



Elaine Choi  
Artistic Director & Conductor

# Alzheimer's Stories

**Sunday, October 29, 2023 | 4:00 pm**

Holy Blossom Temple 1950 BATHURST STREET, TORONTO



# We Acknowledge the Land

Pax Christi Chorale acknowledges the diversity of the First Peoples of this area and recognizes the territories of the Huron-Wendat, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and Anishinabek Nations, and the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation. Toronto is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and around the world and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work, to live and to meet on this territory.

For too long, Indigenous people and their voices have been sidelined from traditional Canadian music and other aspects of public discourse. Great injustices have been and continue to be committed. As members of the Canadian choral community, we would like choral and group singing to contribute in a meaningful way to finding solutions to this complex, long-standing challenge. Regardless of what part of the country we come from, we are all privileged to be able to gather regularly in learning, in community, and in song, on lands that are far more than our own. We are all grateful to have the opportunity to work, to live, to meet and especially to make music on these lands.

— *With thanks to Choral Canada and Toronto Arts Council*

# We Welcome Our Partners

We welcome members of MUSIC CARE by Room 217 and Xenia Concerts. These organizations have a mission to provide support and programs for persons with Alzheimer's disease, dementia and other neurological challenges. We invite you to connect with them in the atrium after the concert.

We are also pleased to welcome you to Holy Blossom Temple for this concert. Holy Blossom, Toronto's first synagogue, is a leading Canadian Reform Jewish congregation with a rich history of responding to both tradition and modernity. For more information, see [www.holyblossom.org](http://www.holyblossom.org).

# Program Notes

When artistic director Elaine Choi first heard a performance of Robert Cohen's *Alzheimer's Stories*, performed by the Tallahassee Community Chorus at the 2019 American Choral Directors Association Conference, she knew she wanted to present it one day to a Toronto audience. *"The piece moved me so deeply. It uses statistics and personal stories to raise awareness about this prevalent disease while bringing us to a hopeful light at the end. It made me realize that a piece of music can be so much more than just a performance; it can be a vehicle to unpack difficult subject matter."*

*Alzheimer's Stories* was one of the first works Elaine suggested to the organization's board of directors in her first months with Pax Christi Chorale. *"I knew, after working with the choir to present Considering Matthew Shepard in 2021 [an oratorio written about the murder of a young Wyoming gay man] that Alzheimer's Stories would resonate with our choir and audience members. We have a very thoughtful choral community with members that are eager to learn and grow together, connect with our music, and spread hope and light."*

In preparing for today's concert, Elaine asked choir members to talk with her about their own stories as relatives or caregivers of people with Alzheimer's disease. *"It's not enough for me to just conduct this work for its artistic merit,"* Elaine says. *"Exploring a substantial work such as Alzheimer's Stories allows us to connect with one another in the ensemble at a deeper level, engaging with music in a more meaningful way. Experiencing Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia can feel very personal and lonely. I hope this concert will bring people together, help them feel less alone and give them a feeling of hope."*

*Alzheimer's Stories* was commissioned by the Susquehanna Valley Chorale and is based on recollections of chorus members and friends with relatives who've had Alzheimer's disease. It premiered on October 9, 2009, was subsequently recorded for broadcast by PBS, and has since been performed throughout the U.S and Europe. Today is the Canadian premiere.

The work is in three movements::

**The Numbers** – sings of the conversation between Dr. Alois Alzheimer and 51-year-old Auguste Deter in 1901. Deter was a patient at a mental asylum in

Frankfurt, Germany, who showcased symptoms such as short-term memory loss, reduced comprehension, and psychosocial impairment. Borrowing from notes on the conversation, the movement follows the spread of the disease and awareness about it, interspersed with numbers detailing the number of people affected by the disease in the past, present and future.

**The Stories** – explores the behaviors and moments of memory loss among patients diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease. It employs theatrical elements to invoke feelings of wistfulness and loss as it narrates critical moments of cognitive impairment.

**For the Caregivers** – is dedicated to the people who care for their loved ones with Alzheimer’s disease. The most difficult part of writing a work about such a terrible and ultimately hopeless disease was how to end the work with some semblance of hope. The clue came in a recollection by one of the chorus members about a visit to a nursing home where a patient asked them to sing. When asked what, the patient replied: “*Sing anything.*” First referenced in the second movement, this idea became the centerpiece and focus of the last movement.

***Find those you love in the dark and light. Help them through the days and nights. Keep faith. They sense what they cannot show. Love and music are the last things to go. Sing anything.***

Description of *Alzheimer’s Stories* movements written by Varshini Chellapilla. To read more about the inspiration behind *Alzheimer’s Stories*, go to <https://makingsenseofalzheimers.org/sing-anything/>.

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The other pieces chosen today to complement *Alzheimer’s Stories* express the healing power of music. As we go through the challenges of life, music and singing bring us solace in the midst of darkness, and reminds us of the love that surrounds us.

# Program

Today's program will run without intermission.

## Sing Gently

Eric Whitacre

## Your Soul is Song

Jake Runestad

A word from Xenia Concerts

## May You Heal

Mark Sirett

## Geistliches Lied

Johannes Brahms

## Flight Song

Kim André Arnesen

## We Rise Again

arr. Lydia Adams

A word from MUSIC CARE by Room 217

## Alzheimer's Stories

Robert Cohen, libretto by Herschel Garfein

I: The Numbers

II: The Stories

III: For the Caregivers

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## In Remembrance

Eleanor Daley

# Text and Translations

## Sing Gently

May we sing together, always.  
May our voice be soft.  
May our singing be music for others  
and may it keep others aloft.

Sing gently, always.  
Sing gently as one.

May we stand together, always.  
May our voice be strong.  
May we hear the singing and  
May we always sing along.

Sing gently, always.  
Sing gently as one.

## Your Soul is Song

Sing!  
When the seams burst,  
And the traps ensnare,  
And your body breaks,  
And the light flees—  
Sing then!  
For then, your soul is song.

## May You Heal

May you heal.  
May you be well again.  
May you be brave.  
May you be strong.  
May you lean on friends and family.

May you return to health and wholeness.  
May you be joyous.  
May you heal.  
May you be well again.

## Geistliches Lied

Laß dich nur nichts nicht dauern  
Mit Trauern,  
Sei stille!  
Wie Gott es fügt,  
So sei vergnügt  
Mein Wille.

Was willst du heute sorgen  
Auf morgen?  
Der Eine  
steht allem für;  
Der gibt auch dir  
das Deine.

Sei nur in allem Handel  
Ohn Wandel,  
Steh feste!  
Was Gott beschleußt,  
Das ist und heißt  
das Beste.

Amen.

Let nought afflict thee  
with grief,  
be calm!  
As God ordains,  
so may my will  
be contented.

Why take thought  
for the morrow?  
The one God  
who gives thee too  
what is thine  
watches over all.

All in thy doings  
stay true,  
be steadfast!  
What God decrees  
is and is called  
the best.

Amen.

## Flight Song

All we are, we have found in song:  
you have drawn this song from us.  
Songs of lives unfolding  
fly overhead, cry overhead:  
longing, rising from the song within.

Moving like the rise and fall of wings,  
hands that shape our calling voice

on the edge of answers  
you've heard our cry, you've known our cry:  
music's fierce compassion flows from you.

The night is restless with the sounds we hear,  
is broken, shaken by the cries of pain:  
for this is music's inner voice,  
saying, yes, we hear you,  
all you who cry aloud,  
and we will fly, answering you:  
so our lives sing, sing,  
wild we will fly,  
wild in spirit we will fly.

Like a feather falling from the wing,  
fragile as a human voice,  
afraid, uncertain,  
alive to love, we sing as love,  
afraid, uncertain,  
yet our flight begins as song.

## We Rise Again

When the waves roll on over the waters,  
And the ocean cries,  
We look to our sons and daughters  
To explain our lives.  
As if a child could tell us why  
That as sure as the sunrise,  
As sure as the sea,  
As sure as the wind in the trees,

We rise again in the faces of our children,  
We rise again in the voices of our song,  
We rise again in the waves out on the ocean  
And then we rise again.

When the light goes dark with the forces of creation



Across a stormy sky,  
We look to reincarnation to explain our lives.  
As if a child could tell us why  
That as sure as the sunrise,  
As sure as the sea,  
As sure as the wind in the trees,

We rise again...

## Alzheimer's Stories

### Part I: The Numbers

Chorus:

Here are the numbers.  
1901. 1906. 1911.

Here are the numbers.  
1901: patient diagnosed, age 51.  
1906: patient died, age 55.  
1911: condition named.

Here are the numbers.  
1901, 2009.  
1901: one patient diagnosed.  
2009: five million two hundred thousand. Twenty six million worldwide.

1901: Mrs. Auguste Deter, age 51, enters the Mental Asylum of  
Frankfurt am Main.  
Her symptoms are unusual.  
1902: loss of memory;  
1903: delusions, anger;  
1904: paranoia.  
1906: She dies, age 55.  
Her doctor is Alois Alzheimer.

Here are the numbers.

1901, 2009.

Here are the numbers. From one to twenty six million worldwide.

Here are the numbers. 2050: one hundred six million people worldwide;  
one in eighty five people worldwide.

1901. Dr. Alzheimer's question:

Baritone: What is your name?

Mezzo: Auguste.

Chorus: Question:

Baritone: What is your husband's name?

Mezzo: Auguste, I think. Auguste.

Baritone: How long have you been here? How long have you been here?

Mezzo: I have lost myself. Ich hab mich verloren.

Chorus: Ich hab mich verloren.

Chorus: Question:

Baritone: What is your name?

Mezzo: Auguste.

Chorus: Question:

Baritone: What is your husband's name?

Mezzo: Auguste, I think. Auguste.

Chorus: Question:

Baritone: How long have you been here? How long have you been here?

Mezzo: I have lost myself. Ich hab mich verloren.

Chorus: Ich hab mich verloren.

Baritone: What are your children's names?

Mezzo: My children?

Baritone: Their names.

Mezzo: My children? Auguste, I think.

Baritone: Your children.

Mezzo: My children?

Chorus: Ich hab mich verloren.

At first, a memory lapse.

Jumbling words or names;

A moderate cognitive decline.

You're not sure where you are,

The day, the week, the year;  
Forgetting simple things  
Like keys or coats or everyday objects,  
And then the street you live on... and soon, those you live with.

Chorus: Here are the numbers. 1901. 1906. 2009. The numbers.

Baritone: Question: What is your name?

Mezzo: Auguste.

Baritone: Question.

Mezzo: Question.

Baritone: What is your name?

Mezzo and Chorus: Ich hab mich verloren.

Baritone: How long have you been here?

Mezzo: Auguste, I think.

Chorus: Ich hab mich verloren.

## Part II: The Stories

Chorus:

I am seeing my dad on an overturned milk crate staring at nuts and bolts from an RV wheel. He has taken it apart, the kind of thing he could do in his sleep, but now he sits staring, like he's never seen it before. But now he sits staring.

This is my story.

I am riding with my mom back home from the A & P. We're chatting away, enjoying the day, and then we sail through a stop sign, we're up on the sidewalk, flying past our neighbor's house... She had blacked out; I thought we would die.

I say, "Mom, you can't drive now." "I drive as well as ever."

"Pop, you can't live alone." "You're not putting me in one of those homes."

This is my story.

Time forgotten, time remembered; images lost and names return.  
Place forgotten, place remembered; names have vanished, images held.

I run to my grandparents, right at the door, and I hug my grampa first.  
And he turns to my grandma and says, "Who on earth is this?" "Who on earth is this?"

Time forgotten, time remembered; images lost and names return.  
Place forgotten, place remembered; names have vanished, images held.

Mezzo: Are we on the boat to Panama? Are we on the boat to Panama? Are we on the boat, are we on the boat to Panama?

Chorus: Mom, you're in a nursing home.

Mezzo: Daddy's taking us to Panama. Daddy's taking us to Panama. Daddy's taking us, Daddy's taking us to Panama. We run down the boat's long hallways, Mary chasing after me. We pull on every doorknob, and swing off all the handrails.

Chorus: The handrails help you walk. The handrails help the patients walk.

Baritone: Speaking of boats...!

When I was in the Navy oh! we raised some hell!

Chorus: Yes, Dad. Yes, Dad.

Baritone: In any port, the order was: be back on board at midnight,  
standing on your feet.

Chorus: Uh huh.

Baritone: If you were late or showed up drunk, or had "I 'n I"  
'til you smelled like a skunk, then KP, swab the deck, hit the rack,  
you'll never go back on shore again – oh! We raised some hell."

Speaking of boats...!

Chorus: Here we go.

Baritone: Have I told you about the Navy oh! we raised some hell!

Chorus: Yes, you raised some hell! Yes, you raised some hell!

Baritone: In any port, the order was: be back on board at midnight...

Chorus: Back on board.

Baritone: ...standing on your feet.

Chorus: That's right!

Baritone: If you were late...

Chorus: If you were late, or showed up drunk...

Baritone: Or showed up drunk,

Chorus: Or had "I 'n I"

Baritone: "I 'n I"

Chorus: 'Til you smelled like a skunk,

Baritone: Smelled like a skunk then

Baritone and Chorus: KP, swab the deck, hit the rack you'll never go back on shore again– oh! We raised some...

Baritone:...raised some hell.

Chorus: My Dad said, please sing. Sing anything.

He talks to the pictures on his desk.

She dresses for church four days early

Sing anything: It's Only Make-Believe; April Showers.

Mezzo: Are we on the boat to Panama?

Baritone: I can't remember the names of my shipmates.

Chorus: My Dad said, please sing. Sing anything.

A tiny woman tied into a wheelchair.

Pink makeup, rosy lipstick.

Next thing you know, she's up and cha-cha-cha-ing.

Panama...Sing anything.

This is my story. This is how pieces of a life were lost. These are the pieces of a life recalled. This is my story. Love and compassion repair every loss, one by one, time and again.

Mezzo: Look at this photograph! Oh, I remember this! I'm in an evening gown, descending a gleaming circular stair. Circular stair...

### Part III: For the Caregivers

Chorus and Soloists:

Find those you love in the dark and light.

(It was brief, but she knew me; she looked at me and knew me.)

Help them through the days and nights.

(As he died, his arm lifted and his fingers looked like dancing)

Keep faith. They sense what they cannot show.  
Love and music are the last things to go. Sing anything.

Find those you love in the dark and light.  
(At the end she still remembered the pearls my father gave her.)  
Help them through the days and nights.  
(As she lay unconscious I would whisper that I loved her.)

Keep faith. They sense what they cannot show.  
Love and music are the last things to go. Sing anything.

Love and compassion repair every loss.  
Keep faith. Sing anything. Keep faith. Sing anything.  
Love and music are the last things to go. Sing!

Find those you love in the dark and light.  
Help them through the days and nights.  
Keep faith. They sense what they cannot show.  
Love and music are the last things to go. Sing anything.  
Sing!

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## In Remembrance

Do not stand at my grave and weep,  
I am not there; I do not sleep.  
I am a thousand winds that blow,  
I am the diamond glint on snow,  
I am the sunlight on ripened grain,  
I am the gentle autumn rain.  
And when you awaken in the morning's hush,  
I am the swift uplifting rush  
of quiet birds in circled flight.  
I am the soft stars that shine at night.  
Do not stand at my grave and cry,  
I am not there, I did not die.

# Our Artists

**Dr. Elaine Choi** was appointed Artistic Director of Pax Christi Chorale in July 2022. In addition to her role with Pax, she is Director of Music at Timothy Eaton Memorial Church and founder of the chamber ensemble Babel. For seven years, she was the conductor of the University of Toronto's Soprano-Alto Chorus. Elaine is Past President of Choirs Ontario, and was the Co-Chair of Choral Canada's 2022 Podium Choral Conference, held in Toronto in May 2022.

**Pax Christi Chorale** was founded in 1987 and consists of a warm and welcoming community of singers of all ages and walks of life. Our overarching aim is to experience the deep joys of choral singing, and to communicate that joy to our audience. As part of our mission to be a leader in choral music performance and education, our membership is enriched every year by four professional choral leads, four choral scholars, and apprentice members. Our outreach program includes the annual Children's Messiah concert in December and a series of school workshops.

**Joshua Tamayo** is a pianist, conductor, composer, and arranger. His passion for music comes from the 10 years he spent with St. Michael's Choir School in Toronto, where he specialized in organ and sacred choral music. Josh's love for conducting blossomed when he was 12 years of age when he had the honour to be the guest conductor of the Sudbury Symphony Orchestra. He later pursued music at the University of Toronto, majoring in piano performance. Josh was appointed Collaborative Pianist with Pax Christi Chorale in the fall of 2022.

**Catherine Carew** has been described as "a real personality with a dark edge to her mezzo as well as clear top notes" (WhatsOnStage, UK) as well as "exhilarating" by Opera Canada. She holds a Masters of Music in Vocal Performance both from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London, England and McGill University, Montreal, and a Bachelor of Music in Vocal performance from the University of Toronto. Alongside her classical soloist career Catharin is a voice masterclass technician specialising in vocal projection with choral groups. Catharin has been alto choral lead with Pax Christi Chorale for multiple seasons.

**Gabriel Klassen** is a baritone studying with Wendy Nielsen at the University of Toronto. Among his solo engagements, he has sung Minskman in Jonathan Dove's *Flight* with Opera Nuova, Lorry in Arthur Benjamin's *Tale of Two Cities*, and in concert with the Dundas Valley Orchestra as the winner of the Dundas Valley Orchestra-HAALSA Young Artist Competition. Alongside solo performances, Gabriel has participated in many choirs, including the Hamilton Children's Choir, and University of Toronto's Macmillan Singers. In 2019, he had the opportunity to perform internationally with the Hamilton Children's Choir at the World Youth & Children's Choir Festival, held in Hong Kong. Gabriel has been a Choral Scholar with Pax Christi Chorale since 2021.

## Chamber Orchestra Musicians

Kaye Royer, clarinet

Alex Toskov, violin

Andrew Ascenzo, cello

Tristan Tye, trumpet

Matheus Moraes, trumpet

Jason Austin, french horn

Courtney Prizrenac, french horn

Karl Silveira, trombone

Ian Feenstra, tuba

Naoko Tsujita, marimba, vibraphone

Andrew Busch, percussion

Jacob Valcheff, percussion

Cassandra Wolff, percussion

Alejandro Cespedes, timpani





# Pax Christi Chorale

## SOPRANO

Michelle Abbott  
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Pia Canada  
Virginia Cheng  
Jane Couchman  
Irene Courage  
Alessia D'Ambrogio  
Jo-Ann Dawson  
Mary-Anne Draffin  
Shari Ellis  
Cathy Forrest  
Jocelyn Fralick (*choral lead*)  
Esther Giesbrecht  
Jane Irwin  
Bettina Juszak  
Camille Labonte (*choral lead*)  
Luciene Lacroix  
Gladys Lau (*section head*)

Maureen Louth  
Hazel Luk  
Maria Lundin  
Marilena Michienzi  
Anne Musgrave  
Eleanor Nash  
Melissa Dawn Pear (*section head*)  
Anne-Maria Pennanen  
Sue Penny  
Maren Richardson (*choral apprentice*)  
Sue Schultz  
Lada Shvartsman  
Ingrid Silm  
Carol Smiley  
Carol Solomon  
Sandra Tang  
Kathy Van Luit  
Julia Wai  
Jeanie Yu

## ALTO

Lisa Aylmer  
Anthea Bailie  
Mary Ballantyne  
Lois Bennett  
Natalie Bryan  
Catharin Carew (*choral lead*)  
Alana Chung  
Catherine Corriveau  
Joan Cotton (*section head*)  
Liya Dunlap

Catherine Falconer  
Miranda Farrell-Myers  
Esther Fine  
Margaret Fisher  
Erika Friesen  
Jennifer Kim  
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Sue Kralik  
Sheila Macadam  
Susan Mahoney (*section head*)

Brenda Millar  
Jo-Ann Minden  
Agnes Yee-Ting Ng  
Catherine Peer  
Louise Pogue  
Ann Power  
Elizabeth Prosser  
Teresa Randall

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Gino Innamorato  
Joel Nash  
Quinton Neufeldt  
John Parker  
William Salinas-Crosby  
(*choral scholar*)  
Martin Tomlinson  
Anthony Varahidis (*choral scholar*)  
Mark Wood-Salomon  
(*choral lead*)

Ann Reesor  
Andrea Siemens  
Marilyn E. Smith  
Mary Stinson  
Anna Tharyan  
Esther Willms  
Yuchen Zhang (*choral apprentice*)

## BASS

Cameron Bedford  
Carl Blanchaer  
Frengo Cheung  
John Chung  
David Dimick  
William Found  
Lucas Kalechstein (*choral apprentice*)  
Gabriel Klassen (*choral scholar*)  
Stan Kwadrans  
Norman Martin  
Dermot Muir  
Aldred Neufeldt  
David Pabke  
Douglas Pritchard (*section head*)  
George Repetski  
Peter Rutledge  
John Rosati  
Charlie Sadler (*choral apprentice*)  
Jingren Sun (*choral apprentice*)  
Christopher Wilson (*choral lead*)

# Thank You!

Thank you to our Board, volunteers and staff for their ongoing contributions to Pax Christi Chorale.

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Camille Labonte, soprano choral lead  
Catharin Carew, alto choral lead  
Mark Wood-Salomon, tenor choral lead  
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Our dedicated front-of-house volunteers, many of whom are family and friends of choir members.

Cameron Bedford, Scott Bergen, Ron Greaves, Dermot Muir, Carol Ringer, Sandra Tang, Jeanie Yu, members of finance committee

**Special thanks to**

Rachel Malach & Rebekah Lobosco Gilli, Holy Blossom Temple

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**Adaptive Concerts**

Neurodiversity-friendly, accessible concerts for children and families

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Presented in partnership with the Alzheimer Society of Toronto

Xenia Concerts presents family-friendly concerts that embrace neurodiversity and disability.

Learn more at [XeniaConcerts.com](http://XeniaConcerts.com)

# Help Us to Thrive

We are so grateful to the members of our community whose gifts support Pax Christi Chorale's annual operations. Concert ticket sales account for only 30% of the funds we need to operate each season.

A gift to Pax Christi Chorale will help us cover the costs of items such as rent for our rehearsal and performance spaces, purchasing the music we sing, and supporting our annual artistic and administrative costs. We also allocate a portion of each donation towards our education and outreach programming; programming that nurtures the next generation of choral singers and leaders, helping to ensure that choral singing and performances of great choral music will continue for generations to come.

## You can donate in several ways:

1. By writing a cheque made out to Pax Christi Chorale and giving it to one of our concert volunteers this evening.
2. By visiting our website at [www.paxchristichorale.org](http://www.paxchristichorale.org).
3. By sending an e-transfer to [etransfer@paxchristichorale.org](mailto:etransfer@paxchristichorale.org).

Pax Christi Chorale issues tax receipts for all donations over \$20.

Thank you for considering a gift.

# Our Donors

We are grateful to the many generous donors who have supported Pax Christi Chorale. The following list recognizes gifts received between July 2022 to September 2023. Thank you!

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We invite you to join us in December



Elaine Choi  
Artistic Director & Conductor

# Children's Messiah

Experience Handel's timeless classic through the eyes of a child. An interactive music experience suitable for all ages.

**December 2, 2023**  
**1:30 pm & 4:00 pm**  
Church of the Redeemer  
162 BLOOR STREET WEST, TORONTO



Elaine Choi  
Artistic Director & Conductor

# Christmas Through the Ages

Music and stories to evoke the wonder and joy of Christmas, from our family to yours.

**December 9, 2023**  
**4:00 pm**  
ESG United Church 35 LYTTON BLVD, TORONTO



## **Pax Christi Chorale**

2901 Bayview Avenue, P.O. Box 91048, RPO Bayview Village,  
Toronto, Ontario M2K 2Y6

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