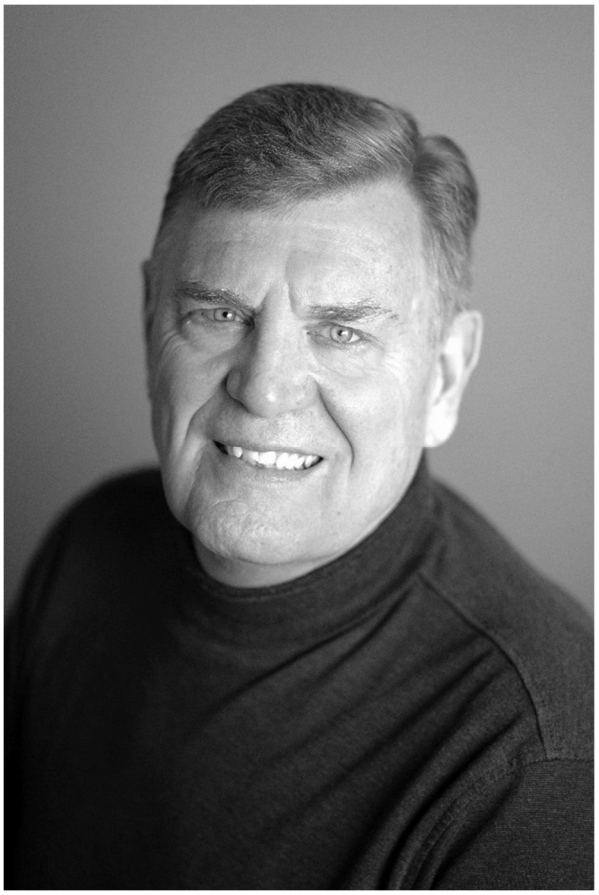
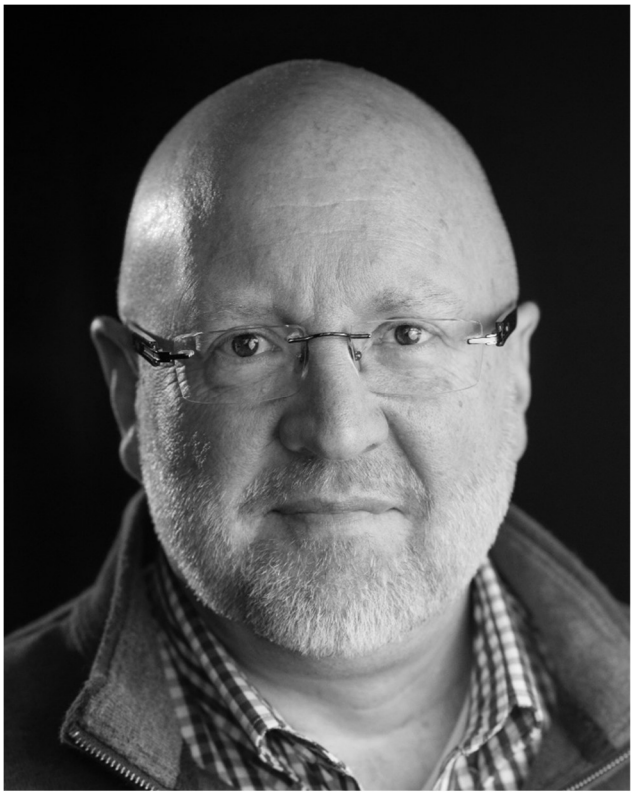
NEWTON

SOLOISTS



Gerard Sundberg DMA is Professor Emeritus of Voice at Wheaton Conservatory of Music (Wheaton, IL), where he taught studio voice, vocal pedagogy, and conducted the Men's Glee Club. Dr. Sundberg earned the MFA and DMA from the University of Minnesota. He has performed frequently with various organizations in Chicago, including Chicago Master Singers, Ars Viva Orchestra, Chicago Chorale, the Apollo Chorus, Camerata Chicago, and the West Suburban Choral Union. He also performed with Duke University (NC) and the Southwest Symphony (Fort Myers, FL). He celebrated his 20th consecutive performance of Handel's *Messiah* with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Chamber Chorus. Performances in Europe have included various cathedrals in England; Church of St. Madeleine and Notre Dame Cathedral, Paris; and the Konzerthaus, Vienna. Dr. Sundberg has been a past soloist and Festival Choir member with the Oregon Bach Festival under Helmuth Rilling. He has been the bass soloist in the Peoria (IL) Bach Festival since its inception in 2003. Performances this past season include The Peoria (IL) Bach Festival 2026: JSB motet "Unser Leben ist ein Schatten" and cantata BWV 78; and the premier of "NEWTON" an oratorio of the life and friends of John Newton by Josh Bauder (Mpls) (9/25).



Tenor, conductor and music educator **Timothy Sawyer** has appeared as a tenor soloist throughout Minnesota and the Upper Midwest in concert, oratorio and operetta performances, at the Boston Early Music Festival, Montana's *Music on the Mountain* festival, Colorado Music Festival, and the Houston and Oregon Bach Festivals. With the Oregon Bach festival chorus, he shared in a *Grammy Award* for the recording of Krzysztof Penderecki's *Credo* in 2000 on *Hänssler Classic* under one of his life-long mentors, the late Maestro Helmuth Rilling. He has sung and recorded with Meredith Monk and her New York Ensemble for *ECM Records*, VocalEssence Ensemble Singers, the Dale Warland Singers, MN Beethoven Festival Chorale, Rochester Symphony, and the *Grammy*-nominated South Dakota Chorale in recordings of Marcel Tyberg's *Masses* on the *Pentatone* label. Sawyer received formal musical training at Bethel University as the voice student of Oliver Mogck and Gerard Sundberg, in graduate vocal performance at the University of Minnesota under Clifton Ware, and in doctoral-level study in choral conducting at The University of Iowa. Since 1989, he has been a member of the music faculty at the University of Northwestern-St. Paul [tksawyer@unwsp.edu] where he is director of choral activities, artistic director of Christmas at Northwestern, teaches conducting and voice, conducts the Con Brio men's chorus and the critically-acclaimed Northwestern Choir. He is married to violinist Heidi Kahl Sawyer, and the proud father to two grown daughters and a son-in-law.

Dylan Sauder is a teacher and performer in the Twin Cities. A graduate of University of Northwestern, he now attempts to use every piece of his education and works in every corner of the metro area, teaching voice, choir, music, and theater classes, and directing musicals and plays for students of all ages. He is the music minister at Faith Baptist Church and frequently cantors at local Catholic churches. He has sung with the Minnesota Chorale and Deo Cantamus. Recent theatrical stage credits include *Jekyll and Hyde* (Ashland Productions), *Anastasia* (Bunce Performing Arts), *Macbeth* (Open Window), *The Last Five Years* (Lyric Arts), and *Puffs* (LaMarca Theatre), as well as a return to the UNW stage as Major General Stanley in *The Pirates of Penzance* and the Voice of God in *Prince of Egypt*. What a blessing and honor it is to help tell this incredible story alongside so many stellar musicians. Colossians 3:23–24—Soli Deo Gloria.





Emma Davis is a soprano from Des Moines, Iowa, currently pursuing a Master's in Vocal Performance at the University of North Texas, where she studies with Dr. Stephen Morscheck. In 2023, she graduated from the University of Northwestern in St. Paul with degrees in Vocal Performance, Music Composition, and Film. She studied voice with Carol Eikum and composition with Josh Bauder. Emma has received awards from several competitions, including first place in Thursday Musical's 2021 and 2022 Vocal and Advanced Vocal College Divisions, first place in the Schubert Club's 2022 Level I Vocal Division, and first place in the Graduate Division of Minnesota NATS in 2023. In 2025, Emma self-produced and performed a concert featuring staged scenes from Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, followed by Menotti's *The Telephone*. She also appeared as soprano soloist in Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem* with the Two Rivers Chorale, Edina Chorale, and Wayzata Symphony, conducted by Hannah Schendel. At UNT, Emma made her opera debut as the title character in Handel's *Alcina*. She later appeared as soprano soloist in Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang* with the UNT Symphony Orchestra and Grand Chorus. This fall, she stars as Florencia in UNT Opera's production of Daniel Catán's *Florencia en el Amazonas*.

Parker Payne is an actor, singer, dancer, and content creator who has performed in over 20 productions across the Twin Cities. He has developed his chops through many lead and supporting roles including numerous solos. You may have seen him around at theatres like Lyric Arts of Anoka, Lakeshore Players, Stillwater Zephyr Theatre, or productions at the University of Northwestern – St. Paul (of which he is an alumnus). Parker also trained at the Saint Paul Conservatory for Performing Artists (where he graduated with honors from the musical theatre actors studio program) and SteppingStone Theatre St. Paul, and he has performed lead roles in *Into the Woods*, *Chess*, and *Floyd Collins*. Parker is honored to be a part of Newton! Parker would like to thank his wife and family for all of the support they have given to his career as an artist.





Mr. **Raymond Graybar** is the co-artistic director of Deo Cantamus of Minnesota. He is a singer, teacher, husband, and father from La Crosse, Wisconsin, specializing in classical singing, vocal pedagogy, and music education. During his undergrad at Viterbo University, Mr. Graybar competed in the National NATS Competition, Classical Singer competition, and Metropolitan Opera Auditions, where he ranked as a finalist for several events. As a teacher, he has taught voice performance, choir, music composition, and theatre for almost ten years to students ranging from kindergarten to collegiate. During that time, he has had hundreds of students and choral groups compete at the state level for Solo & Ensemble Festivals while also music directing the La Crosse Boys Choir. Mr. Graybar currently records part-predominant tracks for *Choraltracks with Matt Curtis* where he has recorded over 10,000 titles of all choral genres. He serves as music minister and fine arts coordinator for Wildwood Baptist Church in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.



A Minnesota native, baritone **Elijah Hager** is a graduate of the University of Northwestern – St. Paul with a B.Mus. in vocal performance. Elijah was a past winner of the Minnesota Sings competition, he is a five-time finalist in the Minnesota State Fair Talent Competition, a finalist and semi-finalist in the Minnesota National Association of Teachers of Singing annual contest, was a winner of the Thursday Musical contest, has been a contracted singer across the Twin Cities area with groups like the Two Rivers Chorale, Twin Cities Praise Symphony, and of course Deo Cantamus of Minnesota.



Klayton Solarek is an 8th grader who enjoys reading, sports, and singing and dancing on stage. Klayton has previously performed in Chisago Christian School's productions of Newsies('25) and Anastasia ('26), as well as last year's debut of *Newton: Saved by Amazing Grace*. He is excited to be returning to his role as "Letter Courier" this weekend.