



A Different Kind of Christmas Parent Meeting

September 30, 2019

Thank you all for taking the time to meet with me here today! There is a lot of information to share with you, and as I usually do, I have linked the notes for this meeting on the website. If we talk about something that isn't in the notes, I will add an addendum to the notes on the website. I'm doing that because there is so much information to share that I want you to be able to concentrate on listening and participating rather than having to scribble notes. I hope that's helpful!

We have welcomed more than 30 new members this semester, which means that there is a good number of parents here who have never experienced preparing for a concert. I hope to give you all the information you need, but if you are new and need information, please ask; and if you are an experienced parent, please come alongside our new families.

Here is the agenda for today's meeting:

1. General announcements
2. Uniform details
3. Month of Giving
4. Run through rehearsals
5. Schedule for concert weekend
6. Set up service teams

General Announcements

Please have your children listen to their rehearsal recordings. If they come to choir knowing their lyrics and familiar with how their part sounds, the directors have much more time to do actual vocal training. Encourage your children to sing along with the recordings - out loud - and to sing in front of a mirror. Sometimes we are completely unaware of the expressions we make when we sing. If your child sings in front of a mirror, he will potentially catch some of his idiosyncrasies. The expectation is that your children should listen to their recordings four times per week.

Please clean up behind you. We are responsible for leaving the church in better condition than we found it. If you use the nursery during rehearsal, you need to make sure that it is neat and tidy before you leave. Please be sure to take all your belongings with you each

week. For the PC, BV, RC, and AV ensembles, beginning next week, please plan to help re-set your rooms, put away chairs, and gather trash each week before you leave. With so many of us, it will only take a few minutes to complete these tasks. We will have a list of assignments in the foyer next week so that you will know who is assigned each job. Up to this time, our wonderful student council has taken care of all the set up and clean up.

Read your Choir Notes each week

So much information goes out each week - you will miss something crucial if you don't read the notes - especially as we get closer to the concert. I have added links on the member page to all the Choir Notes that have been sent this semester. This should be an easy reference for you in case they get lost in your email boxes.

Month of Giving

Our Month of Giving Campaign is about to launch!

The MOG was last year during the month of November, and it was highly successful – so successful that the proceeds of that fund plus the grants that we had received carried us through the remainder of the season.

There are many advantages of this type of fundraising program.

- First and foremost, we are not asking our students and families to sell things, keep track of inventories, etc., etc.
- It's really a very short duration campaign
- Helps us engage with community members who may never have heard of us before.

As a nonprofit organization, the Month of Giving helps us to be more attractive to grantors. As I write grant narratives, one of the questions that is always asked is about member engagement. It's important to grantors that our own members are engaged in some activity that supports the choir. This campaign sends a huge positive message about the choir.

Our goal for this program is 100% participation from every family in the choir. The monetary goal is for each choir family to gather \$100 in donations for the choir. Many students find that they can easily gather more because the community really likes the idea that students are getting involved and willing to earn a donation. Students have raised 150% of our goal each year during MOG.

If you listed businesses on your registration form who you thought might be potential donors, Joanna Crump will be contacting you. She will put together a personalized donor packet for you to deliver to the business. If you have new ideas for potential business donors, please contact Joanna at jcrump@hccchoir.org.

Uniform Details

Our wardrobe department is hard at work to assure that all of your children look sharp on concert weekend. Emily Frye and Lee Ann DeMoss have worked out a system that will have everyone ready for the concert and that keeps their workflow steady and not overwhelming. I am so thrilled to have these skilled and organized ladies on our team!

General concert dress uniform requirements:

1. Boys need to wear a plain white undershirt under their shirts. No logos or designs.
2. Girls – hair must be secured and may be worn up or down – your choice. Hair ties, headbands, etc. must match the color of your hair. We don't want any hair ornaments to be seen.
3. Clear nail polish, clear or pale pink lip gloss may be worn.
4. Hair must be a natural color.
5. Stud earrings only. No necklaces or bracelets.
6. **Black panty hose for CC/PA and black knee-high hose for older girls.** A slip is necessary.
7. Girls may find that a little extra blush is helpful since the lights can wash out skin tone.

Concert Tickets

Our new venue, New Palestine High School, has 816 seats! That means we have 400 more available seats for new audience members! Please be inviting friends and neighbors to the concert!

Having our ticket sales online is such a huge timesaver for Joanna, but it does present a little challenge when you ask people to come to the concert, but you can't sell a physical ticket right then. To help you with that, I will have some cards that you can take to give to people as you invite them to our concerts. The cards have all the concert and ticket information so that your guests don't have to try to remember all the details.

Remember to tell your guests that tickets can be purchased over the phone as well as at the door. We really want to encourage people to purchase tickets before the day of concert. We do have reserved seating at New Pal, so it is advantageous to purchase tickets in advance.

Run-through Rehearsals

Beginning in February, Mrs. Roschi will start the actual practice of the program. She works through every detail of the entire concert meticulously so that by the time we get to Mt. Vernon, the program runs like clockwork. Mrs. Roschi has been doing concerts, recitals, and productions for 35 years, and I don't know anyone who is more thorough in preparation. There are so many life lessons that your children can learn during this process that will help them in their adult lives, so please encourage them to pay attention and take in what she is teaching.

Please assist us in monitoring the use of cell phones during rehearsal. The tough thing is that there will inherently be some waiting while we practice the program, so there is great

temptation to pull out cell phones. Unfortunately, screens steal the attention of students, and then important information is not heard. If students aren't paying attention, we have to go over the same things more than once, and rehearsals run over time. We would appreciate the presence of a few more parents during rehearsals for these last few weeks – your presence will help us run on schedule.

Meals for Concert Weekend

We provide 2 dinners on concert weekend for students and working parents. The first meal is a taco bar that is served on Friday night. The second is a pizza feed served on Saturday evening. We charge \$5 per student or \$15 per family per meal. The PayPal buttons are on the website, and meals should be ordered by March 19. We are asking that students bring a sack lunch on Saturday. The choir will provide water bottles and a dessert.

The taco bar dinner on Friday is a fun, delicious, and easy meal. The choir purchases the food and then doles it out to people who are willing to prepare the food. It's pretty easy – taking frozen corn and heating it in a crock pot, opening cans of beans and heating them in a crockpot, dicing tomatoes and lettuce, making some rice, and fixing taco beef and chicken. The chicken we purchase is already cooked, it just has to be seasoned and simmered. So, you pick up the food on Monday, December 7 and bring it prepared and in a crock pot to dress rehearsal.

New Palestine High School Concert Details

We are creating our volunteer teams for the concert today. Each team will have a meeting before the concert to make sure that everyone understands the responsibilities and duties of each position. We believe that this advance planning along with a clear line of communication will make things go smoothly.

Our dress rehearsal does take several hours because we have to assure that the sound is correct and that students are comfortable with the stage and their position. There are some things that you can do to help our dress rehearsal be as short as possible:

1. Encourage your children to pay close attention during walk through rehearsals here at MCUMC.
2. We ask that parents not sit in the auditorium during dress rehearsal. The noise of conversations carries to the stage and makes it difficult for Mrs. Roschi to communicate with the backstage coordinators and the sound booth.

Be assured that we are doing our level best to make dress rehearsal as short as possible, but also be assured that Mrs. Roschi doesn't do anything half-way – we will go over things until they are right.

Please arrive at New Palestine High School no earlier than 4:00 pm. The school has asked us not to enter the building until their students have been dismissed for the day. Park on the east side of the building near Door 35. The doors are not all marked, so you will find

door 35 more easily through a description of its location. The auditorium at New Palestine High School is on the north side of the building, nearest to US 52. The door we will use, door 35, is the entrance closest to 52. Once you enter the doors, we will either have a person there to direct you, or we will have signage to direct you to the dressing rooms and auditorium.

On Friday, pictures of the RC, CC/PA, and PC ensembles will be taken. Please be completely dressed in your concert uniform and ready to be photographed at the appointed time set for your ensemble. Pictures will be taken in the auditorium on the risers. Directors will be photographed with their ensembles. RC and BV should come directly to the auditorium for pictures. CC/PA and PC should report to the hallway which is on the left (west) side of the auditorium to be lined up by height for the pictures.

We have a limited amount of time for pictures, so unfortunately, we cannot wait for students who are not in place when their ensemble has its picture appointment. Please plan to be early to your picture appointment. We don't want to miss anyone!

Picture Schedule:

4:30 PM: RC

4:40 PM: CC/PA

4:50 PM: PC

Rehearsal Schedule:

5:00 PM: Walk through program in full concert dress.

*6:10 PM: Change out of concert uniforms into street clothes for dinner.

*6:15 PM: Taco Bar dinner served in cafeteria

7:00 PM: Full rehearsal begins. Choir will remain in street clothes except for emcees. Please plan your time accordingly during dinner to assure that you are dressed and ready for rehearsal to begin promptly at 7:00 PM.

CC/PA is released as soon as they finish their part of the rehearsal. Parents of these students should plan to stay from the time of arrival through the CC/PA rehearsal since they are first on the program, then they will be released by 5:30 PM.

* Dinnertime will be staggered this time to help each ensemble have adequate time to eat.

Parents: We are planning to be finished with rehearsal at 9:00 PM. PC will finish by 8:30pm Thank you so much!

Saturday Schedule

9:30am: Arrive at Mt. Vernon (BV, RC, AV, and CL)
10:00am: Rehearsal begins for BV, RC, AV, and CL
11:30pm: Rehearsal begins for PA/CC and PC
12:30pm: Lunch (Students bring a sack lunch. Choir will furnish water and dessert.)
1:15pm: AV pictures
1:25pm: CL pictures
1:35pm: BV pictures
1:45pm: Combined choir pictures
2:00pm: Doors open
2:30pm: Concert
4:00pm: Meet and greet your guests after the concert
4:30pm: Change out of concert uniforms and hang them neatly in dressing rooms.
5:00pm: Pizza feed!
5:45pm: Gather belongings and take anything you don't need out to the car.
6:30pm: Dressed and ready - meeting backstage with Mrs. Roschi
7:00pm: Concert
8:00pm: Meet and greet guests
8:30pm: Change out of uniforms.
8:45pm: *All hands on deck* for cleanup and loading of cars. The goal is to be out of the school by 10:00pm

** For the littles – In order to fight fatigue, it might be best for you to leave immediately after the afternoon performance and plan to stay during the evening performance. Parents of students in this group should plan their day in a way that helps your student be the most rested and refreshed for performances.

*** The hours between the afternoon concert and the evening concert are going to need to be well-supervised so that they are restful and rejuvenating for the students. We have designed a supervision schedule that should be adequate to care for the students properly, but at the same time we are going to need to have some activities for them so that the time is enjoyable. Your ideas and suggestions are welcomed!

As a side note - but an important one - we ask that students in grades K-6 not be in possession of a cell phone during concert weekend. We found, for example, that sometimes in all innocence a student started to take a picture of a friend in the dressing room, not noticing the fact that in the background another choir member was dressing. There are just too many potential issues that could happen, so please send your student with a game to play, but not a cell phone.

Concert Preparation

Many hands make these wonderful concerts come together! I have a Committee Assignments document that lists all the jobs that need to be completed for concert preparation. We will be signing up for jobs today because it is so much more efficient to do it in person than to follow up with many emails and phone calls. The beautiful thing

about having 2 concerts is that you can work for one concert and watch for another. Lots of jobs are available, and they have been divided into categories: backstage, student meals, foyer committee, and auditorium committee. Each parent will have a job – there are 146 jobs on my list, so that means you can expect to have 2-3 jobs each. Some are very simple and take very little time, others are longer. Obviously, if you take a job like working backstage on microphones, that is the only job you will take. There is something for everyone!

We will begin today by filling our student supervision slots. These positions are crucial for keeping our children safe. Our student supervisors will be identified by a bright colored lanyard and name tag. This will help both students and parents to know who is in charge at all times.

After student supervision slots are filled, we will fill the other positions. My goal is to fill all slots today.

Thank you for attending the parent meeting - this is going to be a wonderful concert! As you think of questions you might have, please feel free to contact me. I am trying to stay at the Welcome Desk as much as I can during choir, but please don't hesitate to call or send me a text or email during the week.

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