

*We are singers growing together musically and as people.
We sing for ourselves and for our audience, to bring joy, hope, love and inspiration.
We honour and encourage one another and we love to laugh and play together.*

Weekly Rehearsals

Day and Time: Wednesdays - 7:00 to 9:30 pm.
Location: Holy Cross Japanese Anglican Church
4580 Walden Street (at 30th Avenue, one block east of Main Street)

A few important requirements

- **Arrive on time.** Please arrive by 6:50pm so that you have time to sign in, pick up hand-outs & new music, and get settled. It's frustrating when we can't start the rehearsal at 7pm because people are not ready to sing. Let your Section Coordinator if you know you will be late.
- **Attend rehearsals.** Regular attendance is vital. If you must miss a rehearsal, let your Section Coordinator know, and write it on the attendance sheet ahead of time if you can. Singers who miss too many rehearsals may be asked to take a leave of absence for the remainder of the term.
- **Be odour-free.** Perfumes, essential oils, lotions, hair spray, smoke, etc. can be irritating, or harmful to those with allergies. Smoking odours are particularly troublesome. If you are smoke, be sure your breath, clothes, hair and hands aren't infused with the smell, don't smoke just before coming to choir, or during breaks.
- **Be clean and sober.** Drugs and alcohol affect your voice quality, concentration, and ability to be in rapport with your section and the choir as a whole. Please don't use any of these substances before or during choir practices, workshops or performances.
- **Learn your music.** Practicing at home is essential. The sooner we learn our notes, the sooner we can begin having fun with the style and dynamics of songs. The quality of our performances relies on how well we learn our music and attend to our conductor's cues. Section CDs are made available by the 4th rehearsal of each term.
- **Check the "Members" page of our website regularly.** www.highspiritschoir.ca

Fees

Choir dues are \$165.00 per term (Sept-Jan / Feb-June), plus an annual society fee of \$5.00. Once a term has started, fees for that term are non-refundable. Dues can be paid by cash, cheque or Visa. Cheques are payable to High Spirits Choir.

Financial Subsidies for Singers

Our policy is that *no singer* be excluded from the Choir for reasons of financial hardship. Subsidy Application Forms are included on the back of the application form. If you need a subsidy, complete this side of the sheet when you submit the application form to Martin Gerson, our treasurer.

Probationary Period

There is a 3-month probationary period for all new singers. In addition to this probationary period for new singers, the music director will periodically, in consultation with the membership coordinator and section leaders, assess the progress of the choir, and any member who is impeding the progress of his/her section will be asked to leave the choir. If a singer is asked to leave, s/he will receive a prorated refund of the dues paid, upon return of choir music (and tie – men only).

Music

New singers are loaned music for the two “open” rehearsals at the beginning of each term. Once their dues are paid, they are given a black music binder to use for the term.

The binders and music belong to the choir. You are encouraged to make notes in pencil on your music. Binders are collected on the last day of each term, so that the music librarian can get them ready for the following term. If you have any questions about your music binder, contact Sara Forsey, our music librarian.

Choir Attire

The choir attire is the same for all performances, whether it's a major concert or an outreach performance at a retirement home.

Women wear long, ankle-length black skirts, purple choir blouses, black opaque stockings (or knee-highs), and black shoes. The blouses are purchased from the choir for \$30.00. (The blouses cost more but the choir pays the difference.) Black dress pants may be worn in lieu of a long skirt, but they must be approved by Susan. Women are encouraged to wear make-up and jewellery that complement their attire. (For summer concerts, if the weather is hot, you may wear sandals.)

Men wear black slacks, charcoal shirts, purple ties, black socks, and black shoes. The shirts are purchased from the choir for \$30.00. (The shirts cost more but the choir pays the difference.) The ties are loaned to the men and are returned if a singer leaves the choir.

Section Practices

Three times each term, sections meet with leva to learn new music. Section rehearsals take place on Friday night, Saturday or Sunday, for 90 minutes. Attendance is expected. If you cannot attend a sectional, let your Section Coordinator know. Dates and times will be decided at Wednesday rehearsals and posted on our website. The sectionals take place at leva's house - 6205 St. Catherines Street, Vancouver, 3 blocks east of Fraser/45th.

Workshops

We have a workshop each term with a choir mentor and coach. We spend an entire Saturday receiving advanced vocal instruction and working on specific songs. Everyone is encouraged to attend, because it's a fun and valuable day, learning new techniques and approaches to our music.

Concerts

We put on two major concerts each year, in January and early June. It's very satisfying to sing to a full house, and also the revenues from ticket sales make up a good part of our annual budget; so we ask everyone to proactively sell tickets. All the singers bring snacks or beverages for a reception after the concerts.

We also have a community outreach program. We sing at seniors' homes/hospitals twice each term, usually before and after the main concert. We sing at the Van Dusen Gardens Festival of Lights in December, and host a Christmas sing-along to raise money and goods for the Lookout Homeless Shelter in Vancouver. Details about these performances will be posted on our website closer to the dates.

Fundraising

We currently have two regular fundraising activities:

- A snack bar at our rehearsals, where we sell bottled water and snacks for \$1. The proceeds from these sales are used for our bursary program.
- In the Spring, we sell tickets for the BC Choral Federation Raffle. Each member is asked to sell 2 books of tickets. (Tickets are \$2.00 each; there are 10 tickets per book.)

Donations

High Spirits is a registered charity. We gratefully welcome gifts of money or goods to assist with the operation of the choir. Donations to the choir are needed to sponsor the costs of outreach performances, provide subsidies for choir members who cannot afford dues, and assist with operating and capital costs (e.g. sheet music, binders, costumes, percussion instruments, risers). Tax receipts are provided for donations over \$10.00.

Social Activities

Choir members organize social activities throughout the year, namely our infamous potluck/performance parties. These social events give us the opportunity to socialize as well as display our solo or other musical talents. Everyone in the choir, and their "special someones", are welcome. Former singers and singers-on-leave often attend as well.

If you are involved in other community or social activities, feel free to bring flyers or notices to rehearsals – place them on the table at the entrance. We ask that you not use the time at mid-rehearsal break for your events. This announcement period is limited to choir announcements.

Questions?

Your Section Coordinator can answer most questions. Feel free to contact Susan Braverman, President and Membership Coordinator, at info@highspiritschoir.ca.)

* VOLUNTEERS NEEDED *

High Spirits Choir is a charitable society. Our conductor and accompanist receive a modest remuneration, but everything else in the choir is done by volunteers. It is wonderful it to come every Wednesday and sing, and part of what makes the choir fun is how smoothly it runs. However, the few volunteers we have can't do it all. So we ask that you look at the list of volunteer positions below, and consider helping out. Please contact Susan Braverman at info@highspiritschoir.ca.

Our Board of Directors

Our board is a working board. We have monthly two-hour meetings. Directors carry out specific responsibilities and then report back to the board at our regular meetings. We currently have two vacancies. If you would like information about joining the board, see Susan.

President:	Susan Braverman	Concerts:	Holly Jones
Vice-President:	Sara Young	Publicity:	*Vacant*
Secretary:	Callum MacLeod	Fundraising:	Sara Young
Treasurer:	Martin Gerson	Outreach:	*Vacant*
Membership:	Susan Braverman	Special Projects:	*Vacant*

Section Coordinators

Section Coordinators look after the basic organization of their section, ensure that section members have all the materials and information they need, and take attendance for their section. They also monitor the vocal quality of their section, work with section members who are having trouble with their notes, and coordinate extra section practices if necessary. The current section coordinators are:

Soprano	Sara Forsey
Alto	Carla Zimmerman
Tenor	Richard McMahon
Bass	Barney Lee

Other Volunteer Positions

Music Librarian	Sara Forsey
Costume Coordinator - women	Anne-marie Thorne
Costume Coordinator – men	Barney Lee
Snack Bar Coordinator	Carla Zimmerman
Phoning (for performances)	*Volunteers needed prior to performances*

If you are able to volunteer for any of these vacancies, or have other skills that may be beneficial to the choir, please contact Susan at info@highspiritschoir.ca.