

## Alexandra Nichols

### College Junior

**Bio:** I am currently pursuing the Bachelor of Music degree at Rhode Island College, double-majoring in piano and violin performance and pursuing a Bachelor of Arts degree in Music with a concentration in Music History. At RIC, I am a member of the Symphony Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra, and Early Music Ensemble, amongst other performing groups. A longtime member of the choir at the Church of the Annunciation in Cranston, I have also over the last year enjoyed learning to chant and have been blessed to have taken on the role of chanter along with my brother for the majority of the livestream services.



Despite the challenges with which it has presented me, I view the extended quarantine due to the Covid-19 Pandemic as a blessing as it has provided me with the opportunity to deepen my personal relationship with Christ. In addition, perhaps the extended time away from live church services has provided us with a reminder of their value and so it will be with renewed vigor and excitement that we return to church in person.

I have always been a tight schedule follower and loved to plan everything out. Admittedly, the complete shattering of my schedule and plans as a result of all the cancellations was devastating and anxiety-inducing in the beginning. Ultimately, however, it served as a reminder to me of the words of Jesus when He tells us, “Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.” (Matthew 6:34) This time of anxiety and grief and separation when I truly did not know what to expect the worries of tomorrow to be, was the perfect opportunity for me to

practice ceasing from worrying and instead bringing everything to the Lord in prayer, trusting in His plan rather than my own.

I'm sure we are all familiar with the popular phrase, "You don't know what you've got until it's gone." The Pandemic has provided the Church with the unique opportunity of experiencing the altered reality of worshipping physically separate from each other and away from the church building. I believe and hope that the realization of what a great loss this has been will inspire the congregation to return with renewed vigor to worship together in person once again. I pray that the entire congregation will be able to say along with King David, "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go into the house of the Lord.'" (Psalm 121:1)

While the period of quarantine due to Covid-19 has certainly been challenging, I view it also as a blessing both because I had the opportunity to further develop my own relationship with God and because our church community as a whole has been given the opportunity to use the loss of not being able to worship together as a reminder of the beauty and joy of communal worship and will hopefully come together again even more joyfully to worship as the restrictions lift.