



# Georgian Bay Children's Choir

## Welcome to the GBCC's 2025 -2026 Season!

We are delighted to have you and your child(ren) as members of our choir family. We hope that this welcome letter answers many of your questions and helps you to feel more comfortable in our group.

The **MISSION** of the GBCC is to engage and enrich the lives of young people through high calibre choral education and experience, enhancing the cultural life of the community in which we live.

The **CHOIR STAFF** consists of professional music teachers and administrative personnel. Dr. Regan MacNay, Reanne Dixon and Mrs. H (Linda Hawkins) work together as the artistic team to ensure that each singer grows and develops during their time with us. Together they have over 80 years of teaching experience both in the classroom and private studio, specializing in children, teens and university aged youth. Dr. MacNay is a percussion specialist who also loves her favourite felines "Atlas & Athena". Reanne is a music collaborator specializing in both violin and piano, she is a new mom of baby Jace, & lover of all things "puppy"! Linda Hawkins serves as the Artistic Director and has been with the choir since the fall of 1990 in multiple capacities as parent, accompanist and conductor. Her 5 grandchildren, affectionately known as the Ps and Ms, are her greatest joy!

Administrative tasks are shared with the Board of Directors and Lise Mitchell, our amazing Admin Whiz. Lise brings many years experience working with children and families to our organization. She is here to assist families and the artistic staff wherever needed. She is brilliant with paper work and ensures that things are calm and orderly at the Attendance Desk. Mr. H (Linda's husband) ensures that our spaces are safe and keeps a watchful eye over our groups at weekly rehearsals and performance events.

**OUR CHOIRS:** We have 3 choirs serving different ages and voice development stages. Placement in each group is determined in consultation with parents and members of the artistic staff. Choristers are expected to exhibit age appropriate self control and deportment. Choristers may be invited to move up to the next choir level at the discretion of the artistic team.

**ALLEGRETTO** is for singers Grades 1 through 3 (Ages 6 – 8). 5:30 – 6:20 PM The program includes rehearsals, day camp and performances. The rehearsals are 50 minutes long, scheduled in 5 minute blocks to develop musical skill, singing technique, team building and kinesthetic learning exercises. This group will perform a few songs on their own, and also with the other choirs in the massed choir. Repertoire is age appropriate with a mixture of styles, language and genres and is mostly unison. They will perform on an average of 5 - 6 times per year including our 2 family concerts in December and May.

**The Georgian Bay Children's Choir Box 772 Owen Sound, ON N4K 5W9**  
**General Info Tel. (519) 371-1237 [www.gbccsings.ca](http://www.gbccsings.ca)**  
**Charitable Registration Number: 83638 2895 RR0001**

**YOUTH SINGERS** is for singers in grades 4 and up. (Ages 9 and up) 6:00 – 7:15 PM. Their rehearsal is 75 minutes long and includes literacy components using individual workbooks and group sight singing materials. They will perform a few songs on their own, as well as joining with the Chamber Ensemble. All choirs are part of the Massed choirs featured in our concerts and other performances. Repertoire is age appropriate with a mixture of styles, languages and genres and includes unison, 2 part singing. They will perform on an average of 7 – 8 times per year including our 2 family concerts in December and May.

**CHAMBER ENSEMBLE** is for grades 7 and up with a focus on changed voices (Ages 12 and up) 6:45 – 8:30 PM . Their rehearsals are 90 minutes long and include literacy components using individual workbooks and group sight singing exercises. They will perform a few songs on their own as well as joining with the Youth Singers and are also part of the Massed choirs in our performances. Repertoire is more advanced with complex part singing, languages, genres and diversity of styles. This group performs frequently in the community as well as in our 2 family concerts each year. (We estimate a minimum of 10 performances a year) They may travel to participate in festivals and musical events outside of our local region.

**REHEARSALS:** Choir rehearsal time is precious! We pack a lot into our short time together. It is important that your child arrive for their rehearsal on time and ready to sing. This means that they are toileted and hydrated BEFORE the start of each rehearsal, AND they have signed in and picked up their name tag. (Name tags are for identification and safety) Boots and outer clothing should be left at the coat racks by the Attendance Desk. They are expected to **bring their Music Bag & Music to all rehearsals and events.**

Rehearsals run weekly on Monday evenings from September through to early May, with breaks for Thanksgiving, Christmas, Family Day and March Break. Day camps are held in October and February. All rehearsals and Family Concerts are at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, Owen Sound.

Choir absences affect everyone. Each week new material is presented and taught and so we expect choristers to be at all rehearsals unless they are ill or there is a family emergency. **If more than 3 rehearsals are missed in a term (including camp),** there will be a discussion with the Artistic Staff regarding upcoming performances and participation. It is not fair to the rest of the group to have singers who are not prepared. Often Mondays are a day when children are tired from busy weekend activities. Please try to ensure that your child is in bed in good time the night before choir rehearsals, performances and events so that they can enjoy the experience and make a positive contribution to the rest of the group. Singing requires a lot of physical energy and stamina, much like an athlete!

Please check the current schedule for any changes and additions.

**MUSIC:** Choristers will receive a music bag and be issued music folders and materials throughout the year. They are expected to treat the music respectfully and ensure that all library materials are returned to the choir in good condition at the end of the term or year.

**WARDROBE:** The choir owns and distributes the following wardrobe items to choristers:

All choirs - Blue Polo Shirts

Allegretto – White Dress Shirts

Youth Singers – Boys – Black Dress Shirts; Girls – Black Velvet Tops & Black Palazzo pants

Chamber Ensemble – Boys – Black Dress Shirts; Girls – Black Tops & Palazzo Pants.

All choristers are expected to provide Black pants (or skirts & tights), BLACK SOCKS, BLACK SHOES.

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We have numerous used items that can be borrowed.

All wardrobe items can be washed in cold water. Dress shirts should be ironed.

Wardrobe is distributed at the beginning of each term and can be exchanged if a child needs a different size.

Wardrobe is returned at the end of the season. Please return it clean and in good condition.

**\$ COST: Registration fees** are set each year by the board and cover artistic staff costs and facility rental fees. **Fundraising and Donations** cover all other aspects of our programming: Music purchases, rehearsal materials, camps, wardrobe, insurance, special events, FOOD, celebrations, accountant fees and administration!

The choir strives to keep registration fees as low as possible, to that end we have 2 fundraisers each year (1 in the fall, 1 in the spring) that we ask families to support OR make a donation in lieu. We also have 2 family concerts each year, 1 in December and 1 in May where we ask families to sell tickets.

Families can choose the registration payment schedule that best suits their budget. 1 Annual payment, 2 Term payments or installments (2 per term). Our policy is that a family pays for the 2 oldest children and the rest are free.

There is a bursary fund available to assist families with registration fees. An application is required and requests are confidential. Depending on available funds, bursary support can cover up to 75% of choir registration fees. More detailed information is included on the registration form.

Preferred payment method is by E Transfer to [gbccmanger@gmail.com](mailto:gbccmanger@gmail.com) However, we also accept cash and cheques.

**PARENT VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:** The choir relies on parent volunteers to keep staff costs to a minimum (which saves money on registration fees). Our work is with children, and they need to be cared for, supervised and fed! Parents are well suited for those tasks. We will provide training and support to our volunteer team in order to ensure that expectations are met and our volunteers feel supported and valued. It is also a terrific way to get to know other parents and our staff!

Please note that part of the Registration agreement includes volunteer hours. Some positions will require a vulnerable sector police check. The choir can provide you with a letter of request on behalf of the organization and are happy to reimburse if fees are required.

Our parent information sessions (Sept & Jan) will have more detailed information about volunteer tasks.

**A word about FOOD ..**We are a nut sensitive organization and strive to ensure that chorister dietary needs and restrictions are followed where possible. To that end, we source and provide our own treats, snacks and meals when needed. Please be mindful of this when sending snacks with your child or bringing food to potluck events. Water is our go to beverage, it is not sticky and will clean up easily as well as ensure good chorister hydration.

**Last but not least...**our focus is on young singers and helping them to find their voices and share them with confidence & joy. If you have questions or concerns please speak with us at any time. We believe that talking things through can usually solve almost any problem! Call, email, or catch us in the hall at rehearsals!

**Happy singing!**

**Your friends in the GBCC**

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1h June 2024

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