

LILIAN FORSYTH SCHOLARSHIP FOR CHURCH MUSIC

NEW for 2026: maximum award \$5,000.

DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS: **MAY 15, 2026**

PURPOSE

- To foster excellence in the music of Christian worship.
- To assist an active church musician, or a person pursuing a career in church music, to follow a proposed programme of study in organ playing or other musical subjects and skills, directly related to the leadership of music in Christian worship.

REQUIREMENTS AND INFORMATION

- The Scholarship is open to organists, choir directors, composers and other musicians.
- Applicants must be Canadian citizens or permanent residents.
- Application materials to be **completed and submitted via email to forsythscholarship@gmail.com**, using the application form on the webpage here: <https://www.knoxottawa.ca/ministries/worship/pages/lilian-forsyth-scholarship>.

Includes:

- **Written application** including Study Plan, Education and Experience (see page 2 for details)
- **Audio or video recordings** demonstrating candidate's musical abilities (see page 3 for details)
- **Three references**, using the guidelines below (see page 4)

- The maximum scholarship is \$5000. The amount of the scholarship may vary depending on the proposed program.
- Applications will be received by the Registrar of the Scholarship and will be adjudicated by a panel of church musicians and clergy.
- The adjudicating panel may decide not to make an award in any given year.
- The decision of the adjudicating panel is final.
- The funds will be awarded to the winning candidate after proof of completion of the proposed program OR proof of enrollment and completion of a significant portion of the proposed program, AND a written report on the program, are received by the Forsyth Scholarship Committee, Knox Presbyterian Church, Ottawa.
- A timeline of two years is set for the use of the scholarship award.



LILIAN FORSYTH (1911-1982) devoted herself to the music of Christian worship as Organist and Choir Director of Knox Presbyterian Church, Ottawa, from 1936-1945 and 1955-1981. For nearly fifty years, her selfless enthusiasm and brilliant musicianship were felt in many musical organizations both in Ottawa and across Canada. In 1967, she was chosen as one of six organists to play at Expo 67. In 1977, the Royal Canadian College of Organists awarded her an Honorary Fellowship. On her retirement in 1981, Knox Presbyterian Church established The Lilian Forsyth Scholarship for Church Music as a tribute to her life and work.



The Lilian Forsyth Scholarship for Church Music 2026

THE LILIAN FORSYTH SCHOLARSHIP FOR CHURCH MUSIC was established to *foster excellence* in the music of Christian worship. The Scholarship is aimed at persons pursuing a career in church music or actively involved in the leadership of music in worship in the Christian community. Since Lilian Forsyth was an exponent of the *tradition of classical church music*, preference will be given to applicants who follow that genre.

The Scholarship is open to **organists, choir directors, composers, and other musicians.**

Candidates should have completed their basic musical training.

EVALUATION

- Application materials will be considered by a panel of musicians and clergy.
- The main criteria will be the *potential* of the candidate to gain further musical knowledge, skill, and insight from the proposed program of study and to apply these directly to their leadership of music in Christian worship.
- The amount of the scholarship may vary depending on the proposed program. The maximum award is \$5000.
- The funds will be awarded to the winning candidate:
 - after proof of completion of the proposed program OR after proof of enrollment and completion of a *significant portion* of the proposed program;
AND
 - after a written report on the program is received by the Forsyth Scholarship Committee, Knox Presbyterian Church, Ottawa.
- **All application materials** must be received by **May 15, 2026 at 11:59pm.**

The scholarship funds must be used within two years from the date of award. In exceptional circumstances, this may be extended at the discretion of the Forsyth Scholarship Committee, Knox Presbyterian Church, Ottawa.

Previously unsuccessful candidates are eligible to reapply in any succeeding year by submitting a completely new application package.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS | *Materials to prepare and submit for the application.*

1) **Written application:** See Fillable PDF Application form [here](#).

- Candidate Information {name, address, email. etc.}
- Study Plan, Education and Experience, using the following prompts:
 - A. Describe your proposed program of study for the scholarship (include details such as where, when, with whom, cost). (100-200 words)
 - B. Briefly describe your plans and goals as a church musician. Indicate how your proposed program of study for the scholarship will assist you in achieving these plans and goals. (100-300 words)
 - C. Provide details of your academic education and your musical training including principal teachers. Include your highest academic level achieved or in progress. (e.g. completed Grade 12 High School; OR finished 2 years of 4-year Bachelor of Music Degree; etc.) (100-500 words)
 - D. Summarize your experience as a church musician, including paid or unpaid roles. (100-500 words)
 - E. Briefly describe your understanding of the significance of the role of music in worship, both in general and in your own situation. (100-200 words)





2) Audio or video recordings representing your musical abilities.

Recordings should be uploaded to YouTube or Vimeo with listing set to private. Provide the link(s) to the recordings on the Application Form. Recordings should be clear but are not expected to be professionally recorded.

Recording Requirements:

- Examples of the candidate **leading or accompanying** music and congregational singing recorded during a live service, preferably during a regular service in the candidate's own church. Submit the relevant bulletin or service order to accompany these examples.
Note: Items recorded during the live service must be extracted from the recording of the service. Do not send the complete service recording.
- Examples of **one or more** of the following:
 - organ, voice or instrumental music performed by the candidate
 - choral music conducted or accompanied by the candidate
 - music written by the candidate
- **Total 20 to 30 minutes** in length
- Recorded within **the last twelve months**

{Optional} Provide up to four (4) different examples of recent orders of service or relevant recital/concert programs in which you have participated as a musician within the last 2 years.

3) Three letters of reference using the guidelines provided below on page 4.

One of the referees should be a minister or priest, with whom the candidate has worked recently as a musician.

The candidate is responsible for:

- contacting the referees and providing them with the reference guidelines
- collecting the completed letters of reference
- submitting all three (3) of the completed letters of reference along with the candidate's application by the application deadline **May 15, 2026**.

The Forsyth Scholarship Committee, Knox Presbyterian Church, Ottawa, may later contact the referees directly for further information.

TO SUBMIT:

Email applications to forsythscholarship@gmail.com

Include completed application form and all attachments, including the 3 letters of reference.

All application materials must be received by **May 15, 2026 at 11:59pm.**

It is suggested that you work on the application questions in your own document (such as Word, Google Docs) and then copy your final responses into the fillable PDF application form.





The Lilian Forsyth Scholarship for Church Music 2026

LETTER OF REFERENCE GUIDELINES

About the scholarship: The purpose of The Lilian Forsyth Scholarship is to foster excellence in the music of Christian worship and to assist an active church musician, or a person pursuing a career in church music, to follow a proposed programme of study in organ playing or other musical subjects and skills, directly related to the leadership of music in Christian worship.

The Forsyth Scholarship Committee, Knox Presbyterian Church, Ottawa, administrators of the Scholarship, would be grateful for your comments and opinions on the candidate.

Please send the letter of reference to the candidate who will submit it along with their application.
The candidate's application must be received by **May 15, 2026**.

In your letter, please include the following:

- Name of candidate
- Candidate's proposed program of study
- How long you have known the candidate
- In what capacity have you known the candidate
- Your brief assessment of the candidate's:
 - musical ability
 - potential for development through the proposed program of study
 - character.

Referee Information to include:

- Referee's Name
- Position
- Church or Institution
- City
- Telephone
- Email

The Forsyth Scholarship Committee, Knox Presbyterian Church, Ottawa, may later contact the referee directly for further information.

The Committee expresses their appreciation for your assistance in the work of the Lilian Forsyth Scholarship.

