



Singer Handbook

2024 - 2025

Find this booklet & other Singer information at
choralartsensemble.org/singer-information

Welcome

The mission of Choral Arts Ensemble is to inspire, educate, and enrich the community at large through outstanding choral performance.

Welcome to Choral Arts' 2024-2025 season! Our 40th Season will be the best yet as we strive for excellence in choral singing. Please read this handbook carefully to help that process and get off to a running start. It clearly outlines the ensemble's expectations and obligations of its singers and leaders, and will answer any questions about procedures.

Sing smart and have fun!

Board of Directors

President – Sarah Vinzant

Vice President – Ron Elcombe

Secretary – Beth Nienow

Treasurer - Pamela Hugdahl

Past President - Eric Stinson

Jordan Brown

Holly Ebel

Andrew Good

Elijah Gray

Judy Hickey

Clark Johnson

Amanda Lindberg

Leslie Litwiller

Matthew Maus

Bill Meiers

Alyssa Quiggle

Dean Stenehjem

Joanne Swenson

Janine Yanisch

Website: ChoralArtsEnsemble.org

Facebook: facebook.com/ChoralArtsEnsemble

Instagram: instagram.com/choralartsensemble

CAE Staff

Artistic Director: Ryan Deignan

Oversees the musical vision of the organization, programs the Season, runs the rehearsals, holds auditions, and is the face of CAE to the public.

Contact Ryan for absences and planned late arrivals.

ryan.deignan@ChoralArtsEnsemble.org 319-389-6407

Executive Director: Karen Sessler

Oversees the organization's administration, development, and marketing - shares public duties with Ryan.

ExecDir@ChoralArtsEnsemble.org 507-226-3420

Collaborative Pianist: Emmeline Liske

Emmeline.liske@choralartsensemble.org 920-376-2051

Communications & Concert Coordinator: Karen Rorie

Handles advertising, social media, website, concert programs and box office. In the office Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Marketing@ChoralArtsEnsemble.org 507-252-8427

Harmony for Mayo Concert Coordinator: Ben Gateno

Sets schedule for Monday concerts, books acts, oversees the concerts for the *Rosemary and Meredith Willson Harmony for Mayo Program*.

Harmony@ChoralArtsEnsemble.org

CAE Office

Bethel Lutheran Church
810 3rd Ave SE, 2nd floor
Rochester, MN 55904

(507) 252-8427

Info@ChoralArtsEnsemble.org

Expectations

Of the conductor and section leaders:

- **They will know the music**
- **They will stick to the schedule and will not waste your time**

Of the singer:

- **Show up and be on time**

We start on time – Treble Singers at 5:15 and Ensemble at 7:30. Absences should be rare (see Attendance Policy). Although we will usually include vocal warm-ups, singers should aim to have their voices warmed up ahead of time.

- **Come prepared**

You are expected to learn your part's rhythm, text, and notes at home before rehearsal. Rehearsals are times to deal with ensemble issues, coordinate details, and add interpretive nuance. Learning mp3s will be provided to assist you with at-home preparations.

- **Be alert at all times and in good posture when singing**

Listen at rehearsals, even when another section is being worked. Put your phone away. Be liberal with a pencil (marking lightly). When your section leader or any singer stands, it's time for you to do so.

- **Be courteous and supportive of fellow singers**

Don't take it personally if someone gently points something out to you. It is for the good of the group. On the same note, if someone does something well, tell them so!

- **Do not wear perfumes/colognes**

- **Take care of your voice and health**

- **Bring your musicality to the music before being asked!**

There is rarely a line in music that is not expressed musically. Always listen to each other - how are you doing things as a group and respond to each other. The conductor coordinates and encourages these things, but you are expected to bring them to the music first.

- **Take care of your music**

The Choral Arts music library is its most valuable asset after its singers. *Each singer is responsible for the replacement cost of damaged octavos or music not promptly returned at the end of each concert series.* This also applies to the CAE-owned black performance folders, which are returned at the end of the Season.

- **Advocate and Support**

Be an advocate for the arts in general and CAE in particular within the community. Support CAE by assisting with the Annual Benefit. CAE does not assess dues, so please consider supporting us with a financial gift instead.

Attendance

- The absence of even one singer can adversely affect the balance between sections or the tone within a section. Therefore, attendance at all rehearsals and performances of the choir is an obligation and requirement of membership. *Exceptions include noontime Charter House, Harmony for Mayo, or other ad hoc weekday performances. At those times, attendance is expected within the limits of workday obligations.*
- Missing even one rehearsal in a concert segment (usually seven weeks) affects the entire choir. If two are missed, you must meet with Ryan to discuss your music preparation status.
- Vocal illness of such severity as to make singing painful or harmful should be made known to Ryan and your section leader before rehearsal.
- Illness during which you were out of bed and working on the day of rehearsal should not prevent you from attending the rehearsal. You will learn much in this situation by being at the rehearsal (marking music and listening) and "sitting out." Again, please inform Ryan about the situation and condition.
- Any illness that prevents you from being at rehearsal should be reported to Ryan and your section leader.
- If you have an unresolvable schedule conflict, please alert Ryan and your section leader as soon as you are aware of the conflict.

- Should an absence occur, the singer is responsible for obtaining a summary of music matters covered, announcements, and copies of music and materials distributed.

Rehearsals

- A rehearsal schedule will be published before the start of the Season, and a [Google CAE Season calendar](#) is also available. Notice of changes to the rehearsal schedule will be given as far in advance as possible.
- Rehearsals will begin and end promptly at specified times and will include appropriate breaks.
- Always bring your folder with music, handouts, and pencils.
- Check for new music and other handouts when arriving for rehearsals. These can be found in your numbered file folder near the entrance of the rehearsal room.
- Before each rehearsal begins, please make it a practice to have "warmed up" individually and have music ready in rehearsal order. The rehearsal order will be posted at the front of the room.
- Use pencils (only) to mark your music with changes, problems, and other directions given by the conductor or your section leader during rehearsal.
- Learn your music (notes, rhythms, articulations, phrasings, pronunciations) and improve vocal skills (study of vowel and technique guides and individual voice lessons) between rehearsals.
- Whenever possible, you will be given a list of music that will be rehearsed the following week or special techniques to work on so your efforts can be concentrated.

Performances

- Be advised that you may appear in audio and video rebroadcasts on TV, the radio, or social media as part of your performances with the Choral Arts choirs. *Membership in Choral Arts implies consent and awareness that these appearances involve no compensation.*
- Concert call times are noted on the season schedule and the [Google CAE Season calendar](#). We will alternate which group has the earlier call time throughout the year. Call or bus departure times for out-of-town performances are noted on the season schedule. Any changes to the schedule will be noted in rehearsal.
- Please do not wear perfume or cologne during performances or in rehearsals. Also, be kind to those around you by taking care of what you eat before a performance.
- Be sure to turn off all cell phones, pagers, or watches that may make noise during performances.
- You must use the black choral performance folder provided by CAE (unless you own the exact folder personally). If you use a three-ring binder for rehearsal, you may three-hole punch your music unless told otherwise.
- Because each concert may be structured differently, you will be given information on when to raise and lower your folder for each concert series. In general, raise your folder when the conductor first steps on the podium and lower your folder when the conductor steps off the podium at the end of a section.