



## **CHORISTER HANDBOOK**

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## **WELCOME!**

Welcome to the Spokane Area Youth Choirs! Through the study, rehearsal, and performance of choral music, Spokane Area Youth Choirs (SAYC) provides a joyful and challenging musical experience for musicians from age seven to 18. Choristers will be introduced to healthy vocal technique, music theory, music history, and a variety of literature and performance styles.

SAYC hopes each student-singer will find his or her own voice, both figuratively and literally. Through the rehearsal and performance process, we aim to build a unique community together. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Artistic Directors or Executive Director.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Spokane Area Youth Choirs provides youth with a choral music experience where successive levels of high artistic achievement and performance are fostered in each participant.

## **VALUES**

Artistry | Respect | Commitment

## **VISION**

The vision of Spokane Area Youth Choirs encompasses:

- The study, rehearsal, and performance of choral music with an emphasis on excellence.
- A safe and nurturing environment for student-singers to share the rewards and responsibilities of ensemble membership;
- A place for young people to connect to stories that have shaped, and will continue to shape, the human experience;
- Communal and musical experiences that bring joy to participants and listeners alike.

# THE CHOIRS of SAYC

Spokane Area Youth Choirs' graduated curriculum is divided into three levels. In each ensemble, choristers follow a curriculum designed to develop vocal, musical, and interpersonal skills.

## ***PICCOLINI (Italian: Little ones)***

**Piccolini**, the entry level ensemble for 7 to 9 year-olds\*, is designed to introduce children to the joy of singing and the excitement of ensemble work. Through a variety of educational approaches, young voices are nurtured and developed as choristers learn and grow together as a choir. Throughout the year, Piccolini develops basic musical skills using a combination of music games and age-appropriate repertoire\*\*.

*This choir participates in all SAYC home concerts as well as some performances in the community.*

## ***GRAZIOSO (Italian: Delightful, gracious)***

**Grazioso**, an ensemble for 9 to 12 year-olds\*, builds and expands upon skills and concepts introduced in the previous level. This ensemble also welcomes singers without previous musical experience. Choristers are introduced to basic rudiments of music theory, principles of healthy and age-appropriate vocal production, and a greater diversity of repertoire.

Members of Grazioso demonstrate basic vocal, musical and interpersonal skills, as well as a higher level of discipline in rehearsals and performances\*\*.

*This choir participates in all SAYC home concerts as well as some performances in the community.*

## ***SPIRARE (Latin: Breathe)***

Comprised of 12 – 18 year-olds\*, **Spirare** is an advanced-level ensemble dedicated to the study, rehearsal, and performance of distinctive music for treble voices. Members of Spirare commit themselves to weekly 1.75 hour rehearsals, as well as periodic extra rehearsals in preparation for special performance opportunities (e.g., performances with the Spokane Symphony Orchestra and other local appearances). Members of Spirare will develop and expand their understanding of the rudiments of music theory and principles of age-appropriate vocal production, and demonstrate a high level of interpersonal discipline in rehearsal and performance\*\*.

\*During the placement interview process, and through annual evaluations, directors will determine the appropriate choir level for the chorister based on his/her demonstrated maturity and musical ability.

\*\* In order to provide a quality experience for participants and audience members, alike, family support of their chorister and her/his commitment to the rehearsal and performance schedule is required.

## **Two additional programs of SAYC are:**

**The ABC Program**, designed specifically with our smallest singers in mind. Five and six year olds have the opportunity to purposefully sing, move, and play each and every week, immersed in the foundational music concepts that set them up for success as they progress through the SAYC choruses. Concepts explored include: steady beat, vocal exploration, pitch matching, comparatives (higher/lower, faster/slower, louder/softer), as well as beginning rhythmic and melodic reading. Based on Kodály-inspired teaching, singers engage in active music making to build musical literacy and fluency.

**Le Donne**, a choir for adult women, ages 18-80 (and beyond).

# EXPECTATIONS of CHORISTERS

*Choristers are required to attend all rehearsals, performances, and commitments for their choir.*

Choristers are expected to:

- Observe all rehearsal, call, and pick-up times.
- Be respectful and supportive of fellow choristers, SAYC staff, and directors.
- Bring pencil, music folder, and water bottle to all rehearsals and performances.
- Take proper care of all issued music and return it in good condition at the end of the season or when directed by the conductor. Music should be marked in pencil, not ink.
- Practice at home, as per instructions by director.
- Protect health and voice. See attendance policy below for specifics.
- Notify conductors through the SAYC office in the event of tardiness or absence.
- Bring no food or drinks except water in spill-proof container into choir room or performance space.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance at *all* regularly scheduled and extra rehearsals and performances is required to maintain membership in good standing. Each choir member is an integral part of the ensemble. Absences not only affect individual progress, but also have a negative impact on the ensemble.

### Rehearsal Times

- **Plan to arrive 5-10 minutes prior to the start of rehearsal.** Rehearsals start promptly at the designated time. Please note the beginning warm-up is critical to learning new concepts and being prepared.

### Drop off

- Arrive no more than 10 minutes in advance of start time
- Parent/guardian is responsible for supervision of any children not in rehearsal

### Pick Up

- Late pick up (+10 minutes) may result in a fee.

### Absence/Late Arrival Reporting

- Notify SAYC office prior to rehearsal for any absence or late arrival
  - Attendance line (509) 624-7992 X2

### Dress Rehearsals and Performances

- Participation in any performance is contingent upon attendance at weekly rehearsals. Directors will evaluate chorister readiness and reserve the right to exclude choristers from a performance.
- Participation in dress rehearsals is a requirement for participation in the performance, unless arrangements are made well in advance with the director.
- In the event that there are two (or more) concerts in a series, students must participate in all such concerts; students may not participate in one if they cannot perform in all of them.

### School Music Conflicts

- It is the responsibility of the chorister/parent/guardian to notify the SAYC director as soon as possible of conflicts with school music performances. With advance notice, SAYC will make every effort to collaborate with the chorister and his/her school music director to reach a compromise. If that is not possible, school performances take precedence over SAYC events.

# PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

## CALL TIME

**Call-Time for dress rehearsals and performances** is the time at which choristers must arrive at the performance site so that they are prepared to sing when warm ups start. Directors determine the call time based on the needs of the ensemble and other performance requirements. Please do not arrive earlier than call time, as this can disrupt event setup.

## NECESSARY ITEMS

Necessary items for **every** performance and dress rehearsal include designated uniform, music folder and pencil, re-sealable water bottle, and any additional items specified by the director.

## CHORISTER CONDUCT

Choristers are expected to exhibit exemplary behavior at all times, and to follow directions from SAYC staff and volunteer chaperones. They are also expected to be responsible for their belongings, and to assist when necessary in the clean-up of shared spaces.

# UNIFORMS

Two separate uniforms have been selected to serve a variety of rehearsal and performance needs. Each singer is expected to have both a formal and informal uniform as listed below. Choristers **MUST** be in the appropriate designated uniform as required. The chorister's uniform must be clean, neat, ironed and complete.

***Hair, Makeup and Jewelry:*** *Hair* must be kept out of the eyes and off the face. Only invisible barrettes or hair clips that match hair color (not the uniform) should be worn. Hair styles must be appropriate and in keeping with the total uniform appearance of SAYC. ***Make-up*** must not be noticeable. **NO JEWELRY** (necklaces, bracelets, watches) may be worn with the uniform other than stud earrings.

### **INFORMAL UNIFORM FOR ALL CHOIRS**

SAYC white polo shirt with green/black logo on front (available for purchase from the SAYC office), black ankle-length pants, and sneakers.

### **FORMAL UNIFORM FOR PICCOLINI AND GRAZIOSO CHOIRS AND BOYS OF ALL CHOIRS**

- Girls wear black pleated skirts (Piccolini) or straight skirt (Grazioso), SAYC white polo shirt, white tights, and black flat-heeled “Mary-Jane” shoes with straps. Skirt hems should be below the kneecap, not more than 2” below the knee. Skirts and polo shirts are ordered through the choir office and other items are provided by the chorister family.
- Piccolini and Grazioso boys are to wear black pants (no jeans), SAYC white polo shirt, black belt, black socks, and black shoes.
- Spirare boys are to wear black pants, long-sleeved white oxford shirt, black belt, black socks, and black shoes.

Each chorister will also wear a SAYC-issued vest. Vests are green for Piccolini and Grazioso choirs and black for the upper level boys. Boys in Spirare and Bel Coro Choirs will wear a black bow-tie.

The green vests are owned and maintained by SAYC, and should not be taken home by choristers. Black vests and bowties used by Spirare boys are also owned by SAYC but may be taken home during the concert season and returned at the end of the season.

### **FORMAL UNIFORM FOR SPIRARE CHORISTERS**

Choristers are to own and provide their own sheer nude hose and flat-heeled black shoes. Shoes should be plain, without decorations, straps, or other embellishments.

Skirts are full-length blue satin. Skirts should be worn at the natural waist line (not rolled down to the hips) and hemmed to 2” from the floor while wearing the performance shoes. Tops for these choirs are black velvet and should cover the top of the skirt.

Each chorister must arrange with SAYC to be measured for the purchase of the SAYC formal dress uniform and is individually responsible for hemming skirts to the correct length. (Volunteers may be available to help with hemming and alterations at the beginning of the season – please ask). Skirts and tops must be maintained in accordance with stated conditions (clean, ironed, properly fitted, etc.).

## **AWARDS and RECOGNITION**

### **HEAD CHORISTERS**

One or more head choristers are chosen annually from Spirare by the directors. A head chorister serves as support for the director and mentor to Spirare Choir. Criteria for selection may include vocal and musical skill, good rapport with peers, leadership ability, maturity, dedication to SAYC, and dependability.

### **MENTORS**

Upper level choristers may have the opportunity to volunteer as mentors for Piccolini or Grazioso. Mentors assist the director with rehearsal needs, including modeling good behavior and singing technique. These students must have good leadership skills, strong rapport with younger students, dedication to SAYC, and demonstrably excellent dependability. Mentoring positions require at least a full semester, and preferably a full year, commitment.

**The Leadership Award** and the **Lynda Sittser Musicianship Award** are presented annually to two deserving choristers in each choir at the Spring Concert, the final concert of the year. Criteria for these awards are listed below. Awards are a method of recognizing outstanding achievement and provide incentives for excellence throughout the year.

#### **Leadership Award:**

- Demonstrating professional attitude, personal commitment, and positive concern for success of the group.
- Exhibiting responsibility and professionalism by being prepared with music, pencils, and other necessary materials at rehearsals.
- Completing all assignments thoroughly and at a high level, being in complete and proper uniform at appropriate time, remembering to take all memos, music and personal items from rehearsals and performances, following through with instructions as given by director.
- Consistent and punctual attendance at rehearsals, theory and voice classes, and performances.

#### **Lynda Sittser Musicianship Award:**

- Attitude toward work
- Responsibility toward the group
- Concentration and behavior in rehearsal
- Growth in vocal technique
- Improvement in learning repertoire
- Comprehension and execution of theory



## **SAYC ACADEMIES and RETREATS**

Periodic retreats and small-group classes may be scheduled by the directors. Retreats allow for more in-depth musical training, team-building, and fellowship opportunities. They enable rapid progress in mastering repertoire, music theory, and vocal techniques.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

**Email** is the primary mode of communication between SAYC and its chorister families. If you cannot regularly check email, please advise the office so that we can use mail or phone to contact you. The most frequent method of communication is provided by the monthly bulletin (see below). In general, copies of all written communications to the chorister or parent are placed in the individual chorister's file in the appropriate choir file box outside the rehearsal room prior to each regularly-scheduled rehearsal. *It is extremely important that all choristers check their file each week and take home any new materials.*

Please be sure that SAYC has a current phone number and address on file for you. In the event of an emergency, it is extremely important that the office be able to reach parents or other designated caregivers.

### **BULLETINS**

Bulletins for each choir are published monthly and distributed by email to choir families. Bulletins contain important information about upcoming rehearsals, performances, and other events. They are also placed in the chorister's folder in the appropriate choir file box, which is available outside the choir room prior to rehearsal. Be sure to read your Bulletin thoroughly, as schedules do change throughout the year. It is the responsibility of the chorister and parent to be aware of the information in these bulletins.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

The Board of Trustees is responsible for establishing policies for the operation of SAYC, and for seeing that those policies are properly executed; for approving and monitoring SAYC's annual budget, which includes setting tuition and arranging for fund raising sufficient to cover the gap between income and costs; and for maintaining the long-term stability of the organization. The Board of Trustees comprises 7-15 members who are elected for three-year terms. Members may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms.

### **CHORISTER FORMS**

#### Registration/Emergency Authorization Form

This is a necessary form authorizing the SAYC to act in an emergency when parents cannot be contacted. Be sure to keep this form current. Please notify the Chorus office of each school, address, or phone change.

### Liability Release/Consent Form

Included with the registration form, the consent gives permission for the chorus to use a chorister's picture or voice for publication or advertisement. The liability release is a parent authorization releasing the Spokane Area Youth Choirs from liability that may be incurred while each chorister is a member of the organization.

### Tuition Agreement Form

This form is a statement of parental commitment to the Chorus in making the chorister available for scheduled performances that are part of their membership responsibilities. It also serves as an agreement to fulfill all financial obligations to the Chorus.

**THE ABOVE FORMS MUST BE FILLED OUT COMPLETELY FOR THE CHORISTER TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY CHORUS ACTIVITY OR REHEARSAL!**

### **WESTMINSTER CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

Rehearsal and office space is rented at WCC. Please show courtesy to all personnel and staff. Be aware that there are many different groups that occupy and use space in the Church. Be respectful of the rights and needs of others. **NO RUNNING OR SHOUTING IN THE HALLS. Choristers waiting for rehearsal to start should sit quietly in the designated waiting area.**

### **VOLUNTEERS**

**As with any non-profit organization, SAYC is always in need of volunteers. A large number of people are needed to act as ushers, chaperones, ticket sellers, etc. for each concert,** and there is always need for parent volunteers in the Chorus office, for fundraising projects, and at events. Please check with the Executive Director to see what needs to be done, or if you have any suggestions for sources of additional revenue.

All volunteers who work with the choristers (chaperones, hall monitors, door tenders, etc.) must complete a Washington State Patrol background check form bi-annually.

Volunteers for concerts and rehearsals will be notified of their schedules before the concert. Please be sure to let the SAYC office know promptly if you cannot keep your volunteer assignment, so that someone else may be scheduled in your place. Please note that some concerts have more individuals volunteering to help than are needed. Unless you have been notified that you are scheduled for that concert, you should not assume that you are working. Contact the SAYC office if you have any questions about your assignment or duties.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

Parents are responsible for getting their children to and from each rehearsal and performance. Carpooling is encouraged; however, parents run these carpools voluntarily and the Chorus does not participate in arranging them. Also, it is important to have a backup plan; **if your regularly scheduled carpool partner(s) can't attend, you are still responsible to be at rehearsal.**

Early drop-off is not permitted, and prompt pick-up is essential! Staff members are not always able to be at rehearsals much in advance of the start time or to stay after rehearsals are over. It is vitally

important that parents arrange for supervision of their children before and after rehearsal. Repeated late pick-ups may be charged a fee to cover additional staff time.

### **PARKING**

*Please* do **not** double-park during pick-up and drop-off of your children. *It is very dangerous!* If space is unavailable in the loading zone on 4th, **park and walk children in to their rehearsal.** Limited parking is available on 4<sup>th</sup>, on the side streets of Bernard and Washington, and under the freeway between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, **directly north of the church.**

### **SECURITY**

Parent volunteers fill a schedule to provide door monitors during rehearsals. Their job is to ensure that all choristers get into and out of the building safely and to monitor the entrance on 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. Please sign up for one or more shifts, and assist other volunteers by arriving for rehearsal and pick up in a timely manner, and ensuring that your child understands the safety rules for crossing the road if necessary - at a walk sign, and in the crosswalk. If a monitor is unavailable during rehearsal, the door on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue will be locked after choristers are in. Late arrivals, or parents needing to enter prior to the end of rehearsal, should use the bottom doorbell at the glass doors on Washington Street, which will ring in the choir room.

### **AUDITIONS**

The Spokane Area Youth Choirs holds auditions three times per year. These occur at the end of May for entry the following September, and also at the beginning of each semester. Other times may be made available as needed. Openings are determined after current choristers indicate whether they will return for the coming season.

## FINANCES

Tuition paid by chorister families covers approximately 40% of the cost of keeping the Chorus in operation. Other sources of income include individual donations, performance fees, grants from foundations and corporations, and fundraising programs and events sponsored by the SAYC Board of Trustees.

### TUITION

**Choristers whose accounts are in arrears will not be permitted to participate in choir activities or concerts and will not be considered for promotion to the next choir level.** If you choose to pay in cash, please make sure to pay the executive director or bookkeeper ONLY, and in person, and get a receipt. DO NOT send your child with cash, and DO NOT hand payments to your child's director or accompanist. There is a locked box outside the choir room, for notes and payments made when the office manager is not available. Please do not put cash in this box. Anything placed in the box should be clearly marked with the item's purpose (e.g. tuition, donation, etc.) and chorister's name.

### SCHOLARSHIPS

There are a limited number of partial scholarships available from SAYC. Scholarships require an application process and are granted according to financial need. Scholarships require exemplary attendance and family volunteer time (10 hours per semester) The nature and type of volunteer activities will be determined between the parent and office staff. Contact the office staff for details.

### FUNDRAISING

The Spokane Area Youth Choirs operates with an ongoing need to raise money in order to exist; therefore, the organization relies on the efforts not only of the Board and staff, but also on parents to help raise the necessary funds. Any donation by families is welcome and appreciated, and provides needed assistance to fundraising projects. Contact the Executive Director or members of the Board of Trustees to volunteer ideas and support. The expected fundraising income per chorister, per year, is \$300.



Fred Meyer is donating \$2.5 million per year to non-profits in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington, based on where their customers tell them to give. Here's how the program works:

Sign up for the Community Rewards program by linking your Fred Meyer Rewards Card to SAYChoirs at [www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards](http://www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards).

You can search for us by our name or by our non-profit number #90333.

Then, every time you shop and use your Rewards Card, you are helping Spokane Area Youth Choirs earn a donation!

You still earn your Rewards Points, Fuel Points, and Rebates.

If you do not have a Rewards Card, they are available at the Customer Service desk of any Fred Meyer store. For more information, please visit [www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards](http://www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards).

See the SAYChoirs office for a copy of this notice or ask for an emailed version.



Registration forms are available at the checkout stand or [Click Here](#) for a copy. Give the completed form to the cashier and every time you use your card at any Yoke's Fresh Market, up to 5% of your qualifying purchases will go to SAYC. Spread the word to your friends & family! Give this to everyone you know and ask them to drop it off and pick up their card the next time they shop. Nothing more needs to be done-it's really that easy.

Group Name: Spokane Area Childrens Chorus

Group ID: 500002987



Anyone can earn for Spokane Area Childrens Chorus; Non-registered supporters can earn from Amazon too! Simply follow the link below to start earning directly from Amazon for SAYC.

<http://shopping.escrip.com/click/5400/7337/amazonhome/s1a500068/afsrc=1/sidG500002987>



Go on line to the following link. Register your Vons/Safeway card with SAYC's eScrip

Group ID# 500002987 <http://www.escrip.com/safewaystores/vonspavilions/details.jsp>

## **TAX DEDUCTIONS**

SAYC is a 501 (c)(3) charitable organization. Direct contributions to SAYC of money or the cost of food or other tangible items contributed for a Chorus event may be tax deductible. Tuition or ticket purchases for Chorus events are NOT deductible, as these represent items for which value is received. For more specific information, please consult your tax or financial advisor.

## CURRENT TUITION RATES

Tuition and fees for the 2017-2018 Choir season - nine months, from September through May - are as follows:

Registration	\$40	Polo Shirt	\$15
<b><u>Tuition</u></b>	<b><u>Paid Monthly</u></b>	<b><u>By Semester</u></b>	<b><u>Full Year</u></b>
		<i>Fall/Spring</i>	
Piccolini Choir	\$60	\$232/\$290	\$522.00
Grazioso Choir	\$75	\$292/365	\$657.00
Spirare	\$98	\$384/480	\$864.00
Bel Coro	\$115	\$452/565	\$1017.00

Tuition is due the first of the month to the SAYC office. Include your child's full name and choir level with payment.

Families choosing annual payment will be billed once in mid-August.  
Those choosing semester payment will be billed twice, mid-August and mid-December.

Those choosing monthly payment will be billed by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month for the following month. Cost of this payment plan includes a \$2 per month service charge, and late fees of \$2 for payments received after the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month.

**PLEASE NOTE:**

- SAYC reserves the right to suspend a chorister from rehearsal and/or performance if tuition payments and fees are not current.
- Credit card payments may be made through the SAYC website via Paypal.
- A \$15 charge will be assessed for any returned checks. If the office receives more than two returned checks per semester from a chorus member, we reserve the right to request payment in the form of cash or cashier's check for the remainder of the year.
- Withdrawal from SAYC does not eliminate any fees owed at that time. It is required to notify the office, in addition to the choir conductor, of any withdrawal from the choir, so that billing can be adjusted.

**UNIFORM FEES**

All students must purchase a SAYC polo shirt, **\$15**.

Piccolini and Grazioso choirs, and the boys of Spirare, pay a **\$10** Uniform Rental fee per year for the vest, payable at the time of the first tuition installment. Black skirts for girls of these choirs are purchased through the choir office for \$15/\$18.

Girls of Spirare must purchase SAYC-supplied skirts and tops for the formal uniform for **\$35** for the top and **\$30** for the skirt.

## **2017-2018 REHEARSAL SCHEDULE**

**Tuesday 5:30 – 7:30 – Spirare - Room 207**

**Wednesday 4:45 – 5:45 – ABC Program – Room 207**

**Wednesday 4:45 – 5:45 – Piccolini Choir – Choir Room**

**Wednesday 6:00 – 7:15 – Grazioso Choir – Choir Room**

All rehearsals, unless otherwise noted, are held at Westminster Congregational Church.

## **2017-2018 ADMINISTRATIVE AND MUSIC STAFF**

Artistic Directors	Judy Pearson Hafso Marc A. Hafso
Accompanists	Jill Bray Susan Windham
Executive Director	Sarah Hopkins
Bookkeeper	Carrie Seitz

## **2017-2018 BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

President	David Klatt
Vice- President	Robin McLain
Secretary	Lynn Pachelli
Treasurer	Robin McLain
Trustees	Angela Little Gott Gordon Ritchie Heather Ritchie