

APART BUT NEVER ALONE



Harmony through Harmony

2019-20 ANNUAL REPORT

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LEAD TEAM

Beth McLean Wiest, Executive Director
Reid McLean Wiest, Creative Director
Torrance Airhart, Principal Conductor
Becky Timmons, Producer
Katie Pearn, Communications
Christa Holten, Learning and Serving Trips
John Vooyos, Ensemble Leader
Kara Friesen, Ensemble Leader

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rachel Bryant
Greg Grunau
Kim Pangracs
J. Allen Howard
John Pritchard
Kallie Wood

*We would like to thank Heritage Christian Academy
for the use of their facility free of charge*

Harmony through Harmony (HtH) began as a pilot project October 6th, 2009. The first HtH Board of Directors meeting occurred on June 30, 2010.

On October 25, 2010, HtH was issued its Letter Patent to become incorporated as "a corporation without share capital under part 2 of the Canada Corporations Act". We received our documentation in January 2011. The HtH Corporation Number from Corporations Canada is **767251-9**. The business number from Canada Revenue Agency is **BN 83555 8115 RC0001**.

On August 19, 2014, HtH was issued its Certificate of Continuance under the Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act. On May 30th, 2012, the HtH Board of Directors chose the HtH fiscal year to be June 1st to May 31st. This is the annual report for the year ending May 31st, 2020.

ABOUT HARMONY THROUGH HARMONY

Harmony through Harmony (HtH) began in October 2009, to see what could happen when a love of making music was combined with a growing heart for hurting and oppressed people. We are motivated by Christ's mission to "Preach good news to the poor, ...proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed." (Luke 4:18).

Currently, the injustice we are focusing on fighting together is sexual exploitation, including violence, sex trafficking and exploitation of women and children. We are a network of singing ensembles; rehearsing in groups of up to 16 participants, meeting in homes. About once monthly we gather all ensembles together for mass rehearsals. A typical HtH weekly gathering consists of a family-style meal, music rehearsing, learning and discussing, and praying together. Most often this happens Tuesday evenings from October through May.

We invite our participants on a journey of discovery in community. Through our music making and break-out discussions, we explore and express what we each think, believe and value. In the process, we discover how we can become "voices for the voiceless" – to sing out and speak up on behalf of those who currently are silent or not heard. We regularly present concerts to raise awareness and bring hope to those who are suffering injustice.

We have begun with a choral ensemble of young adults in Calgary, Canada and we are on track to be a reproducing organization that will spread to the development of many types of singing groups worldwide.

MISSION

HtH is a network of singing ensembles that exists to **build community**, where we **expand worldviews**, in order to **develop leaders**, who will **impact culture**, through the **fight for justice**.

CORE ACTIVITIES

- **Gathering Together**
- **Eating Together**
- **Singing Together**
- **Performing Together**
- **Learning Together**
- **Serving Together**
- **Praying Together**
- **Traveling Together**

CORE VALUES

Humility: Acknowledging where we have limitations. Acknowledging where we have strengths

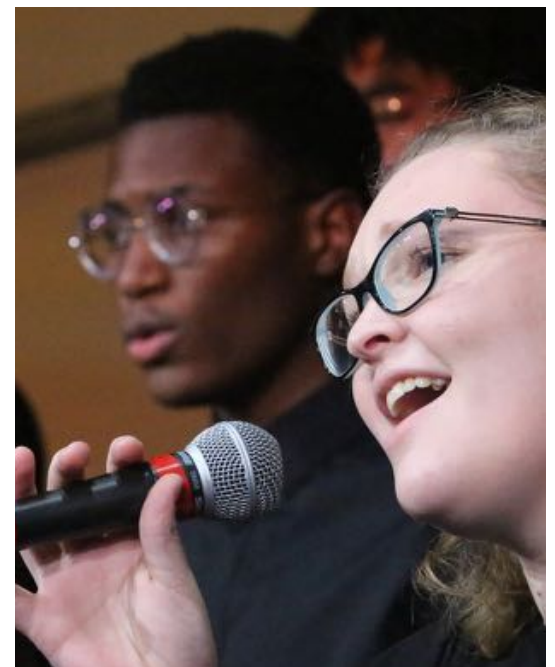
Courage: Being willing to try something new. Risking being vulnerable. Facing our fears. Asking God and each other for help.

Compassion: Entering into the experience of others, particularly their suffering.

Effort: Doing our best within the limits of our time, health, expertise, and other commitments

Commitment: Acting in a dependable way, knowing we can count on each other. Seeing projects through to completion.

Growth: Seeking to personally and corporately develop in character and competence. Being fruitful and multiplying.



MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

More than 400 years ago William Shakespeare said "music can phase out the troubles of the brain". Some music phases out more of the brain than others.

A recent study reported in Nature Neuroscience demonstrated that music can lift moods, combat depression, improve blood flow, lower levels of stress-related hormones, and even ease pain. Maybe you've experienced some of that healing and refreshing music in your life.

Imagine what the music of Harmony through Harmony could do for a young lady deceived and trapped in a brothel. Perhaps it could, even if just for a moment, transport her to a different life. Even better still, what if that brothel was transformed into a concert hall to bring music to the whole community?

You see this is the vision of HtH – not just to bring music, but transformation – not just to bring relief, but prevention. Imagine singers and musicians teaching prevention skills and techniques at a summer camp in Ukraine, at a conference in Uganda and at a teacher's Convention in Manitoba – building thriving communities worldwide where people are attending to their God-given identity and purpose. This is the culture HtH seeks to live & reproduce.

The Board of Harmony Through Harmony (HtH) has been discussing and pressing into the "culture" of HtH this past year. As we contemplate reproducing ensembles in various locations and contexts, the question of "what" we are reproducing has been an important one for us.

a year's overview

MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In a recent interview, one of our newest singers remarked "I really appreciate the value HtH places on flexibility". This made me smile as flexibility isn't actually one of our core values but it is one we practice a lot, especially this year!

The interruptions of COVID-19 stretched even the most flexible among us. According to the COVID-19 Impact Survey on Canadian Choirs, for the 3.5 million Canadians who sing in choirs this has meant a huge amount of stress and anxiety. Did you know that between January and August, nearly 5000 concerts were cancelled or postponed? What a devastating loss of art and culture to Canada! Consider the number of people those audiences could have held! Along with every other arts organization, virtually every choir in Canada is feeling the financial impact as well as the emotional toll on health and well being. We are no different.

Remarkably, however, we ended the year in the black with just enough to make it through the lean summer months. We are very thankful to not have to close our doors. As you read this annual report, you will see each section will reflect pre and post Covid realities. Our fiscal year is June 01 to May 31, however, our season with participants runs September to May.

Our last live performance and last in-person-regular-format gathering were both in March. We have deeply grieved not being able to share meals together, sing together, perform together or travel together.

The Board has devoted the first half of each meeting to consider this and talk through it. The previous work of the Leadership Team has provided the foundation, and now we are attempting to build on it and multiply it.

During this process, we all have recommitted ourselves to the strong values and mission of HtH. All the Board members who are currently serving and have served previously are extremely dedicated to supporting HtH as a very purposeful organization, as well as supporting the people involved in their development as artists and difference-makers.

Covid-19 has made this a difficult challenge this year, but we are so proud of our leaders and members and how they cultivated creativity and perseverance in offering such professional quality productions online. As with many organizations this year, we look forward to the day when we resume our usual operations, yet at the same time we acknowledge that some of our ways have changed permanently. We always look to adjust and improve.

May HtH continue to show resilience in the stand against injustice in whatever times we find ourselves in, while at the same time building thriving communities of diversity. We are hearing the call to be steadfast and faithful people who are attending to their God-given identity and purpose, and help others do the same.

Thank you to all those who support this calling through giving to the work of HtH. May God bring His body together in fantastic ways so we can do what none of us can do on our own.

John Pritchard

Board Chair

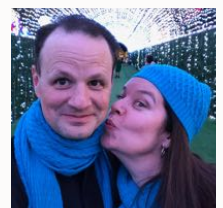


Despite these losses, there is much to be thankful for. We had our greatest intake of newcomers ever with 13 joining our community. We have remarked with amazement at how God led us to call our Christmas production "The Gift of Presence", to have the event include dinner, and for our participants to get to build community with our patrons by eating together. We have taken more time for connection and prayer in our weekly online gatherings and this has deepened our relationships significantly. We have been delighted to reach more people than in a regular spring production through our Virtual Choir videos. And the pandemic has added fuel to our fire to raise awareness to end sexual exploitation; this is one "industry" that does not stop, while so many other industries have during the pandemic.

I wonder if perhaps more than ever, there is a deep need for the HtH network of singing ensembles. I believe we were made for community, we were made to worship, we were made to thrive. Neglect, isolation, paranoia, loneliness, disease, abuse, silence... none of these words reflect the abundant life our Creator intends for us. May we be light bearers in this time of darkness and speak up until we can sing out again.

Beth McLean Wiest

Executive Director



BUILDING COMMUNITY

In HtH, we want to help facilitate thriving, vibrant and giving communities worldwide, where people are attending to their God-given identity and purpose. Some of the ways that we build community are by eating, gathering and praying together.

EATING TOGETHER

Few experiences build community faster than gathering together around a table to share a meal or feast! Prior to Covid, we regularly shared meals before rehearsals, and would hold a potluck once a month during our combined rehearsals.

We also held a Christmas banquet this year, where many were able to gather to share a delicious meal. We were blessed by the incredible generosity of an anonymous donor who covered the cost of food, which helped us pack the house.

This core activity was difficult to find a safe substitute for once Covid struck; however we did have some members get creative by sharing a meal virtually at each other's respective dinner tables. Once we were allowed to gather outside again, we also ate together safely by bringing our own food.



GATHERING TOGETHER

In HtH, our Tuesday night gatherings are highlights in our weekly calendars, but we also encourage participants to support, serve, learn, and have fun together on non "HtH" nights. Many strong friendships and connections continue to be built through these intentional shared experiences.

This year, a real highlight of gathering together was our annual HtH Workshop weekend at Pioneer Ranch Camp in Sundre, Alberta. Many participants carpooled and enjoyed fellowship through games, walks in nature and discussion times, in addition to the camaraderie that is built through intense music learning.

Once Covid made gathering together in person impossible, we quickly switched gears to an online solution, through Zoom. Amazingly, the HtH Leadership team was already in the rhythm of meeting weekly on Zoom prior to the pandemic, which allowed them to lead participants in navigating this new virtual space. Our online gatherings consisted of intentional connection time to see how everyone was doing, prayer time, discussion and many attempts at finding a way to sing together in real time.



PRAYING TOGETHER

We have learned over the years that prayer must be central to our ministry, and we are so grateful for our prayer partners who cover us as we serve. As a community, it is a regular practice to pray before meals, at the end of rehearsals, and before performances.

After Covid, we made sure to leave time in our gatherings for prayer requests and prayer time. HtH Leadership also made prayer and worship a central part of meetings. These times of sharing and praying together helped us to stay connected to each other, and to God, during these trying times.

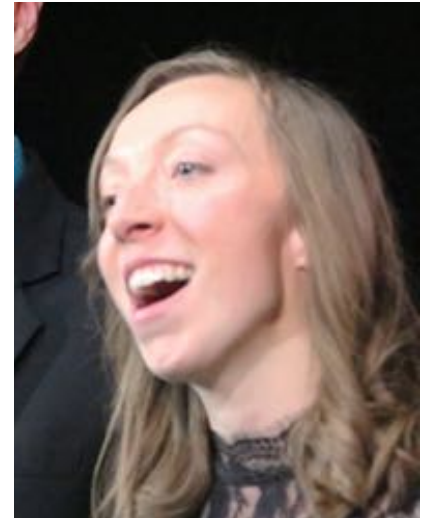
HANNAH BLANTON, YEAR 1

When reflecting on my time at HtH, it's funny to think that it's been less than a year since I joined the community. With all the connections, relationships, and new experiences I've enjoyed since joining last fall, it feels like I've been part of the HtH family for much longer.

It's sad to think I won't get to say goodbye to everyone in person as I prepare to move back to the UK, but I'm glad for the ways we have been able to adapt and continue to meet and sing together virtually since the pandemic hit.

Our weekly Zoom meetings and virtual choir videos were always a much needed pick-me-up during lockdown and were a testament to HtH's commitment to community. Some highlights of my time at HtH include building new relationships and learning how to play President at the weekend getaway, performing in the Christmas concert, and generally rediscovering my love of singing and performing.

Thank you to everyone at HtH who made my time with you so memorable – and by extension, made saying goodbye that much harder. We will meet again!



"With all the connections, relationships, and new experiences I've enjoyed since joining last fall, it feels like I've been part of the HtH family for much longer."

SEBASTIAN DYKSTRA, YEAR 8

When I entered my rookie season back in the fall of 2012, I had the privilege of knowing a number of others already and it made it easy to be a part of the community without having any good reason to build community.

I showed up late and walked into a room filled with many faces I knew despite not having been introduced to anyone. As rehearsal came to an end, however, I realized that building community meant more than doing so with just the people I knew.

When I was asked whether I wished to be in an ensemble with all of those I already knew or with no one that I knew, I chose the latter, for I had come to realize by the end of that first rehearsal that I could not fully fulfil the rest of our mission statement unless that first part rang true.

"I realized that building community mean more than doing so with just the people I knew."



EXPANDING WORLDVIEWS

In HtH, music has many purposes. It helps us process the emotions and thoughts we might be experiencing when digging into tough topics. It is a way for us to glorify God and bond with one another, and also to minister to our audiences. In this unprecedented season, Covid-19 helped us expand our worldviews of what singing and performing together could look like, and allowed us to reach new audiences in new ways.

SINGING TOGETHER

Never in our wildest dreams could we have imagined we would see a day where singing together would be considered a dangerous activity. It's been said that necessity is the mother of invention. That has been proven to be true this year, as for several months we weren't able to sing together in person at all. This prompted us to look at virtual solutions, which ultimately led us to creating four virtual choir videos before the end of May, 2020. We, along with many other choirs and music teachers tried desperately to find a virtual solution that would allow for us to sing in real time without a delay. Our Creative Director Reid recounts the struggles and triumphs of this new reality.



REID MCLEAN WIEST, CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Like the rest of the world, our season was completely interrupted by COVID-19 and the restrictions put forth by public health authorities. Over a short few days, many of our core activities were declared “dangerous activities” that could increase the risk of transmitting the virus. All remaining planned HtH public events had to be cancelled.

Rather than scrap the rest of the season completely, we worked creatively with technology to continue to engage in as many of our core activities as possible. Gatherings over Zoom video conferencing facilitated (and in some cases enhanced) our ability to gather, sing, learn, and pray together. Live performances were replaced with “virtual choir” videos; songs performed on video by individual singers, and edited together to appear as a single performance. I was pretty excited about this project, as I had been struggling for the past several seasons to prioritize making quality recordings of HtH music. Interesting that it took a world pandemic to force us down that road!

I spent much time and effort trying to figure out a way to sing together in real time, over available technology, but discovered that latency over internet connections is too big a barrier. In my fevered search to overcome the latency and the frustration of having to be physically apart from our community, I composed a new song called “Latency” that we learned together over the virtual gatherings. The lyric expressed a comforting thought in this troubling time: “apart, but never alone”. For me, this thought carried at least a double meaning. First, a reminder that no matter how difficult life is, we are never truly alone for God has promised to be with us. Second, an exhortation to commit to pursuing each other in community, despite being apart.

Looking ahead, it is unclear when the pandemic will pass to the point where in-person choir rehearsals and live choral performances will be safe again.

Thank God we are alive at this season of human history, where technology exists for us to keep pursuing our mission, allowing us to be apart but never alone.

"Rather than scrap the rest of the season completely, we worked creatively with technology to continue to engage in as many of our core activities as possible."

PERFORMING TOGETHER

When we perform together, we use our music as a tool for connection and justice. The repertoire we present is chosen for its lyrical content and often contains messages of hope, awareness and Biblical truths about justice. This year, we were able to perform at several events prior to the pandemic. Some of the highlights included hosting Calgary's first World Singing Day event, getting to carol on the community stage at the first ever Noel Christmas festival at Stampede Park, being invited to this year's Midwinter Concert at Centre Street Church, and our Christmas fundraising concert at Rock Pointe Church.

WORLD SINGING DAY

On October 19, 2019 at First Baptist Church in Calgary, HtH had the opportunity to organize and host the city's first World Singing Day Event. More than 100 people gathered together for a huge karaoke party, complete with props, refreshments provided by HtH members, and all the karaoke classics for people to sing along to. Two group songs were recorded, the songs of the year "Twist and Shout" by the Beatles, and the original WSD song "Til the Whole World Sings."

IMMEASURABLY MORE FUNDRAISER

On Dec 13, 2019, we held our fundraising dinner at Rockpointe Bowridge Church, called "The Gift of Presence". We had a packed house, thanks to an anonymous donor who paid for everyone's dinner, removing the barrier of cost to attending the event. About half of the audience were first-time attendees to an HtH concert! Highlights of the event included roaming ensembles of carollers, and an original readers' theatre script, with new singers Kent and Caitlyn cast in the lead roles, and original artwork and piano accompaniment by John. The event raised over \$10,000 towards HtH operations.



KELSI JACOBI, YEAR 1

I was invited to join HtH by a friend (a long-time member of HtH) and my brother (a newer member). I decided to join as I found it to be a welcoming and encouraging group and I knew it would challenge me (in a good way) both musically and as a person overall. I like that HtH is both upward and outward looking, seeking God in everything and looking to our local/global community.

As someone with no formal choir experience, it can be challenging at times to keep up with the music as it is fast-paced, but people are encouraging and we have tools that help - Chorus Class is especially helpful. I enjoy the creativity but also the message the songs express. I have also found HtH provides a good place to learn about sex trafficking. Although it can be a hard topic to discuss and was not often on my mind before, the guest speakers are inspiring yet real and open about sharing their experiences of helping those who are exploited. It is an issue I think about more now!

Covid-19 did change the choir experience - who knew singing could be dangerous! I'm looking forward to performing more with the group once things open up as I've only participated in one concert. I appreciate the effort everyone has put in to make the choir continue virtually. Overall, my knowledge about music and the justice needed in this world has grown, and I look forward to that continuing.



"I found it to be a welcoming and encouraging group, and I knew it would challenge me (in a good way) both musically and as a person overall."

DEVELOPING LEADERS

We believe that we are all leaders and that God has created each one of us with a unique calling. We are committed to helping equip our participants with tools to help them discover who God made them to be, so they can live out their God-given identities and purposes. This is done through planning and going on learning and serving trips, shared projects, and through direct teaching on personal development, leadership principles, and discipleship from a Christian worldview.

TRAVELING TOGETHER

Traveling together helps us achieve our mission in so many ways. It builds community through time spent together, planning and going on trips requires and develops leadership, and you have to approach it all with a humble heart. Naturally with Covid-19, we were not able to travel together much at all this season. There were several promising opportunities to partner with different organizations to travel to India, Ukraine, and Columbia, but all plans were swiftly halted once the pandemic hit. We were able to take one trip to Three Hills, Alberta to put on our "Meant to be Unbroken" production at Prairie Bible Institute right before things began to shut down, which turned out to be a highlight of the season. We were truly blessed to have had the opportunity to spend some quality time on the bus PBI provided for us and enjoyed meeting the people who attended our show.



TORRI AIRHART, PRINCIPAL CONDUCTOR

Three Hills easily was our new high water mark for the year. So many good things came out of this gig. We were balanced vocally and musically. It was the first test run of an important new piece (Ladybug) and proved to be the push we needed to get a revived script completed as well as integrating some new readers.

Most importantly in my mind was successfully performing 3 songs with track - something that we've toyed with for years but had never felt good about until now. While I wish that Three Hills had simply catapulted us forward to our spring show (which now can't happen), it still gives me great confidence looking forward to next season.

LEARNING & SERVING TOGETHER

Leaders are learners, and we have found that a combination of direct teaching, as well as real-life experiences, help us develop our character and our capacity for leadership while raising our own awareness of injustice and developing healthy responses to it. We devote time in our gatherings to learning, particularly topics related to leadership and justice. Resources may include Bible study, books, videos, articles, guest speakers, conferences, and Learning & Serving trips

This season, both ensembles read the book "Humilitas" by John Dickson, which focuses on one of our core values of humility, as well as watched a series of videos and webinars about human trafficking put out by the Joy Smith Foundation.

Ensemble 4007 also read the book "The True Story of Human Trafficking in Canada" by Paul Boge. This novel, based on the story of Joy Smith's successful efforts at passing a private members' bill to increase the sentencing for trafficking minors, was an eye opening read for many participants. We were also honoured to have Mrs. Smith herself join us for a zoom gathering where she graciously shared more of her story, answered our questions, and inspired us to keep fighting against sexual exploitation in Canada and the world.





MELISSA MANN, YEAR 1

I ordered Joy Smith's book online and it arrived a few days later. I started to read and I couldn't put it down. I loved to know that it was a true story but it was written in a novel format - very engaging. I knew a bit about girls in Canada being trafficked, but the detail in the book was much more eye-opening and gut-wrenching than I expected.

As a teenager I was groomed and narrowly escaped being taken and potentially trafficked myself, so reading about what could have been my reality was very disturbing, and I am grateful to God and my nosy parents for intervening and saving me this pain. I was shocked and disgusted by the storyline of the john, Dave, who purchased girls and the idea that many johns seem to not understand that they are doing harm. They buy into the lies that these girls are "of age" and are choosing this life - "earning money for college" seems to be a typical line and lie. I thoroughly enjoyed the storyline of Joy in her time as an MP and her fight for trafficked girls in Canada.

I had no idea the uphill battle that goes on in Ottawa for those fighting justice issues (and others) that are not part of their party's mandate. I was inspired by Joy's perseverance and commitment in the face of so many obstacles. Meeting Joy on our HtH Zoom call a few weeks after reading this book was a highlight, and a culmination of thoughts and emotions that had come to the forefront of my mind as a result of reading her book. I enjoyed hearing her story firsthand, finding out more about her Foundation and learning that resources are available to help educate and empower people to speak out against human trafficking. I have been inspired to learn more about what role I could play in bringing light to this little-talked-about-issue in our country.

"I have been inspired to learn more about what role I could play in bringing light to this little-talked-about-issue in our country."

LOOKING AHEAD

AN UPDATE ON OUR FIVE-YEAR GOAL

While the pandemic interrupted our regular rhythms, the reduction in performances has allowed margin for other important developments for us, unsurprisingly in the area of technology. After more than a year of research, we are now proud participants in G-Suite for Nonprofits and a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database, Sumac.

Research has literally paid off in that G-Suite for Nonprofits is free for successful applicants and our membership with TechSoup Canada saved us \$1200. We are very excited about how these two platforms should improve our operations, donor development and help us achieve greater impact. In our efforts to "build community" both internally and externally, we want to become known for the level of care we provide and the longevity of our relationships. Should you wish to contact anyone on our core team, you can now reach us at the following addresses:

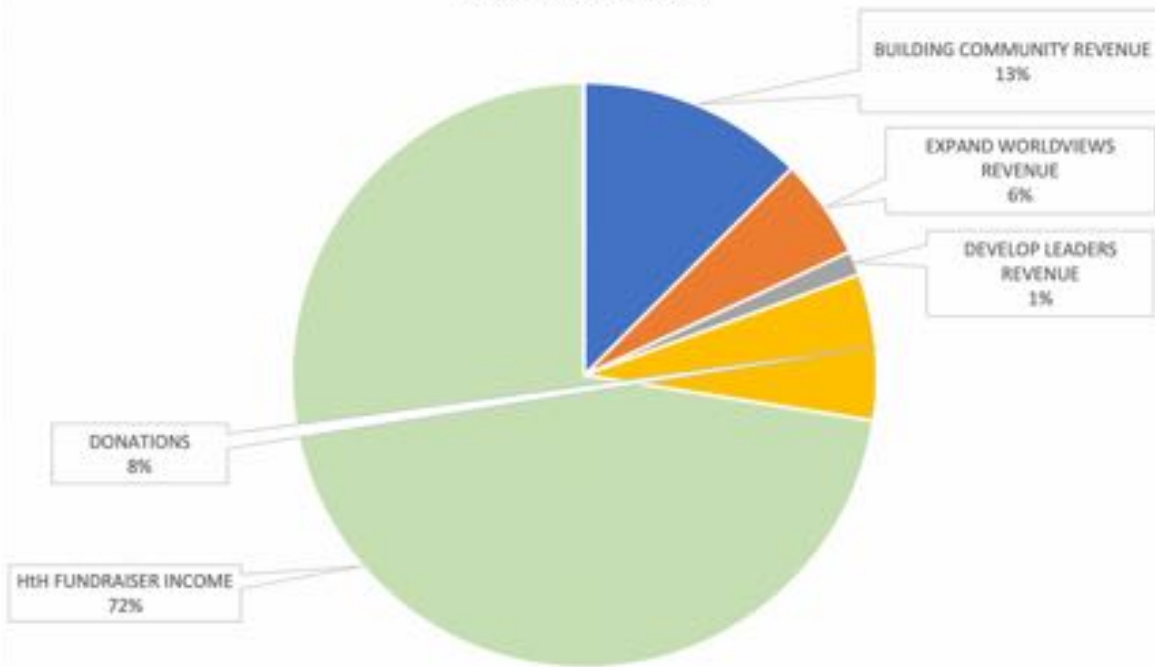
Executivedirector@harmonythroughharmony.com
Creativedirector@harmonythroughharmony.com
Music@harmonythroughharmony.com
Producer@harmonythroughharmony.com
Financialstewardship@harmonythroughharmony.com
Communications@harmonythroughharmony.com
Admin@harmonythroughharmony.com

If you haven't already signed up for our e-newsletter, please do so and also be sure to join our Harmony through Harmony Facebook and Instagram groups.

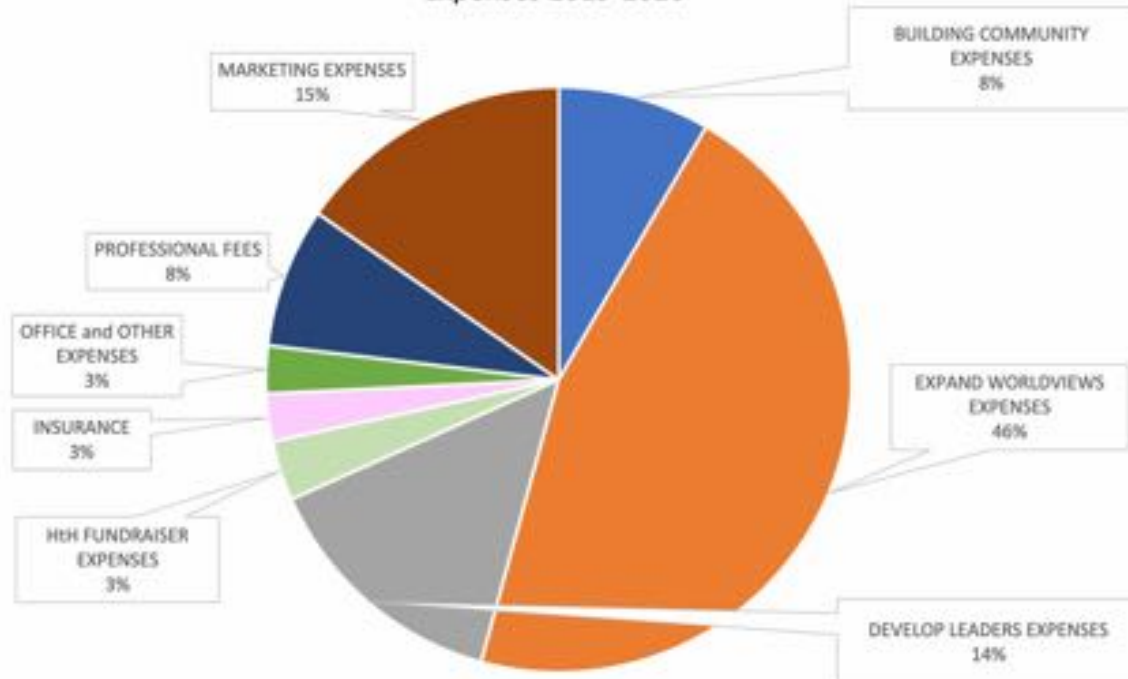
After three months of Virtual gatherings, we launched a four-week pilot project called "HtH Virtual". We were delighted to have 5 participants complete the pilot project. Even more exciting was where they were from! Representing four different time zones, our participants Zoomed in from Calgary (AB), Kelowna (B.C.), San Antonio (TX), McAllen (TX) and Lexington (KY)! Review and feedback is ongoing. We anticipate more HtH Virtual ensembles in the near future. When we will be able to resume singing rehearsals in person remains unknown at this time. This does make it difficult to plan and is discouraging. But constraints breed creativity and innovation is often born out of overcoming adversity. We remain optimistic as we explore application for charitable status, launching in another city in Alberta, training intensives, and new ways of performing.

2019-20 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Income 2019-2020



Expenses 2019-2020



THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

21

PARTICIPANTS

8

LEADERS

24

**LIVE
REHEARSALS**

4

**ORIGINAL
COMPOSITIONS**

15

**VIRTUAL
REHEARSALS**

17

**LIVE
PERFORMANCES**

8000+

**VIEWS ON ONLINE
MUSIC VIDEOS**

1

ORIGINAL SCRIPT

1

GROUP TRIP

4

**RECORDING
PROJECTS**

2

ENSEMBLES

