



member's handbook 2006 – 2007

Attendance Policy

Because the choirs are auditioned, you are expected to attend every rehearsal and performance. To protect choir members' self-esteem and health and to ensure the choirs' continued growth, the following Attendance Policy is in place:

Only TWO absences are allowed per semester, this includes rehearsals and retreats. If the musician misses more than two times within a concert semester, the musician will contact the director and schedule a private 30-minute lesson at the cost of \$15 per half hour. After the lesson, the director will decide whether the musician is adequately prepared to perform. *Choir members are expected to attend all performances unless excused by the director.*

For an expected absence, the parents and musician will notify the director by telephone or e-mail prior to the absence. For an absence due to illness or emergency, the parents and musician will notify the director as soon as possible. Choir members are eligible to perform or tour only if they are in compliance with the Attendance Policy.

Dress rehearsals and ALL concerts are mandatory.

(If the singer has a stuffy nose or scratchy voice, he/she should still attend rehearsal even though he/she may not be singing!)

Audition procedures for choir members

If you are a member of Cantus, you will NOT need to re-audition to be in the choir the following year. Camerata members of appropriate age may advance to Cantus only after auditioning and receiving approval from the director.

Audition procedures for prospective singers

Auditions will be held once a year in late May or early June. All prospective singers who would like to join the BCC must complete an audition form, and audition for either Miss Ramsey or Mrs. Cornett. Parents may accompany the child to the audition, if they like. The audition will consist of pitch matching, determining the child's vocal range, examining the singer's quality of tone, diction and his/her natural aptitude for singing. The singer will also be asked to sing a simple song such as "My Country Tis of Thee" or "Happy Birthday".



Behavior Expectations

The Bentonville Children's Choir was created to give musically motivated children the opportunity to create beautiful music in an energizing, invigorating, and loving atmosphere. Choir members are expected to act appropriately at all times. Singers who cannot control their behavior will be removed from the choir at the director's discretion *without* refund of tuition.

The BCC holds a firm "three strikes & you're out" policy.

1st strike: warning sent home to be returned signed by parent.

2nd strike: Parent will be notified by phone or e-mail.

3rd strike: Child is removed from choir without refund of tuition.

Communication

While a monthly update will be sent home at the first rehearsal of each month, we strongly encourage you to visit the website often (www.bcchoir.com) as we will post news, changes in schedules, and there are a variety of needed forms such as the handbook, etc, available for download. We may also send important notes and information via e-mail. Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns:

Rachel Cornett, Director, Camerata Choir

(479) 871-0678 rcornett@bentonville.k12.ar.us

Andrea Ramsey, Director, Cantus Choir

(479) 531-2086 a.ramsey@bcchoir.com

Contract

Parents and choir members will be required to sign the Musician's Contract at the beginning of each concert season. The contract will be strictly enforced.

Inclement Weather

If the Bentonville School District cancels classes due to bad weather, BCC rehearsals will be cancelled as well. In performance situations, please check local news and radio stations.



Music & Supplies

Each choir member is responsible for keeping his/her music safe and in good condition. Choir members are responsible for replacing lost or damaged music at his/her own expense. Choir members who leave the choir must return music or he/she will be billed for cost. Choir members must bring their music, folder and a pencil each week unless the director says otherwise. Students who fail to have the necessary supplies will receive a verbal warning and if the behavior persists, he/she will be assigned a "strike", per the expectation policy. Please come to rehearsal prepared!

Uniform & Concert Attire

In order to maintain a level of professionalism about the music we make, all choir members must purchase a uniform for concert performances.

Cantus girls: Uniform dress must be purchased at the cost of \$60. This will be ordered through a quality supplier. Girls should wear black opaque tights (not sheer!) and black flats with their uniform. Black hair bows and small stud earrings are allowed for performances. Hair needs to be off the forehead (this includes bangs). We want to see your face! Girls, if you must wear make-up, please keep it light and natural. Avoid heavy eye makeup, blush or dark lipsticks.

Cantus boys: Uniform shirt, tie and dress slacks must be purchased at the cost of \$60, to be ordered through a quality supplier. Must be worn with black socks and black dress shoes. Hair should be neat and away from your eyes.

Camerata girls: White tuxedo shirt, bow tie, cummerbund and skirt must be purchased at the cost of \$50. This will be ordered for you through a quality supplier. Girls should wear white opaque tights (not sheer!) and black flats with their uniform. Black hair bows and small stud earrings are allowed for performances. Hair needs to be off the forehead (this includes bangs). We want to see your face! Girls, if you must wear make-up, please keep it light and natural. Avoid heavy eye makeup, blush or dark lipsticks.

Camerata boys: White tuxedo shirt, bow tie, cummerbund and black dress slacks must be purchased at the cost of \$50. This will be ordered for you through a quality supplier. Must be worn with black socks and black dress shoes. Hair should be neat and away from your eyes.

All choir members regardless of age should wear deodorant. Nerves increase the heart rate and turn on the sweat! Also, PLEASE, no perfume or cologne as some may be allergic and/or become nauseated.



Rehearsal CDs

Members of the choirs will be provided rehearsal CDs for each semester. Please take these home, listen, and learn YOUR part. In the first two weeks of receiving your CD, you should listen to the CD at least once a day.

Other Performances

Cantus and Camerata will perform a fall and spring concert as indicated on the schedule. The choirs may also perform when asked at designated community events at the discretion of the director. You will receive at least one month's notice regarding these performances.

Rehearsals

It is essential that you attend EVERY rehearsal as information is taught sequentially. During rehearsals, it is not just notes and good choral tone that is taught...self-esteem, teamwork, responsibility, controlling nerves, dignity, focus, posture, and confidence will be incorporated into every rehearsal and performance. Rehearsals will begin promptly at 5:30 pm and end at 7:00 pm on Monday nights in the First Baptist Church Music Suite for Cantus members and the First Baptist Church Orchestra Room for Camerata members.

“Special Events Account”

In accordance with IRS regulations, a separate “Special Events Account” is used for tours and other special events. All fundraising monies are placed in this account. Individual family accounts are kept in here as well. Due to IRS rules, we CANNOT issue refund checks from this account. Please do not ask us to bend or manipulate these rules as our answer will remain a “no.” All money deposited into this account must be used only for its designated purpose of tour or special events such as concerts, uniforms, or trips. If you have money left in your account at the end of a concert season, it will remain in the account for you to use the next year. If you have money in your account and do not return, the money will be moved into the general ledger line in the Special Events Account.

Tuition, Payment & Tour Fees

Tuition costs for each choir are: \$250 per year. In addition, each musician will be assessed a \$15 fee to cover the cost of their t-shirt and music folder. All tuition is



due by the first rehearsal, unless a payment plan has been arranged with the directors. All checks should be made payable to "Bentonville Children's Choir." Parents will be assessed a \$10 late charge for each week the tuition is past due. Tuition covers expenses for rehearsal space, accompanist, music, supplies, and performance facilities. Tuition is non-refundable. No exceptions will be made for the trip or tour fee deadlines. If the payment is late, the musician's name and/or chaperone's name will be removed from the tour list without hesitation. Tour/trip fees are non-refundable. A \$30 service fee will be charged to the parents, for all returned checks. The musician may not perform or tour if his/her account has a negative balance.

Volunteer Opportunities

We strongly desire for the Bentonville Children's Choir to have a family atmosphere, and we welcome parents who would like to volunteer their help! Sign-up sheets will be available at the first orientation/parent meeting.

Watching the Rehearsal

Parents, grandparents, teachers, and visitors are welcome to enjoy the rehearsal. There is minimal seating available but you are always welcome to stand and observe. The rehearsal atmosphere is not conducive to very young children, and we ask that they wait outside or at home. To keep distractions to a minimum, we also request that you silence all cell phones before entering the rehearsal. In accordance with our contract for the rehearsal facility, we ask that you do not use any other room other than the rehearsal space and/or restrooms. Parents, if you have questions, the directors will be available *after* rehearsals to speak with you, or you may e-mail. Please do not direct questions toward directors at the start of rehearsal. It is important that rehearsals start and end on time.

Drop-off of Singers

This is very important to ensure the safety of all singers. Singers are to enter First Baptist Church through the solid double doors next to the Chapel. This entrance is located directly between the new and older portions of the church, and faces "A" Street. It will be marked with signs for the first rehearsal. Singers should not arrive more than 15 minutes early to rehearsal.

Being late to rehearsal

There is more than one reason to be on time for rehearsal, but a very good reason is this: the doors will lock at 5:45 pm. First Baptist church is a secure building and you cannot get in to attend rehearsal if you arrive more than 15 min late. Please



be punctual! In addition, being late three times will equal *one strike* on our “three strikes and you’re out” expectation policy. Being on time makes everyone better!

Pick-up of Singers

To ensure safety of all children, singers will be picked up in a different location than they are dropped off. Please pick up your child at the main parking lot at adjoining the new sanctuary near the drive-through area at 7:00 pm. Your children will be supervised, but please be on time in picking them up, as your delays become our delays. Thank you!

Water

Yes! It is important enough to receive its very own category!! Water is needed to hydrate the vocal chords. Please bring a labeled, plastic bottle of water with a push-top lid to every rehearsal and performance. Water fountains are available, but rehearsals run much more smoothly if children have water close at hand. Please, no carbonated beverages or flavored waters. They will not be allowed.

Tentative Rehearsal/Performance Schedule 2006-2007

Aug. 20th- BCC Family Orientation Night
Aug. 27th- First Monday Rehearsal, ALL TUITION DUE
October 6th- Saturday Fall Retreat 9 am to 3 pm @ FBC
Oct. 28th- Fall Concert 7 pm (singers arrive at 6)
?Dec. 9th- TBA? Christmas Concert 6:00 pm @ FBC
Dec. 10th- NO REHEARSAL
Dec. 17th- End of semester fun night. TBA
January 7th - First Monday Rehearsal of the New Year
January 26th – Saturday Winter Retreat, 9 am to 3 FBC
?April 20th- TBA Spring Concert 2:30 pm @ FBC
May TBA- Allegro Children’s Choir Event ??
June TBA- Cantus Trip?