

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT EACH SESSION HERE.

GENERAL SESSIONS

SACRAMENTS AND SONG (WEDNESDAY THROUGH SATURDAY)

At the heart of this year's Sacred Music Institute is a study of the seven Sacraments of the Church. What do they mean for us as church musicians and worshipers of the One True God? How does our spiritual knowledge about these mysteries affect our musical and artistic vocation? Practically speaking, how can we use our experience and expertise to draw our congregations closer to Truth in our Divine Services? You will get a chance to hear from a number of different presenters about these and other related questions throughout the weekend.

CHORAL REHEARSAL (WEDNESDAY THROUGH SATURDAY)

Regular rehearsals help us to grow as musicians, and in these sessions, Paul and Zhanna will do much more than teach us the music for the Divine Liturgy services on Friday and Sunday mornings. They will explain how, why and to what extent they have prepared for leading us; share the rationale behind each piece and the circumstances under which it could change; and as we sing and encounter the inevitable difficulties, they will offer strategies for handling these challenges with grace and good humor. Rehearsal is the heart of the Sacred Music Institute, and you will come away from each one with new ideas to try with your choir.

VOCAL TECHNIQUE (WEDNESDAY THROUGH SATURDAY)

VARIETY SHOW (SATURDAY 8-10)

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

BEGINNING CHORAL CONDUCTING (ALL BREAKOUTS)

This class is designed to meet the needs and abilities of participants who are learning conducting or would like to improve their fundamental conducting skills. The complex of practical exercises will lead participants to develop and master basic conducting techniques that include elementary patterns (2/4, 3/4, 4/4), conducting planes, preparatory gestures, various cutoffs, breathing marks, conducting articulations (legato and staccato), tempo, dynamics and etc. Participants also will be given recommendations on how to interpret styles of choral liturgical music. A discussion of rehearsal strategies and vocal techniques, score study, and choral methods will be explored. Part of the sessions will focus on the selective pieces of music presented during the SMI, which will provide conductors with necessary knowledge of how to introduce this music to their choirs and how to conduct it. There will be practical opportunities for all participants to ask and get consultation with their individual needs.

INTERMEDIATE CHORAL CONDUCTING (ALL BREAKOUTS)

This comprehensive and immersive choral conducting workshop is designed to serve and educate individuals as conductors, teachers, singers and servants. These sessions are for those with good musicianship skills, a fair amount of training, and who are experienced in working with choirs. This level further develops the foundations of conducting technique and vocal training, using more challenging music and score analysis, with increased attention to style, interpretation and rehearsal technique.

BEGINNING BYZANTINE NOTATION I (THURSDAY AND SATURDAY)

Students will briefly be introduced to the types of symbols used in Byzantine notation in order to understand how the overall system functions. Most of the class will be spent mastering basic interval and rhythm symbols. Students will play interactive games, read phrases on parallage (the Greek version of solfege), and write simple phrases in Byzantine notation.

BEGINNING BYZANTINE NOTATION II (FRIDAY)

Students will continue their study of interval and rhythm symbols and learn some qualitative symbols. Students will play interactive games, read phrases on parallage (the Greek version of solfege), and write simple phrases in Byzantine notation. By the end of the class, students will be able to chant a short hymn from Byzantine notation!

INTERMEDIATE BYZANTINE NOTATION (ALL BREAKOUT SESSIONS)

Attendees will learn about complex rhythms, basic interpretation, scale changes, and the characteristics of the tones.

Intermediate Byzantine Notation will consist of three 2-hour sessions. Each session will build upon the prior lesson, and the skills acquired there. We will begin by discussing the key prerequisites for a chanter, along with advanced rhythms and interpretation using hymn examples from the services of the sacraments (specifically, baptism, unction, and marriage). We will also look at scale changes and tetrachordal shading. Finally, we will discuss the basic characteristics of the tones in the Byzantine style. **Prerequisites:** *A fluent knowledge of the byzantine note names (Ni, Pa, Vou...), basic up and down symbols, and simple rhythms is essential to begin this course. If you can read and chant an heirmologic / brief hymn from Vespers by yourself and at the appropriate tempo, you should be equipped to begin going deeper. For example, if you can chant this hymn by sight, you should be able to join the course: <https://bit.ly/2IIXDqk>*

MUSIC THEORY (ALL BREAKOUTS)

These sessions will provide a foundation in the various elements of music that are most vital to Orthodox musicians, as determined from past assessments of SMI participants. Please select the session(s) that would be most beneficial for you: Thursday we will cover Staff, Clefs, Notes, Duration, and Time Signatures; Friday, Scales and Keys; and Saturday, Intervals, Triads and Chords.