



The Cellar Singers Handbook: What Every Chorister Needs to Know

The Cellar Singers is an adult choral organization under professional leadership dedicated to providing and promoting artistic excellence in the Simcoe/Muskoka area and beyond, through education, outreach and high quality performance of the choral art.

We are happy you joined us. We hope you enjoy singing with us.

How we operate:

Our season usually consists of four concerts offered in Orillia. Sometimes we repeat one or more concerts in Muskoka or other areas.

- Choristers are expected to perform at each concert.
- Choristers who expect to be absent from a concert must discuss this absence with the Artistic Director as soon as possible.

We perform a wide range of choral music, both accompanied and a cappella. We sing traditional works and new works. We constantly strive to achieve artistic excellence. The Artistic Director chooses our music. The Artistic Director reserves the right to audition new and continuing choristers at any time.

We rehearse at St. James Anglican Church, 58 Peter St. N., Orillia, on Wednesdays from 7:15pm to 9:45pm. Attendance at rehearsals is key for individual learning as well as building the group's sound and maintaining group morale.

- Choristers are expected to be in their seats warmed up and ready to sing promptly at 7:15. We take a 10-minute break midway through the rehearsal.
- Choristers who are unable to attend a rehearsal must notify the Artistic Director as soon as possible. Choristers who are unable to attend a rehearsal should text Rebecca at 705-718-4124 as soon as possible. Also let her know in advance about late arrivals, after 7:40pm, as she locks the church when we've all arrived.
- Choristers who expect to be absent for multiple rehearsals must discuss their absence with the Artistic Director who has the right to exclude any singer from performing in a concert.

Rehearsals and concerts are SCENT FREE. Please ensure that you do not use perfumes, scented lotions, shampoos or deodorants any day you sing with The Cellar Singers. Also do not wear clothing that has been exposed to perfumes or laundered with heavily scented detergents or dryer sheets and ensure dry cleaned garments or woolens stored in cedar or with moth balls are thoroughly aired out before wearing to a Cellar Singer activity.

There will be a dress rehearsal before each concert. Choristers must attend each dress rehearsal. Dress rehearsals are usually held at the performance venue.

We're a community that is concerned with each other's health and wellbeing.

- if you have any symptoms of illness, please find and use a rapid test for COVID, or request one before coming into our rehearsal space.
- if you have symptoms of illness but have a negative rapid test and feel well enough to attend, please plan to sit in 'sick bay' at the back of the rehearsal space, and wear a mask.
- take advantage of the most recent booster for new COVID variants.
- consider wearing a mask while you're in the rehearsal space if you or anyone in your circle might be more vulnerable.
- approach Mitchell, Maureen, or any board member with concerns during rehearsal so they can be promptly addressed. Please be kind and considerate if approached by any fellow chorister, Mitchell, or a board member, with concerns.

Choristers will be given the opportunity to purchase scores for performance works to help defray costs.

- The choir librarian contacts choristers by email to determine quantities to order. Choristers are expected to pay for these scores promptly.
- Copies of each score will be available to lend to any chorister who does not purchase their own copy. These copies must be returned after the respective concert. Choristers must not mark borrowed scores with anything other than pencil. **NO PENS, NO MARKERS, NO HIGHLIGHTERS, NO EXCEPTIONS!**

How to dress like a pro for a Cellar Singers concert:

- Black suit (with black bow tie / white shirt) *or*,
- Black tuxedo (with black bow tie / white shirt) *or*,
- Black concert wear:
 - Black pants / skirt / dress with black shirt (pants/dresses/skirts to be floor length or below the knee accompanied by black hosiery)
 - No garments that are strapless, have spaghetti straps or low cut necklines.
 - No leggings or casual pants
- black hosiery or dress socks
- black (closed toe) polished dress shoes

How to look like a pro at a Cellar Singers concert:

Follow the directions of the choir marshal to enter and leave the performance space

- Carry your music folder closed in the hand facing the audience. Do not open the folder until directed by the Artistic Director.
- Watch the person appointed by the marshal for cue to sit; place your folder in your lap and your hands on your folder; do not cross your arms or legs; watch the Artistic Director to stand
- Turn pages quietly and unobtrusively. Do not follow the score during solos. Look engaged during solos.
- Smile – you will look better AND sound better!

How you contribute:

Be on time. On time means in your seat with music and pencil ready at least 5 minutes before a rehearsal begins.

Pay close attention to the Artistic Director during each rehearsal. During rehearsals please do not speak to your neighbour, (save your comments for the break) and do not hum or sing unless requested. If you have a question, raise your hand.

Mute your cell phones during rehearsal. Better yet, turn them off completely.

Make notes IN PENCIL in your score to ensure you will remember comments made by the Artistic Director. Practice your music between rehearsals. Listen carefully to suggestions made by the Artistic Director on how to overcome technical difficulties. Visit the chorister section of the website or contact your section representative, if applicable, for practice aids. Attend sectional rehearsals as appropriate.

Monitor our website (thecellarsingers.com) and especially the materials posted to the chorister login page. The password is "woodshed".

Like us on Facebook ([Facebook.com/TheCellarSingers](https://www.facebook.com/TheCellarSingers)), follow us on Instagram (@cellarsingersON). Share postings with your friends. Invite your singing friends to join us!

Funding:

The Cellar Singers pays a professional Artistic Director and Collaborative Pianist, hires professional soloists and musicians, rents rehearsal and performance space, prints posters and programs, purchases advertising and maintains a music library. Ticket sales cover only a portion of the choir's annual expenses. Other sources of revenue include annual chorister dues, program advertising, donations and grants, when available, and proceeds of fundraisers.

The choir's board of directors prepares an annual budget in consultation with the Artistic Director. Financial statements of the choir are circulated to choristers in advance of the choir's annual general meeting and choristers are encouraged to participate in that meeting.

Each chorister pays an annual fee of \$325, due by September 30, and receives a charitable receipt for income tax purposes. Other donations towards the choir's expenses are welcome.

- Choristers are expected to promote concerts to the best of their ability. Beautiful posters are available for you to place in your neighbourhood; your guests pay less when they purchase season tickets in advance.
- There's an expectation that each chorister will sell (or buy) at least one ticket per concert / event.
- Choristers are requested to participate in fundraising activities including soliciting advertisements for concert programs and assisting with fund-raising events. It's easy!
- Choristers are advised that concerts may be recorded for purposes of submission with grant applications.

Contact information:

Choir email		info@thecellarsingers.com
Artistic Director	Mitchell Pady	mitchellpady@hotmail.com
Treasurer	Malcolm Stephens	m.b.stephens.p.eng@gmail.com
President	Maureen Froese	maureenfroese@gmail.com