

**THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
SEMINARY SCHOOL OF THE ARTS (SSA) – FALL 2025
SATURDAY STRING ENSEMBLE (SSE)**

Coordinator/Lead Teacher:
Ms. Caryn Thomas

Assistant Teacher:
Ms. Juliette Melton

1:00-3:00 p.m. on these Saturdays:
September 13
September 20 (in Alumni Chapel)
October 11
October 25
November 8
November 15
December 6
December 13 (with SSA Student Recital following)

**Cost per student: \$150.00
Registration deadline: Tuesday, September 2**

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The Fall 2025 Saturday String Ensemble program will have participants organized into two separate ensembles, according to their level of performing skill:

- (1) The Advanced Ensemble will be for students playing at the level of Suzuki Book 2 or higher. It will be open to violinists, violists, and cellists.
- (2) The Foundational Ensemble will be for students of at least age 8 or grade 3 who are playing at the level of Suzuki Book 1. It will be open to violinists and violists only.

For the SSE program to be held this semester, a total of at least eight students must be enrolled (both ensembles combined). The registration fee of \$150.00 must be paid in full by September 10. Refunds are not given for mid-semester withdrawals from the SSE program.

All participants must be currently studying their instrument privately, but not necessarily through SSA. The ensemble music will need to be included with the other music which the student regularly works on with the private teacher over the course of the semester.

All students are expected to perform when the ensembles play in the SSA Fall 2025 Student Recital at 3:00 p.m. on December 13. More than two absences from the Saturday String Ensemble sessions will disqualify the student from participating in the recital.

All ensemble sessions are scheduled for Cooke Hall, except for the session on September 20 which will be in Alumni Chapel. For ensemble rehearsals, parents are invited to wait in the rehearsal rooms, in the second-floor lobby between Heeren Recital Hall and Choral Rehearsal Hall, in the basement lobby, on the Cooke Hall breezeway, or in the Cooke Hall courtyard. Under no circumstances should a parent leave the immediate Cooke Hall/Alumni Chapel area after having dropped off a child for an ensemble rehearsal.

SSE VISION STATEMENT – FALL 2025

Music is a gift from God and serves both as a form of worship and a means to bring people together to create something beautiful. At the beginning of the fall semester, the repertoire may be slightly below the skill level of our advanced players. This is so we can begin on common ground, making sure that students are developing ensemble skills such as following the conductor and each other, reading, counting, balance, and blending.

During the first rehearsal, we will focus on establishing and reviewing ensemble mechanics and then move into activities based on the different skill levels of our two ensembles. Repertoire for the Fall Recital will include pieces chosen specifically for the two individual ensembles, as well as pieces chosen at a level where all students may play together. If the number of students permits, we will also be able to perform duets/trios/quartets to further challenge our students through the scope of chamber music. We value and count on the participation of students of all levels as we grow a cohesive, multi-level program.

My prayer is that we come together in humility and fortitude to work diligently on growing our program. The theme for the year comes from *The Doxology*. May we praise God from whom all blessings flow. May we aspire to grow in musicianship for the sake of worship, community, and to carry on this aspect of a well-rounded music education experience. I am so excited for all the Lord has for us this semester, and I hope you choose to be a part of it!

In Christ,
Caryn Thomas
SSE Coordinator/Lead Teacher
cthomas@sbts.edu

MEETING OUR SSE LEADERS

MS. CARYN THOMAS

Hello! My name is Caryn Thomas, and I teach 3rd grade at Highlands Latin School. I hold a B.A in Music Education with emphasis in Instrumental and Choral studies from Asbury University. My instrument emphasis was piano, and I played viola in the orchestra. My string journey began in 2015 with violin, and I participated in SSA, SSE, and the KY Christian String Camp. Later in 2015 I switched to viola and continued all three programs, finishing high school with the UofL College Preparatory String Program in 2018. During the UofL program, I was a member of two chamber ensembles and a soloist with the orchestra. The Lord has enriched my life through music, and I am excited to share this journey with you!

MS. JULIETTE MELTON

I am a senior at Boyce College in the Music and Worship program, emphasizing in Music Pedagogy, with violin as my primary instrument. I've studied under Mrs. Rebecca Sowell, Dr. Esther Crookshank, and Dr. JuRang Kim, and have progressed so far under their instruction! I have taken several opportunities to grow in teaching violin and small ensembles. This summer, I was blessed with a senior internship through the Louisville Youth Orchestra. My work included observing, assisting, and teaching beginning violin students. I've also had experience with SSE! As an assistant teacher for the spring 2024 semester, my work included leading rehearsals for the younger students. I was a volunteer for the spring 2023 semester as well. I've taught private lessons on my own and spent many hours observing both strings classes and other music classes. I'm excited to continue to use my experience to help younger students develop their skills and to experience the joy of ensemble playing!