



HUNTSVILLE COMMUNITY CHORUS ASSOCIATION

# HANDBOOK

for

HUNTSVILLE COMMUNITY CHORUS

Children's Chorale

and

Youth Chorale

Lea Hoppe, Director

Shelli Rimes, Director

**2017-2018 Season**

# Children's and Youth Chorales Handbook

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# Welcome

Welcome to the Huntsville Community Chorus Children's and Youth Chorales! Sponsored by the Huntsville Community Chorus Association, our two ensembles are for students in grades 3 to 12. The major objectives for these groups are to develop strong musical and vocal skills, to promote good choral singing experiences, and to provide opportunities for fun interactions.

## Background

The first HCC children's chorus, HC3, was founded in the mid-90s, by HCCA with Anne Chelekis as Director. That group expanded into three: HC3jr, HC3, and HC3sr. Restructuring occurred in 2009, and the Huntsville Children's and Youth Chorales emerged and have become the leading children's and youth choral groups in North Alabama. In 2016 a Vocal Jazz group was formed consisting of 13 auditioned members from the Youth Chorale.

## Our Program

Our **Children's Chorale** is for students in grades 3-6. They learn the basics in vocal technique that will enable them to perform together in one- to three-part music. The Children's Chorale rehearses on Tuesdays from 5:00 to 6:15 p.m. at First Baptist Church, 600 Governors Drive, during the school year. This group is directed by Lea Hoppe, assisted by Katie Hoppe-McQueen and accompanied by Matt Sloma.

Our **Youth Chorale** is for students in grades 7-12. Younger male singers whose voices have changed and who have auditioned may also be included in HYC. This group performs high-school and collegiate-level repertoire. Students are expected to practice music outside of their organized rehearsal time. The Youth Chorale rehearses on Mondays from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. at First Baptist Church, 600 Governors Drive, during the school year. This group is directed by Shelli Rimes and assisted and accompanied by Bess Jernigan Desta.

Our **Vocal Jazz** group is an auditioned group of around 13 singers from the Youth Chorale. They meet on Monday's from 6:30-7:30PM at First Baptist. Members must be a member of the Youth Chorale in order to be in the Vocal Jazz group. This group is directed by Bess Jernigan Desta.

## Membership

The HCC and HYC groups are meant to be positive learning experiences for the singers – ones that they will carry with them throughout their lifetimes. These young people will be sharing wonderful times together both musically and socially. The singers are expected to understand and practice commitment and responsibility. We encourage all children and youth to take pride in their membership in these unique choir programs. ***Every member is expected to remain active and committed to the program for the entire season of his/her enrollment, which begins in August and concludes with a spring concert in May.***

## Tuition and Attire Financial Information

**\*\$25 discount for each additional family member on tuition**

<b>Chorale</b>	<b>Non-Refundable Tuition</b>	<b>Performance Attire</b>
Children's Chorale	\$100	\$20 HCCA Polo Paid to Educational Outfitters
Youth Chorale	\$175	Girls: est \$70 Boys: est \$90
Vocal Jazz	\$75	TBA

## Payment Policies and Information

Fees for the season are due in full, even if a child drops out of the program or is removed at any time during the season. Parents are required to sign and return a Financial Contract with your child's/children's Registration Form(s) in order for your child to participate in the chorales for the season.

Payment plans may be set up through the course of the season if preferred. Please let the business manager know that you would like to take the payment option.

We offer a multi-family discount for any family member singing in one of our HCCA ensembles (adult or child). The first family member is full price with each subsequent family member receiving a \$25 discount.

### **Payment Methods**

Payments may be made by cash, check, or credit card. If paying by credit card, you will need to call The Chorus office (256.533.6606) to pay by phone. *There will be a 3% handling fee for each credit-card payment made throughout the year.*

## Need-Based Financial Assistance

A limited amount of need-based financial assistance is available to qualified families. If you would like to be considered for financial assistance, you must complete a Financial Assistance Form. Forms are reviewed and assistance awarded at the discretion of a committee appointed by the HCCA Executive Board. Qualification is determined based on financial need or special circumstances as documented in your application. The business manager will have scholarship forms on hand.

# Performance Attire

Just as an ensemble's sound is important, so is the ensemble's appearance. A well-groomed, neatly uniformed ensemble is essential for a truly professional and artistic experience. Good personal hygiene is a must for all singers. Shirts must be tucked into pants. Clean teeth and clean, combed hair are always expected of each singer. Hair should be groomed away from the face.

Any singer who fails to dress or groom properly for an event may not be allowed to participate.

## Children's Chorale

The Children's Chorale will perform throughout the year in a variety of attire combinations depending on the performance and venue.

1. Performance attire consists of HCCA polo with khaki pants or skirt with closed-toe dark shoes.

## Youth Chorale

The Youth Chorale will perform throughout the year in a variety of attire combinations, depending on the performance and venue.

1. Formal attire consists of a formal dress, pearls, and black closed-toe shoes for the girls. The boys will wear a tux shirt, long black neck tie, satin vest, and tux pants with black dress shoes and socks.
2. Informal attire consists of a spring HCC Youth Chorale t-shirt.

## Polos (HCC Children's Chorale Only)

HCC Polo shirts are purchased by the parents by calling Educational Outfitters in Madison. You will call and order your child's size over the phone. When it is ready, the store will call you for pick-up. Approximately one week is required to complete an order.

Educational Outfitters  
97 Hughes Road Ste E  
Madison, Alabama  
256.464.6151

## T-Shirts

We order colorful HCC Children's and Youth Chorale t-shirts in the spring for our annual Panoply performance, as well as a memento of the season. Checks should be made payable to HCCA.

## Youth Chorale Formal Attire

- Make formal-attire checks payable to HCCA.
- A bulk formal-attire **order will be placed by September 15**. Singers who have not paid for their formal attire by **September 1** will be responsible for ordering their attire directly from Stage Accents, [www.stageaccents.com](http://www.stageaccents.com)

# Rehearsal Schedule

## Children's Chorale Rehearsals

Tuesdays 5:00-6:15 PM

Room #241

First Baptist Church, 600 Governors Drive SW, Huntsville, AL 35801

## Youth Chorale Rehearsals

Mondays 5:00-6:30 PM

Choir Room

First Baptist Church, 600 Governors Drive SW, Huntsville, AL 35801

First Baptist Church maintains a secure environment by keeping all exterior doors locked. The Huntsville Community Chorus Association is given a door code that will unlock the door at the east entrance on our rehearsal evenings. **The door code is \*50010**

## Vocal Jazz Rehearsals

Mondays 6:30-7:30PM

Room #242

First Baptist Church, 600 Governors Drive SW, Huntsville, AL 35801

# Rehearsal Attendance

Membership in the Huntsville Community Chorus Children's and Youth Chorales is a commitment to faithful, consistent, and punctual attendance. It is expected that rehearsals take a very high priority in each child's life. Each child is holding a valuable place in his/her choir. All rehearsals are mandatory unless otherwise indicated on the choir calendar.

## Absences from Rehearsals

Each chorale has a business manager. The business managers attends each rehearsal and performance, takes attendance, maintains absence information, maintains attendance records for the director, and makes absence calls to singers who have not arranged their absences. *Please make sure to post this information in a prominent place in your home for handy reference.*

A choir member may have **three** excused absences for each semester. For a student to be excused, the manager or director must be notified prior to the rehearsal. Failure to notify in advance of an absence will result in an unexcused absence. In the case of a planned absence, notice as far in advance as possible is appreciated. Please email the business manager and director with any absences that will occur or submit a "Pre-arranged Absence Form" that will be emailed separately.

Parents must submit a written excuse for each TARDINESS OR EARLY DISMISSAL. A written excuse should include the child's name, name of his/her choir, reason for tardiness or dismissal, and a parent signature.

The final dress rehearsal before a concert is very important. Please make sure to pre-arrange any absence that will result in missing any of these rehearsals. Without prior arrangements for absence, it is possible that a singer will not be allowed to perform. Sound checks, staging, and other final details are handled at these rehearsals, and it is important that the directors know how many members to expect.

### **Religious Holidays**

Any singer absent because of a major religious holiday shall not have the absence counted against him/her. These absences should be pre-arranged.

### **Unexcused absences from Rehearsals**

If no contact has been made with the manager or director prior to an absence, it will be considered unexcused. Singers are allowed no more than **two** unexcused absences a semester. If a singer is unable to demonstrate commitment to the HCC Children's or Youth Chorales through good attendance and punctuality, the singer may be asked to not perform in an upcoming performance. Should an excessive number of excused or unexcused absences occur, removal from the program will be considered.

### **Excessive Absences**

Any absences exceeding the allotted number, excused or unexcused, may result in the singer being asked to not perform on the upcoming performance. Excessive absences may result in the singer being asked to resign from the chorales until his/her schedule will allow for consistent attendance.

## Resignation

Each singer is expected to fulfill his/her commitment to participate in the HCC Children's and Youth Chorales for the entire season. If, however, an extremely unusual circumstance occurs that would prohibit a singer from honoring that commitment, a personal conference between the director and parents is requested before a letter of resignation is submitted. If a student resigns, the parent is still responsible for the entire tuition fee.

## Rehearsal Etiquette Procedures

The following procedures help us achieve the discipline and professionalism for which the HCC Children's and Youth Chorales are known. These procedures are enforced for the singers' safety, to ensure orderly rehearsals, and out of respect and courtesy for each other.

1. Arrive not more than 15 minutes before the designated rehearsal time and go directly to the business manager at the attendance table to sign in before reporting to the rehearsal room. After signing in, wait in the lobby and the group will move together to the rehearsal room with the directors. Late arrivals must always sign-in immediately on arrival. Any child arriving more than 30 minutes late to two separate rehearsals will receive one unexcused absence. A written note is necessary for early dismissal from a rehearsal. Singers do not leave the room after signing in unless an emergency occurs or special permission has been granted. Please use the restroom and get drinks before you sign in.
2. Always bring your music notebook and pencils to rehearsals.

3. Give attendance notes, payments, permission slips, etc. to the business manager at the attendance table.
4. Do not roam about the building at any time. Students should only be in the rehearsal area or lobby.
5. Do not bring food or drink into the rehearsal area. Try to eat a nutritious meal before you arrive at the rehearsal facility. Directors, however, encourage singers to bring bottled water to rehearsals.
6. If, for any reason, a child cannot actively participate in a rehearsal, the singer should bring a written note and observe quietly and attentively.
7. The most common form of communication is through email. Members are responsible for taking home any handouts that are distributed at rehearsals. These notices are important sources of information and should be requested by the parents from the singer.
8. When dropping off or picking up singers, parents are asked to be on time so that the students do not have to wait in the lobby as the next activity is beginning at the church.
9. At all times, show respect for each other, parent volunteers, directors, staff, and the facilities. Pay attention to the director at all times. Do not behave in a manner that is disruptive to the rehearsal or distracting to fellow singers, directors, or accompanists, or that prohibits a positive and successful rehearsal.
10. Running, yelling, and rowdy behavior are not permitted in the building or on the grounds at any time.
11. Non-participating siblings must be supervised at all times. Neither HCCA nor First Baptist Church is liable for any accident, injury, or altercation that may occur.

### **Disruptive Behavior**

Disruptive behavior will result in the following consequences:

- First offense – verbal warning
- Second offense – a verbal warning, specifying that it is your second warning and removal from rehearsal is imminent
- Third offense – removal from rehearsal. The rehearsal is counted as an unexcused absence. Following the rehearsal, there will be a brief meeting with the director.

Removal from a second rehearsal will result in a meeting with the singer, parents, and director.

Removal from a third or subsequent rehearsal will result in a leave of absence from the program, the length to be determined on an individual basis. It may also result in removal from the program.

## Performances

Attendance is required at all scheduled mandatory performances. If a school performance conflict occurs, the absence must be reported BOTH in person and in writing two weeks prior to the performance.



### **Excused Absences from Performances**

Acceptable reasons for an excused absence from a MANDATORY PERFORMANCE:

- Illness
- Death in the Family
- School Music Performance

Acceptable reasons for an excused absence from a MANDATORY PERFORMANCE DURING SCHOOL HOURS:

- Illness
- Death in the Family
- School System Will Not Excuse Student

All absences from mandatory performances must be pre-approved by the director **two weeks prior to the performance**. Any exception to the above reasons must be presented BOTH in person and in writing to the director two weeks prior to the performance.

**NOTE: Any unexcused absence from a mandatory performance may result in removal from the program.**

### **Performance Procedures**

Performances require the very best conduct, appearance, and musicianship. Information concerning specific concerts will be distributed on the Season Schedule. These procedures include:

1. Singers should always eat a nutritious meal and get plenty of rest before a performance. Be sure the singer has used the restroom prior to arrival at the performance site.
2. Singers should arrive at the given call time for the concert and immediately check in with the business manager.
3. Tardiness to a performance may exclude a singer from participation at that performance.
4. All performers must arrive wearing proper concert dress attire as noted in the performance detail sheet. Failure to wear proper concert dress will result in non-participation in the performance. Singers should remain in their complete uniform until they have left the performance site.
5. Singers should conduct themselves at all times in a calm, polite, and professional manner. They must give their undivided attention to the staff and appointed chaperones at all times.
6. All singers must know the music. Each musician must have a confident command of the performance repertoire. Failure to demonstrate this at the final rehearsal may result in release from the corresponding concert commitment.
7. If a singer feels ill during a performance, he/she should quietly sit down on the riser and rest for the remainder of the song. Then, if feeling better, the singer may get up and sing again, or if not, quietly leave the stage. Once a singer leaves the stage he/she may not return.
8. Remember that singers represent the Huntsville Community Chorus at all times.

**Tickets**

Some of our concerts will have an admission/ticket. These are usually when we collaborate with another organization such as the adult Huntsville Community Symphonic Chorus, Chamber Chorale, Huntsville Symphony Orchestra, etc. Some of our other performances are either free, require a nominal donation, or are free with admission to a specific event . *HCCA give each family one free ticket to HCCA sponsored concerts.* Visit [www.thechorus.org](http://www.thechorus.org) for season ticket information.

## Music

Great care should be taken to keep the music in good condition. Individual folders are issued to singers in both chorales.

It is the singer's responsibility to take proper care of the music and folders and not to lose them. All folders and music are the property of HCCA and must be turned in at the end of the season. If music or folders are lost, irreparably damaged, or not returned, an additional fee will be charged to cover replacement costs. The fee is \$3 per piece of music

**Handling and Care of Music**

1. Music must be brought to all rehearsals unless students are notified otherwise.
2. Never fold or roll music.
3. Never write on music without the permission of the director. Any markings should be done lightly, in pencil, and only at the direction of the music director. A sharpened pencil should be brought to each rehearsal. Do not deface any piece of music. Blank pages or portions of the music are NOT for drawing pictures, writing personal notes, etc.
4. Photocopied music is done with permission and should be treated just as an octavo.
5. If for any reason a piece of music is in need of repair, please do so properly with clear tape OR bring it to the attention of the director.

## Development

HCC Children's and Youth Chorales continue to be grateful for the support we receive from parents, families, alumni, and friends. Tuition covers approximately 50% of the expenses incurred by our Chorales. Charitable contributions are tax-deductible and are appreciated. If you have donated to the HCC Children's and Youth Chorales this year, we deeply appreciate your support.

HCCA is also forming strong partnerships with corporations and foundations in Huntsville in order to enhance the musical experiences of our participants. If you know of a potential funding source, or if you would like to help us, please contact Sally Priester, [sally@thechorus.org](mailto:sally@thechorus.org)

## Singer Fundraising Opportunities

The HCCA Children's and Youth Chorales hold a few fundraisers each year to help keep our tuition rates low. It is our hope that each family will help participate in these or consider donating to help offset some of the costs not covered by tuition.

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## Volunteers

As a non-profit organization, HCCA depends on volunteers, and volunteer opportunities are numerous and diverse. We welcome all interested parents to help keep the chorales going and growing.

## HCC Children's and Youth Chorales Parents Organization

We would like to form a parent organization to help with the many facets of our growing organization. If you would like to volunteer for one of the positions below, please contact your child's director, business manager or CC/YC Liaison.

### Officer and Volunteer Positions

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Fundraising
- Program Advertising Sales Coordinator
- Volunteer Coordinator
- Formal Attire Coordinator

## Children's Chorale Director and Staff

### Lea Hoppe, Director

(256) 541-9066

lhoppe@randolphschool.net and/or childrenschorale@thechorus.org

### Staff

Katie Hoppe-McQueen, Assistant Director

Matt Sloma, Accompanist

David Hoppe, Business Manager

Janet Bentley, Chorus Liaison

## Youth Chorale Director and Staff

### Shelli Rimes, Director

(256) 682-5199

shelli.rimes@gmail.com and/or youthchorale@thechorus.org

### Staff

Bess Jernigan Desta, YC Assistant and Accompanist and Vocal Jazz Director

Ginny Fichten, Business Manager

Janet Bentley, Chorus Liaison