

# Bach Chorale Children-Youth Choir Manual

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For more information...  
check out our website –  
[www.bachchoralechildrenschoir.org](http://www.bachchoralechildrenschoir.org)  
or contact **Darcy Keegan**  
[bachchildrenschoir@gmail.com](mailto:bachchildrenschoir@gmail.com)

## INTRODUCTION

### Vision Statement

*Bach Chorale Singers* is an educational and artistic organization dedicated to enriching the intellectual, philosophical and spiritual quality of life for our community for this and future generations, through the study, practice, and performance of choral music.

### Mission Statement

The mission of the *Bach Chorale Singers* is to:

1. *Promote, support, and sustain* interest in choral music by providing opportunities for singers of all ages to learn and perform under the direction of professional musicians.
2. *Inspire* the citizens with programs featuring great choral repertoire performed at the highest artistic level.
3. *Educate* future generations by providing music education opportunities for children and youth in our community.
4. *Enrich* the lives of singers and audiences by linking them to diverse musical heritages.
5. *Lead* the arts community by creating opportunities to incorporate various art forms in our performances and to collaborate with other arts groups.

### Rehearsal Location

**Grace United Methodist Church, 615 N. 22<sup>nd</sup> St., Lafayette, Indiana**

## THE CHOIRS

**Prelude Choir** - This choir, consisting of children seven years old and up, includes those who have a strong desire to sing and are eager to learn vocal technique, sight reading and performance skills. As these children explore their interest in singing, practices will be focused on fun, with singing and movement the primary guide to building musicianship. Additionally they will gain self-awareness and self-worth within a social structure of sharing musical experiences made lovingly together.

**Concert Choir** – Based on ability and not age, this choir consists of children and youth who are able to produce a beautiful tone quality, have a good ability to read music and are able to sing harmony independently. They will sing challenging, quality music literature chosen to delight themselves and their audiences. They must have the maturity to conduct themselves in a professional manner during performance and rehearsal. They must have high integrity with regard to commitment to their choir. These singers will have the option to audition for participation in the Youth Choir.

**Youth Choir** – The most elite of our three young choirs, this choir consists of our most advanced Concert Choir singers. Members of the Concert Choir may choose to audition for this ensemble, and if chosen, will have performance opportunities beyond that of the Concert Choir. Such opportunities may include working with Artistic Director, Michelle Louer, performances with the adult Chorale, touring, and singing at important community events.

**Adult Chorale** - The Chorale was formed in 1965 and currently consists of 60 – 80 adult singers from Lafayette-West Lafayette, and surrounding areas. Membership is by audition. Although some of our singers have had formal training, many have not. All are bound by a love of choral music.

## REPERTOIRE

The composer, Zoltan Kodály, once said “With sweets and candy one cannot rear healthy people. The food of the soul should also be simple and strength-giving. The masters have provided plenty of such nourishment. Feed on this.” At Bach Chorale Singers, we, like Zoltan Kodály, believe that children deserve only the best of children’s literature. Therefore the repertoire we choose will be from the long tested folk traditions of ours and other cultures, and artistically composed literature from history’s proven masters (Bach, Mozart, Britten, Copland, etc.)

Though we perform in a variety of venues, including some churches, we are a nonsectarian organization and it is our commitment to educate our performers and audiences, not to promote or intrude upon the beliefs of our singers and audiences. Therefore, we ask that all singers sing all music presented to them, whether or not it coincides with their personal beliefs. Great care will be taken to insure that music will be of the highest quality.

## AUDITIONS

All children, ages seven and up, will be invited to participate in one of our Bach Chorale choirs. An audition is required if a child wishes to be considered for the Concert and Youth Choirs. Auditions will be held in August and January. Returning singers will audition in April. Auditions consist of a one on one meeting with the director and it is asked that there be no prepared piece in advance. To arrange for an audition, contact Darcy Keegan at [bachchildrenschoir@gmail.com](mailto:bachchildrenschoir@gmail.com).

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Please read this handbook for basic information regarding our Bach Chorale Choir program and expectations. For specific information not included, you may contact the Bach Chorale Office, 765-429-5151 or Darcy Keegan, Chorus Coordinator, [bachchildrenschoir@gmail.com](mailto:bachchildrenschoir@gmail.com). Announcements and updates will be sent by email and posted on our website at [www.bachchoralechildrenschoir.org](http://www.bachchoralechildrenschoir.org).

Each chorister is required to fill out a registration information form and turn in a signed contract every year. These will be distributed at the audition and must be returned no later than the first rehearsal date.

Parents are welcome to observe their child’s rehearsals at any time. However, ***we do require complete silence while observing.*** Disruptive siblings (or parents) will be asked to leave. Music and choral folders belong to BC Singers. They will be assigned at the beginning of the season and a \$50 deposit will be collected. They should be used and handled with care. At close of season, the deposit will be refunded upon the return of the music, folders and uniform, in good condition.

# CALENDAR

## Chorus Calendar/Schedule

A calendar for the year has been made available to you and may also be found online at our website. Please place the information on your family calendar within the week so that you can let Darcy Keegan [bachchildrenschoir@gmail.com](mailto:bachchildrenschoir@gmail.com) know of any absences that you foresee.

Arrive and check in 10 minutes, but not more than 15 minutes, before rehearsal time to have time to go to the restroom, get a drink, and find their folders, etc.

**Prelude Choir** Mondays 6:00 – 6:45 p.m.

**Concert Choir** Mondays 6:15 – 7:30 p.m.

**Youth Choir** Mondays 6:45 – 8:00 p.m.

## Special Rehearsals and Performances

Public performances are an important component of the BC Choirs. Singers in the BC Choirs participate in two major concerts each year, (Fall Concert and Spring Concerts) and will also perform a minimum of three community outreach performances. Choristers can only experience the fruits of their labor by participating in the finished product. This opportunity to share their works with an audience in the concert/public setting is extremely valuable. ***Every chorister has a special voice and unique talent to contribute, and everyone is expected to give his or her best!***

The director will select activities and performances for the season. Other community performances may be scheduled based on requests. These will be communicated to the chorister's families at the earliest opportunity. Transportation to all rehearsals and performances is the responsibility of the chorister's parent(s). ***All performances and dress rehearsals are mandatory and if a singer is not in attendance at the dress rehearsal, they will not be allowed to perform; however they will remain a member of the choir.***

# MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE

## Attendance Policy

Each choir member holds a very important place in their choir. ***It is expected that rehearsals and performances take a very high priority in each child's life.***

When a child knows in advance of an absence, our choir administrator, Darcy Keegan, [bachchildrenschoir@gmail.com](mailto:bachchildrenschoir@gmail.com), should be notified two weeks prior to the rehearsal. School conflicts, major religious holidays, illness and death in the family are considered excused absences. If a member has laryngitis but feels well, he or she is encouraged to attend rehearsal in a listening capacity. School holidays are excused as well, though if you are in town during the holiday we ask that you come to rehearsal. ***There are two absences allowed per semester, including excused absences.*** If there are more than two, a singer hearing will be required in order for them to perform the upcoming concert. Singer hearings will take place on Monday evenings after rehearsal, prior to the upcoming concert. The purpose of the hearings is to establish readiness. They are not punitive. Dress rehearsals are mandatory. ***Those who have not fulfilled the attendance requirement will not be allowed to sing the concert, but will remain a member of the choir.***

## **Behavior at rehearsal/performances**

Exemplary behavior is expected of all choristers, whether at rehearsals or performances, on stage and off stage. Disruptive and disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated, and after proper warning, will be grounds for dismissal. If a child is asked to leave rehearsal, the parent/guardian will be called to pick up their child at that time. If this happens on two separate occasions, the child will be removed from Bach Chorale Singers for the remainder of the year. **Tuition will not be reimbursed.**

## **Rehearsal Etiquette**

Arrive to rehearsal and check in 10 minutes, but not more than 15 minutes, before rehearsal time. (Those who are set-up volunteers may arrive 30 minutes prior.) Before entering the rehearsal room, drink water and go to the restroom. Do not enter until you have done so, because you are asked not to leave again after rehearsal starts. Upon arrival in the rehearsal room, have a seat and put your music in rehearsal order. You may talk quietly to your neighbors, but not wander around the room, until rehearsal has begun. Only water in a closed container is allowed at rehearsal. Please remember that we are guests in the **Grace United Methodist Church** building. Be good representatives of our choir. Running in the hallways and visiting areas that are not ours to use is strictly forbidden. A singer who is waiting for other singers should bring a quiet activity or homework.

## **Performance Procedures**

- Students should arrive 10 minutes prior to call time. **Call times will be announced at the last rehearsal, prior to the dress rehearsal.**
- Students should be well fed, but not overfed prior to performance. Drink plenty of water the day of the performance and use the restroom prior to arrival.
- Punctuality is imperative. If a child is late to call time, it is possible they will be excluded from the performance.
- In order to sing in the concert, full uniform must be worn. Students should remain in uniform until they leave the performance site.
- We are on stage from the moment we arrive at the facility. Students are to conduct themselves in a professional manner, including speaking in a quiet voice and silence when talking is not allowed. Students should be ever attentive to direction and should walk calmly.
- If a child is feeling ill during the concert, they should quietly sit on the risers in their place, until they feel better. If they still are not feeling well, they should leave the stage and go to our choir coordinator (Mrs. Keegan,) who will wait for their parents in the lobby. Once a child leaves the stage, they may only return at the director's discretion.
- All questions from parents at call time should be asked of our choir coordinator, Darcy Keegan. Directors should not be interrupted during rehearsal and prior to performance. The performance is very important to your child and to your child's director, and therefore distractions are to be avoided at all costs.

## **UNIFORMS**

**Deposit** – A \$50 deposit will be collected from all singers at the beginning of the year, and the deposit will be reimbursed upon close of season when the uniform and choral music are returned in good condition.

**Prelude Choir** uniforms will be assigned to singers and consists of a dress for girls and a black shirt, cummerbund and tie for boys. Girls are expected to supply black tights and solid black shoes (no sandals.) Boys will provide black pants, black socks and black shoes.

**Concert Choir** singers will be provided with a uniform shirt, with cummerbund and tie for boys. Singers are expected to provide solid black pants or skirt, black socks or tights, and solid black shoes (no sandals.) Singers should be solid black from waist to toe.

**Youth Chorus** girls will be provided with a coverlet, and boys will receive a black shirt and tie. Boys will provide black dress pants, black socks and black shoes. Girls will provide a solid black outfit of their choosing, along with black hose or socks and solid shoes (no sandals.) Girls should be solid black from head to toe.

### **Personal Appearance**

Each chorister is responsible to look their absolute best and be dressed appropriately for performance. Hair should be pulled back from the face with a fastener that matches the color of hair. Jewelry should not be visible from the conductor's podium at the time of performance. Any chorister that does not come dressed appropriately for a performance will not be allowed to perform. A uniform appearance for our choir is important. Anything that draws attention toward an individual also draws attention away from our sound.

## **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

A non-refundable tuition payment is due upon registration. Full year tuition is \$150 for Prelude Choir, \$200 for Concert Choir, and \$235 for Youth Chorus, due at the first rehearsal. If you prefer, you may pay in three equal installments due by the 10<sup>th</sup> of September, October, and November. We do take credit card payments (Visa, Master Card, Discover).

Payments may be mailed to the Bach Chorale Organization, (Bach Chorale Singers, 839 Main St., Suite 540, Lafayette, IN, 47901-2830,) or may be given to the Chorus Coordinator (Darcy Keegan) when registration and contracts are completed and turned in. We do not send out invoices. It is your responsibility to 1) pay the right amount on time; 2) include on each check the chorister's full name and include appropriate registration forms when applicable, and 3) if your check is to be used for more than one chorister or purpose, attach a note itemizing the charges to be covered.

**No child shall be excluded from participation in a Bach Chorale choir due to financial considerations.** If for any reason a chorister's family is unable to pay the required tuition, a request for financial assistance may be given in writing. For example, *students on free or reduced lunch at school will qualify for assistance.* A chorister's minimum financial obligation to the BC Choir is a placement fee of \$25.00 with the completion and approved acceptance of Financial Assistance by the BC Board of Directors.

### **Sibling Discounts**

If more than one child participates from within a family, \$25 will be deducted per child, for each additional child's tuition.

### **Recruiting Discount**

Singers who invite a friend to join, and their friend completes a full season, will receive a \$25 discount the following year.

### **Fundraising**

Your annual tuition fees cover less than half of Bach Chorale Choir's ongoing expenses, which include rental of concert sites, staff salaries, insurance, choral music and practice resources, office supplies, etc. Bach Chorale Choirs rely on the efforts of the board and parents to raise additional needed funds (SEE PARENT COMMITTEES).

### **Tickets**

All members of the audience will be required to purchase a ticket. Adult seats will cost \$10, students/ children are \$5, with a family group rate of \$25 for immediate family members only. (Grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, etc. will be required to buy a separate ticket.) Concerts, in which we are guests, i.e. for the Symphony or adult chorus, will cost more.

# **PARENT VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

## **Parent Committee and Community of Volunteers**

Bach Chorale parents become participants in the success of the choir each year by accepting a volunteer support position. Volunteer sign-up sheets will be available at the parent meeting which will be held at the beginning of the semester.

## **Bach Chorale Singers Committee**

A group of parents representing the Choirs meets regularly to address needs and provides implementation methods to meet those needs.

## **Chaperone**

Oversees BC Choristers for rehearsals (in absence of Coordinator,) concerts, community events, chorus travel.

## **Check In and Greet Singers**

Weekly attendance check-in. Plan to arrive 15 minutes prior to rehearsal and greet singers as they arrive, assisting parents and/or singers with information as needed.

## **Fundraising**

- Solicit fundraising opportunities
- Assist with fundraising activities
- Apply for grants

## **Mailing Preparations**

Office volunteers to help with concert promotions, etc.

## **Music Sorting/Filing**

Assists with preparing folders and re-filing music following semester end/beginning.

## **Concert Set-up/Clean-up**

- Transport risers
- Set-up and teardown risers

## **Event Support**

- Video or CD recording
- Photography
- Equipment transport as needed

## **Uniforms**

- Measure choristers for correct uniform sizes
- Assist with uniform distribution

## **Public Relations**

- Contact media coordinator of the Bach Chorale Singers regarding BC events.

## **Awards Night**

Coordinates and helps with the awards banquet at the end of the season.

## **Social Committee**

Initiate and coordinate social events to foster friendships between our singers.

## **Serve on Bach Chorale Organization Board of Directors**