

Dean Ferguson Sacred Music Series
Easter Sunday, April 20, 2025



Rebecca Ray found a love for music at the age of nine upon her serendipitous introduction to the violin. Originally from Maryland, she learned violin via the Suzuki violin method which she now uses to teach her students at Wildflowers Suzuki Violin Studio in West Charlotte. Rebecca obtained her Bachelor of Music in Violin Performance from the University of North Carolina, Charlotte, under the tutelage of Anne R. Belk Distinguished Professor David Russell. After graduation, she spent two years as an orchestra instructor at a charter school before starting her training as a Suzuki teacher. Currently, she teaches from her private violin studio located in her home. In addition to teaching, Rebecca frequently performs with various ensembles in the Charlotte region. Outside of her musical pursuits, she enjoys coffee, baking, and planning her next travel adventure with her husband, Alex, and their two-year-old daughter, Daisy.



Vasily Gorkovoy is a distinguished violist known for his expressive artistry and deep musicality. Born in Taganrog, Russia, he earned his Bachelor's degree from Rostov State Conservatory in Russia, followed by a Master's in Music from Texas Christian University and an Artist Certificate from Southern Methodist University, refining his technique and artistic voice. Vasily has performed with esteemed orchestras, including the Charlotte Symphony, Charleston Symphony, Hilton Head Symphony, Savannah Symphony, and others. For over six years, he has been a dedicated member of the Bechtler Ensemble, with whom he recorded "Imagine a World of Harmony." His ensemble work showcases his passion for chamber music and collaboration. Vasily is a dedicated educator with a thriving private teaching studio, where he teaches viola, violin, and piano. His approach to teaching blends technical excellence with musical expression, helping students develop their skills and love for music. His dynamic stage presence and ability to connect with audiences have made him a sought-after musician in orchestral and chamber music settings. Vasily brings passion, precision, and depth to every note.



Courtney Guthrie is a violist and strings teacher at Community House Middle School in Charlotte, NC. As a North Carolina native, Courtney began her orchestral career in her public school orchestra and performed with the Charlotte Symphony Youth Orchestras under the direction of Dr. Pereira. She received a Bachelor's of Music degree from UNC-Greensboro in 2012. Her groups consistently earn Superior ratings at North Carolina Western Region Music Performance Adjudication, Guilford County Schools Festival, and Music in the Parks Festival at Carowinds. Many of her students are often selected to represent Community House Middle School in CMS Honors Orchestra, Jr. Western Region Orchestra, Youth Orchestras of Charlotte, Charlotte Symphony Youth Orchestras, and the Union Symphony Youth Orchestras. Courtney is the Co-Director of the YOC Sinfonia Strings, the viola sectional coach for the Union Symphony Youth Orchestra, and an active freelance violist having performed with the Union Symphony Orchestra, Spartanburg Philharmonic, and at other various ceremonies and events. Ms. Guthrie resides in Charlotte, NC with her husband Brian Booth and their dog, Connor.



Matthew Lavin, a native of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, moved to Charlotte in 2001 after an invitation to play a full-time contract as a cellist in the Charlotte Symphony. He graduated with a cello performance degree from the San Francisco Conservatory and was a founding member of the Sausalito String Quartet. His quartet held residencies at Aspen, Banff and Tanglewood, and consequently, he became an avid fan of all things chamber music. He still seeks out small ensemble opportunities whenever he gets a chance. Currently, he balances a life in finance with his musical endeavors, travel, and spending time with his partner and beloved Bernese Mountain puppy.