



Rules & Regulations

Management

1. The Festival is operated and under the authority of the St Thomas Christian Church and the Music Festival Committee.
2. Inquiries: Before festival week begins: questions, about the rules, entry form, session, classes, fees, etc., must be submitted to the Festival Committee Personnel:
For questions please contact the appropriate person:
 - Vocals - Hilary Greer (519)-520-4986
 - Piano - Kathy Hagerman kjh1958@gmail.com
 - Bands, Instrumental, Strings - Rosemary Charlton (519)-860-4237
 - Choirs - Theresa Ginther (226)-926-7147
 - Choral Speaking - Sue Green (519)-633-4822
 - Online Registration - stthomasmusicfestival@gmail.com
 - General - Sherry Graham (519)-200-3574
 - Program/Scheduling - Ian MacArthur (226)-919-7041
 - Contributions, gifts, scholarships - Rosemary Charlton (519)-860-4237
3. All matters not dealt with in these rules shall be submitted to the Festival Committee whose decisions on such matters shall be final and binding on all concerned.

Important Dates

Important dates for the 2026 Festival:

Registration opens - Oct 1st, 2025

Registration closes - Dec 19th, 2025 - **no extensions**

Program online - Jan 20th, 2026

Festival Competition - Feb 23rd - Feb 27th 2026

Major Awards Competition - Feb 27th, 2026 7:00PM

Keynotes Concert - Mar 27th, 2026 7:00PM

Eligibility

4. All competitions shall be open to amateurs only.
 - i. For the purpose of these competitions, an amateur shall be defined as: "any person whose principal means of livelihood is not obtained from the professional practice or teaching of music, even though he/she may from time to time accept remuneration for musical services rendered."
 - ii. An exception allowed for a professional who is a bona fide member of a choir, choral society, and group of singers, orchestra or band provided that the other members are amateurs and the group itself is amateur.
 - iii. This rule does not apply to accompanists or conductors.
5. University music performance majors must only enter classes at the Advanced (open) level.
6. Participants may enter as many classes as they wish, providing that age restrictions are strictly observed.
7. Participants may not appear more than once in any one class. (i.e. perform as a part in two duets or ensembles in the same class).
8. Where age limits are specified, participants must be of the prescribed age on the first day of January in the



year of the festival to be entered.

Test Pieces

9. The Festival Committee recommends that all test pieces be played or sung from memory. This will give the impression of superior preparation and provide a more polished performance. However, an exemption to this is the Non-Competitive classes.
10. In piano and instrument classes: repeats are to be omitted unless otherwise specified.
11. All participants selected to represent our festival at the Provincial Finals (piano and voice) will be required to perform from memory as required by the provincial rules.
12. No performer, nor any persons acting on their behalf, is allowed to have any contact by any means with an adjudicator regarding "Test Pieces" before, during or after the festival.
13. All test pieces in solo classes must be performed in the prescribed key except where stated. In vocal classes where candidates are 20 years and under, the keys may be transposed up or down one tone, provided the adjudicator is advised before the class begins. However, in classes where any standard editions are used, only the printed key may be used. Folk songs and Broadway songs may be performed in any key suitable to the candidate's vocal range.
14. Choral and vocal numbers may be sung in either the original language or English, as long as the adjudicator is advised in writing before the start of the class.
15. Participants must not exceed the time limit stated in the syllabus. The adjudicator may stop any participant who exceeds such limit.
16. In ALL classes the participant must provide an authorized legal copy of the music (conductor's score where applicable) for the adjudicator's use. This will be given to the adjudicator's secretary immediately preceding the respective competition and received from the secretary immediately following the competition.
17. A piece that has been selected as a test piece may be used only in that class.
18. Repertoire cannot be repeated from year to year or if entering two different classes.
19. A participant may not perform the same test piece in more than one class at the same festival.

Entrant Registration

20. Each contestant must submit online a completed registration form with all required information for each class entered. Correct spelling of the accompanist and teacher's name, address and phone number is required.
21. Entry fees will not be refunded, except where the entry is rejected by "The Board". Participants desiring to withdraw their entry should contact the Festival by email stthomasmusicfestival@gmail.com as early as possible. Failure to participate in all classes entered and programmed may influence the awarding of Awards.
22. Online registration (<https://stthomasmusicfestival.ca/>) begins on October 1st, 2025. The deadline for registrations (online* or by mail) is Friday, December 19th, 2025. Entries after Friday, December 19th 2025 WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Copyright Rules and the Law

All copyright music is protected under law and is the property of the composer or agent and of the publisher. Unauthorized photocopies are illegal and cannot be accepted or used during the festival. Copyright music may not be performed in any manner or variation without permission of holders of copyright. It is the responsibility of the student or teacher to apply to the publisher or composer for such permission. Performers must be able to produce proof of authorization if asked by the Adjudicator, or other festival officers. Failure to show proof when required



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may result in the immediate removal of the registrant from the class.

Program Guidelines

23. The participant's online registration will need to be completed and once finalized and paid, a receipt will be generated. This will confirm entrance into the St. Thomas Music Festival.
24. Each participant must supply his/her own accompanist, if required.
25. A participant may be disqualified if he/she is not ready to compete within 10 minutes of being called. A class will not be delayed to accommodate latecomers, but the adjudicator's secretary may change the order of performance in a class to accommodate those who have been competing at other locations.
26. A chord may be given on the piano at the beginning of each piece of unaccompanied music.
27. The Festival Committee reserves the right to appoint additional or substitute adjudicators.
28. After registration is closed, all entries posted will be available online by January 20th, 2026 on the St. Thomas Music Festival website and available to print. There will be a reminder email sent to advise it is available. It is the registrants responsibility to ensure you are aware of the date, session, class time, order of appearance and the location. If a competitor identifies a conflict, it is the responsibility of the participant or teacher to notify the Music Festival Committee to seek a solution.
29. Sessions will begin at the appointed times, but class times may adjust as required due to previous classes running longer than anticipated. In the event of changes or delays entrants will be notified if possible. It is expected that all personal schedules must be sufficiently flexible to accommodate late changes.
30. It is the responsibility of the festival team in each session to maintain order and to try to ensure that no person disrupts a performance. No admission to the auditorium will be permitted during a performance.
31. Each entrant will be called to perform at the discretion of the adjudicator.
32. Adjudicators are professionals in their respective fields and are expected to draw on their knowledge and experience to carry out their duties. No person is allowed to directly challenge any decision of any adjudicator. Any questions or challenges may be brought to the attention of the Festival Chair.
33. No person has the legal right to photograph or record any person without first obtaining written consent. Once permission is obtained, it must not cause disruption or distraction for the performer(s). It is the responsibility of the person photographing and recording to know and comply with all laws.
34. Each participant will receive the adjudicator's written report.
35. Awards will be presented in accordance with the Official Award List, subject to revision at the discretion of the Scholarship Committee.
36. Awards are presented to participants who, in the opinion of the adjudicators, not only perform well but also demonstrate the most potential for future musical development.
37. Award payments will be made by cheque directly to the Award winners and presented at the Keynotes Concert.
38. All Awards are presented at the absolute discretion of the Scholarship Committee following the recommendations of the adjudicators.
39. A participant will be eligible for only ONE Award per discipline.

Awards & Trophies

The criteria for awarding many scholarships have been set by the donors, and are subject to change, at the request of the donor. Undesignated scholarship funds, held in trust by the sponsor, may be divided or combined to create more awards of equal value, or awards of values greater than the smaller donations.



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40. Every entrant who completes the required performance in a class listed in the current syllabus will receive a certificate bearing a seal of the colour appropriate to the results assigned by the adjudicator. For a Non-Competitive class, the entrant will receive a participant certificate.
41. Selection of winners of cash awards, scholarships, plaques and trophies will be made following the close of Festival Week, and will be presented at the Keynotes Concert.
42. Winners are selected through the procedures established by the Festival Scholarships and Awards committee. Participants in the classes designated for eligibility in one of the six major competitions will be notified as quickly as possible that they have qualified for the competitions to be held on the closing night of the Festival or a time selected by the Music Festival Committee.
43. Scholarship cheques must be cashed within a reasonable time, and should not be allowed to lapse beyond the time allowed by banks.
44. A replacement cheque may be issued by the treasurer or sponsor upon application of the award winner or agent, but no replacement cheque can be issued after the start of the next festival.
45. Winner of one of the major competitions may not compete a second time for the same award but may compete in any class in any other discipline.
46. In the event of a participant qualifying for more than one scholarship, or of two or more participants qualifying for the same scholarship, the Scholarship committee will determine which scholarship(s) to award.

Competition Rules and Guidelines

47. The selection committee will distribute a program for the major competitions once participants are determined.

Complaints and Protests

All teachers, parents and students are forbidden from approaching any adjudicator at any time during or following the festival with the intent to debate an outcome or an award. Anyone violating this directive will be removed from the class and forbidden from attending any other classes for the duration of the festival. All complaints must be submitted in writing to "The Festival Committee" which will deal with the complaint. All decisions by The Festival Committee will be final and not open to further debate. It must be accepted that the appeal of the festival is found in the "spirit" of the event and not necessarily the detailed analysis of all outcomes. Award choices by adjudicators can be motivated by potential and a perceived need for encouragement and not necessarily on marks and placements alone. There must be a place for the subjective in the arts.

Notices

Entry Form

The electronic Registration Form is available online on October 1st, 2025. PAYMENT is required online by e-transfer. A cheque is the alternate form of payment. Once the electronic registration and confirmed payment is complete, a print-out of the electronic registration for each class will be available.

Web Site: <https://stthomasmusicfestival.ca>

Printed Festival Programs

Programs are available in advance by downloading and printing the online program after January 20th 2025.

Music

It is unlawful to copy any portion of music or text without authorization from the copyright holder. To do so is a violation of the Canadian Copyright Act. It is unfair to deny the author/composer just recompense for work that



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may represent years of effort. Photocopying of copyright music for the purpose of performance is illegal. No photocopies, or computer-generated copies will be allowed in this Festival in any case whatsoever, unless they show legal authorization by the publisher.

Music Selections

Sections 1 Choral, 2 Elementary and 3 Secondary School Choirs - Please note - unless a class specifies music selections, entrants in these sections are free to use music from any planned concert or public performance already in rehearsals and in progress for the current year. The entrant will not be required to prepare other pieces in addition to work already underway, provided that the selections follow all other criteria. The Adjudicator must be provided with appropriate written music.



Music Festival 2026

Schools - Speech Arts Syllabus

Schools

2026 Syllabus - Choral

1. All participants are subject to the Rules and Regulations of the Festival. Please read them carefully.
2. It is the responsibility of the choir director or ensemble participants to provide the adjudicator with a legal copy of the music to be performed. The adjudicator must be provided with an original music score or proof of online purchase of the number of copies required for the entire group. Music in the Public Domain is copyright free and is also acceptable.
3. The same work cannot be performed in successive years.
4. For performances that require accompaniment, live accompaniment is preferred, when possible. Recorded accompaniment may be used and *must be free of any vocals*.
5. All choirs and ensembles are eligible for scholarship consideration.
6. In competitive classes, each choir or ensemble will receive an adjudication, marks, placement, and a certificate. In non-competitive classes, each choir or ensemble will receive an adjudication but will not receive marks or placement.
7. Please refer to number 33 in the rules and regulations for information about photography and recording and protection of individual rights to privacy.

2026 Syllabus - Orchestra and Band

1. Music selections may be from concerts or performances already in rehearsal or that are intended for use in other events during the current year (school year).
2. Orchestras must be of a size to include all standard sections.
3. When entering performance time on the registration form, it must include time required for set-up and warm-up as well as actual performance time.
4. It is the responsibility of the conductor to ensure that all members of the group are in the auditorium before the session or class is called.
5. Please refer to number 33 in the Rules and Regulations for information about photography and recording and protection of individual rights to privacy.
6. The Festival does not provide percussion or any other instruments except a piano/keyboard. There are some music stands available, but it is recommended that groups bring their own.
7. The adjudicator must be provided with an original music score or proof of online purchase for the number of copies required for the entire group.
8. Please adhere to copyright laws.

Elementary Grade Classroom Speech Arts

The Speech Arts Award of \$200 will be awarded to the top performer in a Speech Art class (highest mark from the adjudicator).



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Schools - Speech Arts Syllabus

Elementary Grade Classroom Speech Arts (continued)

2.6.010 - Grade 1 Classroom Speech Arts	\$35.00
2.6.020 - Grade 2 Classroom Speech Arts	\$35.00
2.6.030 - Grade 3 Classroom Speech Arts	\$35.00
2.6.040 - Grade 4 Classroom Speech Arts	\$35.00
2.6.050 - Grade 5 Classroom Speech Arts	\$35.00
2.6.060 - Grade 6 Classroom Speech Arts	\$35.00
2.6.070 - Grade 7 Classroom Speech Arts	\$35.00
2.6.080 - Grade 8 Classroom Speech Arts	\$35.00

Elementary Mixed Grades Speech Arts

The Speech Arts Award of \$200 will be awarded to the top performer in a Speech Art class (highest mark from the adjudicator).

2.5.020 - School Speech Arts Grade 1-3 <i>2 selections, 1 from the list and 1 contrasting own choice</i>	\$35.00
2.5.030 - School Speech Arts Grade 4-6 <i>2 selections, 1 from the list and 1 contrasting own choice</i>	\$35.00
2.5.040 - School Speech Arts Grade 7-8 <i>2 selections, 1 from the list and 1 contrasting own choice</i>	\$35.00