

MUSIC CELEBRATIONS INTERNATIONAL
THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
&
THE AMERICAN VETERANS CENTER

present the

NATIONAL MEMORIAL DAY CHORAL FESTIVAL

COMMEMORATING THE 250TH BIRTHDAY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

MAY 22-25, 2026

DR. CRAIG JESSOP
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



A MUSICAL TRIBUTE TO AMERICA'S VETERANS



Memorial Day (originally known as Decoration Day) is much more than a three-day weekend that marks the beginning of summer. To many people, especially the nation's thousands of combat veterans, this day, which has a history stretching back all the way to the Civil War, is an important reminder of those who died in the service of their country.

In commemoration of this important holiday, Music Celebrations International, the American Veterans Center, and the United States Air Force, are pleased to sponsor and produce a unique Musical Tribute in our Nation's Capital under the direction of Dr. Craig Jessop (former music director of The Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square; Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Air Force music programs) that honors veterans past and present who have sacrificed so much for the liberties we enjoy in our country. The setting for this commemoration is historically the Concert Hall at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

In 2026, America will celebrate its 250th birthday. Music Celebrations is planning special events and itineraries throughout the year to highlight this monumental celebration of our Country. We are thrilled to have the Capital Orchestra Festival be part of this celebration in 2026. Washington, DC is now the heart of the United States. Explore the National Mall, flanked by the Washington Monument, U.S. Capitol, Lincoln Memorial, and numerous monuments and memorials. Get a taste of American history in the world-famous Smithsonian museums, showcasing the nation's diverse history and culture.



The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts is America's living memorial to President John F. Kennedy, attracting millions of visitors each year to more than 2,000 performances, events, and exhibits. With its artistic affiliates, the National Symphony Orchestra and Washington National Opera, the Center is one of the nation's busiest performing arts centers dedicated to providing world-class art, powerful education, and outstanding memorial experiences to the broadest possible constituency. On September 7, 2019, the Kennedy Center inaugurated the REACH, its first-ever major expansion, providing visitors with new opportunities to interact and engage with the Center as the nation's premier nexus of arts, learning, and culture.

SAMPLE ITINERARY

DAY ONE: FRIDAY, MAY 22, 2026

- Arrive in Washington, D.C.
- Meet your Tour Manager, who will escort the group through the duration of the tour, for a panoramic motorcoach tour of Historic Washington, D.C.
- Visit and tour Arlington National Cemetery. Attend a Changing of the Guard Ritual at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier
- Check-in to the hotel
- *Festival Welcome Dinner and introductions*
- ***Evening Festival Chorus Rehearsal***
- Overnight at the hotel

DAY TWO: SATURDAY, MAY 23

- Breakfast at the hotel
- Morning Festival Chorus rehearsal
- Lunch, on own
- Enjoy a walking tour of the Lincoln, Korean, National World War II, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Martin Luther King, and Vietnam Memorials, as well as a view of the outside of the Washington Monument
- Free time to explore the Smithsonian Museums
- Dinner at a local restaurant
- ***Evening Festival Chorus Rehearsal***
- Overnight at the hotel

DAY THREE: SUNDAY, MAY 24

- Breakfast at the hotel
- ***Festival Chorus Dress Rehearsal at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts***
- Boxed lunch provided at the Kennedy Center Café
- ***National Memorial Day Choral Festival Performance in the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts****
- Dinner at a local restaurant
- Attend the *National Memorial Day Concert* on the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol, featuring a performance by the National Symphony Orchestra (no reserved seating)
- Return to the hotel for overnight

DAY FOUR: MONDAY, MAY 25

- Breakfast at the hotel
- Check-out of the hotel and board your motorcoach for transfer to the pre-parade staging area
- ***Sound-check and technical rehearsal at the National Archives Building***
- Boxed lunch, provided
- ***Festival Chorus Performance at the National Archives Building for the Opening Ceremonies of the National Memorial Day Parade on Historic Constitution Avenue***
- Attend America's *National Memorial Day Parade*
- Depart for home

**Pending confirmation*



Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty.

- JOHN F. KENNEDY



For choir inquiries, please contact:

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