

*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: St. Peter's Estonian Church  
6520 Oak St. (at 49<sup>th</sup> ave.)

### A few important requirements

- **Arrive on time.** Please arrive by 6:50pm so that you have time to pick up any 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 ahead of time. 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. Practice recordings (MP3 format) for all the parts to our songs are available via a Dropbox link provided weekly.
- **Check your email regularly.** Upon joining the choir for the term, you will be added to the Google Group email list [currentmembers@highspiritschoir.ca](mailto:currentmembers@highspiritschoir.ca) Please check your email for weekly rehearsal emails and other important announcements. You can also access all messages for this group via <https://groups.google.com>

### Fees

Choir dues are \$215 for the September to January term or February to June term. This includes the annual society fee of \$20. Once a term has started, fees for that term are non-refundable. Dues can be paid by cash, cheque or Visa/Mastercard. Cheques are payable to High Spirits Choir. Post-dated cheques are accepted.

### **Financial Subsidies for Singers**

Our policy is that *no singer* be excluded from the choir for reasons of financial hardship. Subsidies for choir fees are available upon request. If you need a subsidy, please contact our treasurer, Shelley Waldie, via [highspirits treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:highspirits treasurer@gmail.com)

### **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, folder, and concert attire.

### **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 Jen Balfour, our music librarian, at [highspiritslibrarian@gmail.com](mailto:highspiritslibrarian@gmail.com)

### **Choir Attire**

Men (major concerts and outreach performances): black slacks (not jeans), black or charcoal shirts, purple ties, black socks, and black shoes. The purple tie is supplied by the choir, along with a black or charcoal shirt if the singer does not have a suitable one of their own.

Women (major concerts): black slacks (not jeans) or below-the-knee black skirt, purple choir blouse (black blouse for female tenors), black opaque stockings (or knee-highs), and black shoes. The purple blouse (black for female tenors) is supplied by the choir.

Women (outreach concerts): black slacks (not jeans) or below-the-knee black skirt, black blouse/shirt, black opaque stockings (or knee-highs), and black shoes.

First time singers are asked to pay a \$35 costume fee, which helps the choir cover the costs of our concert attire.

### **Section Practices**

Three times each term, sections meet with lewa 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 lewa's house 333 Wethersfield Dr, just south of 49<sup>th</sup>/Alberta – Buzz #35, apartment 323

### **Workshops**

We have a workshop each term with a choir mentor, an accomplished choral conductor and teacher. 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, and we learn valuable new techniques and approaches to our music, which benefits the whole choir. The cost of the workshop is included in your term fees.

### **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.

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 \$1.50. 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 a minimum of 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 Jen Balfour, Membership Coordinator, anytime at [highspiritsmembership@gmail.com](mailto:highspiritsmembership@gmail.com)

### Volunteers

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 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 Kate Chang at [highspiritspresident@gmail.com](mailto:highspiritspresident@gmail.com).

### 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. If you would like information about joining the board, please speak to any member of the board.

President:	Kate Chang
Secretary:	Nadine Gomm
Treasurer:	Shelley Waldie
Membership:	Jen Balfour
Member-at-Large:	Gail Wynston

### 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:	Pat Dutcher-Walls
Alto:	Megan Reiter
Tenor:	Rob Shaw
Bass:	Alaric Posey

### Other Volunteer Positions

Music Librarian	Jen Balfour
Fundraising	Vacant
Costume Coordinator	Vacant
Assistant Concert Coordinator	Vacant
Webmaster	Jen Balfour
Graphic Designer/Desktop Publisher	Andy Rose / Jen Balfour
Preparation of practice files for website	Alaric Posey
Risers Set-up (for performances)	<b>*Volunteers needed at concert time*</b>
Ushers (for performances)	<b>*Volunteers needed at concert time*</b>
Snack Bar Coordinator	Pat Dutcher-Walls

**If you are able to volunteer for any of these vacancies, or have other skills that may be beneficial to the choir, please contact Kate Chang at [highspiritspresident@gmail.com](mailto:highspiritspresident@gmail.com).**