

Mint City Singers Choir Handbook

Mint City Singers is a community-based choir comprised of people from St. Johns, Michigan and the surrounding communities. It provides opportunities to sing and perform a wide variety of choral music, cultivate self-expression through group choral singing, and contribute to the artistic diversity within the community.

The Mint City Singers (MCS) is a branch of the Clinton County Arts Council (CCAC), and as such, is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. In order to ensure individual personal success and the success of the MCS, please carefully read the information contained in this Handbook to understand how to fulfill the goals and expectations outlined. If you have questions or concerns, contact the Music/Artistic Director, Ellen Hoard, at 989-233-5775 or ellen.hoard@rpccpas.com.

Prospective Membership:

MCS is an adult (age 14 on up) non-auditioned SATB (soprano, alto, tenor, bass) choir which combines beautiful singing and musical learning in a safe and fun community environment. While being able to match pitch or read music is not a requirement, it is helpful (along with a pleasant voice and a sense of humor). Membership is for one session at a time – Fall 2019 (September 9 – December 16) and Winter/Spring 2020 (January 6 -May 4) with a culminating concert and outreach performance at the end of each session. Additional performances can be added, with a positive vote by the general membership. Commitment to one session at a time allows for the possibility of greater membership success.

Rehearsal Time and Place:

Required rehearsals are Monday evenings, 7:00 – 8:30 pm at the South Point Mall, 1035 Old U.S. 27, Johns, Michigan (next to the Secretary of State Office) unless otherwise noted. Additional *voluntary* rehearsals may be scheduled at the discretion of the Music/Artistic Director – dates, times, place TBD as needed.

Rehearsals will automatically be canceled if the St. Johns Public Schools are closed due to inclement weather. An e-mail will be sent to members and a phone call made via the MCS phone tree as well.

How Are You Supported as a Member?

Rehearsals include warm-ups, the practice of music by sections (soprano, alto, tenor, bass), and rehearsal as an entire ensemble. A Leadership Committee exists to support your concerns and ideas.

General Expectations:

- ~Be respectful of yourself and others in what you say and do – voices, capabilities, differences.
- ~Be positive and bold – take risks for the benefit of yourself and the choir.
- ~Take ownership of your learning and ownership of the ensemble.
- ~Be capable of working successfully within a large group.
- ~Adhere to proper etiquette and legal expectations on social media.
- ~Reimburse MCS for:
 1. Lost music
 2. Music damaged beyond ordinary use.

Rehearsal Expectations:

- ~Attend regularly scheduled rehearsals. (See Attendance Policy)
- ~Notify the Music/Artistic Director in advance if you are unable to attend a rehearsal.
- ~Arrive a few minutes early to allow for socializing, taking care of business you have with other choir members and be prepared with folder and pencil. The church will always be open at 6:45 pm.
- ~Socialize prior to, during breaks, and after rehearsals and performances – not during.
- ~Contact the Director at times other than rehearsals about non-rehearsal concerns/needs.
- ~Be willing to set-up and clean-up as you are able.
- ~Be respectful of the rehearsal space. Leave it as we found it.

Performance Expectations:

- ~Participate in the published required pre-concert rehearsals, concert, and outreach performance, and any additional performance to which you have committed. A concert is approximately 1-1 ½ hours with a 10-15 minute intermission.
- ~Have music in performance order and be knowledgeable of riser position prior to the performance.
- ~Assist with set-up/clean-up as requested and able.
- ~Contribute to simple refreshments for after-concert reception.
- ~Provide your own concert attire. (See Concert/Performance Attire)

Attendance Policy:

MCS members are required to attend rehearsals regularly and on time with a three-absence maximum per Session. To take part in the scheduled performances for that session with more than three absences, please contact the Music/Artistic Director, Ellen Hoard, at 989-233-5775 or ellen.hoard@rpccpas.com. Each situation will be considered on a case by case basis. Consideration will be given to people who have to attend Monday evening meetings for work or other organizations, or illness, or family emergencies, etc., but it still needs to be discussed. If you miss a rehearsal, it is your responsibility to find out from a choir member or the director - in advance of the next rehearsal -what was practiced at the missed rehearsal.

Concert/ Outreach Performance Attire:

Members are required to provide their own performance attire.

Concerts:

Women: Long-sleeve/three-quarter-length-sleeve black blouse (not turtlenecks, polo shirts, or sweaters).

Black skirt or dress slacks.

Black dress shoes with nude-colored nylons.

Earrings, and rings, no other jewelry.

Scarf to be provided by choir; given at concert and returned at end.

Men: Long-sleeved dress black shirt (not turtlenecks, polo shirts, or sweaters).

Black dress slacks.

Black dress shoes with black socks,

Black belt or suspenders.

Tie to be provided by choir; given at concert and returned at end.

It is the responsibility of choir members to return scarves/ties to the MCS inventory immediately following a concert.

Outreach Performances:

Your choice of black and white clothing with color accents (shoes, scarves, ties, suspenders, jewelry). You may have more flexibility with the type of clothing you choose to wear.

December Outreach – accents of red

Spring Outreach – accents in pastel color of your choice

Registration:

New and returning members are required to complete a Membership and Commitment Form. Forms may be obtained and printed from the CCAC website <http://www.clintoncountyarts.org/>, or picked up at the CCAC Art Gallery, 215 N Clinton Ave, St Johns, Michigan. Completed forms may be returned in advance to Ellen Hoard, 1214 Lincolnshire Drive, St. Johns, MI 48879 (or ellen.hoard@rpccpas.com) or brought to the first rehearsal of the session.

Membership fees are \$50 per session. The fee helps to offset the cost of doing business: performance venue, music, accompanist, instrumentalists, etc. If you are experiencing financial hardship, please contact the Music/Artistic Director to inquire about applying for a Member Sponsorship. All inquiries are confidential.

Please make checks (no cash) payable to Mint City Singers and mail in advance to Dan LeVeque, 601 S. Lansing Street, St. Johns, MI 48879, or bring to the first rehearsal of the session.

Director – Ellen Hoard

A resident of St. Johns for 33 years, Ellen and her husband Doug raised two children, Elizabeth and Kevin, in St. Johns. She has been the director of the Mint City Singers since September 2014. Ellen has a Bachelor of Music Education degree, and a master's degree in guidance and counseling, both from Central Michigan University. She is a retired public school music teacher with 28 years' experience, 26 of which were in the Grand Ledge Public Schools as an elementary music specialist. She is a soprano and has studied voice with Richard Fracker, Rachel Gates, and Cora Enman. Ellen has performed in the greater Lansing area with several groups, including Starlight Dinner Theater, Singers on the Grand, Riverwalk Theatre, and the (now defunct) Lansing Civic Players.

Accompanist – Jeff Richards

Jeff Richards hails from St. Johns where he studied piano under Jean Hull and Diantha Witteveen. He has a bachelor's and a master's degree in piano performance from Michigan State University where he studied under Deborah Moriarty. Jeff has served as staff accompanist in Chicago at several universities including Northwestern, Loyola and DePaul. He has also musical directed shows for Royal Caribbean International and has been the audition pianist for The Rockettes. Jeff is currently the Director of Music at St. Joseph Parish in St. Johns. In addition to serving as accompanist for the Mint City Singers he also plays for the Laingsburg Community Singers.

Mint City Singers Leadership Committee

Carol Malewska, Chairman – 989-834-2281

Kelly Bitz, Vice-Chairman – 989-948-7537

Dan LeVeque, Finance Officer – 989-640-1535

Sara Morrison, Secretary – 989-224-1106

Kris Collier, Assistant Secretary – 989-307-9435

Ann Hufnagel, Member at Large – 989-640-0213

Ellen Hoard, Music/Artistic Director (non-voting) 989-233-5775

Leadership Committee

The Leadership Committee is governing body of the Mint City Singers. It meets from 6:00 – 7:50 pm on the second Monday of the month. All MCS members are sent the agenda and are encouraged to join the discussion. Any member of the MCS may nominate him/herself to be considered for a place on the committee. Positions are for two (2) years and a member may serve as many terms as s/he is interested in and elected to doing. Committee membership may be repeated in the same position or in mixed ones.

Leadership Committee Positions

President – Creates written agenda/leads discussion, spokesperson for MCS, delegates jobs, organizes/initiates contracts/confirms/ intercedes with outreach facilities, plans and carries out nominations and voting procedures for new Leadership Committee members.

Vice President – Brings the Membership Handbooks, blank Membership Commitment Forms, and trifold brochures to the first two rehearsals of each session and concerts to display at front table. Gives completed Forms to the Music/Artistic Director. Informs director in advance when more copies of the preceding materials are needed. Creates written agenda/leads discussion in the absence of the President.

Secretary - Writes and prints the minutes of the meetings. Keeps member records. Creates and distributes the phone tree.

Treasurer – Collects fees, handles deposits to CCAC, prepares budget, processes reimbursements. Upon request prepares end of year donation statement letter.

Member-at-Large – Keeper of the scarves/ties - brings them to/from concerts. Coordinates the after concert receptions. Writes thank you cards to patrons, donors, musicians, etc.

Director (non-voting) - Selects music, artistic director, creates programs, organizes concert set-up, selects/supervises accompanist, prints programs/brings to concerts, works with graphic designer to create fliers/printed programs/Facebook and email graphics.

The positions of Treasurer, Secretary, and Member-at-Large will rotate in the spring of odd ending years (starting in 2021). There will be a nominating and voting process that will take place in January and February of the odd ending years to elect the new members for these offices.

The positions of President and Vice President will rotate in the spring of even ending years (starting in 2020). Because the position of President is so integral to the smooth operation of the committee and choir, it is important for the person filling it to have working knowledge of the role of the president and the operating procedures of the Leadership Committee, and it will be filled by the previous Vice President. There will be a nominating and voting process that will take place in January and February of the even ending years to elect a new Vice President.

Rehearsal/Performance Schedule 2019-2020

Fall Session

September 9	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
September 16	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
September 23	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
September 30	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
October 7	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
October 14	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
October 21	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
October 28	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
November 4	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
November 11	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
November 18	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
November 25	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
December 2	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
December 9	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
December 13	Concert (Friday night) at Wilson Center, Call 6:00 pm, Concert 7:30 pm
December 16	Outreach Performance, Grace Haven, Call 6:00 pm, Perform 6:30 pm

Winter/Spring Session

January 6	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
January 13	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
January 20	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
January 27	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
February 3	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
February 10	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
February 17	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
February 24	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
March 2	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
March 9	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
March 16	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
March 23	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
March 30	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
April 6	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
April 13	Rehearsal 7:00 – 8:30 pm
April 16	Concert (Thursday night) at Wilson Center, Call 6:00 pm, Concert 7:30 pm
April 19	Monday Outreach Performance, Hazel Findlay, Call 6:00 pm, Perf. 6:30 pm