

Palmetto Youth Choir

Family Handbook
2022-2023

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WELCOME

Dear Families,

We are thrilled you have chosen to be a part of Palmetto Youth Choir! Thank you for allowing us to teach your children, and for being a part of our choir community. We look forward to getting to know you and making awesome memories together, and creating a rewarding experience for all!

In the following pages you will find (hopefully!) all of the information you need to have a successful and joyful year as a PYC singer. Please read this handbook thoroughly, and if you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact us. We look forward to a magical year of music making and fun!

Sincerely,

Regina, Danielle, and Bill

MISSION

The mission of Palmetto Youth Choir is to give a meaningful voice to singers, providing the opportunity for them to develop and advance their artistic abilities in a safe and positive learning environment, inspiring and empowering them to succeed in music and in life.

Our artistic and educational goals are:

- To develop musical literacy and healthy vocal technique
- To learn diverse and quality choral literature
- To share musical messages of hope, love and justice
- To give back to our community through service projects

Palmetto Youth Choir is open to students in grades 1-12 who love to sing and are able to pass the audition. The choir is divided into two age groups. Reading music is not a requirement, but is a welcomed skill. Singers are expected to attend all rehearsals and performances, and to utilize provided tools for regular practice at home. Members learn musicianship, vocal technique and performance skills, and participate in concerts and outreach and community events. Our nurturing staff ensures all students are treated with kindness and celebrated for their unique talents and abilities.

OUR TEAM

Danielle Loveless, Music Director
Regina Ruopoli, Founder and Managing Director
Bill Gesin, Principal Accompanist
Lauren Houston, Teaching Assistant (currently on maternity leave)
Read our full bios at www.palmettoyouthchoir.com/about

REHEARSALS

REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

ALL REGULAR REHEARSALS take place at:

James Island Arts and Cultural Center
1248 Camp Rd
Charleston, SC 29412

Junior Choir Monday, 5:30pm - 6:45 pm

Senior Choir Monday, 7:00pm - 8:45 pm

Our Rehearsal Google Calendar will be available on our website member page.

COMMUNICATION

We send frequent communications via email, so please make sure we have your most up-to-date email address. Regina's cell phone number is 843-991-6369. Danielle's is 843-860-5477. Feel free to call or text us for urgent or time-sensitive communication. Otherwise, the best way to reach us is via email. You may also come to the sign-in desk before/after rehearsal and talk to us in person. We appreciate your rehearsals run as smoothly as possible. Thank you!

For those on Facebook, we also have a private group called **Families of Palmetto Youth Choir**. Here, we will post important information as well as "fun stuff" like links to choir videos, where to get concert attire, potential future concert ideas, etc. Families can also communicate here, arrange carpooling, etc. If you haven't already joined we invite you to do so:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/833709927793081>

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

REHEARSALS

The Palmetto Youth Choir is an ensemble committed to musical excellence. If any member of that ensemble is missing, the character, spirit and sound of the whole is altered. Each individual voice and personality is of great importance to all. Your child's consistent attendance will ensure that he or she becomes a vital part of the Palmetto Youth Choir.

Each student is allowed two absences per semester (semesters run September–December, and January–May). Any absence beyond the limit may require a conference with the Staff and may result in performance restrictions. Exceptions may be made in extreme cases. **Please email the Managing Director regarding any upcoming absences, whether planned or last-minute.**

CANCELLATIONS

Please note the rehearsal calendar for the season and any scheduled non-rehearsal days (for example, no rehearsal on October 31/Halloween). In the case of an unforeseen cancellation the Managing Director will send an email blast as soon as we are aware of the change. *Public school closings do not necessarily mean that chorus rehearsals will be canceled, since our rehearsals are held after school and weather might improve throughout the day.*

PERFORMANCES

All singers are expected to perform at our two regular annual performances (Winter, Spring). In addition, we expect to accept additional performance opportunities as they arise (for example, Piccolo Spoleto, PRIDE festival, community events, etc.), and will give ample notice of those dates. Singers will be excused from additional performances if preexisting schedule conflicts occur, otherwise we expect that all singers will attend these additional performances.

REHEARSAL EXPECTATIONS

CHECK IN

Please drop off and pick up your singer at the entrance to the building. Arrive no more than 15 minutes before the start of rehearsal, and please pick up promptly. As our rehearsals happen

during the evening hours please make sure your singer has a healthy non-sugary snack beforehand.

Remind your student to:

- Check-in at the front desk (this is how we keep track of attendance)
- Use the restroom before rehearsal
- Fill their water bottle
- Do their best and have fun! :)

What to bring to rehearsal:

- Water bottle (no other liquids, please!)
- Music folder and pencil (when applicable – currently Senior Choir only)
- Light sweater (it tends to get chilly in the JIACC)

Parents are welcome to stay for rehearsal. If you choose to do so please stay in the non-rehearsal spaces of the JIACC so as to not become a distraction to the singers.

REHEARSAL ETIQUETTE

We are extremely fortunate to have the use of the James Island Arts and Cultural Center. This public facility is also an art gallery, and we must all have the utmost respect for the artwork at all times. Please refrain from touching the artwork and keep young children from wandering into the art areas unaccompanied.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

More soon about our behavior expectations, as we are working with the students to create our own unique verbiage together.

HANDLING AND CARE OF MUSIC

All music provided to students is the property of Palmetto Youth Choir, and we expect singers to treat the music with care. Folders and pencils will be provided to each student, and collected at the end of each rehearsal. Senior choir members will be permitted to take their folders home for practice purposes. We may decide to allow Junior Choir members to take music home for practice purposes, in which case they will also be responsible for the care and prompt return at the following rehearsal. Replacement of lost music or folders will be the financial responsibility of the singer.

HOME PRACTICE

Students will be expected to engage in regular practice of their performance pieces at home. Audio rehearsal tracks will be made available online, as well as any rehearsal videos. Singers will be expected to have their Winter Concert repertoire memorized by Thanksgiving.

PERFORMANCES

END-OF-SEMESTER CONCERTS

We have TWO annual concerts, at the end of each of our Fall and Spring semesters. The dates of these concerts will fluctuate slightly each year, but will be generally mid-December and early May.

FALL/WINTER CONCERT 2022

Saturday, December 17, 2022, 4:00 p.m.

Scottish Rite Center Auditorium

1051 Sam Rittenberg Blvd., Charleston, SC 29407

Projected Ticket Prices:

\$15 Standard (18-64) | \$10 Seniors (65+) | \$10 Youth (3-17) | Free Child (0-2)

SPRING CONCERT 2022 - TBD

POP-UP CONCERTS

We expect to add performance opportunities to our calendar as they arise, for example performances at nursing homes, community events, Piccolo Spoleto, Pride Festival, etc. As every member of our choir is important we hope that each singer is able to perform at these events. We understand that previously-scheduled conflicts may exist and those students will be excused without penalty. We will give members as much notice as possible about these additional performances.

DRESS REHEARSALS

Concert dress rehearsals are **mandatory** and will take place during regular rehearsal time the week before a concert. If we are able to rehearse at our performance space we will give ample notice, and will ask for parent volunteers to help assist in the process.

CONCERT ATTIRE

Formal performances like our Winter and Spring concerts are special occasions, and we want the singers to feel like what they are wearing reflects the tone of the evening. We have chosen not to have a “uniform” that requires all children to dress alike, as we believe in the importance of personal style. That being said, we also don’t want a few singers’ chosen outfits to distract the audience from what the main purpose of our group is - the music! Therefore we ask that singers wear tasteful “dress clothes” that are comfortable and do not distract either themselves or the audience from the music.

We will have a “Concert Attire Check” a few weeks before the concert, during which singers will bring/wear their concert outfits to rehearsal so we can make sure they are appropriate for the performance (we will be asking for parent volunteers to help with this process). If at any point in the season leading up the concert you are unsure of what your singer should wear please do not hesitate to contact us, bring it the outfit, or send us a picture of the singer dressed in the potential outfit.

ATTIRE “DO’S”

Shoes: flat, plain, black dress shoes (no sandals, sneakers, or heels)

Limited “sparkle” (whether from clothing or jewelry)

Hair tied back (headband, half-up, ponytail, braid, etc.)

No words, images, distracting details

COLOR SCHEME

Fall: All black

Spring: Khaki bottoms, pastel tops/dresses

INFORMAL CONCERT ATTIRE

We plan to purchase Palmetto Youth Choir shirts soon, and we will wear these shirts with coordinating bottoms (TBD) for our informal performances. We know it gets hot here in Charleston, so at times we will wear shorts. Please make sure shorts are “fingertip length” and do not have any see-through holes or tears.

PERFORMANCE ETIQUETTE

AUDIENCE ETIQUETTE

We expect our concerts to be family affairs, and we are happy to have young siblings and relatives to attend the performances. If your child becomes a significant distraction and needs your attention, please find a space outside of the concert hall to attend to their needs so our singers can have the audience's undivided attention.

FILMING/PHOTOGRAPHY

We will hire professional videographers for our end-of-semester concerts and will make these videos available to you so that you can sit back and enjoy the performance. We also ask that you keep photography to a non-distracting minimum (absolutely no flash photography) so that your young singers may focus on the music. Please do not publicly post any performance videos due to copyright laws.

MEDIA WAIVER/MARKETING POLICY

On the Enrollment Form, all families have given permission to Palmetto Youth Choir/Rosewood Productions, LLC, to use photos and/or videos of the participant for the marketing of their company and services. We agree to do so without using full names or detailed information about the participants. All visual materials remain the property of Palmetto Youth Choir/Rosewood Productions, LLC.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

We can't do this alone! We enthusiastically welcome your assistance. Please let us know how you can help by filling out our nifty Volunteer Form. Thank you!

FUNDRAISING

We anticipate the need for occasional fundraisers, which we plan to be unique and fun opportunities for socialization and community-building. We look forward to hearing your creative input!

SCHOLARSHIPS

A limited number of scholarships are available to students who have the financial need, pass the audition and demonstrate exceptional ability. "Financial need" is defined as having a household income of no more than 125% of the 2022 SC Poverty Guidelines, as outlined [HERE](#). The Audition Form and Enrollment Form each have a checkbox to indicate if you'd like to be considered for a scholarship.

FINANCE/TUITION

If you are invited to join Palmetto Youth Choir, it is a 9-month commitment, late August through early May, coinciding with the school year.

Tuition* for 2022-2023 Season:

Junior Choir (Grades 1-6:) \$720 (\$80 per month) + \$25 enrollment fee

Senior Choir (Grades 7-12): \$990 (\$110 per month) + \$25 enrollment fee

**Tuition includes weekly instruction, special activities, 2 retreats, sheet music and other learning resources, a portfolio bag and our at-home practice tools.*

The \$25 Enrollment Fee is due upon registration to hold your spot.

Tuition can be paid in two ways:

1. Nine equal monthly payments, September 2022-May 2023. A 10% sibling discount is available.
2. One payment for the full amount, on or before the first rehearsal date. A 10% discount is offered for full payment.

MEDICAL POLICIES

COVID-19 Policy: We take seriously the health and safety of our choir family and our community. We look to the CDC and DHEC recommended guidelines and protocols as we strive for safety for all in regards to COVID-19.

Our staff and volunteers are all vaccinated. For Fall 2022 we anticipate that we will not be requiring masks for singers and staff/volunteers during the season (although they are welcome if that is your choice.) We are not anticipating the need for social distancing. We will have hand sanitizer readily available and encourage its use upon arrival and departure. Students should not come to rehearsal if they are sick, or have been recently exposed to COVID-19. Students

who develop a persistent cough or fever during rehearsal will be sent home. If a new COVID-19 infection is reported by one of our families, we will contact our choir community as soon as possible. If we need to shift to a virtual format temporarily, we are prepared to do that, as have many choirs throughout the world during recent times. We will provide regular updates and communications, monitoring changes and everyone's comfort level as needed. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation. This policy is subject to change.

Non-Covid Illness

Please don't send your child to rehearsal with vomiting, diarrhea, or a fever. That being said, if your child has the sniffles or a mild cough/sore throat and feels physically able to come to choir, please send them and let us know they're feeling less energetic than usual. They can still participate by listening and singing in a mask if necessary.