



**2024 - 2025 CONCERT SEASON
MEMBER HANDBOOK**

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**SNOHOMISH COUNTY YOUTH CHORUS
2024 - 2025 SEASON
MEMBER HANDBOOK**

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Welcome!

Welcome to the Snohomish County Youth Chorus. SCYC is a non-profit, non-auditioned, community-based youth chorus dedicated to the artistic and personal development of all children and youth who love to sing. We have been members of the Everett Chorale Association (ECA) since 2015. Our goal is to offer affordable, high-quality vocal instruction and outstanding performance opportunities to young people residing in Snohomish County and beyond.

In the 2024-25 season, SCYC will be divided into three choral ensembles:

- **Primo** - Kindergarten - Grades 2/3
- **Cantare** - Grades 3/4 - 8+ (treble voices)
- **Bella Coro** (*testing period - Fall Quarter 2024, details on p. 6*) – Grades 6-12 (treble voices)

Membership in SCYC is open to all interested singers who can commit to the terms of membership and the effort required to keep pace with the musical progress of the ensemble. All singers may have an initial and possibly subsequent voice assessments with the director to guide their successful participation. Exact placement of choristers will be determined as the director gets to know choristers and what level of instruction will benefit everyone the most. Families of third graders are especially encouraged to contact the Artistic Director to partner together to find the best placement for their student.

A voice assessment is a short, informal process that gives the director some idea of the vocal qualities and capabilities of individual singers. The director may vocalize a singer to assess range, color, and other vocal elements, then lead them through short sight-reading, rhythm, or pitch recall assessments. Having any difficulty with these components does *not* mean you can't join SCYC! But it does give the director important information about a singer's ability, and may lead to specific guidance for areas that require attention.

Details about rehearsal schedules are found on page 6 under "Rehearsals."

2024-2025 SCYC Concert Season: Song Quests

Season-at-a-Glance Calendar

Calendar is Subject to Change

Notes about the calendar:

“Relaxed Rehearsals” refer to rehearsals in which a greater than usual number of SCYC members are expected to be absent, usually due to holidays. These rehearsals still cover new material, but move at a gentler pace than regular rehearsals.

Spring Break – Because SCYC students come from several different school districts and not all school districts had released their calendars at the time of writing this year’s handbook, SCYC will *not* schedule a spring break week this program year. Some families will have spring break plans, which we understand! As usual, please let the director know in advance when you will be absent.

Thank-you Performance at Our Savior’s Lutheran Church – This is a chance to thank our rehearsal venue for the use of their facility during SCYC’s summer camp and rehearsals. This thank-you performance happens during a Sunday morning worship service; and though SCYC singers are *not* required to participate in aspects of the service that are unfamiliar or uncomfortable to them, they are expected to remain respectful. OSLC’s worship service is at 10AM; call time and other details TBD in coordination with OSLC staff.

TBD – Community Sing-Out – Sidequest: Story Songs & Dreams – This shorter community performance will borrow songs from our winter & spring quarters, giving SCYC members the opportunity to practice performing in a more informal setting. This will be scheduled during Winter Quarter; details will be announced ASAP.

Fall Quarter 2024 – Traditional Holiday Concert (title TBA)

2 September	Monday	ECA Meet and Greet Night
9 September	Monday	SCYC Rehearsals Begin
27 September	Friday	Fall Registration Closes
28 October	Monday	(Optional) Costumed Rehearsal Day!
11 November	Monday	Veteran’s Day – Relaxed Rehearsal
24 November	Sunday	Thank-you Performance at OSLC
7 December	Saturday	SCYC, Everett Chorale, Evergreen Community Orchestra Dress rehearsal at Everett Performing Arts Center
8 December	Sunday	Winter Performance with EC & ECO at EPAC
9 December	Monday	Quarter-End Celebration!

16 December 2024 through 6 January 2025 -- Winter break!

Winter Quarter 2025 – Bards of the Realm: Poetry, Story, & Song

6 January	Monday	Rehearsals Resume – Winter Quarter Orientation
20 January	Monday	Martin Luther King, Jr., Day – Relaxed Rehearsal
17 February	Monday	Midwinter Break – No SCYC Rehearsals
16 March	Sunday	SCYC Concert - Bards of the Realm – venue details TBA
17 March	Monday	St. Patrick’s Day + Quarter-End Celebration!

TBD – Community Sing-Out – Sidequest: Story Songs & Dreams – This shorter community performance will borrow songs from our winter & spring quarters, hopefully giving SCYC members the opportunity to practice performing in a more informal setting. This will be scheduled during Winter Quarter; details will be announced ASAP.

Spring Quarter 2025 – World Building

24 March	Monday	Rehearsals Resume – Spring Quarter Orientation
30 March	Sunday	<i>Everett Chorale - Flight: With the Angels</i> <i>SCYC not performing</i>
21 April	Monday	Monday After Easter – Relaxed Rehearsal
18 May	Sunday	SCYC Concert - World Building – venue details TBA
TBA June		EC + SCYC Dress Rehearsal
TBA June	Sunday	EC + SCYC Season Closer - Flight: Up & Away
16 June	Monday	Season-End Celebration!

August 2025 – SCYC Summer Camp – details TBA

Rehearsals

Rehearsal Schedule

Most SCYC rehearsals for the 2024-2025 season will take place at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Everett, WA, on Mondays starting 9 September 2024.

Choir	Description	Rehearsal Time
Primo	K - Grades 2/3	5:30 - 6:15pm
Cantare	Grades 3/4 - 8+	6:30 - 7:30pm
Bella Coro	Grades 6-12	7:30 - 8:00PM, with 7:00PM warm-up with Everett Chorale for high schoolers

SCYC is "beta testing" Bella Coro in Fall 2024!

Bella Coro has historically been SCYC's ensemble for grades 8-12, and has been on hiatus for 4 years. Bella Coro will be reopened for Fall 2024 in a trial phase for interested treble voices grades 6-12! While Cantare's focus is in building strong fundamentals in vocal production and music theory, Bella Coro rehearsals will move more quickly, with more complex repertoire and a greater focus on singing in parts. Because Fall 2024 will be a trial phase we may attempt a few different models, but this will be our first:

- All middle school students (grades 6-8) will attend Cantare rehearsals.

Interested middle school students are then invited to stay for Bella Coro's rehearsal at no extra cost during this trial phase.

- High school students (grades 9-12) are invited to join Everett Chorale's warm-ups at 7:00PM. They will then attend Bella Coro's rehearsal at 7:35PM.

We will re-evaluate this model both throughout and at the end of Fall Quarter to determine how best to continue forward.

*Middle and High School students are **not** required to participate in Bella Coro during this beta phase. If they would prefer to remain only in Cantare, they are welcome to!*

The ECA adult choir and our partner organization, Everett Chorale, will also meet on Mondays, starting at 7:00PM. All SCYC ensembles may occasionally have rehearsal overlap or even join rehearsals with the Chorale, beyond Bella Coro's weekly involvement.

Effort will be made to follow the year-at-a-glance schedule as closely as possible. Occasional changes to our rehearsal schedule, especially for any joint rehearsals with Everett Chorale or other SCYC ensembles, will be announced at least three weeks in advance.

Attendance

Attendance at rehearsals is of the utmost importance to prepare for quality performances and to make sure choristers all progress at similar paces. Parents/guardians are asked to notify the director in advance if a chorister will be absent for a rehearsal. Similarly, please notify the director at the beginning of the quarter if you have a conflict with a final rehearsal or concert call time.

If more than three rehearsals are missed throughout a quarter, or if a chorister has a conflict with the final rehearsal or a concert call time, the chorister, family, and director will confer; the chorister may be asked to excuse themselves from the performance, dependent on circumstances and at the discretion of the director. Attendance records will be maintained and monitored by the director in conjunction with the ECA board.

Rehearsal Etiquette

Maximum enjoyment of SCYC participation can be realized by all if members give their full attention to the director and the music, refrain from chit-chat with neighbors, and listen carefully to all instructions. This helps the group experience a smooth flow during the rehearsal and maintain steady progress in mastering their music. Members all want to have fun singing together!

Choristers are expected to be willing to learn and ready to listen. This will include following the director's, accompanist's, and classroom adults' directions at all times; respecting the physical space of fellow choristers; keeping track of one's own belongings; etc. Singers use their bodies a lot during rehearsal, and sometimes choristers will need to be able to quiet their bodies for specific exercises and pieces. Choristers are expected to give this their best effort.

Food and drink besides water are not allowed in rehearsal, except for medical reasons which must be discussed with the director ahead of time (can be marked on health release form when registering). Chewing gum and chewy fidget toys are not allowed during rehearsal for safety reasons. Water is allowed in a bottle.

Neurodivergent choristers and their families are especially encouraged to speak with the director about possible accommodations (ear plugs, fidgets, etc.) to help their chorister be successful.

Our goal is to curate a safe and compassionate rehearsal environment. Consistent disruptive behavioral issues, as well as any behaviors that put a chorister or their fellow choir members at risk, may lead to disciplinary actions such as probation, suspension, expulsion, etc., and will be carried out under the oversight of the SCYC Planning Team and ECA Board of Directors.

Sheet Music & Memorization

SCYC music will be learned either by rote or from sheet music loaned from the SCYC library. Students who wish to bring music home for at-home practice must provide a 3-ring binder. Pencil may be used to mark sheet music, but all marks, if possible, should be erased before the music is returned to the library. **Please do not use a highlighter or ink to mark music.**

A procedure for returning loaned music will be designated and communicated prior to the end of the quarter, or prior to performances. Pieces must be returned at the conclusion of a quarter or concert, or whenever a chorister leaves SCYC. In the event that a singer must drop out of SCYC prior to the performance, the singer must return loaned music to the director.

SCYC students are expected to memorize music for performances. In the event a singer has a learning condition that prevents or inhibits memorization, families are invited to discuss accommodations with the director. On the rare occasions that an ensemble must use sheet music, families will be asked to provide a plain black 3-ring binder or 3-ring choral folder for their singer.

Phones and Other Electronic Devices

As long as cell phones are not distracting, students are welcome to keep their phones or other electronic devices on their persons during rehearsal.

However, if electronic devices become a distraction or disruption in rehearsal, chorister phones and electronic devices may be kept in a basket near the front of the rehearsal space. (Exceptions will be allowed if a chorister continually uses an e-device to help monitor a medical condition, or if the director specifically invites students to document an element of rehearsal via photo, video, or audio recording.)

Classroom Adults

SCYC takes student safety seriously. To that end, we try to have a second adult in the classroom at every rehearsal. Often, these will be SCYC Planning Team or ECA Board members. But SCYC parents are also welcome to sign up! Please contact the director if you would like to be placed on the Classroom Adult rotation.

Performances

Schedule

The year-at-a-glance calendar shows the dates for our performances, which are also listed below. Sometimes SCYC is invited to sing at local events after the program year has begun. Any additional performance will be optional, and the Artistic Director or ECA board will make a reasonable effort to provide performance details to families as soon as they are available.

Currently, required performances are scheduled as follows:

Fall Quarter

- Sunday, 24 November 2024 – Thank-You Performance at OSLC
- Sunday, 8 December 2024 – Holiday performance with Everett Chorale & Evergreen Community Orchestra at Everett Performing Arts Center

Winter Quarter

- Sunday, 16 March 2025 – SCYC Concert “Bards of the Realm: Poetry, Story, & Song”; venue details TBA
- TBD – community performance – Side Quest: Story Songs & Dreams

Spring Quarter

- Sunday, 18 May 2025 – SCYC Concert “World Building”; venue details TBA
- Sunday, __ June 2025 – “Flight: Up & Away” Everett Chorale concert with SCYC participation at Everett Performing Arts Center

As mentioned elsewhere in the handbook, SCYC gives an annual thank-you performance at our host venue, Our Savior’s Lutheran Church, during one of their worship services. Though ECA understands that not every family may wish to participate in the service itself, we also acknowledge that we are guests in this space and expressing our gratitude is appropriate. Students and families are *not* required to participate in any parts of the service that are uncomfortable, but are asked to remain respectful. If you foresee concerns, please discuss with the director.

Soloists and Instrumentalists

The director determines the nature and composition of SCYC programs. Soloists and small ensembles may be selected from within or outside SCYC membership, and any auditions for these parts will be announced in advance by the director. Other local soloists and ensembles may be invited by the director to participate in our programs. Solo and small ensemble assignments may not be contested.

Stage Etiquette

SCYC sometimes performs on risers or stairs. A singer will notify the conductor of any reason they cannot be on a riser, use stairs, or stand for the length of a performance so that proper accommodations can be arranged with the venue.

When entering or leaving the stage with sheet music in 3-ring binders or 3-ring choral folders, performers should carry their black folders with their music in their upstage hand. Music should remain at their side until the director cues it to be raised.

When accompanist, orchestra, or soloists are performing alone, there is no need to follow along in the score unless directed to do so. Instead, turn pages to the next choral entrance and be prepared to sing on cue by the director. Skipping to the next vocal section can be assisted by paper clipping pages together. Singers should maintain eye contact with the director during performance.

Choristers should never chew gum on stage for safety reasons. Food, drink, and cell phones are not allowed on stage and should be left in the warm-up space.

Concert Dress Code

SCYC choristers are expected to wear “concert blacks” for concert performances.

What are concert blacks? Concert blacks are a type of uniform: all-black, logo-free, and head-to-toe -- socks and shoes included! Even with tights or leggings, knee length and longer skirts are recommended for chorister’s comfort as venues might have a variety of seating angles; reasonably modest necklines are recommended for similar reasons. As much as possible, concert blacks avoid sequins, heavy beading, and stiff metallic finishes to fabrics; they can be itchy for choristers. Hijabi choristers are encouraged to use black scarves for concerts. SCYC recommends close-toed shoes with 1.5 inch or shorter heels, both for comfort and for safety.

Still, concert blacks allow students to express some individuality while also ensuring a uniform look for performances. A choir presents an image as a whole ensemble, so concert blacks help ensure focus stays on the music that choristers have worked so hard to prepare rather than on whatever clothes they might be wearing. Acceptable outfits across genders include (assume all items are black):

- Trousers, button-down shirt, socks, tennis shoes with no visible logo
- Knee-length dress, leggings, cardigan, ankle boots
- Midi skirt, tights, plain t-shirt, ballet flats
- Slacks, polo, socks, oxford shoes
- And more!

Many different configurations of concert blacks exist! If unsure if a chorister's black clothes are appropriate for performance, please speak with the director.

Finding black clothes can sometimes be difficult. If a chorister needs assistance in obtaining appropriate concert blacks due to financial hardship or growth spurt, please let the director know as early in the season or quarter as possible.

Respiratory Health and Other Health Procedures

Everett Chorale Association takes the health of all our members seriously.

At SCYC, we recognize that even when community transmission rates are low for respiratory illnesses, we take certain health risks when we sing, due to the nature of singing as a “super spreader” activity. Starting in the 2021-2022 season, ECA formed a task force that did its best ever since to provide guidelines to help choristers and their families stay as safe as reasonably possible during ECA activities.

To that end, ECA sometimes has instituted rehearsal protocols that may at times include incorporating physical distancing and running a powerful air filter. Singers are asked to stay home when they feel ill, and to stay home if they become infected with COVID-19. When the director is ill, either a substitute director will run rehearsal, or rehearsal will be canceled. In this event or the event of chorister illnesses necessitating rehearsal cancellation, information will be sent to families as soon as is reasonable.

We want the medically vulnerable among us to be able to be full participants in our activities. To that end, SCYC choristers are encouraged but not required to seek vaccination for both flu and COVID-19 for the 2024-'25 Concert Season. Families are strongly encouraged to speak with their pediatricians about appropriate preventative health care for their chorister before the start of the season or quarter for which they are registered.

In the event of spikes in community transmission rates or hospitalizations/deaths caused by respiratory illnesses such as flu, RSV, and COVID-19, ECA Board of Directors may implement rehearsal risk mitigations to keep ECA members safe. These mitigations may include the wearing of well-fitting N95 or KN95 masks, or two surgical-style masks as a double layer. Such mitigations will be implemented in alignment with community transmission rates of illness, hospitalization rates, respiratory conditions, medically vulnerable membership, etc. Such mitigations and policies, though temporary, will be non-negotiable once implemented.

If risers or stairs are used in a performance venue, SCYC and the ECA will be in no way liable for injuries or death of a singer on or off the risers due to falls or other incidents.

In the event of any health emergency such as major injury or respiratory crisis, SCYC or ECA adults will contact emergency services. A health waiver regarding such emergencies is included as part of the online registration form to be submitted before the beginning of each quarter.

Tuition

The Everett Chorale and SCYC have the same tuition rates. Tuition for the 2024-2025 concert season will be \$80 per quarter. We have three quarters during the concert season.

Other Expenses

Students who wish to study music at home will be asked to provide their own 3-ring binder or 3-ring choral folder. Ensembles or singers who need sheet music during a performance will be asked to purchase and provide their own black 3-ring binder or 3-ring choral folder.

Sometimes, we are invited to area workshops or youth choir events. SCYC or the ECA will provide details about these optional opportunities, including any financial details, as quickly as possible.

It is possible that SCYC may offer t-shirts or other apparel for sale at some point in the concert season. If this happens, details will be communicated as early as possible.

Payment Schedule

Tuition must be paid no later than the first rehearsal of each quarter.

Financial Aid

The Everett Chorale Association uses federal guidelines for poverty in determining need-based financial aid. The financial aid application form is provided on the SCYC website, or

http://bit.ly/ECA_FinancialAid

Find federal poverty guidelines for 2023 at <https://bit.ly/2023PovertyGuidelines> or

<https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1c92a9207f3ed5915ca020d58fe77696/detailed-guidelines-2023.pdf>