



**ELK ISLAND REGIONAL HONOUR
CHOIRS ASSOCIATION**

**CHORISTER
HANDBOOK**

2020/2021

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

5:30 pm-6:00 pm

ONLINE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

JUNIOR HONOUR CHOIR

Singers in Grades 3-6

MONDAY Rehearsals

5:30 pm – 6:00 pm

ONLINE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

SECONDARY HONOUR CHOIR

Singers in Grades 7-12

MONDAY Rehearsals

6:30pm-8:00pm

ONLINE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

EVENT	DATE & TIME	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	EXTRA REQUIREMENTS
CHOIR REGISTRATIONS AUDITIONS	Mid-August through September 13, 2020	ONLINE	New chorister auditions. Please contact Choir Manager to book.	
DROP OFF REGISTRATIONS (DEADLINE SEPT. 13/20)	Wednesday August 26, 2020 4:00 – 8:00 pm	Sherwood Park Farmers Market, Canadian Tire Emerald Hills	Registration Form Drop off. Payments accepted by check only. E-transfer available.	Registrations can also be mailed or dropped off in mailbox at 44 Glenwood Drive
FALL BOTTLE DRIVE	Thursday September 10, 2020 5:00 – 7:00 pm	Fir Street Bottle Depot 979 Fir Street (near Wye Road)	Truck will be sitting outside the bottle depot. Place your bags into the truck.	
TINY TREBLES/JUNIOR CHOIR REHEARSALS BEGIN	Monday September 14, 2020 5:30 – 6:00 pm	ONLINE	Watch for further information from your Choir Director.	
SECONDARY CHOIR REHEARSALS BEGIN	Monday September 14, 2020 6:30 – 8:00 pm	ONLINE	Watch for further information from your Choir Director.	
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING	Monday September 28, 2020 7:00 – 8:00 pm	ONLINE	Watch for an on-line invitation from the Choir Manager	Attendance is required by at least one parent per family.

THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES ARE TENTATIVE AND PENDING CLEARANCE FOR RESUMPTION OF GROUP IN-PERSON GATHERINGS. DECISION WILL BE MADE BY CHRISTMAS.

TINY TREBLES/JUNIOR CHOIR REHEARSALS	Monday January 11, 2021 Times TBA	Sound Lab Studios 130 Broadway Blvd. Sherwood Park, AB		
SECONDARY CHOIR REHEARSALS	Monday January 11, 2021 Times TBA	Sound Lab Studios 130 Broadway Blvd. Sherwood Park, AB		
CHOIR PHOTO DAY	February, 2021 Details TBA	TBA	Choristers should wear their choir t-shirts.	

CAMP NAKAMUN SECONDARY CHOIR RETREAT	Tuesday & Wednesday February 23/24, 2021 (overnight)	Camp Nakamun Busby, Alberta	Retreat at the camp for music workshops and recreational activities.	Elk Island Choirs covers half of the cost. Approximate remaining cost per chorister is \$120.00.
CAMP NAKAMUN JUNIOR CHOIR RETREAT	Wednesday February 24, 2021 8:00 am – 6:30 pm	Camp Nakamun Busby, Alberta	Music workshops and recreational activities at the camp.	Elk Island Choirs covers half of the cost. Approximate remaining cost per chorister is \$50.00
SILENT AUCTION	March, 2021	Virtual	Watch for further details from Choir Manager	Choristers are required to donate a silent auction item worth a minimum of \$25.
EASTER BOTTLE DRIVE	April, 2021 (TBA) 5:15 – 7:00 pm	TBA		
JUNIOR CHOIR SCHOOL TOUR & BIRCH BAY RANCH	Friday May 7, 2021 (Times TBA)	TBA	Junior Choir will tour & perform at schools in the morning & enjoy recreational activities at Birch Bay Ranch in the afternoon.	Costs are included in registration fees.
SPECIAL PRE-CONCERT REHEARSAL	Sunday May 9, 2021 2:00 – 4:00 pm	Sherwood Park United Church 20 Fir Street		
SPRING CONCERT	Monday May 10, 2021 7:00 pm	McDougall United Church 10086 MacDonald Drive Edmonton	Doors open at 6:30 pm Chorister drop off TBA	50-50 draw will be held.



Important Dates

Rehearsals (on line until further notice)

2020

Auditions held mid-August through September 13, 2020

September 14 / 21 / 28

October 5 / 19 / 26

November 2 / 16 / 23 / 30

December 7 / 14

2021 (may continue to be on line – decision to be made at Christmas)

January 11 / 18 / 25

February 1 / 8 / 22

March 1 / 8 / 15 / 22

April 12 / 19 / 26

May 3 / 10 / 17

Annual General Meeting

Attendance is REQUIRED by at least one parent per family.

Monday, September 28, 2020 (**ONLINE – WATCH FOR INVITATION**)

Concerts (tentative based on Covid situation)

Spring Concert Monday, May 10, 2021 McDougall United Church

Camp Nakamun Workshop (tentative)

Tuesday, Feb 23 & Wednesday, Feb 24, 2021 (Secondary Choir overnight)

Wednesday, Feb 24, 2021 (Junior Choir day trip)

Junior Choir School Tours (tentative)

Friday, May 7, 2021

Bottle Drive Fundraisers

Thursday, September 10, 2020

Monday, January 11, 2021

Monday, April, 2021 (exact date TBA)

REGISTRATION AND FEES



Choristers who have not pre-registered in the spring are required to register by September 13, 2020. Registration forms & payment can be mailed to:
PO Box 57131 RPO Eastgate, Sherwood Park, AB, T8A 5L7
Or drop in the mailbox at 44 Glenwood Drive, Sherwood Park.
Or email the forms to elkislandchoirs@gmail.com and e-transfer the registration fee prior to September 30, 2020.

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, silent auction, raffle tickets, sponsorships, 50/50 tickets, bake sale, etc.)

Full payment must accompany the singer's registration form. The full registration fee will be required no later than September 30, 2020. Any fees received after September 30 will be subject to a \$25 late penalty fee. **Payment options include cash, 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 June 19, 2020.

Instructions for E-transfers

E-transfers should be sent to: elkislandchoirs@gmail.com

Security question: What is this for? Security answer: **choirs**

IMPORTANT: 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 **\$245.00 (due by September 30)**

- Included in the annual fee is a Choir photo

JUNIOR CHOIR **\$276.50 (due by September 30)**

- Included in the annual fee is a Choir photo
- Costs for extra day trips and choir retreat are not included in annual fees.

SECONDARY CHOIR **\$294.00 (due by September 30)**

- Included in the annual fee is a 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. Referrals and sponsorships can be used to offset costs for Choristers. See "Fundraisers" section of this Handbook.

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
Leesila Dawkins – leesila99@gmail.com
Angela McKeown- amckeown@ualberta.ca

TINY TREBLES CHOIR
JUNIOR CHOIR
SECONDARY CHOIR

Choir Manager

Laurie Christiansen – manager.elkislandchoirs@gmail.com
Phone# 780-257-5959

Bookkeeper

Pam White- elkislandchoirs@gmail.com

Elk Island Choirs Website: www.elkislandchoirs.ca

All important dates, updates, announcements 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 as they are a great source of updated choir information.



Email: manager.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 September 30 of each year.** 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). **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 28, 2020.**
- ❖ **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 or 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.



The Junior Choir - participate in school tour day trips as we are able in relation to the Covid situation. 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:

- **Raffle (to be held virtually)**
- **Bottle Drives**
- **50/50 Tickets (may be held virtually)**
- **Silent Auction (to be held virtually)**

Our Silent Auction is a massive undertaking and 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.
- **Referral Credits** - \$25.00 for referral of any new chorister who auditions and joins

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.

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. Also, if your chorister refers another person to the choir, and that person auditions and joins the choir, \$25.00 will be added to your chorister's account. 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.

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

Spring Concert - McDougall United Church (TENTATIVE)

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.



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.

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.