



Chorister Handbook

Welcome to choral singing! Twin Rivers Community Choir is open to adult singers of all ages and abilities. We love to have fun, work hard, and make amazing music – together! We enjoy bringing many different genres of music to our community in staged concerts as well as informal performances from September through June each year.

How do we do this? In addition to an encouraging artistic director who coaches us to our very best, we also offer a variety of tools to help you succeed, and a group of colleagues to practice with. Singing is not a passive experience; it demands that you are actively engaged in learning and practicing your part. There is a time commitment and work involved by everyone!

Interested in singing with us? Here is some information about joining our choir.

Membership:

Membership is completed online at: <https://www.twinriverschoir.com/join>
It can be done electronically or by downloading the pdf. Authorization and release of liability waiver is required to participate.

Cost:

Membership dues: Due once a year in September. Membership gives you the right to attend the choir and vote at the Annual General Meeting.

Participation Fees: Due at the beginning of each season, September and January. You must be a member in good standing to participate.

Please see www.twinriverschoir.com/join to see the current membership and participation fees. Fees may be paid by e-transfer to trcc.treasurer99@gmail.com or by cheque (payable to Twin River Chorale Society).

The expenses involved in running a choir are significant, and as a society we do not aim to accumulate profits. If you have questions about how your membership and participation fees are spent, please feel free to attend a board meeting or ask any board member for more information. We recognize that cost may be a factor for some people to participate and it is not our goal to exclude members based on payment. If the costs are of concern to you, please email trcchoir@gmail.com for a special provision.

Refund Policy: New members are welcome to attend two rehearsals before making a commitment to the choir and paying the required fees. No refund of monies is provided once paid except by extenuating circumstance as authorized by the Board of Directors.

Rehearsal Time and Location:

- ❖ In person rehearsals run weekly on Thursdays from 7-9 p.m. from Sept – Dec (Fall season) and January – late May (Spring season).
- ❖ Rehearsals are held at New Life Church – 602 7th Street, Castlegar BC. On-site parking is available.
- ❖ We start at 7 p.m. sharp, so please arrive about 10 minutes early to give time to settle in.
- ❖ Choristers have the option to participate online through Zoom. If you are ill in any way, please do not attend in person. The Zoom link is posted on our website in the Members Area and rehearsals are recorded for later viewing.

Joining a choir is joining a team and we value every voice!

Time commitments:

1. Thursday Rehearsals: two hours per week either in person or online. Every voice is important and regular attendance is encouraged. Music is learned cumulatively. Each week, members learn to sing and blend their voices together.

2. Sectional practices: each section (Bass, Tenor, Alto, Soprano) has an appointed Section Leader who will schedule additional weekly practices for your section. Each practice is about 1.5 hours, and they are often fun and lively gatherings. Although attendance at these sectionals is not mandatory, it is very important for maintaining the pace of the weekly choir rehearsals and the high performance quality for which the Twin Rivers Community Choir is known. This is extra time to help members learn and feel comfortable singing their part.

3. Audio Tracks: these are provided as an additional format for learning the music, and are found on the Members page of the website. Many members download the tracks and listen while driving or doing chores. Put those songs on repeat!

4. Performance Attendance Requirement: Any chorister who would like to sing in ticketed concerts must attend at least 50% of our regular weekly rehearsals in person, and must attend the technical rehearsal on the Thursday evening preparatory to the Friday/Saturday ticketed concerts.

Performance dates and locations are released as early in the season as possible. Not all singers want or wish to perform – some just prefer the joy of rehearsing group singing – and Twin Rivers choir welcomes you! Come – sing – enjoy a supportive group of

singers and learn some new skills!

Interested in performing a solo or in a small ensemble?

We also encourage choristers to work on their own solos and small ensemble numbers. These are independent collaborative endeavours which the Musical Director encourages but DOES NOT ORGANIZE. If you are interested in working with some other singers and have a song in mind – reach out because you will find a community that wants to learn it too! All solo/duet and small ensemble numbers must be auditioned by the Musical Director to be eligible for inclusion in public performances. The audition date is announced partway through the season.

From time to time the Musical Director also asks for volunteers to sing a solo part in one or more of our whole-choir songs. Please arrange to attend both Friday/Saturday concert performances if you volunteer and are selected for a solo in one of our choral songs.

Performance Attire:

Our performance attire is all black with blue accessories which will be provided for you. We are very fortunate to work with a talented volunteer who keeps us looking fantastic! Variations in performance attire (eg, for outdoor or informal performances) will be announced as needed.

‘Members Area’ Website access:

Once you have paid your membership dues and participation fees, you can then sign up to our Members’ Area of the website. This area has downloadable sheet music, audio tracks and music literacy tools. New to the choir? Go to: <https://www.twinriverschoir.com/members> and click “Sign Up”. We will review the application, verify you have paid your fees, then accept your application (this may take a few days). If you have been a member in the past, your email and password remains the same. If you were a member in the past, but took a break, please reach out to trcchoir@gmail.com to re-instate your previous login information.

Sheet Music:

You will be provided with sheet music which is the purchased property of the Twin Rivers Community Choir and which must be returned in good condition at the end of the season. You are entitled to take your music package home after you have paid your membership dues and participation fees. You will be assigned a library number which will appear on all your music copies. Please bring a 3-hole binder and a pencil to choir.

IMPORTANT! DO NOT use pens or highlighters on the original copy music – pencils only! - and please erase all pencil markings prior to returning it. If your music or performance folder is lost or is damaged (outside of normal wear and tear), you will be expected to reimburse the cost of replacement.

Printing your own copies from the Members Only Area? Please return all music and copies to our librarian at season’s end.

Audio learning tracks can be downloaded from the Members Only area of our website. You can download these tracks directly to your own device for your convenience. If you require the audio tracks in another format, please contact trcchoir@gmail.com to make arrangements.

Pay attention and be respectful of others:

Choir singing is a social pastime and choirs are full of sociable people. However, please give the choir director your full attention during rehearsals. Socialization is permitted prior to rehearsal, at break and at conclusion. During rehearsal, PLEASE DO NOT TALK. Please also refrain from singing your part or another section's part while the director is rehearsing with a section other than your own. Use this time to silently review your part. The goal of our organization is to provide positive learning experiences and as such any bullying or rude behaviour of choristers will not be tolerated.

The TRC choir has a Member Code of Conduct which provides clear expectations for respectful conduct among members. The link to the Code can be found on the Members page and the Join page. Choristers are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Code of Conduct.

Eating/drinking/cell phone use:

- ❖ You are encouraged to bring a non-carbonated drink to rehearsal. Plastic, or covered metal* water bottles are preferred. Water bottles held discreetly will be permitted on stage (*metal ones make too much noise when accidentally kicked over!).
- ❖ No food is allowed in the sanctuary space or during any performance activities.
- ❖ Please TURN OFF CELL PHONES at the beginning of each rehearsal and we encourage you to put them away!

Safety precautions:

- ❖ Choristers may sit with their sectional group or in other areas of the sanctuary to meet their own preference for social distancing.
- ❖ Masks are welcomed but not mandatory.
- ❖ If you are unwell IN ANY WAY, please attend online and DO NOT ATTEND IN PERSON.
- ❖ Vaccines are encouraged but not mandatory for participation in rehearsals. PLEASE NOTE THAT VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS MAY EXIST FOR OUR PERFORMANCE VENUES AND WE MUST ADHERE TO THEM.

Choir Communication:

From time to time, our communications director will send out email correspondence to the choir as a group. Every care will be taken to protect the privacy of our members' information. We keep your information confidential and will only contact you regarding choir matters.

Please subscribe and become a member of our website at www.twinriverschoir.com – and our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/TRCChoir> for up-to-date information and assistance!

Questions?? We're here to help! Please send an email to the choir at trcchoir@gmail.com and we will be happy to address anything that's on your mind.