



# MEMBER HANDBOOK

Welcome to the Q City Singers – Quesnel’s Community Choir!

The Q City Singers is a member-funded society with up to 65 members, featuring a diverse group of mixed voices and a broad range of skill and experience. We are united by our love of singing, and strive to learn and grow musically in a fun and inclusive environment.

Integrating our voices to deliver an artistic program requires discipline, commitment, and practice. We meet once a week for a 2-hour session under the guidance of the Conductor, and enhance our skills and efforts further through intensive workshops as scheduled. The Q City Singers is Quesnel’s Community Choir – we are dedicated to being involved in our local community both in the promotion of arts facilities and programming, and in “giving back” through local performances and events.

This handbook outlines some of the policies and guidelines of the society you need to be aware of as a member of the Q City Singers (QCS).

## MEMBERSHIP

The Choir consists of up to 65 members ages 16 and up. Although advanced musical training or solo voice ability is not required, choral experience and the ability to read music are considered assets. Each member's musical contribution is vitally important to our team effort.

The Choir's active season starts with the fall session from September to December and ends with the spring session from January to May. Member commitment is essential to a successful season. All Choir members are expected to be committed to the Choir, make every effort to attend all scheduled rehearsals and performances, and follow the policies and procedures of the Q City Singers Society.

## MEMBERSHIP FEES

### 1. Membership Fees

There is a \$20.00 non-refundable lifetime society membership fee for new members. Each session’s fees are \$70.00 and due by the 2<sup>nd</sup> rehearsal of the session. Members who wish to join mid-session may be accepted at the discretion of the conductor. Fees will be determined each year by the Board of Directors.

## 2. Sheet Music Deposit

Members must provide a payment in the amount of \$50 as a sheet music deposit. The deposit is refundable if sheet music and choral folders are returned in excellent condition; if the music and folder are not returned in excellent condition by the music return date, this deposit will not be returned.

- The music deposit will not be returned if:
  - o Music and folder are not returned by the date determined by the Board
  - o Pieces are missing when the music is returned;
  - o Physical damage has occurred to the sheet music or folder;
    - Includes rips, tears, stains, water damage, hole-punching, etc.
  - o Permanent markings are present (pen/highlighter/felt/etc.);
  - o Pencil markings are not erased.

## 3. Payments

Cash, cheque, and electronic fund transfers (EFT) are accepted by the Q City Singers.

- E-transfers should be directed to [qcitysingers@gmail.com](mailto:qcitysingers@gmail.com) for processing.
- The Society charges an additional fee of \$25.00 for any NSF payments that need to be replaced.

## 4. Refunds

Members who wish to leave the choir mid-season are entitled to a refund within 4 rehearsals of the session start date, assuming all QCS property is returned in good order; at any point thereafter, no refund shall be granted.

## ATTENDANCE

Choir members are expected to make the commitment to attend all rehearsals and perform in scheduled concerts and community events. Each voice is an important component of the Choir and is noticeably missed when a member is not in attendance. The schedule of major events for the year will be provided in September and January; if you are unable to commit to any of the core performance dates for the session, please see a member of the Board or the Conductor.

Throughout the season, events may be added to the Choir's schedule; those events may be attended on a volunteer basis, and will only be confirmed if enough members sign up to attend and there is appropriate balance in voicing among the volunteers.

**If you are sick and contagious, we ask that you stay away to avoid spreading illness among the members;** please mark your absence on the attendance sheet the following week. If you are not contagious, we encourage you to participate by listening so that you do not miss vital changes the Conductor may

make during the rehearsal.

Please note: Practices in advance of a performance are especially critical – if you miss any rehearsals ahead of a performance, your participation in the concert will be at the Conductor's discretion.

## REHEARSALS

Regular rehearsals are held on Monday evenings at Bethel Church, 143 Coach Rd N., in Quesnel. The doors open at 6pm, and rehearsal starts at 6:30pm. The rehearsals typically wrap up at 8:30pm, but may occasionally go a few minutes longer if we are really on a roll! On occasion there may be a change in date or location -- please watch for email and social media communication of any changes.

When you arrive to practice, be sure to sign the attendance sheet. Please do your best to be on time; arriving late is distracting to the choir and causes you to miss the warm-up, which is an important part of rehearsal. If you are late, please wait for a break in singing to enter the room and quietly find your seat.

Choir singing is a social past-time and choirs are full of social people. The camaraderie in a choir is an enjoyable and important aspect of a choir, and members are encouraged to get to know one another during breaks or in the time before and after the rehearsal. Please avoid chatting during rehearsal, as it causes a distraction to other singers.

We value our partnership with Bethel Church to provide rehearsal space for the choir; Members are expected to use the facility with care and clean up after themselves. If you rearrange furniture or other items, please move all venue items back to their original placement at the end of rehearsal.

## SCENT-FREE ENVIRONMENT

Please refrain from wearing perfume, cologne, after shave, scented hairspray or other heavily scented products during rehearsal or performances.

## SHEET MUSIC

The sheet music and choral folders loaned to singers are owned by the Choir, and we license the use of our music through the payment of royalties. Copyright laws must be observed at all times; unless specifically authorized by the publisher, Q City Singers is not permitted to scan, copy, or otherwise duplicate sheet music for distribution. The Society does not condone the illegal reproduction of sheet music.

Members must return folders and sheet music in their possession to the Choir at the end of the season, when their membership ceases, or at the request of the Board of Directors. Any member failing to return their sheet music or fail to return it in excellent condition may jeopardize current and future membership with the Choir.

**Sheet music and choral folders are a significant investment for the Choir; members are asked to respect this investment by taking excellent care of folders and music while these items are in their care.**

Markings and notes on sheet music should only be made with a soft pencil and **MUST be fully erased** before the sheet music is returned to the Choir. Permanent markings, such as pens, felts, and highlighters (including “erasable” highlighters) cause irreparable damage, and are not permitted to be used on Q City Singers sheet music. Music may not be hole-punched or otherwise damaged unless express permission is granted by the Board.

Choir members are responsible for the replacement cost of any music that is lost or irreparably damaged while in their possession that is valued above the music deposit amount. Members are strongly encouraged to contact the Board immediately if any sheet music in their possession is lost or damaged.

## SOLOS

From time to time our musical selections may feature solo parts. Q City Singers recognizes that soloists are a representation of the choir, and are dedicated to an equitable and democratic selection process for these parts. The conductor will develop and announce the selection process for available solo parts throughout the season. All singers interested in singing solo parts are encouraged to participate in auditions.

## COMMUNICATION AND RESOURCES FOR CHOIR MEMBERS

Each season, the Board publishes links to recorded rehearsal tracks and/or public domain rehearsal tracks (i.e., YouTube video) for all choir music (where available). Members are strongly encouraged to use this resource to practice on a regular basis. Once you are comfortable with your own part, try singing your part while playing a different part – this will help you learn how your part fits with the other lines in each piece.

The choir maintains an active social media presence on Facebook, and encourages members to “like” our public page to stay informed of activities and news, and to “share” our posts to help promote events within the Quesnel community. Content shared through social media is at the discretion of the Q City Singers social media manager(s). The choir sets up a private Facebook page for members each season, for the sharing of updates, pictures, soundbites, etc. – everyone is encouraged to take part in communications and regular updates.

The Q City Singers maintains an email list to communicate choir-related information to members. From time to time, we may also communicate information about events related to the Quesnel and District Arts Council, at the discretion of the Executive. Email lists will not be used to communicate non-related community events or information unless deemed appropriate by the Executive

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board is elected at the AGM and must have no fewer than 3, and no more than 11 directors. All Board positions are volunteer. At times the general membership will be asked to assist the Board so please consider helping out as needed.

## OPERATIONAL APPOINTMENTS

The musical leadership team consists of the Conductors, Accompanist(s), and Section Leaders.