

JOIN US!

We welcome everyone to share their talents, as a performer or behind the scenes. We are always seeking members who sing or play an instrument and would like to present solos in a service or participate in the music program in other ways.

There are also group opportunities such as:

Society Choir: The choir performs in services throughout the year and is open to all who like sing. We rehearse Sunday mornings before services (9:15 am–10:15 am). From high school students to seniors, this group is committed to making joyful music for the congregation and having great fun doing it! The Society Choir plays a major role in our Yuletide Revels.

Junior Choir: For young people in grades three and up, this is an opportunity to learn musical skills in a friendly, relaxed environment. The Junior Choir performs in services several times a year and also participates in our Yuletide Revels. Rehearsals are Sunday mornings after services (Noon-12:45 pm).

Yuletide Revels: The most popular event in the church year is this medieval celebration of the Winter Solstice. A special family event, Revels includes a Mummer's play, magician, brass quartet, Morris dancers, and our Society choirs. Over 100 congregational members participate: acting, singing, sewing, ushering, or baking cookies. Members of the greater community also look forward to this rollicking holiday program! Yuletide Revels is written, directed, and produced by members of the congregation.

Cupid's Cabaret (and Just Desserts Buffet):

A luncheon with scrumptious desserts is followed by a Cabaret featuring talented members of the congregation. In addition, three tables filled with exquisite desserts – all made by congregation members – go to the highest bidder at the end of the show!

Some of the musicians (members and guests) who have appeared in Sunday morning services:

- Lee Shaw, *jazz pianist*
- Anping Liu, *erhu*
- Everest Rising, *bluegrass/folk band*
- Leo Russo, *saxophone*
- Mark Evans, *pianist*
- Dennis Yerry, *Native American musician and storyteller*
- Sten Isaachsen, *classical guitarist*
- Members of the Catskill Klezmerim
- Paula Shaw and Terry Spinelli, *violinists*
- Karlinda Caldicott, *harpist*
- Ellen Sinopoli Dance Company
- Norman Thibodeau, *flutist*
- Bill Flanagan, *hammered dulcimer*
- Joe Gumper, *fiddler*
- Musicians of Ma'alwyck
- Umoja African Dancers and Drummers



Rev. Priscilla Richter, *Minister* | Gareth Griffiths, *Music Director*
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Photos by Don Porter, Jennifer Wilkerson, Gareth Griffiths



Music Program

UUSCHENECTADY.ORG



Music is a strength and passion here. It attracts newcomers and sustains long-time members.

We are proud to offer exceptionally high quality and varied music in our Sunday services.



“The diversity of the music program was an important factor in my decision to join the church.”

– USS member



SERVICE MUSIC

The Society’s elegant Great Hall, with its Whisperdome, boasts unique acoustics. Every Sunday guest musicians, Society choirs or congregation members share their talents in our services. A sampling of music includes Choral, Chamber, Celtic, Bluegrass, Folk and Jazz.



YULETIDE REVELS AND CUPID’S CABARET

We also present two holiday performances that showcase the talents of our members: Yuletide Revels, in the tradition of the medieval Mummer’s Play and Cupid’s Cabaret, a Valentine’s Day celebration. Both events are extremely popular and serve as fundraisers for the Society.

MUSIC COMMITTEE

This Committee supports the Music Director and the music program, providing research and suggestions about potential guest musicians, and assisting with annual budgets and funding requests. The Committee also presents both Yuletide Revels and Cupid’s Cabaret.



MUSIC DIRECTOR GARY GRIFFITHS

For over two decades, the music program has been developed and guided by Music Director Gary Griffiths. A piano accompanist and organist, she has also managed two orchestras and served as a university concert manager. Gary is one of the founders of our Yuletide Revels.



Working closely with all the musicians, Gary often helps select music to enhance the theme and elements of each Sunday service. Through her dedication and creativity, the Society’s music program enjoys an excellent



reputation among musicians, the congregation, as well as the wider community – attracting top talent from across the region.



“Gary is an amazing teacher. She was the one who taught me how to sing, how to read music, and fostered my love of music.”

– a former member of the Junior Choir

