

Welcome to the Ypsilanti Community Choir!

Whether you are a returning member or you're joining us for the very first time, we are delighted that you are here and have chosen to share your time and talent with us. We want you to experience the art of wonderful music-making in an atmosphere that is positive, professional, and fun!

Hopefully, this handbook will answer all your questions, but if you have others, please don't hesitate to reach out to a board member.

Membership

By joining YCC, you are agreeing to participate in the following ways:

1. Attend regular rehearsals, missing fewer than half of them.
2. Be punctual for and attentive at all rehearsals.
3. Arrive for all performances on time, prepared, and wearing the requested concert attire.
4. Return music in good condition.
5. Make a musical contribution to the choir.

Registration & Dues

If you're new, you'll be asked to complete a registration form at the first rehearsal. Please fill it out completely and legibly. (Returning members: Please make sure the information on your preprinted form is correct.) Virtually all communications are handled via email, so it's vital that we have your correct email address.

Dues are \$35 per semester. This nominal fee helps to cover the expenses of music, stipends for our leaders (everything else is done by volunteers), and auditorium rental.

Please make checks payable to "Ypsilanti Community Choir" or YCC. or You're more than welcome to pay with cash, but please bring the exact amount. Volunteers handling registration won't have change, so if you bring \$40 instead of \$35, the \$5 difference will be considered a tax-deductible contribution and will be noted as such on your receipt.

Note: While YCC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, dues payments are not deductible; additional contributions are.

Please take care of your registration and dues no later than the third rehearsal.

Rehearsals

Rehearsals are held in the choir room of Emmanuel Lutheran Church, located at 201 North River Street in Ypsilanti. The choir room is located at the back of the building on the lower level. Rehearsals run from 7:30-9:00 pm.

Prospective members are welcome to attend a rehearsal to see how they fit.

Fall rehearsals begin in mid-September in preparation for a December concert.
Winter/spring rehearsals begin in mid-January in preparation for a May concert.

Attendance policy: Members must attend at least 50% of all rehearsals in a given semester in order to be included in the concert.

Note: Please, no fragrances. Anything (cologne, hairspray, body lotion, anything) with a scent will affect singers with sensitivities. Just don't do it. This applies to both rehearsals and performances.

Fall 2018 YCC Rehearsal Schedule

September 13, 20, 27

October 4, 11, 18, 25

November 1, 8, 15, 29 (No rehearsal November 22, Thanksgiving Day)

December 6

December 13: CONCERT!

CONCERT ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 7:30 pm

Inclement Weather

Occasionally (maybe three times in the last 30 years), we've had to cancel a rehearsal due to the weather. If this happens, we'll try to make the decision and let you know—via email—as early in the day as possible. So, if you think the weather looks threatening enough that rehearsal might be cancelled, check your email!

Never, ever put yourself in danger trying to get to rehearsal. We understand that the weather where you are may be different than the weather in Ypsilanti.

Accessibility

The elevator entrance to Emmanuel Lutheran Church is at the back of the building, toward the north end of the lot. Unfortunately, there's no bell or buzzer at that entrance, so pre-arrangement with a member is highly recommended. You could also try phoning a member's cell phone (listed on the roster).

Towsley Auditorium is totally accessible.

Communication

Virtually our only means of communication is via email. If you don't have—or don't regularly check—email, please make sure that you have a “choir buddy” who'll keep you apprised of any information communicated via email.

You can count on receiving regular emails about rehearsals, special performances, concert order, call time, attire, etc. These are for your information and convenience and will echo handouts and announcements at rehearsals. Please read them—all of them!

YCC Online

Website

Please visit this site often and encourage your friends to do the same. If you discover an error, please let a board member know.

Facebook

YCC maintains a Facebook page, and an "event" is created every time we have a concert. Please invite your friends to those events, and share them on your timeline.

The YCC calendar is also available via the Facebook page.

Please visit the page often and encourage your friends to do the same. If you discover an error, please let a board member know.

YouTube

Many previous YCC concerts can be found on YouTube.

Promoting the Choir

It's incredibly difficult to get good publicity, and paid advertising is outrageously expensive. We post YCC concerts on numerous online calendars; and all local media are contacted, as are senior centers, churches, and representatives from music departments in the local educational institutions.

But our best promoters are you—each and every one of you. It's important for all members to make a sincere effort to spread the word about our public performances. There are many (painless) ways to do this. They are all important and work together to build our audience.

Here's how you can help:

Tell your friends, family, etc. Word-of-mouth is THE most effective way to fill the house.

Invite your friends to "like" us and widely share our event information on Facebook.

Share the poster PDF via email and the JPG on your Facebook timeline. Both of these will be provided prior to each concert.

Distribute postcards, either by mailing them to friends or taking them to meetings, rehearsals, etc.

Put up posters. Think about the places you regularly patronize. Many of them will be happy to display a poster.

Performance Attire

Whether your chorus has 10 singers or 110, what those singers wear matters. The overall look should complement, not distract from, the music and communicate a certain level of seriousness, or as one choral conductor quipped, "not like you just walked in off the street." —Chorus America

We understand that everyone's on a budget, so please don't feel you need to buy any top-of-the-line clothing! There are many thrift and resale shops in Washtenaw County, and our required attire is often available there for just a few dollars.

Formal Concerts

Women: All black. Black blouse with black skirt or long pants. If you choose to wear a short(er) skirt, please wear black hosiery.

Men: Black tuxedo, dark suit, or dark sport coat/pants with white shirt and dark tie.

Informal Performances

All: YCC shirt/blouse or PLAIN white shirt/blouse (no logo t-shirts, slogan t-shirts, etc.), long khaki (tan, beige, etc., NOT dark) pants.

Outdoor Winter Appearances

Wear whatever the weather dictates!

Concert Etiquette

Folders. When entering or exiting the stage, please carry your music folder in the hand away from the audience. This is a universal truth.

Risers. When you reach your place on stage, please step forward as far as possible. The men on the top tier will thank you.

No fragrances. Anything (cologne, hairspray, body lotion, anything) with a scent will affect singers with sensitivities. Just don't do it. This applies to both rehearsals and performances

While we're singing. Look up and watch the conductor! Smile and share your joy of singing with the audience!

At the end of each song. The piece isn't over until the conductor has dropped her arms. Stay frozen till then.

Soloists

When music calls for a soloist, Ariel will hold auditions about three weeks prior to the concert. Auditioning is strictly voluntary.

Music

All music is provided by, and remains the property of, YCC. This is one of our biggest expenditures, and we can't afford to lose it. Each member is expected to return all music—in good condition—at the end of each season (or earlier if s/he needs to drop out mid-semester).

We encourage you to make notes in your music in soft pencil, which can be easily erased. (If you want to erase your markings before returning your music, that would be great; but it's not necessary.)

PLEASE do not permanently alter the music in any way. For instance,

No pen or highlighter.
No dog-earing of music.
No red pencil.

Music Folders

Plain black folders are required for concerts. YCC folders are not required, but members opting not to purchase an "official" folder must use a plain (no logos, designs, etc.) black folder. Black YCC folders are available for \$25, which is our cost. There may be a few free (used) folders as well, so please ask if you'd like one.

Fundraising

As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, YCC welcomes all contributions. Happily, YCC has always been able to depend on the generous contributions of our community. Those funds have made it possible for us to grow—both musically and in numbers—since 1983. Every effort—YOUR effort—is important!!

Ways You Can Help:

Make a personal, financial contribution in addition to your dues. The Board thanks all members for their participation and for their financial support!
Encourage your friends and family to both attend concerts and make tax-deductible contributions to YCC.

Consider your personal and professional contacts. Are you on a board? Do you have a friend who's a business owner? Does your dentist, doctor, etc. support community organizations? Those are great sources for concert sponsorships (\$1,000) and for general contributions. If you have a lead and would prefer not to be the contact yourself, please see a board member.

When you shop on Amazon, use smile.amazon.com, rather than amazon.com. The first time you do, you'll be able to choose the Ypsilanti Community Choir as the charity you want to support. Every time you sign into your Amazon account using smile.amazon.com, you'll see a message beneath the search box, saying "Supporting: Ypsilanti Community Choir." We don't earn a lot this way, but it's something.

Other Ways We Raise Money:

Each spring, Haab's Restaurant in Downtown Ypsilanti holds a fundraiser for us. We get 10% of all the day's sales. The only thing required of us is to increase their number of customers on the designated Sunday. The more people they feed, the more we receive.
We are sometimes paid for our informal performances, Christmas tree lightings in Downtown and Depot Town, for instance.

Occasionally, we're "hired" by a group—a senior citizens residence, for instance.