



**UNEXPECTED  
COMPANY  
CHORALE**

# ***Member Handbook***

*Version: Final – September 16, 2023*

*This handbook outlines standard practices that should be followed by the Unexpected Company Chorale (UCC) Board of Directors, staff, and Chorale members. It is maintained by the UCC Board of Directors and serves as an informative reference to all its members. Where contradiction is found between Chorale documents, the highest authority document should be referenced (Articles of Incorporation → Bylaws → Handbook) and the contradiction should be amended in the lower authority document. The handbook is intended to protect UCC and all its members/affiliations by offering guidance for how to operate using fair and safe processes. The handbook is not intended to restrict its Board of Directors or members from acting in the best interest of the UCC. If this is found to be the case, the Board of Directors should consider amendments to realign the handbook with appropriate information.*

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## 1. Chorale Purpose

The purpose of the Unexpected Company Chorale is to provide an educational musical experience for singers aged 16 and older and audiences in the Chisago Lakes area and its surrounding communities, including activities designed to

- Enhance the musical talent of each member,
- Share the special joy of singing as a group, and
- Provide audiences with an enjoyable and quality performance

All Chorale members are expected to have some previous vocal experience, adequate voice control, and the ability to follow music. Music reading skills are not necessary but will be helpful.

## 2. Chorale Contact Information

Mailing address: P.O. Box 4, Lindstrom, MN 55045

Email: [unexpectedcompanymn@gmail.com](mailto:unexpectedcompanymn@gmail.com)

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/UCChoraleMN/>

Website: [www.ucchorale.org](http://www.ucchorale.org)

## 3. Fees

Member fees are due in full by the third rehearsal of the winter and spring sessions and can be paid by cash or check at rehearsal. The amount required for each session is \$60.00 per member and is subject to change upon approval by the Board of Directors. If you are unable to pay due to hardship, contact your section leader or a Board member.

## 4. Rehearsals

### Days/Times

Regular rehearsal days and times for fall and spring concerts are Mondays from 7 – 8:30 p.m. Rehearsals are held at Trinity Lutheran Church in Lindstrom, MN. If the church is unable to accommodate rehearsal on a particular date, the change in venue will be communicated to the Chorale in advance.

Additional rehearsals may be added at the discretion of the Chorale Director if it is deemed necessary to produce a quality concert. Any additional rehearsal dates and times will be communicated to the Chorale as early as possible during the concert session.

In the event of inclement weather, cancellation of rehearsal will be communicated to members via email.

### Sectionals

Rehearsals for individual sections may be necessary due to the complexity of the music. Sectionals are typically conducted at the beginning of a regular rehearsal, but may be scheduled outside of a regular rehearsal, based on the availability of the members of the section(s).

## Rehearsal for Special Events

Occasionally, UCC may perform at other venues or events outside of the fall and spring concert sessions. Special rehearsals will be convened for these events and may occur on days other than the standard Monday rehearsal.

## Rehearsal Expectations

To ensure rehearsal time is efficient, beneficial and enjoyable, please keep these expectations in mind.

- Arrive at rehearsal in enough time to be ready to sing at the start of rehearsal.
- Sit in the assigned area for rehearsals. (The Chorale Director will assign a seating chart. If you have any concerns over your seating placement, please bring them to your Section Leader or Chorale Director.)
- Avoid wearing scents (perfume, aftershave, essential oils, lotions) as others in the Chorale may be sensitive to scents.
- Have a pencil on hand at each rehearsal to make notations in the music.
- Refrain from engaging in side conversations during the rehearsal time. This can disrupt the learning and enjoyment of other Chorale sections and members.

Part of the purpose of UCC is to provide an educational music experience. The Chorale Director will provide members with opportunities to expand their musical talent through selection of a robust and challenging music set for each rehearsal cycle. As with any new skill, improvement can be made only through practice. Please take correction with the positive spirit in which it is intended.

## 5. Attendance

You are expected to consistently attend rehearsals, missing no more than five rehearsals in each concert cycle. If you are unable to attend a rehearsal, inform your section leader prior to the expected absence and make arrangements to get notes on items that you may have missed. It is expected that you continue to progress at a rate similar to the entire Chorale. Consistency in member attendance makes for a stronger final product, so please make all efforts to attend rehearsals.

Occasionally the Chorale may be engaged for a special performance outside of the standard concert season. The Chorale Director will ask members for their availability to participate. This will help ensure a proper balance across all sections. If you indicate that you are available, make every effort to attend so that the Chorale can put forward a well-represented and solid performance.

## 6. Music

Music is the property of Unexpected Company Chorale. Care should be taken to preserve the music. Music cannot be 3-hole punched. Refer to *Music Folders* under Section 7 for more information on handling music for a performance. Any markings made in the music must be done with a pencil.

The Music Librarian distributes music at the first rehearsal. Once you have paid the session dues, you may keep the music until the end of the session. If you have not paid the dues, you must return the music to the Section Leader or Music Librarian after each rehearsal. At the end of the season, all music must be returned to the Music Librarian at the end of the last concert, or within two weeks of the last concert date.

## 7. Performances

### Performance Dress

Formal concert attire is required for performances. The concert attire currently consists of selected formal black dresses/pants ensemble or a black tuxedo (borrowed/rented/owned as each prefers). Concert attire can be ordered through [www.stageaccents.com](http://www.stageaccents.com). Consult with your Section Leader or the Dress Maven if you need to order concert attire.

Concert attire may be adjusted based on the nature of the performance.

### Performance Etiquette

You are expected to exhibit a professional concert appearance, including hair, makeup and demeanor. Remember, that if you look like you are having fun performing, the audience will enjoy the performance even more. During performances you are expected to maintain appropriate stage etiquette. please keep these expectations in mind.

- Side conversations are not permitted while onstage.
- You should raise and lower music as directed by the Chorale Director.
- Chairs are typically provided on stage for performances during the regular concert season, and you will be allowed to sit between sets while narration occurs. Noise must be kept to a minimum during this time, and any activity on stage should be minimized so as not to distract from the focus of attention.
- If you choose to bring water on stage during the performance, care should be taken to select a container that does not make significant noise when opening or handling (e.g., plastic water bottles that “crinkle” when squeezed). It is also important that the container is spill-proof.

### Music Folders

Black music folders are used during performances to produce a uniform look across the Chorale. You may choose to purchase a folder specifically designed to hold music, or you may select an alternate option, such as a 3-ring binder with plastic inserts (e.g. magazine holders) or similar method of securing your music in in the 3-ring binder. **Reminder, music cannot be 3-hole punched.**

## 8. Annual Meeting

An annual meeting of all UCC members, independent contractors, and board members is held at the close of the Chorale fiscal year (Fiscal year July 1 – June 30). Location, date, and time of the annual meeting will be communicated to all eligible during the spring concert season. Anyone 16 years of age or older who has paid the required fees and participated in rehearsals and concerts is considered a voting member of Unexpected Company Chorale and may vote on Chorale matters brought forward by the Board at the annual meeting.

Topics that are generally included at the annual meeting include:

- Previous year review and highlights
- Review of financial performance
- Election of Board members from a slate of candidates

- Plans for the upcoming season
- Other matters pertaining to the organization as determined by the Board
- Topics, input, questions from the membership

## 9. Chorale Structure

### Board of Directors

The UCC Board of Directors manages the affairs of the Chorale. Specific details about the Board structure and responsibilities can be found in the Chorale Bylaws.

### Chorale Director

The Chorale Director has day-to-day responsibilities related to the artistic functions of the Chorale. Specific details about the responsibilities of the director can be found in the Chorale Bylaws.

### Business Manager

Duties/responsibilities TBD.

### Accompanist

The Accompanist is responsible for assisting the Chorale Director and Chorale at all rehearsals, sectionals and performances. Specific details about the responsibilities of the accompanist can be found in the Chorale Bylaws.

### Music Librarian

The Music Librarian maintains the music library for the Chorale and is responsible for organizing and distributing the physical music to Chorale members in advance of and throughout the session. The Music Librarian is responsible for ensuring the return of all music at the end of each session.

### Section Leaders

Section Leaders may be appointed by or hired by the Chorale Director and are responsible for ensuring the dissemination of key information for their section. Additionally, Section Leaders are expected to serve as a point of contact for their section members to discuss questions, issues, or concerns.

### Committees

Standing committees exist to further the mission of the Unexpected Company Chorale (UCC) by coordinating key activities of the Chorale. Other committees beyond those outlined below may be established if necessary. You are encouraged to participate in one of the committees listed or others that have been established. Additional details about the committees can be found in the Chorale Bylaws.

- (a) **Publicity and promotion:** Responsible for widely disseminating information about UCC in general, specific concerts and educational programs so that the public will be knowledgeable about UCC and able to participate in its activities.

- (b) **Membership involvement and communications:** Responsible for recruiting and welcoming members, providing hospitality at rehearsals and concerts, communicating with members during the season, and providing general communication.
- (c) **Concert preparations:** Responsible for all activities surrounding events once the Board of Directors has established the date and venue for concerts. These activities include producing the programs, decorating the stage, providing costumes if necessary, and managing the sale of pre-concert tickets and managing tickets at the front door.
- (d) **Fundraising/Development:** Responsible for overseeing all revenue that supports the educational and performance activities of the Chorale, including grants, donations and sponsorships.

## 10. Chorale Policies and Procedures

### Safe and Fair Practices Guidelines

Your actions should reflect the intention to provide a safe and comfortable environment for all Chorale members. Be considerate of others, and be respectful of the Chorale Director, Accompanist and fellow Chorale members.

Within any group, divergent views are common. If you have concerns or constructive criticism, contact the Chorale Director, your Section Leader, or a Board member who will attempt to resolve the issue. Unbridled criticism is highly discouraged.

If, during rehearsal or concert prep, there are concerns related to sound or stage, bring them to your section leader or the Chorale Director who will, if necessary, bring them to the stage technicians.

### Grievance Procedures

Diversity in thought and ideas allows us to continue to expand not only our enjoyment but also the enjoyment of our audience members. If you have a suggestion for music themes, additional performances, etc., bring these to your Section Leader, a Board Member, or the Chorale Director for consideration.

### Interacting with Minors

On occasion the Chorale engages the participation of minors to join with the Chorale at rehearsals and performances. In addition, minors may be present at Chorale events, such as the annual meeting. In the event that minors are in attendance at a UCC performance or event, the minor should never be left alone with only one adult at any UCC activity. Additionally, proper supervision of employees and volunteers who are in direct contact with minors at UCC performances and events should be instituted. An exception to the above-mentioned procedures would be allowed for immediate family members of a minor.