

## **Chapter History of Asheville Threshold Choir 2025**

### **Early Inspiration (2012–2016)**

In 2012, Kate Munger, founder of the Threshold Choir movement, visited Asheville as part of her mission to spread the choir's vision of singing at the bedsides of those in need. Her visit directly inspired the creation of the first Asheville Chapter. Though that initial group disbanded after only a few years, one member, Ginny Moreland, remained connected to the wider Threshold Choir community. Her dedication bore fruit in the spring of 2017, when she helped organize a regional gathering in Montreat, North Carolina. That event rekindled interest and drew together half a dozen singers who would form the foundation of a new Asheville chapter.

### **A Rebirth and New Leadership (2017–2020)**

The reborn Asheville Chapter officially launched in October 2017, with Teri Sandoval serving as the first Music Director and Ginny Moreland as Administrator. By 2020, the choir was actively singing at meeting again, initially outdoors. Around this time, Teri Sandoval relocated out of state, and Regina Webster bedsides in several locations, fulfilling its mission of offering comfort through song. However, the COVID-19 pandemic forced the group into hiatus, halting bedside singing and in-person gatherings.

### **Renewal After the Pandemic (2022–2023)**

In early 2022, the chapter began stepped in as Music Director, guiding the choir for several years. The group also began experimenting with a more collaborative leadership model, planning a "music team" to share responsibilities for repertoire and practice leadership. Membership grew steadily. In the early years, new singers joined one at a time, but by late 2023, interest surged. After welcoming a dozen new members, the chapter created a waiting list for the first time, with membership reaching about 18 singers.

### **Challenges and Growth (2024–2025)**

In the fall of 2024, Tropical Storm Helene disrupted choir activities, causing another temporary pause. Yet, the group rebounded with renewed energy. By spring 2025, the Asheville Threshold Choir embraced a more "leaderful" approach, reaching out to over forty prospective singers who had expressed interest in the past year. Many responded enthusiastically, and the chapter's official membership rose to 28, with about 16 actively singing at bedside. The rising cost of living in Asheville also reshaped the group's geography. Singers began traveling from farther afield, leading to the formation of northern and western subgroups that may eventually evolve into independent chapters.

### **Practices and Musical Expansion**

From its early days, the chapter offered four practices per month across two locations, asking singers to attend at least twice monthly. Most practices were held on Saturday afternoons, but new evening sessions are being added in Fletcher to accommodate more singers.

Another sign of growth is the addition of tenor and baritone voices, expanding the choir's range after years of being exclusively treble. Singers from other Threshold Choir chapters who have moved to Asheville have also enriched the group's sound and community.

### **Service and Outreach**

In a typical month, the Asheville Threshold Choir sings at bedside for 15–20 individuals, primarily in three nursing facilities and at the Center for Conscious Living and Dying. The choir also responds to individual referrals and occasionally sings at public events such as song baths, vigils, or memorial services. Currently, there are five trio leaders, with plans to add more. Strengthening the high and low harmony sections remains a priority as the choir continues to expand.

### **Looking Ahead**

As of late 2025, the Asheville Threshold Choir has grown to nearly 40 singers, with about 28 officially registered members. The group is navigating new logistics, balancing growth with intimacy, and exploring ways to remain welcoming while sustaining its mission.

The chapter celebrates community through quarterly potlucks, embraces diversity across ages and life stages, and continues to welcome visiting Threshold singers from around the country. With new babies, new voices, and new leadership models, the Asheville Threshold Choir enters 2026 as a vibrant, evolving community of song.

5th Tuesday Asheville Threshold Choir Potluck 07/30/2024. Michele Skeelee, Melinda Hershey, Regina Webster, Tanya Schwalbe, Jeannie McKenzie, Sarah Updegraff, Jennifer Worthen, Ginny Moreland, Judy Kaplan



Asheville Threshold Choir, October 7, 2025. Amelia, Lisa, Tanya, Megan, Lisa, David, Mary, Ginny, Betsy, Sarah, Erin, Clare, Janet, Bella, Virginia, Jen, David

