreciation for those representing these various cultures that share prominence in our local community and nation. It was a moving afternoon of music-making and personal storytelling.

We continued to walk alongside one another through the changes that transpired in the lives of our singers, their families and friends. Once again, we affirmed the value of Cantare's mission, nurturing a compassionate community across boundaries that often divide us, through the beauty and power of choral music.

What a privilege for me to be a part of this lofty endeavor.

David Morales, Artistic Director

Cantare Thanks Mary Finch



Mary Finch began her service as Cantare's Executive Director in November 2021, as the pandemic was beginning to ease and school offerings and choir rehearsals were returning to being face to face, but still with masks required. She quickly made her presence felt through her leadership with staff and in building relationships with Cantare donors. Mary concluded her time with Cantare at the end of our FY2023, in order to give herself time to manage her shifting personal responsibilities. In her brief 20-month tenure, Mary greatly expanded our public footprint in the Bay Area, increased funding income from individuals and foundations, participated in strengthening our Board, and provided programmatic support for David, Julie and Conway in our Adult and our Children's & Youth offerings. Cantare's staff, board and supporters are sincerely appreciative of Mary's accomplishments, delivered with her marvelous professional and compassionate touch.

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2022–2023 Concerts



**You Can't Stop the Beat!
The Music of Broadway**
7.30.2022 | Walnut Creek
7.31.2022 | Oakland



Holiday Concert
12.3.2022 | Walnut Creek
12.4.2022 | Oakland

Songs by The Beatles
2.10.2023 | Kensington
2.11.2023 | Lafayette



Ernest Bloch's Sacred Service
3.19.2023 | Oakland

Music from Asia's Pacific Rim
5.21.2023 | Oakland



A Reflection of the Asia's Pacific Rim Concert

Our country is experiencing so much violence and hatred. We are polarized and traumatized by what we see all around us. Is healing even possible? Healing from watching our country violate human rights of immigrants and transgender people, from hateful crimes against Asian people, or micro-traumas from daily interactions with those unaware of their privilege.

This is where Cantare fills that gap. Music plays a role in helping communities heal by creating connections between people of all generations. We may never have full cultural understanding of the people around us, but on May 21, 2023, Cantare was determined to try.

The evening's program listed traditional songs from eight different Asian countries. I assumed they'd be sung in English. I wondered if it would have the same meaning after translation. I then learned both the adult and children's choirs would be singing them in their original language. I was cynical—and impressed at the same time. I thought, "So many people can't even pronounce "Phở " properly when ordering at a Vietnamese restaurant (pronounced "phuh"), and now they would sing it?"

That evening, the audience was amazed. Faces lit up when they heard their own language belted out with pride. The crowd was awestruck by each language perfectly sung in harmony. Connections were made that evening in a polarized society where our traumas have distanced us from one another.

If music is an antidote to life's traumas, Cantare, thoughtfully and intentionally, provided it in the way the audience could receive it...in their own language.

—Angela Aquino, Cantare Board Member,
Former OUSD Principal

Lifting Voices Uplifting Lives

Children's & Youth Programs

86% of students met rhythmic learning objectives

82% met melodic objectives

90% of the partner schools' staff surveyed said that Cantare's Classroom Music Education helped their students develop listening and communication skills.



100% of Cantare middle/high school singers graduate high school

98% go to college or vocational school, many the first in their families to do so

Over 3,000 students in:

- 106 Classrooms
- 6 After-school choirs
- 72% Economically disadvantaged
- 35% English language learners
- 11% Special education
- 18% African American
- 38% Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI)
- 26% Hispanic
- 7% Two or more ethnicities



After-School Choirs

Last year, we stepped up to meet the exciting demand in our community for our after-school choir programs. Our longtime choirs at Lincoln Elementary and Melrose Leadership Academy reached record enrollment rates and Nova nearly doubled in size. We also started three new tuition-free choirs at Cleveland, Franklin and La Escuelita Elementary schools.

Our youth choirs united in November for our Pride and Joy Festival. Coming out of pandemic conditions, it was the first opportunity for many of our students to perform. The feeling of community and connection was palpable. Our spring concert in May, *Shining through the City*, celebrated music from Oakland's AAPI community. Students and parents helped our choirs

at a clinic with the Cal Poly Pomona choir director and enjoyed touring the campus. At the Anaheim Heritage Music Festival, Nova received the prestigious Gold Award and senior Nai Trawick was awarded Most Outstanding Soloist. The adjudicators noted the artistry our students demonstrated while singing repertoire from Malaysia, Japan and Iraq. We celebrated our achievements in Disneyland!

As part of our professional voice coaching program, Nova students also shared their individual artistic achievements. They courageously performed an incredibly diverse recital of solos, duets and trios with selections from musical theater to hip hop to a Mexican folk ballad.

Each week, I am proud to see incredible growth in our after-school choir singers as they develop their voices and grow as musicians, leaders and team members.

—Julie Haydon,
Director of Children's and Youth Choirs

learn songs in eight languages.

In March, our Nova singers toured to Southern California. We learned so much

"It made me feel good to be singing in a group. It made me feel powerful. Everyone's voice together, it made me feel connected to them."

—4th grade student





Classroom Music Education

2022-23 proved to be another year to demonstrate our unwavering commitment to advocating for quality music education for Oakland youth, facilitating meaningful learning experiences, and creating lifelong relationships with local communities.

We expanded our offerings of the interdisciplinary programs to 30 classrooms at four sites: Lincoln, La Escuelita, Laurel, and Piedmont Avenue Elementary Schools. We culminated each residency with a performance, celebrating history-makers and leaders who used their voices to make a difference.

We partnered with Arwen Lawrence and Jorge Liceaga (see video) from Cascada de Flores to bring an all-new Spanish Music Class to TK-2nd grade students and their parents at La Escuelita. This program began in response to a request from a principal, who communicated newcomer families' hesitance to come on school campus or to interact with school staff. Through songs and games in their native language, we saw parents strengthen their connections with their children, other newcomer families, school staff and the resources provided on-site. This eight-week program served as a pilot program for other language based programs next year (Mandarin at Franklin and Lincoln Elementary).



We understand strong partnerships are rooted in communication and collaborative spirits. Our strong partnership with our schools helped us navigate the OUSD teachers' strike in May 2023. With collaborative efforts from and with our partners, we were able to have another successful year for our students.

—Conway Tan-Gregory,
Director of Music Education

“We work with many partners at Cleveland, but Cantare more than anyone else so directly supports our school values of inclusiveness and responsibility, folding directly into the work we are already doing and supporting it in another dimension that we would not be able to support without Cantare!”

—Peter Van Tassel, Principal,
Cleveland Elementary

Summer Music Camp

Our summer music camp was a high-energy two weeks of singing, community and creativity. One hundred rising 4-9th graders from across Oakland came together, forming new friendships, and challenging themselves musically. After just three days, our 100 campers learned an arrangement of the National Anthem with American Sign Language to perform at an Oakland Athletics game. In the other eight days, they prepared an entire program with singing, choreography, xylophone accompaniment and speaking roles, of songs that celebrated our theme of individuality, love and acceptance: “This is Me.” Many campers rose to the opportunity to perform their first solo.

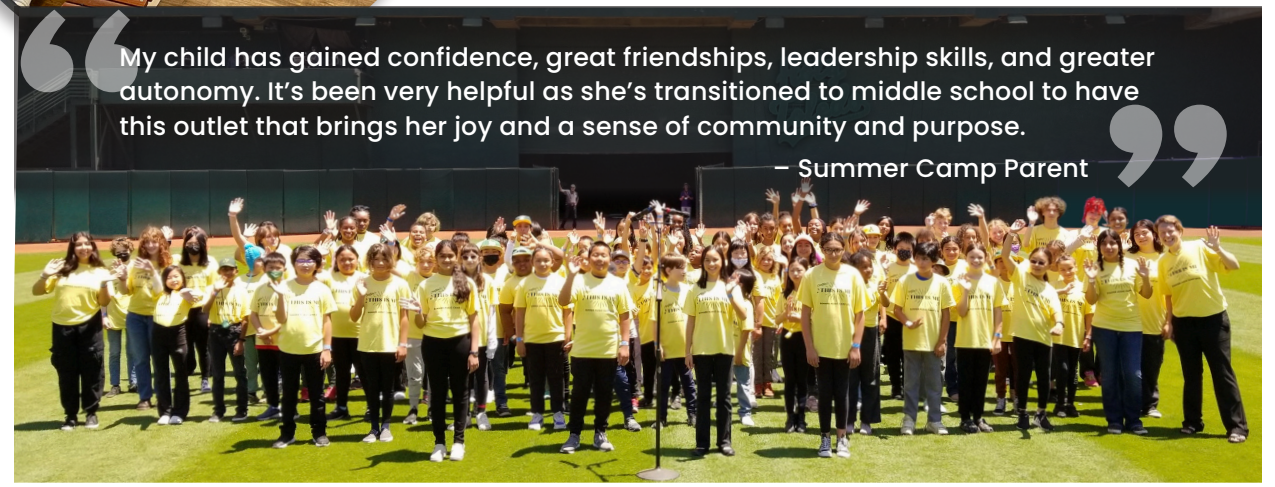


Campers were supported by an incredible team of 10 counselors, grades 10-12. These young adults gave each student the support and encouragement they needed to thrive. Counselors developed their leadership skills while gaining paid work experience.

On the last day of the camp, the counselors asked the campers to describe themselves. Their answers help illuminate what makes our summer camp such a meaningful experience for our campers and staff. Here are some of our favorite answers:



“I am beautiful.”
“I am truthful.”
“I am human.”
“WE ARE STARS.”
“I am a good singer.”



“My child has gained confidence, great friendships, leadership skills, and greater autonomy. It's been very helpful as she's transitioned to middle school to have this outlet that brings her joy and a sense of community and purpose.”

— Summer Camp Parent

Community Outreach

Our young singers have so much to offer our community by lifting their voices. We are not waiting for them to grow up to be of value, we know that they already have something meaningful to tell us today. Our students are ambassadors for their neighborhoods and their city, uplifting all of us by singing songs that raise awareness and understanding.



Our staff and community partners are also sharing their voices to make a difference. In June, Director of Children's and Youth Choirs Julie Haydon and Director of Music Education Conway Tan-Gregory facilitated a panel discussion at the national Chorus America conference called "Building Meaningful School Partnerships." The discussion offered an overview of Cantare's unique partnership with the Oakland Unified School District and strategies for effectively partnering with a school and the community. We are thankful to our panelists for sharing their time and insight: Mukta Sambrani, Lincoln Elementary Principal; Fillmore Rydeen, Director of OUSD Visual and Performing Arts Department; Valerina Hilton, Kindergarten teacher at La Escuelita and choir parent; Mercedes Harrison, Cantare Board Member and Education and Outreach chairperson.

This year, our Nova singers represented the community by performing at several special events in Oakland. They started the school year by performing the National Anthem at an Oakland Athletics game in September. They later performed for important city leaders at the Oakland Rotary Club's annual holiday luncheon and the annual banquet for the Oakland Chinatown Chamber of Commerce.

"Something I've learned from Nova is being able to grow with a variety of different people can benefit you drastically. I have learned new techniques, learned new skills, and leadership that I will take with me to college."

— Nova Student

Board & Staff

Board of Directors

- Graham Seel, President
- Janet Venturino, Vice President
- Al Peters, Treasurer
- Joaquin Pellegrin-Alvarez, Youth Board Member
- Mercedes Harrison
- David Hofmayer
- Dayana Merino
- Dominic Savant

Teaching Artists

- Julie Haydon
- Conway Tan-Gregory
- Rhonda Crane
- Adam Flowers
- Kate McCarthy
- Lydia Mills
- Valentina Shaddox
- Magda Johanna García Vera
- Diana Walsh
- Matthew Bourne, Accompanist
- Ray Capiral, Accompanist

Nova Voice Coaches

- Branice McKenzie
- Leila Motaei
- Alexander Taite

Staff

- Mary Finch, Executive Director
- David Morales, Artistic Director
- Julie Haydon, Director of Children's and Youth Choirs
- Conway Tan-Gregory, Director of Music Education
- Alyssa Pluth, Finance and Office Manager
- Treva Obbard, Marketing and Development Manager

Fiscal Year 2022 – 2023 Treasurer's Report



Cantare closed the 2022-23 fiscal year with a 4.6% deficit combined with a significant 13.3% advancement in support of our children's and youth programs in FY24. Government funding included grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, California Arts Council, California Small Businesses Administration and Alameda County, of which \$87,500 accounted for the remainder of our pandemic relief dollars. Cantare added two new foundation supporters who when coupled with increased support from past funders boosted foundation contributions by 42% to nearly \$180,000. Our individual donor contributions also dramatically increased. The generosity and continued support of Cantare's donors was critical in our weathering the challenges of the global pandemic and then returning to a full season of concerts and children's programs in 2022-23.

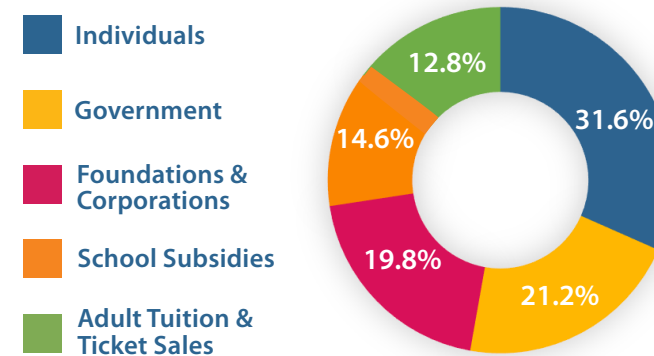
Cantare is fortunate to have dedicated and committed staff. We believe that providing a living wage to our employees not only is fair, but it helps to retain quality, talented, mission-motivated personnel.

Cash flow for the fiscal year relied on funds from the previous year to advance us into a new season in which we reap the benefit of accrued funding. The Wong Fund, which supports supplemental Children's programs, is above \$50,000, which we anticipate drawing down over the next several years per the restrictions set forth in the gift. This year it helped to underwrite our youth summer camp attended by 100 students.

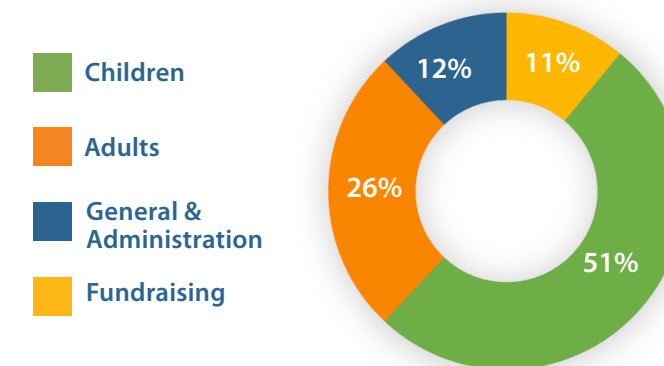
Through the generosity of donors, funders and government support, Cantare is poised to move forward with significant growth in our children's programs and expansion in the community through our adult choirs.

—Al Peters, Treasurer

Income = \$1,011,995



Expenses = \$1,061,289



FUNDERS

Cantare is funded in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts and by the California Arts Council, a state agency.

\$50,000 and Beyond

California Performing Arts
National Endowment for the Arts

\$25,000 to \$49,999

California Arts Council
City of Oakland Cultural Arts
Crescent Porter Hale Foundation
Quest Foundation
Joseph & Vera Long Foundation

\$10,000 to \$24,999

Bernard E. & Alba Witkin
Charitable Foundation
Stulsaft Foundation
The Barrios Trust
Walter & Elise Haas Fund

\$5,000 to \$9,999

Arts for Oakland Kids
Dean & Margaret Leshner Foundation

\$1,000 to \$4,999

Alameda County Arts Commission
ARTSFUND
Alameda County Arts Relief
Grant Program
American Endowment Foundation
Bill Graham Supporting Foundation
of the Jewish Community
Federation and Endowment Fund
Kiwanis Club of Moraga
The Mechanics Bank
The Murdy Foundation

\$500 to \$999

First Presbyterian Church of Oakland

To \$499

Amazon Smile Foundation

DONOR-ADVISED FUNDS

AssetMark Charity & Giving Fund
Charles Schwab
Christian Community Credit Union
East Bay Community Foundation
Fidelity Charitable
Merrill Bank of America Company
Morgan Stanley
Network for Good
Omaha Community Foundation
Renaissance Charitable Foundation
Schwab Charitable
Talcott Resolution
Vanguard Charitable

MATCHING YOUR GIFT

AbbVie
Chevron Humankind Matching
Gift Program
Google Matching Gift Fund
Lawrence Livermore National
Laboratory HOME Campaign
Levi Strauss
NIKE
Workday

2023-2024 Season

25 years
**Chorale
Children's Choirs
& Programs**

David Morales
Founder | Artistic Director

Dec 3 2023
4pm
First
Presbyterian
Church
of Oakland



Dec 4 2023
7:30pm
Walnut Creek
Presbyterian
Church

Featuring the Chorale, Chamber Ensemble, Nova & Youth Honor Choir, Orchestra

Mar 16 2024
7:30pm

Walnut Creek
Presbyterian
Church



Mar 17 2024
4pm
First
Presbyterian
Church
of Oakland

Featuring the Chorale with Orchestra

May 18 2024
7:30pm

Walnut Creek
Presbyterian
Church

May 19 2024
4pm
Skyline High
School
Oakland



Celebrating
25 Years
Chorale,
Children's
Choirs &
Programs

