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# Summer Sundays

PRESENTS

## A Celebration of Nature

Western art music inspired by our natural world

June 1, 2025 | 3:00 p.m.  
Bethany Lutheran Church  
76 W Crystal Lake Ave

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### **“Flight of the Bumblebee” | Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844–1908)**

Ellie Pierzina, flute | Ayesha Chetty, piano

This orchestral interlude, arranged for flute and piano, is meant to evoke the seemingly chaotic and rapidly changing flying patterns of a bumblebee. Bumblebees are important pollinators for many wildflowers and crops. In fact, they are one of the few species of commercially developed pollinators, particularly for berries, peppers, and hothouse tomatoes. Bumblebees can, uniquely, buzz, or sonicate, flowers that require this behavior for pollination. Some tomatoes, for example, do not produce nectar but bumblebees visit them anyway in order to collect pollen, which they do by vibrating their wing muscles (making a buzzing noise) to shake pollen grains out of the anthers. Bumblebees are, unfortunately, threatened by human activities such as habitat fragmentation, pesticide use, disease transmission, and loss of floral resources. – US Forest Service, National Wildlife Foundation

### **“Summer” | Herman Beeftink (b. 1953)**

Ellie Pierzina, flute | Ayesha Chetty, piano

From his collection *Seasons*, “Summer” is meant to evoke the hottest and brightest of the four temperate seasons beginning or centered around the summer solstice, which occurs when one of the Earth’s poles has reached its maximum tilt towards the Sun. Culturally important since, at least, the Neolithic era (“New Stone Age,” c. 10,000 BCE to c. 2,000 BCE), the concept of summer in European languages is associated with growth and maturity, particularly that of cultivated plants. – Encyclopedia Britannica

### ***Homeland* | Allison Loggins-Hull**

Ellie Pierzina, flute

“*Homeland* (2018) was written shortly after Hurricane Maria stormed through Puerto Rico in 2017. Maria represented the increasing strength of natural disasters and the intense, sometimes deadly, repercussions of climate change. While this was going on, there was also a rise of political and social turmoil in the United States, and global unrest throughout the world, including the Civil War crisis in Syria. For weeks, the news was flooded with these stories. With so many people throughout the world dealing with tragic domestic issues, I began to think about the meaning of home during a crisis. What does home mean when the land has been destroyed? What does it mean when there’s been a political disaster, or a human disaster? How does a person feel patriotic when they feel unwelcomed at the same time? *Homeland* is a musical interpretation and exploration of those questions. The flute opens with timbral trills representing troubled waters, then transitions into passages that are anxious and distorted. There is a moment of hope and optimism, a remembrance of past struggles that have been overcome, followed by an off-putting play on the Star Spangled Banner, representing an unraveling of patriotism. In the end we come full circle, still with unanswered and unresolved questions.” – Allison Loggins-Hull

**“Cornfield Chase”** FROM *Interstellar Suite* | Hans Zimmer, arr. Richard McVeigh

Aaron Knodle, organ

*Interstellar* is a 2014 science-fiction film by Christopher Nolan about a space mission to find a new home for humanity, which faces extinction due to dust storms and widespread crop blights. The United States faced its own dust storms between 1930 and 1940, where a severe drought in combination with overfarmed and overgrazed lands in the Great Plains caused nineteen US states to become a vast dust bowl that, ultimately, caused approximately 400,000 people to leave the Great Plains region. – Library of Congress

**“Sænk kun dit Hoved du Blomst” (“Bow Down Your Head, O Flower”) | Carl Nielsen (1835–1931)**

Rich Nielsen, recorder | Casey Nielsen, guitar

Carl August Nielsen was a Danish composer, conductor, and violinist, widely recognized as his country's most prominent composer. Nielsen maintained the reputation of a musical outsider during his lifetime, both in his own country and internationally. It was only later that his works firmly entered the international repertoire, accelerating in popularity from the 1960s through Leonard Bernstein and others. In Denmark, Nielsen's reputation was sealed in 2006 when four of his works were listed by the Danish Ministry of Culture amongst the greatest pieces of Danish classical music. Nielsen is a common name in Denmark: there is no relation between the composer and today's performers. The original Danish text and translation follow:

Sænk kun dit hoved, du blomst, bøj det i bladene ned,  
Vent kun med lukket krone nattens livsalige fred  
Natten, den milde, den tyste, kommer, o bøj dig til blund.  
Sov under gyldne stjerner, sov dig salig og sund.  
Sov som et barn, der vugges blidt i sin moders favn,  
Vågner kun halvt og sukker smilende moders navn.

Bow your head, oh flower, bend it down to the leaves,  
With closed blossom, await the night's blissful peace  
The night, the gentle, the silent, come, oh bend to slumber.  
Sleep under the golden stars, sleep blissfully and soundly.  
Sleep as a child, gently cradled in his mother's embrace,  
Only half waking and sweetly smiling his mother's name.

**“Allegro”** FROM *Duo for Treble Recorder and Guitar* | Amadeo de Filippi (1900–1990)

Rich Nielsen, recorder | Casey Nielsen, guitar

Recorders were first documented in the Middle Ages and have been known by their modern name since at least the fourteenth century. The instrument has long been associated with birds and shepherds. The composer of this piece, Amadeo de Filippi, created orchestral, choral, and chamber music for ballets, radio and philharmonic groups. As a composer, arranger, and orchestrator, he was on the staff of the Columbia Broadcasting System and also worked for Pathe Films, Judson Radio Program Co., Victor Phonograph Co., and several theaters and publishers. Amadeo de Filippi was also a NY Fellow, International Institute of Arts and Letters in 1962. He was a member of the NAACC, and joined ASCAP in 1952. He moved to Studio City in 1961 and continued to write music until his death in 1990.

**“Samba de Verão” (“Summer Samba”) | Marcos Valle (b. 1943)**

Christy Bennett, soprano | Rich Nielsen, trombone | Casey Nielsen, guitar

“Samba de Verão” (Portuguese: “Summer Samba”) is a 1964 bossa nova song and jazz standard. Bossa nova is a relaxed form of samba. The origins of samba are linked to African drumming music traditions shared by enslaved people who were brought to Brazil from Africa as forced labor in mines and sugar plantations. Though the sugar industry's history has a varied path, today, Brazil is, once again, one of the leading sugar producers in the world and relies on outside laborers to form an underpaid workforce. This song's composer, Marcos Kostenbader Valle is a Brazilian singer, musician, and songwriter. He has produced works in many musical styles, including bossa nova, samba, and fusions of rock, soul, jazz, and dance music with Brazilian styles. Valle is credited for popularizing bossa nova in the 1960s. “Samba de Verão” was first popularized by the Walter Wanderley Trio in 1966, recorded as “So Nice” with English-language lyrics by Norman Gimbel. – World History Encyclopedia, BBC

## Nature Boy | eden abhez (1908–1995)

Christy Bennett, soprano | Rich Nielsen, trombone | Casey Nielsen, guitar

George Alexander Aberle, known as eden abhez, was an American songwriter and recording artist of the 1940s to 1960s, whose lifestyle in California was influential in the hippie movement. Living a bucolic life from at least the 1940s, abhez traveled in sandals and wore shoulder-length hair, a beard, and white robes. He camped out below the first “L” in the Hollywood Sign above Los Angeles and studied Asian mysticism. He slept outdoors with his family, ate vegetables, fruits, and nuts, and claimed to live on \$3 per week. In 1947 abhez composed the song "Nature Boy" for Nat "King" Cole, whose recording of the song became a No. 1 hit for eight weeks in 1948. The song is a tribute to Bill Pester, who practiced the *Naturmensch* (nature person) and *Lebensreform* (life reform) philosophies adopted by abhez. *Lebensreform* is an umbrella term for various social movements but there are usually shared elements critiquing industrialization, materialism, and urbanization and a promotion of “living according to nature”. – SWI swissinfo.ch

## Mother Nature's Son | Lennon-McCartney

Christy Bennett, soprano | Rich Nielsen, recorder | Casey Nielsen, guitar

Lennon–McCartney is the songwriting partnership between the English musicians John Lennon (1940–1980) and Paul McCartney (b. 1942) of the Beatles. Between 1962 and 1970, the partnership published approximately 180 jointly credited songs, of which the vast majority were recorded by the Beatles, forming the bulk of their catalog. This song was written primarily by Paul McCartney, and credited to Lennon–McCartney. According to Paul McCartney he was inspired by Nat King Cole's recording of "Nature Boy" he had heard growing up. The song portrays a person enjoying the solitude of nature but also harkens to an interconnectedness in “singing songs for everyone”.

## “Zur Rosenzeit” (“Time of Roses”), Op. 48, No. 5 | Edvard Grieg (1843–1907)

Nichole Nordschow, soprano | Ayesha Chetty, piano

“Rose is a beautiful and fragrant plant with a variety of medicinal and substance uses. Various parts of rose such as fruits, flowers, leaves, and bark can be used in various product development, including cosmetics, food, pharmaceuticals, and engineering. The medical benefits of roses include the treatment of inflammation, diabetes, dysmenorrhea, depression, stress, seizures, and aging.” – National Library of Medicine

Ihr verblühet, süße Rosen,  
Meine Liebe trug euch nicht;  
Blühet, ach! dem Hoffnungslosen,  
Dem der Gram die Seele bricht!

Jener Tage denk' ich trauernd,  
Als ich, Engel, an dir hing,  
Auf das erste Knöspchen lauernd  
Früh zu meinem Garten ging;

Alle Blüten, alle Früchte  
Noch zu deinen Füßen trug  
Und vor deinem Angesichte  
Hoffnung in dem Herzen schlug.

Ihr verblühet, süße Rosen,  
Meine Liebe trug euch nicht;  
Blühet, ach! dem Hoffnungslosen,  
Dem der Gram die Seele bricht!

You fade, sweet roses,  
My love did not wear you;  
Ah! you bloom for one bereft of hope,  
Whose soul now breaks with grief!

Sorrowfully I think of those days,  
When I, my angel, set my heart on you,  
And waiting for the first little bud,  
Went early to my garden;

Laid all the blossoms, all the fruits  
At your very feet,  
With hope beating in my heart,  
When you looked on me.

You fade, sweet roses,  
My love did not wear you;  
Ah! you bloom for one bereft of hope,  
Whose soul now breaks with grief!

## **“En Svne” (“A Swan”), Op. 25, No. 2 | Edvard Grieg**

Nichole Nordschow, soprano | Ayesha Chetty, piano

Swans are a large waterfowl known for their elegance and long, slender necks. “Swans play a vital role in maintaining the health of aquatic ecosystems. By eating plants and small aquatic animals, they help spread seeds and aquatic animal eggs through their feces, supporting the growth of plants and the survival of animal species. While swimming, they also stir up sediment, which helps circulate nutrients around these bodies of water, supporting the health of the plants and fish that live below.” Though currently maintaining stable or growing populations, swans are still challenged by habitat loss, pollution, and avian flu. – International Fund for Animal Welfare, IUCN

Min hvide svane  
du stumme, du stille,  
hverken slag eller trille  
lod sangrøst ane.

My swan, my pale one,  
of silence unbroken;  
of your voice never a token  
or sound did assail one.

Men sidste mødet,  
da eder og øjne  
var lønlige løgne,  
ja da, da lød det!

Aloft you sprang?  
as death was overtaking  
you life-silence breaking,  
at last thou sang!

Angst beskyttende  
alfen, som sover,  
altid lyttende  
gled du henover.

Shyly hiding from elves  
that you dread,  
-listening, gliding,?  
you timidly fled.

I toners føden  
du sluttet din bane.  
Du sang i døden;  
du var dog en svane!

That song so cherished  
for ever is gone then?  
the singer has perished.  
Were you only a swan then?

## **“Med en Vandilje” (“With a Waterlily”), Op. 25, No. 4 | Edvard Grieg**

Nichole Nordschow, soprano | Ayesha Chetty, piano

“Water lilies are a group of aquatic plants containing about 70 species in the waterlily family (Nymphaeaceae).” Considered beautiful (because of their expansive leaves and vibrant flowers), these hardy plants are widely used as ornamental, but their overcultivation has led water lilies to become invasive, especially in California’s San Joaquin Valley. Still these aquatic plants provide shelter, shade, oxygenation, nutrient absorption, and general biodiversity support almost anywhere they naturally grow. – North Carolina Cooperative Extension; The Environmental Literacy Council

Se, Marie, hvad jeg bringer;  
blomsten med de hvide vinger.  
På de stille strømme båret  
svam den drømmetung i våren.

Look, Marie, at what I bring;  
At the flower with its white wings.  
Floating in the gentle current  
Dreamily it swam in springtime.

Vil du den til hjemmet vie,  
fæst den på dit bryst Marie;  
bag dens blade da sig dølge  
vil en dyb og stille bølge.

Will you take it home  
And pin it to your breast, Marie?  
Behind its petals then would hide  
A deep and calm wave.

Vogt dig, barn for tjernets strømme,  
Farligt, farligt der at drømme!  
Nökken lader som han sover;  
liljer leger ovenover.

Child, be wary of the current in the pond,  
It’s dangerous to dream there!  
The watersprite only pretends he is sleeping;  
Lilies play above.

Barn, din barm er tjernets strømme.  
Farligt, farligt der at drømme,  
liljer leger ovenover;  
nökken lader som han sover.

Child, your breast is the current of the pond,  
It’s dangerous to dream there!  
Lilies play above;  
The watersprite only pretends he is sleeping.

## **“Våren” (“The Spring”), Op. 33, No. 2 | Edvard Grieg**

Nichole Nordschow, soprano | Ayesha Chetty, piano

“Though known for those dark and long winters, perhaps no season is more special to the Norwegians than their springtime, a brief and late season where 18 hours of darkness, thick snow and ice gives way to flowers, greenery and sunlight. Those who live in the Northeast [of the US] can perhaps relate to a certain extent, especially so in late February. The notable Norwegian composer, Edvard Grieg captured the approaching season in his song “Våren” (“The Spring”). The poem, written by Aasmund Vinje, wistfully recalls the emerald meadows, butterflies dancing in blossoms, and spring-gladdened vales. Among all the songs of spring, it is one of the more solemn, as the speaker imagines this spring to be their last on earth, but to me, it makes the song all the more exquisite.” – Ellie Gisler Murphy, Caramoor Center for Music and the Arts

## **“Blåbær-Li” (“Blueberry Slope”), Op. 67, No. 3 | Edvard Grieg**

Nichole Nordschow, soprano | Ayesha Chetty, piano

Blueberries are one of the few naturally blue foods on earth. Known as a superfood, blueberries have long been used for health-related purposes as well as just a sweet snack. Not only do blueberries provide their namesake color to a landscape but their scarlet fall foliage and creamy-white spring flowers are also valued for their decorative capabilities. – The Old Farmer’s Almanac

Nei sjå, kor det blåner her!  
No må me roa oss, Kyra!  
Å nei, slike fine Bær,  
og dei, som det berre kryr a’!  
Nei, Maken eg hev kje set!  
Sumt godt her er då tilfjells.  
No vil eg eta meg mett;  
her vil eg vera til Kvelds!

Men kom no den Bjønnen stor!—  
Her fekk bli Rom åt oss bære.  
Eg torde kje seia eit Ord  
til slik ein røseleg Vår.  
Eg sa berre: ver so god!  
No må du kje vera bljug!  
Eg lèt deg so væl i Ro;  
ta for deg etter din Hug.

Men var det den Reven rau,  
so skuld’ han få smaka Staven;  
eg skulde banka han dau,  
um so han var Bror til Paven.

Sligt skarve, harmelegt Sleng!  
Han stel både Kje og Lam.  
Men endå so fin han gjeng,  
hev korkje Agg hell Skam.

Men var det den stygge Skrubbe,  
so arg og so høl som Futen,  
eg tok meg ein Bjørkekubb  
og gav han ein god på Snuten.  
Han reiv sund Sauer og Lamm  
for Mor mi so trådt og tidt;  
ja sant! um han berre kom,  
skuld’ han so visst få sitt.

Look how blue it is here!  
Now cattle, we shall rest ourselves!  
Oh, what fine berries  
And so many of them.  
No, I’ve never seen anything like it!  
Some things are good in the mountains.  
Now, I’ll eat my fill;  
I could stay here until evening time.

But, what if the big bear appeared?  
There would have to be room for both of us!  
I wouldn’t dare say a word  
To such a terrible beast.  
I would say: ‘berries; please have some!  
Don’t be shy,  
I’ll leave you in peace;  
Please take whatever you want!’

But, if it were the red fox,  
He’d get a taste of my stick;  
I would beat him to death,  
Even if he was the Pope’s brother.

Such a despicable, awful devil,  
He takes both lambs and kids.  
But still, he walks so proudly  
Feeling no regrets or shame at all.

But, if it were the wicked wolf,  
As angry and mean as the bailiff,  
I would take a birch club  
And hit him hard on the jaw.  
He’s always destroying  
My mother’s sheep and lambs.  
Yes, indeed! If he would only come  
He’d get his just reward!

*("Blåbær-Li" text and translation continued)*

Men var det den snilde Gut  
der burte frå Skare-Brôte,  
han fekk vel ein på sin Trut,—  
men helst på ein annan Måte.  
Å Tøv, kva tenkjer eg på!  
Det lid nok på Dagen alt ...  
Eg må til Buskapen sjå;  
ho »Dokka« drøymmer um Salt.

But, if it were that nice lad  
Who comes from Skare-Brote.  
He'd get one on the mouth  
But perhaps in a different way...  
How stupid, what am I thinking of?  
The day is getting on.  
I must go back to the cattle,  
For 'Dokka' is dreaming of salt.

### **"Ved Gjætle-Gekken" ("At the Brook"), Op. 67, No. 8 | Edvard Grieg**

Nichole Nordschow, soprano | Ayesha Chetty, piano

Brooks are, in practical terms, very small streams that often babble and are fast flowing. They are often found in rugged terrains and are, typically, shorter and have less volume than a creek. In regional and poetic terms, a brook is often used to simply describe a very small stream. From a geographic perspective, brooks are mostly found in the United Kingdom and the Northeastern United States. – World Rivers

Du surlande Bekk, du kurlande Bekk,  
her ligg du og kosar deg varm og klår.  
Og sprytar deg rein og glid yver Stein,  
og sullar så godt og mullar så smått,  
og glitrar i Soli med mjuke Bår'.  
Å, her vil eg kvila, kvila.

You chattering brook, you gurgling brook  
Here you are, lying warm and clear,  
You wash yourself clean and you run over stones  
You take life easy, softly humming  
And shining in the sunlight with gentle ripples.  
Oh, here will I rest.

Du tiklande Bekk, du siklande Bekk,  
her gjeng du så glad i den ljose Li.  
Med Klunk og med Klukk, med Song og med Sukk,  
med Sus og med Dus gjenom lauvbygd Hus,  
med underlegt Svall og med Svæving blid.  
Å, her vil eg drøyma, drøyma.

You tickling brook, you trickling brook,  
You wander so joyfully on the hillside.  
With clunking and clinking, with singing and sighing,  
With rustling and murmuring through your leafy house,  
With a wondrous surge and a restful sleep.  
Oh, here will I dream.

Du hullande bekk, du sullande bekk,  
her fekk du seng under mosen mjuk.  
Her drøymer du kurt og gløymmer deg burt  
og kviskrar og kved i den store fred,  
med svaling for hugsott og lengting sjuk.  
Å, her vil eg minnast, minnast.

You whispering brook, you humming brook,  
Here is your bed, beneath the soft moss.  
Here, your dreams are short and so you can forget  
And can whisper and sing full of peace –  
A balm for heartache and sickly longing.  
Oh, here will I remember.

Du vildrande Bekk, du sildrande Bekk,  
kva tenkte du alt på din lange Veg?  
Gjenom aude Rom? millom Busk og Blom?  
Når i Jord du smatt, når du fann deg att?  
Tru nokon du såg so eismal som eg?  
Å, her vil eg gløyma, gløyma.

You scurrying brook, you swirling brook  
What did you think about on your long journey?  
Through barren places? Through bushes and blooms?  
When you hid below ground? When you reappeared?  
Has anyone been so alone as me?  
Oh, here will I forget.

Du tislande Bekk, du rislande Bekk,  
du leikar i Lund, du sullar i Ro.  
Og smiler mot Sol og lær i dit Skjol  
og vandrar so langt og lærer so mangt ...  
å syng kje um det, som eg tenkjer no.  
Å, lat meg få blunda, blunda!

You wandering brook, you foaming brook,  
You play in the meadow, you laze in peace.  
And smile at the sun and laugh in your solitude  
And wander so far and learn so much.  
Oh, do not sing of what I'm thinking now –  
Oh, let me shut my eyes.

**Thank you for joining us today! *Musicking* is a collective process that involves everyone!**

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The entirety of today's free-will donation will be directly donated to **Youth and Family Center of McHenry County (YFC)**. YFC, located in the city of McHenry, is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides a range of services for youth and families in McHenry County, including youth programs, adult education, bicultural support, and community gardening.



There are baskets to place your free-will donation in as you leave the sanctuary today, but you can also donate electronically. Scan the **above** QR code and be sure to choose "Summer Sundays Freewill Offering" as the selected fund.

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Please, come back and join us for more **Summer Sundays 2025!**

- June 29 @ 3:00 p.m. – Broadway in Love: From Cautionary Tales to Happily Ever Afters
  - August 3 @ 3:00 p.m. – Crystal Keys Trio in Concert
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**A huge thank-you goes out to...**

- The staff and volunteers at Bethany Lutheran Church!
  - Clara Solak (lights, sound, PowerPoint)!
  - Today's performing artists as well as their friends, family, and partners!
- 

A special note goes out to **The Bethany Arts Series** for underwriting today's artists!

Thank you for your unwavering support of the arts!

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If you have questions about The Bethany Arts Series or want to get on their mailing list, please reach out to Cynara Pierzina ([cynara.pierzina@gmail.com](mailto:cynara.pierzina@gmail.com)).

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"Art is a nation's most precious heritage. For it is in our works of art that we reveal to ourselves and to others the inner vision which guides us as a nation. And where there is no vision, the people perish."

– Lyndon Johnson, on signing into existence the National Endowment on the Arts

## Meet today's artists

**Christy Bennett**, bandleader and vocalist, began performing straight-ahead jazz in 2006. Classically trained, with a degree in Vocal Performance from DePaul University, she had also been drawn to jazz through elective classes and combos. In 2010, Bennett reconnected with a high school friend who introduced her to the 1930's and 40's music of Django Reinhardt and The Hot Club of France and ignited her love of gypsy jazz. Another high school friend, in 2012, asked Bennett to sing two songs at her wedding with an instrumental gypsy jazz duo, that immediately inspired Bennett to form her own gypsy jazz band—Fumée—based on this European style. Her quest for this rare repertoire led Bennett to antique stores and European Internet auction sites, collecting sheet music by Django Reinhardt and his contemporaries that had been almost lost in time. Bennett then gathered a diverse and talented group of Chicago musicians. Performing the compositions of the master who invented the genre brought a new understanding of their music, energizing both the musicians' and audience's appreciation.

**Dr. Ayesha Chetty** is a social scientist whose primary research interests lie at the intersection of race, gender, and culture. She currently works as a researcher at M+R, doing audience research and message testing for a range of progressive nonprofits around the U.S., and is the collaborative pianist at Bethany Lutheran Church. Ayesha holds a PhD in sociology from the University of Cincinnati and is a classically trained pianist and singer holding an Associate and Licentiate in piano performance from Trinity College London.

**Dr. Aaron Knodle** is Director of Worship & Music at Bethany Lutheran Church where he plays the church's Clarence Agnes Carlson Memorial organ, and conducts the Bethany Choir and Bell Canto Ringers. Aaron has degrees in organ performance, music education, sacred music, and choral conducting from Luther College, Boston University, and the University of Cincinnati – College-Conservatory of Music.

**Casey Nielsen** was 12 when he began to study classical guitar with Paul Henry of Roosevelt University, adding lessons with Chicago jazz guitarist Neal Alger at 14. He earned a BM in Jazz Studies from NIU, studying both genres with internationally-renowned Fareed Haque and three more years, post-graduation, with classical guitarist Denis Azabagic, also at Roosevelt. Casey performs solo recitals throughout the Chicago area and is a jazz bandleader and sideman in various groups throughout the USA. As a classical guitarist, solo concerts throughout the Chicago area including Baker Memorial Church, Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, North Shore Baptist Church, Elgin Public Library, Northbrook Public Library, Fabyan Park Japanese Garden series, and Musical Offering's Music on Madison concert series. As a jazz guitarist, most of Chicago's jazz venues including Andy's, Fulton Street Arts Collective, Green Mill, Jazz Showcase, Merriman's Playhouse, and The Whistler. Since forming in 2014, his Lapis Trio has played many venues including Chicago Botanic Gardens, the Jazz Estate and the Glen Ellyn Jazz Festival. Their 2019 recording *The Travelers* made it possible to travel south to do performances and workshops in Louisiana and New Orleans including University of Southern Mississippi, Louisiana State University, and the SideBar NOLA, The Jazz Estate, and The Glen Ellyn Jazz Festival. In 2024 Casey was Music Director for Chicago Tap Theater's October tour in Colorado and Wyoming.

**Rich Nielsen** began playing trombone at the age of ten. He studied music at Roosevelt University, and worked around Chicago for a few years, playing bars, clubs, events, many (many) weddings, church gigs, orchestral work, musical theatre, some studio work, and at Lyric Opera of Chicago. For the past twenty years he has played with several musical theatre groups and community bands in the northwest suburbs.

**Nichole Nordschow** has a BA from Luther College where she studied Vocal Performance, and pursued her MM at Florida State University where she studied Opera performance. Currently, she is working for the TJX Companies as a retail store manager and performs lullabies nightly for her two-year-old old son.

**Ellie Pierzina** just completed her final year at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) where she studied music education, and flute performance with Dr. Jonathon Keeble. While at UIUC, Ellie was presented with the Mark H. Hindsley award from the Illinois Bands faculty, an Outstanding Leadership award from the School of Music faculty, and the Thomas J. Smith full-tuition scholarship. She also served as the Marching Illini piccolo section leader in the Fall of 2024 and was awarded the Illinois Loyalty scholarship. This summer, she will be playing with the Wheaton Municipal Band as well as preparing to student teach at Hersey High School and Wauconda Middle School in the Fall. Outside of music, Ellie enjoys running, crocheting, and watching Dance Moms.