

Bach Chorale Children-Youth Choir Manual

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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 and 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

Immanuel United Church of Christ – 1526 South 18th 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, Bill Gray, performances with the adult Chorale, touring, and singing at important community events.

Adult Chorale - The Chorale was formed in 1965 and currently consists of 80 – 100 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 Kodaly, 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 Kodaly, 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 Chamber Choirs. Auditions will be held in August and January. 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 Jean Dahnke at 765-296-2666 or dahnke789@gmail.com.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Please read this handbook for basic information regarding our Bach Chorale Prelude and Concert Choir program and expectations. For specific information not included, you may contact the Bach Chorale Office, 765-429-5151 or Jean Dahnke, Chorus Coordinator, 765-296-2666.

Weekly updates are often sent home following rehearsals with information regarding upcoming concerts, scheduling and changes, parent meeting dates, fundraising opportunities, or other important information concerning the Bach Chorale Choirs. All choristers are expected to share this information with their parents immediately following the rehearsal. As our website function continues to develop, we hope to post weekly information for all Internet users to access.

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 and should be used and handled with care. They are to be turned in at the end of each rehearsal, unless the director gives permission for choristers to take the folders home. Each chorister is responsible for lost or damaged music and will be charged \$40 for unreturned folders at the end of the season.

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.

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 Jean Dahnke know of any absences that you foresee. (765-296-2666.)

Prelude Choir Mondays 6:00 – 7:15 p.m.

Concert Choir Mondays 6:30 – 7:50 p.m.

Youth Choir Mondays 6:30 – 8:30 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, (Winter 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 attendance is required.

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, Jean Dahnke, (296-2666) 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 Wednesday afternoons, two weeks prior to the upcoming concert. 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 and tuition will not be reimbursed.***

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 Immanuel United Church of Christ's building. Be good representatives of our choir. Running in the hallways and visiting areas that are not ours to use is strictly forbidden.

Performance Procedures

- Students should arrive 10 minutes prior to call time. Call time for *Concert Choir* will be one hour prior to concert time. Call time for *Prelude Choir* will be 30 minutes prior to concert time.
- 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. Polos should remain tucked in.
- 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. Dahnke,) who will wait for their parents in the lobby. Once a child leaves the stage, they may not return to perform.
- All questions from parents at call time should be asked of our choir coordinator, Jean Dahnke. 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

Informal Uniforms

Informal uniforms are required for All Bach Chorale members. The uniform consists of a maroon polo shirt with the BC Choir logo, black slacks or skirts, black shoes and socks.

Formal Uniforms

Youth Choir members are required to take responsibility for the purchase and maintenance of his/her choir outfit. For gentlemen, the BCYC outfit is a white, long-sleeved tuxedo-style shirt, and black slacks, black socks and black shoes, provided by families. A maroon tie will be supplied by Bach Chorale at a cost of \$12. For the ladies a white, short-sleeved blouse and black palazzo slacks are required, also purchased through Bach Chorale, at a cost of approximately \$85. The shirts and pants must be clean and unwrinkled, and shoes must be clean and polished at the time of performance.

Choristers will be measured for uniforms three weeks into the semester. Parents will be notified of uniform charges, and payments must be received before uniforms will be distributed to choristers. It is possible that used dresses and uniform shirts may be available for purchase at a discount.

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 \$120.00, due at the first rehearsal. If you prefer, you may pay in three installments of \$45 per month by the 10th of September, October, and November.

Payments may be mailed to the Bach Chorale Organization, or may be given to the Chorus Coordinator (Jean Dahnke) 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 form must be completed. 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 may be deducted per child (maximum of three children per family), for each additional child's tuition. In simple terms, if two children from a family participate, tuition for each child would be \$95. If three children participate, tuition for each child would be \$70.

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 \$8, 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.)

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 for the Prelude Choir members. 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

Communication

- Phone calling
- Website maintenance

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 (radio, TV, newspaper, etc.) regarding BC events
- Search for performance venues for BC

Awards Banquet

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