

2026 WINTER TOUR
JANUARY 23 - FEBRUARY 12
California | Washington

The
CHOIR
of the **WEST**

2026 Tour | “Seeking Light and Beauty”

PLU | SCHOOL OF
MUSIC, THEATRE & DANCE

The CHOIR of the WEST

PROGRAM

I.

A Mighty Fortress is Our God Martin Luther (1483-1546)
arr. W.B. Olds

II.

Jauchzet dem Herrn, WoO. 28 Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (1809-1847)
German text, Psalm 100

*Shout for joy to the Lord, all the world!
Serve the Lord with gladness,
Come before his presence with rejoicing!
Know that the Lord is God: it is he that has made us,
and not we ourselves, we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise;
Be thankful unto him and bless his name.
For the Lord, he is good; his mercy is everlasting,
and his truth endures for all generations.*

III.

Rhapsodie, op. 53 Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)
German text by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), from *Harzreise im Winter*
Soon Cho, mezzo soprano • Amy Boers, piano

*But who is it that goes there, apart?
He loses his way in the bushes.
Behind him the shrubs strike together.
The countryside opens again in grass;
The wasteland devours him.
Ah, who will heal the pains
Of him, for whom balsam turned to poison?
Who drank the hatred of mankind
From the fullness of love?
First despised, now one who despises,
He secretly consumes his own worth
In futile self-absorption.*

*If there is in your psaltery
Father of love, one tone
That is perceptible to his ear,
Then refresh his heart!
Open the clouded gaze
To the thousand springs
That are next to the thirsty one
In the desert.*

IV.

Angele Dei (2012) Susan LaBarr
Latin text, found in collections of St. Anselm (1093-1109)

*Angel of God, my guardian dear,
to whom his love commits me here;
Ever this day be at my side,
to light and guard, to rule and guide.
Amen.*

Cantate Domino (rev. 2025) T.J. Wheeler
Latin text, Psalm 98

*The Lord be with you,
and with your spirit.
Sing to the Lord a new song, all the earth.
Sing and give praise to his name.
Sing and exult and praise, for he has done marvelous deeds.*

INTERMISSION

V.

Joy (2022) Hans Bridger Heruth
English poetry by Sara Teasdale (1884-1933)

*I am wild, I will sing to the trees,
I will sing to the stars in the sky,
I love, I am loved, he is mine,
Now at last I can die!*

*I am sandaled with wind and with flame,
I have heart-fire and singing to give,
I can tread on the grass or the stars,
Now at last I can live!*

Stars in Your Bones (2017) Joan Szymko
English poetry (1990) by Alla Bozarth

*The small plot of ground
on which you were born
cannot be expected
to stay forever
the same.*

*Earth changes,
and home becomes different
places.*

*You took flesh
from clay
but the clay
did not come
from just one
place.*

*To feel alive,
important, and safe,
know your own waters
and hills, but know
more.*

*You have stars in your bones
and oceans
in blood.*

*You have opposing
terrain in each eye
you belong to the land
and sky of your first cry,
you belong to infinity.*

VI.

Love: A Child, My Choice Brian Edward Galante
from *So Hallow'd the Time* English poetry by Robert Southwell (1561-1595)

Erin Burson or Emily Morse, *soprano*
Sam Brown or Joaquin Makinster, *tenor*

Let folly praise what fancy loves,
I praise and love that Child,
Whose heart no thought, whose tongue
no word,
Whose hand no deed defiled,

I praise Him most, I love Him best,
All praise and love is His;
While Him I love, in Him I live,
And cannot live amiss.

Love's sweetest mark, laud's highest theme,
Man's most desired light.
To love Him life, to leave Him death.
To live in Him delight.

He mine by gift, I His by debt,
Thus each to other due,
First friend He was, best friend He is,
All times will find Him true.

Though young, yet wise, though small,
yet strong,
Though Man, yet God He is;
As wise He knows, as strong He can,
As God He loves to bless.

His knowledge rules, His strength defends,
His love doth cherish all;
His Birth our joy, His Life our light,
His Death our end of thrall.

Alas! He weeps, He sighs, He pants,
Yet do His Angels sing;
Out of His tears, His sighs and throbs,
Doth bud a joyful spring.

Almighty Babe, Whose tender arms
Can force all foes to fly,
Correct my faults, protect my life,
Direct me when I die!

All Shall Be Well (2021) J.A.C. Redford
English text by Julian of Norwich (1343-1416), *Revelations of Divine Love*

All shall be well,
and all shall be well,
and all manner of thing shall be well.

VII.

North (2014) Text and music by Ryan O'Neal, *Sleeping at Last*
arr. George Chung

We will call this place our home,
The dirt in which our roots may grow,
Though the storms will push and pull,
We will call this place our home.
We'll tell our stories on these walls,
Every year, measure how tall
And just like a work of art,
We'll tell our stories on these walls.

Let the years we're here be kind.
Let our hearts, like doors, open wide.
Settle our bones like wood over time.
Give us bread, give us salt, give us wine.

A little broken, a little new,
We are the impact and the glue,
Capable of more than we know,
We call this fixer upper home.
With each year, our color fades
Slowly, our paint chips away,
But we will find the strength
And the nerve it takes
To repaint and repaint and repaint every day.
Smaller than dust on this map
Lies the greatest thing we have:
The dirt in which our roots may grow
And the right to call it home.

Sunday Text and music by Stephen Sondheim (1930-2021)
from *Sunday in the Park with George*

Sunday,
By the blue
Purple yellow red water
On the green
Purple yellow red grass,
Let us pass
Through our perfect park,
Pausing on a Sunday
By the cool
Blue triangular water
On the soft
Green elliptical grass
As we pass
Through arrangements of shadows
Towards the verticals of trees
Forever...

By the blue
Purple yellow red water
On the green
Orange violet mass
Of the grass
In our perfect park,
Made of flecks of light
And dark,
And parasols.
People strolling through the trees
Of a small suburban park
On an island in the river
On an ordinary Sunday...

Beautiful Savior Silesian Folk Song
arr. F. Melius Christiansen/adapt. Brian Galante



The CHOIR of the WEST

The **Choir of the West** is the premier choral ensemble at Pacific Lutheran University. Founded in 1926, the choir was the third Lutheran college choir to tour extensively throughout the United States. Choir of the West has toured Europe, Scandinavia, Japan and China, and has performed at several state, division and national conferences of the National Association for Music Education and the American Choral Directors Association. Most recently, the choir performed at the Northwestern Region ACDA conference in 2022.

The Choir of the West is comprised of undergraduate students from a variety of academic disciplines. The choir performs several concerts each year, including shared programs with other PLU ensembles, the annual series of Christmas Concerts, and campus events. The choir tours domestically in three out of four years, and internationally once every four years. The ensemble completed a tour of Switzerland and Italy, including memorable performances in Lucerne, Milan, Venice, and Florence in June 2025.

In October 2026, the Choir of the West will celebrate our rich tradition — 100 years of outstanding choral music with social gatherings, shared singing, a celebratory banquet, and a chance to perform together again in the Centennial Celebration Concert.

For more information on this event, please visit
plu.edu/alumni-student-connections/choir-of-the-west-reunion.

ENSEMBLE

SOPRANO

Leila Bauer
Erin Burson
Claire Cilley
Lily Dadole
Maggie Dobbins
Kyra McCloud
Emily Morse^
Claire Schwartz

ALTO

Gracie McDanold
Ashley Midlo
Josie Mae Sanders
Marianna Vargas^
Isabella Wilkins
Anna Yee
Madison Zantello

TENOR

Sam Brown*
Coleton Davis
Marco Diez
David Garfia
Joaquin Makinster^
Gabriel Stadtmueller
Giacobbe Whitworth

BASS

Nate Clay
Hudson Groom
Xen Johnson
Kai Kindem^
Cooper Perez
Matthew Roe
Liam Schmidt
Cade Tate

* Choir of the West President
^ Section Leader



BRIAN GALANTE

Brian Galante is Associate Dean for the School of Music, Theatre & Dance, and Director of Choral Studies at PLU. In Fall 2022, he became the seventh conductor of the Choir of the West. During his time at PLU, Dr. Galante also conducted Chorale, University Singers (SA), and Knights Chorus (TB), and taught undergraduate courses in Vocal Pedagogy for the Choral Music Educator, Choral Methods, and Choral Literature.

Galante received the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Choral Conducting, with a related field in Voice Science and Pedagogy, from the University of North Texas. He holds Master of Music and Bachelor of Music degrees from Louisiana State University.

Dr. Galante continues to find success and acclaim as a composer and arranger. His compositions are published by GalanteMusic, Walton, Colla Voce Music, and Pavane Publishing; have been performed by professional, collegiate, and advanced high school choirs throughout the United States and Europe; and recorded for commercial release by Delos, Centaur Records, MSR Classic, and PLU Media.

Frequently in demand as a clinician and adjudicator, Galante has conducted honor choirs at all levels. He served as President of the Northwestern ACDA Region from 2018-2020, Conference Chair of the 2020 Northwestern ACDA Region Conference, Program Chair of the 2010 and 2018 Conferences, on the National ACDA Technology Committee (2007-2011), Associate Conference Chair of the 2013 National ACDA Conference, Performing Choir Chair of the 2025 National ACDA Conference, and President of Louisiana ACDA from 2001-2003.

SOON CHO



Soon Cho is a Korean American lyric mezzo-soprano and artist-teacher whose work is grounded in a deep commitment to storytelling — using voice to illuminate human vulnerability, resilience, and shared experience. She has earned acclaim for her “potent” and “intense and incisive” stage presence (Opera News) and has been hailed as “regal in bearing, with vocal endowments to match” (Cincinnati Post).

Dr. Cho serves as Associate Professor of Music at PLU, where she teaches applied voice, vocal pedagogy, lyric diction, and a college transition course for first-year music students. She holds a DMA and Artist Diploma in Opera from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, an MM from Rice University’s Shepherd School of Music, and BA/BM degrees from the University of Washington, Seattle.

Her operatic repertoire spans canonical and contemporary works. Recent performances include Emilia in Verdi’s *Otello* with Vashon Opera and Flosshilde in Wagner’s *Das Rheingold* with Tacoma Opera. A passionate advocate for new music, Dr. Cho originated leading roles in Greg Youtz’s *Tacoma Method*, which confronts the 1885 expulsion of Chinese citizens, and Jared Schwartz’s *Schiele in Prison*, exploring the incarceration of Austrian artist Egon Schiele for his provocative work. Her vocal chamber music includes Caroline Shaw’s *Is a Rose* with the Seattle Wind Ensemble, and the West Coast premiere of Meira Warshauer’s *Rachel Weeps*.

Dr. Cho is a longtime adjudicator and master clinician with the Schmidt Vocal Competition and currently serves as Washington Schmidt Vocal Competition Host Coordinator. Her students regularly earn top honors, win competitions, and gain admission to competitive graduate programs.

AMY BOERS



Amy Boers is well known as a collaborative pianist, music director, singer, and church musician. As pianist and collaborator, she currently holds positions at Pacific Lutheran University, Symphony Tacoma Voices (pianist and assistant rehearsal conductor), and plays for regional public schools. Her work at Pacific Lutheran University includes being the pianist for three choral ensembles, hosting the opera workshop, accompanying and coaching private students, team-teaching theater courses, and serving as resident Music Director for PLU's Theater & Dance Department.

As a conductor, Amy has led regional honor choirs and coached developing choral conductors from across the Western Hemisphere at the annual Cascade Conducting Workshop in Tacoma. As a true collaborative artist known for her deep insight and “getting inside the conductor’s head,” she provides feedback through the special lens of accompanist, singer, and conductor combined. She leads pedagogical workshops for choral conductors and collaborative artists regionally and in Canada.

When not making music, she loves to garden, cycle, and travel. Most important to her currently is spending time with her three beloved grandchildren: Adler, Jack, and Holden.

PACIFIC LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY

Pacific Lutheran University is located six miles south of Tacoma, in suburban Parkland, Washington, on a 156-acre woodland campus. PLU offers approximately 2,600 students a unique blend of academically rigorous liberal arts and professional programs. Students develop skills in decision making, analysis, communication and reasoning that prepare them for a lifetime of success — both in their careers and in service to others. PLU is dedicated to developing ethical, educated, thinking leaders by challenging students to identify and ask questions of meaning and value in their own lives. Students are asked to explore their passions and purpose in life, and to uphold the university’s Lutheran heritage and commitment to academic excellence and academic freedom. PLU fosters in all students a global perspective, including an understanding of the intercultural and intellectual richness of the world and their roles as world citizens. The University includes the College of Health Professions, the College of Liberal Studies, the College of Natural Sciences, and the College of Professional Studies.

SCHOOL OF MUSIC, THEATRE & DANCE

The PLU School of Music, Theatre & Dance is a nationally recognized center for musical performance, education, and community. From early in the morning to late at night, students are practicing, studying, collaborating, and sharing their passion for musical growth. The SMTD offers Music degrees in performance (instrumental, organ, piano, vocal), music education (K-12 Band, Choir, and Orchestra), music therapy, composition, musical arts, and liberal arts in music, plus BFA degrees in theatre (acting/directing, design/technical) and musical theatre.