

# pittsburgh girls choir

**Policy Handbook 2018 - 2019**

## **Mission**

The mission of PGC is to welcome girls of all races, ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds into a supportive community committed to artistic excellence through an exemplary music education program.

## **Slogan**

Pittsburgh Girls Choir: Where girls find their voice and community

## **Staff**

Kathryn W. Barnard, Artistic Director (Concentio, Chamber, Via, Melodia),  
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Kelly Brennan, Executive Director  
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Karen Crenshaw, Board Chair  
[crenshaw@clunies.net](mailto:crenshaw@clunies.net)

## **Rehearsal Locations:**

Shadyside Presbyterian Church (5121 Westminster Pl., Pittsburgh, PA 15232)  
DO NOT RING DOORBELL

## **Mailing Address**

PO Box 9062  
Pittsburgh, PA 15224  
412.267.7707

## **Vision**

The Vision of PGC is to share the transcendent beauty of girls' voices with our audiences and to transform the lives of choristers by creating communities characterized by compassion, mutual respect and encouragement and united by dedication to excellence.

## **Membership**

Membership in PGC is maintained by attending rehearsals and performances and by contributing in a cooperative way with all others in the choral organization.

## **Auditions**

All potential choir members are auditioned to determine musical skill and experience before placement in the appropriate ensemble.

## **Invitation to Return:**

Each year, choristers will receive an invitation to return for the next season if they have fulfilled the requirements of membership including attendance, completion of homework, being respectful towards faculty, staff and other choristers.

## **Re-Audition and Interview (for Concentio and Via members only)**

Every year all invited choir members will re-audition in order for director to evaluate progress and to assign proper voice placement. If chorister leaves the choir for any period, the former choir member is permitted to re-audition one time after leaving the choir for any period. The re-audition will include an interview, where the potentially returning choir member and at least one parent will meet with the Artistic Director to evaluate their potential return to the choir.

## **Commitment**

Enrollment in PGC implies a commitment to attend and participate in the rehearsals, concerts, performances, and events on the season's calendar.

## **Choir Calendar**

While it is not possible to foresee an entire Choir season, every attempt is made to include all events on the season Calendar, so that families can plan accordingly and balance their commitment to the Choir with other commitments. An updated Calendar will be provided in January.

## **Concentio or Chamber Choir Opportunities**

If an extraordinary performance opportunity is presented to Concentio or Chamber Choir, it will be added to the Calendar and families will be updated as soon as possible.

## **CHOIR CONDUCT**

The following requirements govern conduct in Choir rehearsals and events, including breaks.

### **Choir Environment**

- No cell phones (will be collected at beginning of rehearsal)
- No texting
- No iPods, headphones, etc.
- No smoking
- No bullying, excessive teasing
- No romantic activity
- No alcohol, drugs, or illegal substances

### **Cell Phone Calls**

Your child should not make calls to you on her cell phone during a rehearsal, even during a break. Calls are to wait until the rehearsal is dismissed. If your child needs to reach you during a rehearsal, in the event of an emergency or special circumstance, the chorister will seek permission from the Artistic Director to call you.

### **Homework**

Choir members complete a minimum of 30 minutes of homework per week for Training Choirs, 60 minutes for Concentio and Chamber Choir. Assignments are given each week at rehearsal and are due to be turned in on the following week at rehearsal.

## **REHEARSAL, RETREAT, AND TOURS**

Rehearsals are held at Shadyside Presbyterian (5121 Westminister Pl, Pittsburgh, PA 15232). Choir members should remain in designated areas and treat the church facility, staff, and volunteers with respect and courtesy at all times.

### **Training Choir Rehearsals**

Tuesday rehearsals are 4:30 to 5:45 p.m. for Melodia, 6:00 to 7:45 p.m. for Harmonia and 6:00 – 8:00 for Via unless otherwise noted.

### **Concentio Rehearsals**

Friday rehearsals are 4:10 to 6:30 p.m., unless otherwise noted. Monthly Saturday rehearsals are 10:00am to 2:00pm.

### **Chamber Choir Rehearsals**

Monday rehearsals are 7:00pm-9:00pm, unless otherwise noted. Monthly Saturday rehearsals are 10:00am-2:00pm.

### **Camp and Retreat (Concentio and Via)**

Camp and Retreat are required for all Concentio and Via members. Dates for camp will be released at the beginning of the Fall semester.

### **Dress Rehearsals and Concerts**

Each concert has two dress rehearsals for Concentio, and one dress rehearsal for other choirs. All choristers are required to attend all dress rehearsals and concerts.

### **Tour (Concentio and Via)**

Tour is required for all Concentio members, with the exception of grand tours. Parent Tour Information Meetings are listed on the calendar, available at the beginning of the season.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

### **Training Choir Attendance**

Training Choir members are allowed 2 absences, 2 late arrivals (30-minute maximum) and 2 early dismissals (30-minute maximum) per semester. Late arrivals and early dismissals exceeding the above limits will be counted as absences by the Choral Instructor.

### **Concentio Attendance**

Concentio Choir members are allowed 4 absences total (5 for juniors and seniors) from August – Feb. Total of 2 early dismissals and 2 late arrivals (MUST BE at rehearsal for at least 1 hour)  
**ABSENCES MAY NOT BE APPLIED TO DRESS REHEARSALS**

### **Chamber Choir Attendance**

Chamber Choir members may miss up to 2 Monday rehearsals in the Fall and 3 rehearsals (Monday and Fridays) in the Spring. She may have 2 late arrivals (30-minute maximum) and 2 early dismissals (30-minute maximum) each semester.

### **Reporting Absence, Late Arrival, and Early Dismissal**

Attendance is taken at each rehearsal. If your child must be absent, arrive late or be dismissed early from rehearsal, notice must be given to the Executive Director via phone (412-267-7707) or email ( [kelly@pghchoralarts.org](mailto:kelly@pghchoralarts.org) ) at least 24 hours before said rehearsal. In the event of a day-of emergency, please call 412-267-7707 as early as possible.

### **Communications:**

Updates will be posted to the Parent Portal through the PGC website. It is the parent's responsibility to check the Parent Portal for updated. Email alerts can be created for the portal. If you wish to have email alerts setup, contact the Executive Director by email. In addition, occasional emails will be sent as needed. Please inform the Executive Director if you are not receiving sufficient communication.

## **CHOIR FAMILY MEETINGS**

Choir Family Meetings are scheduled for each choir at the beginning of the choir year and before tour for parents of Via and Concentio members. Concentio tour requires multiple meetings. Attendance at meetings by at least one parent/guardian per family (and chorister for Concentio) is expected. Attendance by all parents/guardians/supporting family members is encouraged. Choir Family Meetings provide updates, materials, and important information regarding upcoming program events and tours. The goal of these meetings is to streamline communications.

## **CONCERT DRESS**

### **Concentio**

Concert dress includes the choir dress, flat black shoes, and a 14" pearl necklace for Concentio members. The dress, shoes and pearl necklace are to be provided by chorister. The Wardrobe Manager will provide instructions on ordering your dress and ask for confirmation of the order. As some companies take a long time to ship dresses, they **MUST** be ordered by October 1, 2018. Once ordered, the chorister responsible for all fittings and alterations.

### **Via**

Concert dress includes the choir dress, flat black shoes and, skin-colored hose. Hair must be neat and away from the face. No high buns. The Wardrobe Manager will provide instructions on ordering your dress and ask for confirmation of the order. As some companies take a long time to ship dresses, they **MUST** be ordered by October 1, 2018. Once ordered, the chorister is responsible for all fittings and alterations.

### **Harmonia**

A concert dress will be provided. Please plan to purchase skin-colored hose and black flats. Hair must be neat and away from the face. No high buns. The Wardrobe Manager is available to help Choir members with dress fittings at the beginning of each season.

### **Melodia**

A concert dress will be provided. Please plan to purchase white tights, and Mary Jane type shoes. Hair must be neat and away from the face. No high buns. The Wardrobe Manager is available to help Choir members with dress fittings at the beginning of each season.

### **Additional requirements regarding choir dress for Concentio, Via, Harmonia and Melodia:**

- No perfume, body spray or any other scented product
- Hair must be kept out of chorister's face (no high buns)
- Deodorant (Concentio, Via, Harmonia)
- Stud or post earrings, no dangle earrings
- Light make-up (blush, mascara, no lipstick, no sparkles) for Concentio
- No make-up except chapstick for Via, Harmonia and Melodia
- No additional jewelry or ornamental hair accessories
- Natural hair colors only
- No visible tattoos or piercings (except earlobes) and no tongue piercing
- No heels or sandals

## **ENROLLMENT AND COSTS**

### **Tuition**

The Pittsburgh Girls Choir uses a sliding scale for tuition. Please see the chart at the end of the handbook.

Tuition payments are intended to cover the chorister's family obligations for one year of enrollment, with the following exceptions:

- International tours
- Spending money for tours and outings
- Concert and event tickets

### **Payment Plans**

Tuition may be paid in a single installment or in two or four payments. Below you will find the due dates if paying in four payments. If paying in two payments, please pay by the dates for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> payments listed below. You chose your payment plan at registration.

For all programs that run September to May:

- 1st installment due September 1st
- 2nd installment due November 1st
- 3rd installment due January 1st
- Final installment due March 1st

For Concentio/Chamber:

- 1st installment due at registration
- 2nd installment due October 1st
- 3rd installment due November 1st
- Final installment due January 1<sup>st</sup>

All tuition payments must be received on or before the due date. Payments are to be made online using the link provided in the invoice that is emailed to you after registration. There is no ACH auto-deduction payment option this year. Most banks offer free auto-payment options on their online banking sites. You may also pay by check. If paying by check, please send payment to PO Box 9062, Pittsburgh, 15224. Do not give checks to Choir Directors at rehearsal. There is a \$10 fee for installments received 5 days past the due date. If paying by check, payment must be received on or before the due date. There is a \$10 insufficient funds fee for checks.

## **ADDITIONAL FEES**

### **Wardrobe Deposit for Melodia and Harmonia Dresses**

At registration, Melodia and Harmonia parents will write a separate check for **wardrobe deposit** (\$75) and date the check for May 1, 2019. If the family fails to return their concert attire, they will receive email notification stating that they have one week to either return the dress or make sure that they have sufficient funds in their account to cover the check. After the week is up, the check will be cashed. There will be a \$35 fee for checks that bounce/are returned for any reason.

### **Fundraisers**

Fundraiser payments, such as Sing for Service, must be submitted on collection dates to the Executive Director or the Bookkeeper or, may be sent by the due date to PO Box 9062, Pittsburgh, 15224. Do NOT give checks to Choir Directors at rehearsal. No Choir Director will accept payment in person.

## **REGISTRATION**

All registration must be complete prior to the first rehearsal in September. A chorister may not participate in rehearsals until registration is complete. This is for the child's safety and for insurance purposes.

## **CONCERNS**

Concerns about rehearsals, performances, and scheduling should be addressed to the Executive Director via email, or in person. Concerns about your child's artistic growth and his or her ability to attend rehearsals due to health or other issues should be addressed to the specific Choir Director via email, phone, or in person. Extreme concerns, beyond those of rehearsals and artistic growth, should be addressed to the Executive Director, who will consult with the Board Chair, as appropriate.

## **VOLUNTEERING**

### **Events**

PGC families contribute volunteer hours to the organization through a commitment to volunteer as a Volunteer on Duty (VOD) throughout the year and on one choir committee. This volunteer work allows us to keep administrative costs down. Family members will sign up for a committee at registration. The Parent Committee will confirm that each family is signed up for a committee at the beginning of the year and communicate the responsibilities of that committee. In tandem with the Parent Committee, the General Manager will be responsible for communicating volunteer duties. If a person offers special skills (photography, wardrobe, etc.) and volunteers throughout the year, they may be exempt from participation on a committee, at the discretion of the General Manager.

### **Volunteer on Duty**

All choirs (including Concentio) will have a Volunteer on Duty (VOD) at each rehearsal at Shadyside Presbyterian Church, usually an adult chorister family member. VOD slots will be assigned by the General Manager. If the assigned VOD date does not work for the parent, it is the parent's responsibility to trade slots with another family. This can be done through the parent portal and the choir directory. Each family must participate as a VOD in one regular rehearsal per semester.

The VOD must arrive 15 minutes early and will be responsible for letting choristers in the building at the Westminster Place entrance at Shadyside Presbyterian Church. (Choristers, please do not ring bell. If early, please wait until the VOD arrives). VOD will also bring a snack for the choir's break. The snack should be something simple and easy to eat with fingers or limited utensils. The choristers have only between five and ten minutes to eat snack. Please consider ease of clean-up in choosing a snack (ie... popcorn). VODs may also have mailing or other administrative work to do during rehearsal as assigned by the General Manager. If no work is available, VODs may read or do other work as long as they pay attention to the door. **For no-shows and late arrivals there is a \$50 fee which will be applied to the next tuition payment.** Families may buy out of their VOD responsibilities for \$50 per semester but are strongly encouraged to work with other parents to see that the duties are covered. Family contact information may be found on the Parent Portal.

### **Tour Chaperoning**

Tour chaperones are generally selected on their demonstrated willingness to enhance the tour experience and to work in a cooperative manner with the Artistic Director, and fellow chaperones. Chaperone applications are available in September and due by mid-October. Decisions will be made by November.

If you are interested in chaperoning a tour, express your interest to the Artistic Director promptly. Your interest will be carefully considered and it is important to understand that there is no obligation to invite you to chaperone a tour. All tour chaperones must have a completed PA background check, PA Child Abuse Clearance, and FBI Fingerprinting or notarized Affidavit before going on tour.

### **Alcohol and Substance Abuse**

Choir volunteers are not permitted to operate a motor vehicle or volunteer in any other manner while under the influence of alcohol or any other substance that may impair their ability to ensure the safety and well-being of Choir members. While you are responsible for determining your ability to ensure the safety and well-being of Choir members, volunteers may be removed from assignment due to impairment at the discretion of the Staff and Event Chairpersons.



## **FUNDRAISERS**

The Choir hosts the following fundraisers each year as part of the regular season. Each chorister in PGC is supported financially by the organization. Participation in the fundraisers is essential to supporting every member, and making sure all choristers can participate regardless of financial circumstances.

### **Every Voice! Benefit**

The Board hosts this benefit once a year. Choir parents are invited to participate as paying guests.

### **Sing for Service**

Sing for Service is required of all choir members (Concentio and all Training Choirs). This fundraiser is necessary to subsidize every choir member. All choristers need to raise a minimum of \$250 (Concentio) and \$200 (Training Choirs) to cover the cost of her choral education. The choirs will perform at local nursing homes, hospitals, etc. All choir members are asked to get a minimum number of sponsors for their three concerts that day. Sing for Service packets will be given in early October. Participation in the Sing for Service enables the choir to refrain from traditional holiday wrapping/cookie-selling fundraisers to focus on music. Sing for Service Family Meetings are currently scheduled for October 26 (Concentio) and October 30 (Training Choirs). See the schedule for times.

### **Tour Fundraiser**

Concentio and Via members participate in this event that raises money for the choir's summer tour. It is a themed dinner with auctions and entertainment. The tentative date for this event is October 20, 2018. Training choir families are welcome to participate on this fundraising committee and are encouraged to attend. It is a fun night for all.

Other fundraiser may be added for special circumstances like grant tours and unforeseen expenses.

**SLIDING SCALE Tuition Rates**

For the purposes of this table, “Income Level” is defined as total gross income for all family members contributing to the household, as found on line 37 of your 1040.

“Family Size” is defined as the total number of family members claimed on the household tax return, as found on line 6d of the 1040.

Chamber Choir + Concentio + Tour				
Income Level	Family 2-4	Family 5	Family 6	Family 7+
Under 30,000	356	279	203	127
30,000 - 44,999	586	509	433	357
45,000-59,999	894	817	740	663
60,000-74,999	1201	1124	1048	971
75,000-99,999	1559	1482	1405	1329
100,000-124,999	1816	1765	1714	1663
125,000-174,999	1991	1946	1895	1844
175,000+	2057	2030	2019	1993

Concentio				
Income Level	Family 2-4	Family 5	Family 6	Family 7+
Under 30,000	205	154	103	77
30,000 - 44,999	384	333	281	230
45,000-59,999	639	588	536	485
60,000-74,999	894	843	791	740
75,000-99,999	1099	1048	996	945
100,000-124,999	1304	1253	1201	1150
125,000-174,999	1484	1434	1384	1334
175,000+	1536	1512	1505	1485

Via				
Income Level	Family 2-4	Family 5	Family 6	Family 7+
Under 30,000	154	128	103	77
30,000 - 44,999	280	229	179	128
45,000-59,999	484	433	381	330
60,000-74,999	689	638	586	535
75,000-99,999	894	843	791	740
100,000-124,999	1099	1048	996	945
125,000-174,999	1279	1229	1179	1128
175,000+	1342	1331	1325	1278

Melodia				
Income Level	Family 2-4	Family 5	Family 6	Family 7+
Under 30,000	103	77	51	51
30,000 - 44,999	154	128	128	103
45,000-59,999	205	179	179	154
60,000-74,999	256	231	205	205
75,000-99,999	308	282	256	256
100,000-124,999	333	333	308	282
125,000-174,999	359	359	334	308
175,000+	421	408	488	358

Musical Scenes Camp, Women's Choir, Choral Skills			
Income Level	Family 2-4	Family 5-6	Family 7+
Under 44,999	103	77	51
45,000-59,999	154	128	103
60,000-74,999	205	179	154
75,000-99,999	256	231	205
100,000+	282	282	256