



**ELK ISLAND REGIONAL HONOUR
CHOIRS ASSOCIATION**

**CHORISTER
HANDBOOK**

2019/2020

www.elkislandchoirs.ca

Welcome to the Elk Island Regional Honour Choirs Association!

This organization has been in existence since 1984, and currently operates three auditioned choirs for students residing in Strathcona County and surrounding areas.

The choirs exist to enrich the musical experience of gifted amateur singers and are funded in part by membership fees, fundraising, and contributions from both local and provincial arts funding organizations.

This handbook is designed to prepare singers and their parents for the coming year of music-making, and to answer some frequently asked questions.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Elk Island Regional Honour Choirs Association is to promote excellence in musical education by establishing and maintaining a choir or choirs composed of gifted and interested children selected from students residing in Strathcona County and surrounding areas in the province of Alberta.

THE CHOIRS

All of the choirs are auditioned choirs and consist of some of the finest young singers in this area. There is some overlap between the choirs to accommodate singers of varying maturity and experience level. If you have any questions about your child's transition between choirs, please discuss this with your child's musical director.

TINY TREBLES HONOUR CHOIR

Singers in Kindergarten – Grade 2

MONDAY Rehearsals

5:35pm-6:20pm

FR HAYTHORNE JR HIGH SCHOOL

300 Colwill Blvd, Sherwood Park, AB

JUNIOR HONOUR CHOIR

Singers in Grades 3-6

MONDAY Rehearsals

4:30pm-5:30pm

FR HAYTHORNE JR HIGH SCHOOL

300 Colwill Blvd, Sherwood Park, AB

SECONDARY HONOUR CHOIR

Singers in Grades 7-12

MONDAY Rehearsals

6:30pm-8:00pm

FR HAYTHORNE JR HIGH SCHOOL

300 Colwill Blvd, Sherwood Park, AB

IMPORTANT CALENDAR DATES

Choir registration & Audition day	Sunday, September 8, from 2:00-4:00pm @ Sound Lab Studios, 195 – 130 Broadway Blvd, Sherwood Park
Tiny Treble Choir rehearsals start	Monday, September 9, from 5:35 - 6:20pm @ FR Haythorne Jr High School
Junior Choir rehearsals start	Monday, September 9, from 4:30pm - 5:30pm @ FR Haythorne Jr High School
Secondary Choir rehearsals Start	Monday, September 9, from 6:30pm – 8:00pm @ FR Haythorne Jr High School
Annual General Meeting	Monday, September 30, doors open at 6:30 for raffle ticket distribution, meeting 7:00-8:00pm @ FR Haythorne School in the library Attendance is <u>REQUIRED</u> by at least one parent per family!
Casino	Saturday, Dec 7 & Sunday, Dec 8, 2019 @ Camrose Casino
Christmas Concert	Monday, December 9, 2019 from 7pm-8pm @ Bethel Lutheran Church, Sherwood Park [See FAQ page for address]
Choir Photo Day (<u>Please wear your choir t-shirt</u>)	February – date TBA
Camp Nakamun Choir Retreat	Tuesday & Wednesday, February 25 & 26, 2020 Junior Choir – Wednesday, Feb 26 only (one day trip) Secondary Choir – Feb 25-26 (overnight)
IMAGINE Concert & Silent Auction	Monday, March 9, 2020, from 7pm-9pm @ Festival Place, Sherwood Park [See FAQ page for address]
Spring Concert	Monday, May 11, 2020, from 7pm-8pm @ McDougall United Church, Edmonton [See FAQ page for address]

Rehearsals Dates, Concerts and Fundraisers

2019

Sunday, September 8, Auditions & Registration Day

September 9, 16, 23, 30

October 7, 21, 28

November 4, 18, 25

December 2, (concert on December 9)

2020

January 6, 13, 20, 27

February 3, 10, 24

March 2, Sunday 8, 16 (concert on March 9)

April 6, 20, Sunday 26, 27

May 4 (concert on May 11)

Concerts:

Christmas Concert Monday, December 9, 2019

Bethel Lutheran Church

Imagine Concert Monday, March 09, 2020

Festival Place

Spring Concert Monday, May 11, 2020

McDougall United Church

Camp Nakamun Workshop

Tuesday, Feb 25 & Wednesday Feb 26, 2020 (Secondary Choir overnight)

Wednesday, Feb 26, 2020 (Junior day trip)

Junior Choir School Tours

December 6, 2019 & May 8, 2020

Casino

Saturday, Dec 7 & Sunday, Dec 8, 2019 @ Camrose Casino

Bottle Drive Fundraiser & New Fundraiser

TBA (usually fall and spring)

Annual General Meeting

Attendance is REQUIRED by at least one parent per family.

Monday, Sept 30, 2019



REGISTRATION AND FEES



Registration day is on SUNDAY, September 8, 2019 from 2:00-4:00pm @ Sound Lab Studios, 195 – 130 Broadway Blvd, Sherwood Park

Choristers who have not pre-registered in the spring are required to register on this day. If you are unable to attend this day, completed registration forms & payment can be mailed to PO Box 57131 RPO Eastgate, Sherwood Park, AB, T8A 5L7, or emailed to elkislandchoirs@gmail.com prior to Sept 9.

Fee Information and Payment Policy

Registration fees are established by the Volunteer Executive and are reviewed annually. Registration fees represent less than half the full cost of a singer's participation in the choir. Additional funding is provided through operating grants and occasional special funding (concert ticket sales, casino, bursaries, donations, etc.).

Full payment must accompany the singer's registration form. The full registration fee will be required no later than September 30th. Any fees received after September 30 will be subject to a \$25 late penalty fee. **Payment options include cash or cheque or e-transfer. Please make cheques payable to EIRHCA.**

To qualify for the **early registration** discount of 5%, forms and fees must be received by May 31.

E-transfers can be sent to elkislandchoirs@gmail.com Make the security question: What is this for? And the security answer: **choirs** *Be sure to include your chorister's name in the information section so our bookkeeper knows whose account to apply the funds to.

In the event of unforeseen circumstances, please contact the Choir Manager. Failure to contact the Choir Manager on or before September 30th may result in the temporary suspension or expulsion of the Choir member from the Choir.

A \$25.00 NSF charge will apply to any dishonored cheques. The EIRHCA reserves the right to insist upon full fee payment in the event any cheque is returned.

TINY TREBLES CHOIR \$350 (\$332 – early registration)

- Included in the annual fee is a Tiny Trebles Choir T-shirt and Choir photo

JUNIOR CHOIR \$395 (\$375 – early registration)

- Included in the annual fee is a Junior Choir T-shirt, Choir photo, and 2 school tour day field trips.
- *Costs for any other day trips and choir retreat are not included in annual fees.

SECONDARY CHOIR \$420 (\$399 – early registration)

Music Deposit **\$ 50 (postdated cheque dated June 1,2020)**

- Included in the annual fee is an Intermediate Choir T-shirt and Choir photo
- *Costs for touring, field trips and/or retreats are not included in annual fees.

*You will be informed of any trip costs once they have been confirmed. Optional fundraising opportunities will be available to offset these costs for the Choir members.

COMMUNICATION



The Directors, Manager and a Volunteer Executive operate the Choirs. Please direct all questions and concerns that arise during the year to the following:

Choir Directors

Leesila Dawkins – leesila99@gmail.com

TINY TREBLES CHOIR

Leesila Dawkins – leesila99@gmail.com

JUNIOR CHOIR

Angela McKeown- amckeown@ualberta.ca

SECONDARY CHOIR

The Choir Directors will also be available to you in person at the end of each choir rehearsal.

Choir Accompanists

Grace Huang- gmhaung@gmail.com

TINY TREBLES CHOIR

Grace Huang- gmhaung@gmail.com

JUNIOR CHOIR

Laura Lillies- laura.lillies@telus.net

SECONDARY CHOIR

Choir Manager

Laurie Christiansen – manager.elkislandchoirs@gmail.com

Phone# 780-257-5959

Bookkeeper

Pam White- pmwhite2009@hotmail.com

cell# 780-937-3431

Elk Island Choirs Website: www.elkislandchoirs.ca

Please check our website. All important dates and general information can be found on our website.

Elk Island Choirs Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/elkislandchoirs>

Be sure to “like” & “follow” our Facebook page and Instagram page as they are a great source of updated choir information.



Email: elkislandchoirs@gmail.com

Be sure to check your emails regularly for news from your Choir Director or the Choir Manager. Important dates and information will be sent to the email address you provide on your registration form.



Mail:

The mailing address for the choir is **PO Box 57131 RPO Eastgate, Sherwood Park, AB, T8A 5L7.**

The Wittenberg Scholarship

The Wittenberg family set up The Wittenberg Scholarship in Honour of their daughter Stephanie who was killed in a tragic car accident. Stephanie was a member of the Elk Island Choirs who loved music and singing. In her memory, the scholarship is used to fully or partially offset the cost of registration for families who may have difficulty paying. Thank you to the family for sharing Stephanie's love for music through this annual scholarship in her name. Please contact the Choir Manager for more scholarship information. Applications for funding are reviewed by the Board. **The cut-off date is Sept 30.** A Board member will contact you directly with the decision.

Cancellation/Refund Policy



All choir membership refunds are pro-rated over a period of 9 months (September – May). Reimbursement of remaining fees will take effect the 1st day of the following month after cancellation notification was given (please refer to below scenarios). All refunds are subject to a \$50 processing fee. **There will be no refunds beyond October 31.** (Note: Extenuating circumstances will be considered by the Board on a case by case basis)

Example: “Kelly” withdraws from choir on Oct 12 and “Jennifer” withdraws on Oct 31. They are each considered to have been in the choir September and October and receive 7/9's of their registration fees back. (ie. A secondary choir registration of \$420 would receive a refund of \$327 minus the \$50 processing fee for a total refund of \$277).

Attendance Policy

- ❖ **It is very important that choir members attend regularly, since a choral rehearsal teaches not only the music, but blends the sounds of the singers over time.** Singers or parents are expected to notify their director in advance for any planned absences from rehearsals or performances. In the event of an unplanned absence (illness or emergency) singers or parents must notify their director as soon as possible
- ❖ **If any member misses more than two rehearsals without proper notification, their membership will be reviewed.** We realize that singers are talented and often very busy people. Arrangements can be discussed with the Directors to accommodate sports or other arts activities that might otherwise prevent someone from being part of the choir or from attending regular rehearsals.

Behavior Policy

- ❖ Disruptive or rude behavior will not be tolerated.
- ❖ **FIRST offence-** a verbal warning will be given.
- ❖ **SECOND offence-** the parents will be notified.
- ❖ **THIRD offence-** membership will be reviewed, with the chance of the choir member being suspended or expelled from the choir.

EXPECTATIONS

Singers:

As a choir member I understand that:

- I am an ambassador for Elk Island Regional Honour Choirs and am expected to show pride in the choir.
- I will accept my placement in the choir and make every effort to participate in all rehearsals and performances.
- I will notify the Director in advance for any planned absences from rehearsals or performances. In the event of an unplanned absence (illness or emergency), I will notify the director as soon as possible.
- I will show respect for my fellow choir members, the Director, Accompanist, Manager, and Supervisors.
- I will exercise self-disciplined behavior at all times during rehearsals and performances.
- I will adhere to the choir attendance policy and always give my best effort.
- **I will make my parents aware of all Choir newsletters and/or other printed information received at rehearsal or from the website (www.elkislandchoirs.ca)**
- Failure to comply with the above expectations could jeopardize my participation in the choir.

Parents:

As a parent of a choir member I understand that:

- ❖ I am responsible to ensure that my child has transportation to and from all rehearsals, performances and festivals, paying due attention to drop-off and pick-up times.
- ❖ I am responsible for notifying the Director in advance for any planned absences for my child. In the event of an unplanned absence (illness or emergency), I will notify the director as soon as possible.
- ❖ **I am to attend the Annual General Meeting on Monday, September 30, 2019.**
- ❖ **I am to check the website (www.elkislandchoirs.ca) on a regular basis for updated choir information and read all choir emails and newsletters received by my child.**
- ❖ I will ensure that my child understands the commitment she/he is making and the importance of self-disciplined behavior at all times during rehearsals and performances.
- ❖ I recognize that this Choir Association is run by volunteers and that the success of the same is based upon the participation and cooperation of all members. I will consider being available to volunteer to help ensure my child has the best choral experience possible
- ❖ I undertake to pay the Choir membership fees established by the Elk Island Regional Honour Choirs Association in accordance with the payment policy.

Elk Island Regional Honour Choirs Association:

As the EIRHC Association:

- ✓ We will provide training and instruction in both the theoretical and practical principles of music, with particular emphasis on choral music and its performance. To this end, we will provide highly qualified Directors and Accompanists.
- ✓ We will work to operate a viable and efficient volunteer organization in support of the artistic and educational goals of the choirs.
- ✓ We will update our website; provide newsletters and/or other electronic/printed announcements to ensure adequate communication between the Association and Choir families.
- ✓ We will manage the choir's financial affairs prudently and diligently. Such management to include; fundraising, applying for government funding grants, as available, and the timely collection of fees.

DRESS CODE

Choristers are required to follow a dress code for all performances. The Directors will inform choristers and parents of specifics prior to each concert. Please read over the following carefully.

CASUAL



The Choir Association will provide a choir t-shirt to all registered choristers. The choir t-shirt, together with jeans, comprises the casual dress code for all choirs at functions such as school tours and The Imagine Concert.

FORMAL



Certain choir performances during the season will require formal attire. Some items will be provided by the Association and some are to be provided by the chorister. For example, choristers may be asked to wear their own, all-black, dress attire or a choir robe provided by the association.

If you are unsure, please check with your child's Choir Director for further instruction.

Touring & Day Trips

The choir association has included touring in their roster of activities. Each choir tours at a level that is appropriate to their age group. Additional fundraising opportunities may be provided, particularly for out-of-province tours.



Secondary Choir - every second year is a touring year. Last year the choir travelled to Vancouver BC on April 11-14, 2019.

The Junior Choir - participate in 2 school tour day trips. School tours help to showcase our singers and attract new members from within the school system.

FUNDRAISERS

Registration fees do not cover all costs of the EIRHCA, therefore the association must rely on **grants** and **special funding** that is applied for throughout the choir year.



Fundraising is another way for the association to acquire the necessary funds to keep things running. It is necessary for choristers and their families to participate in these fundraising opportunities so the association will continue to have the funds to provide outstanding musical education for all choristers.

Fundraising opportunities this year will include:

- **Casino**
- **Raffle Tickets**
- **Bottle Drive(s)**
- **Silent Auction** – Our Imagine Concert is a massive undertaking and the Silent Auction is something we are very proud of. In order to make it a first class event, we require GREAT Silent Auction items and we count on the generosity of our choristers and their parents to help us find these items.
- **Sponsorship/Advertising**- Choristers will obtain a 25% chorister credit for any advertising they bring in for the concert programs. This credit can be used towards registration fees, Camp Nakamun or towards any other tours.

Please watch for more information about these fundraisers as the choir year unfolds.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

Where do I find information or forms I may need?

All information and forms are posted on our website: www.elkislandchoirs.ca or you can contact the Choir Manager Laurie Christiansen at 780-257-5959 or email manager.elkislandchoirs@gmail.com.
Be sure to follow our Facebook page for up to date information.



Can anybody sing in the choirs?

All three levels of choir are auditioned. Your child must audition for the Director before being allowed to sing with Elk Island Regional Honour Choirs Association.

Why do I need to give a postdated cheque dated June 1st for a music deposit fee for SECONDARY choir?

We pay a steep fee for all music, and any music we lose must be replaced. Over the past several years there has been an incline of non-returned music, causing us to impose the music deposit fee. Failure to return all of your music will result in your cheque being cashed. **This applies to secondary choir only**

How is the choir association funded?

We are funded through operating grants from various government agencies, concert ticket revenue, fundraising revenue, chorister registration fees, as well as casino funds (every three years).

What is a chorister credits account?

A portion of the money raised by your chorister from certain fundraisers such as Sponsorship (advertising in the concert programs) will go into a special account just for them. This money may be used to help pay for registration fees, touring, or other choir activities. Any unused money from these accounts will go to the Wittenberg Scholarship Fund if your child is not returning. If your child is returning these funds will be held in his/her account for the following choir year. If at any time you would like to know what the balance is in your chorister's fundraising account, please contact the bookkeeper.

Will my child go on a major tour during the choir year?



Every level and every year is different but the general rule is that the Secondary Choir tours every other year. The Junior Choir will do various day tours or camps with no overnight trips. All tours are left to the discretion of the directors and are optional for the choristers. Choir fees do not include tours. Last year the Secondary Choir travelled to Vancouver, BC from April 11-14, 2019.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS continued...



Who gets to volunteer? What are the Volunteer opportunities?

This association depends on volunteers to make it a success. We hope that you will consider volunteering on a regular or as-needed basis, depending on your interests and availability. Please take the time to fill in the back portion of the registration form. All members are invited to volunteer.

Where will the Choir Concerts be located and how do I get there?

1. Christmas Concert – Bethel Lutheran Church

298 Bethel Drive
Sherwood Park, 780-417-7775

2. Imagine Community Concert- Festival Place

100 Festival Way
Sherwood Park, 780-464-2852

Please note that Festival Way is a one way street and the only access is from Sherwood Drive (at the corner of the Sherwood Park Mall).



3. Spring Concert - McDougall United Church

10025 100 Street
Edmonton, 780-428-1818

The church is one block south off Jasper Avenue/100 Street Downtown. It's across the street from the Crowne Plaza Hotel and AB College Campus.

Why are concert start times at 7:00pm as opposed to being earlier so my child can get to bed earlier?

We need to start at 7:00pm so all three levels of choir have sufficient time to run a very quick sound check. If we started any earlier we would be faced with choristers not being ready on time.

Why do I need to contribute an item to the silent auction?

The silent auction, held in conjunction with our Imagine Concert, is one of the choir's main fundraisers of the year. Not only does it raise funds for the choir, but a portion of the proceeds goes to a local charity or non-profit organization in our community. We encourage our choristers to be active members in our community and this benefit concert allows them to do so. All choir families are encouraged to donate an item of \$25 value or more to the silent auction.

Why are some concerts in Edmonton rather than Sherwood Park?

Acoustically Sherwood Park does not really have a venue for choral singing. Venues that work best are old style churches with wooden pews. Places like Festival Place and Sherwood Park Alliance are beautiful facilities but they are better suited for heavily micro phoned performances and do not lend themselves for optimal performance spaces for our choristers.