

MEMBER HANDBOOK

2021 – 2022 SEASON

Dr. Katherine Kinsey
Artistic Director

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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Rehearsal Location: Oakland Baptist Church
1067 Oakland Avenue
Rock Hill, SC 29732

MISSION STATEMENT

The York County Choral Society's mission is to perform great choral masterworks with the composer's intended accompaniments. Our organization has been founded to offer our community and the surrounding area an outlet for quality music making and continued artistic growth.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

York County Choral Society was formed in the 1981-82 season by Dr. David Lowry and Dr. Shirley Fishburne. The group's founders expected about two dozen people to attend the organizational meeting and were overjoyed at the 140 who showed up! From the outset, the chorus numbered over 50 voices and it has continued to date with consistent strength. The first performance was Handel's Messiah, Parts II & III on April 4, 1982, in Winthrop's Byrnes Auditorium. Each year live performances of works often not accessible to church or school choral groups are presented for the public to enjoy, improving the quality of life for the entire community.

CHOIRS

York County Choral Society (YCCS) Main Choir

The YCCS Main Choir is a large concert choir devoted to performing major choral works and symphonic choral music from all musical periods, as well as contemporary classical selections. The group also performs concert settings of holiday music, patriotic, seasonal choral, and multi-cultural choral repertoire. Normally, two concerts are presented each year,

one in the fall, and one in the spring. Accompaniment is by instrumental ensembles, organ, or piano. Featured soloists from both inside the chorus and from outside perform with the ensemble.

York County Chamber Singers

The York County Chamber Singers, formed in 2012, is a smaller ensemble of 24 to 26 singers that primarily performs *a cappella* music from all musical periods. Singers in this ensemble practice outside the regularly scheduled rehearsals on “agreed upon” dates throughout the year. They perform on the same concerts with the Main Choir, but also extend community outreach in arts festivals, churches, and civic functions.

MEMBERSHIP

Benefits

YCCS singers have an outlet for musical creativity and pleasure. They have an opportunity to increase their musical ability by learning music in depth and improving their vocal and leadership skills. They join like minded persons, become friends and make beautiful music. In addition, opportunities to travel and perform in other venues; across the region, the state, the nation, or even overseas, may be offered to YCCS singers.

Auditions

Auditions are held each year two weeks prior to the first rehearsal. Singers do not need to make an appointment but are expected to come during set/advertised times to the audition site on a first come basis. Singers also may audition/join in the spring by contacting the director for an audition appointment before the January rehearsals resume. All vocal parts will be auditioned for both the main choir and chamber choir. *Singers are required to wear masks during the audition.*

Audition Location: Oakland Baptist Church, 1067 Oakland Ave., Rock Hill, 29732, Choir Room
(Enter at the Ebenezer Road entrance)

Singer Eligibility Requirements:

Singers in the YCCS are expected to have medium to advanced music reading skills, an ability to blend their voices with others, and prior singing experience with choral ensembles such as church choirs, college or advanced high school experience. All singers are expected to have the ability to rehearse independently outside the scope of the rehearsal in some manner.

Audition Criteria:

Candidates may choose to provide a music piece of their choice if possible or otherwise sing a familiar a cappella piece such as a hymn or the National Anthem. The audition process will explore range vocalization, participation in a short check for aural skills, music reading capability, and singing a prepared piece (if possible). The audition will be overseen by the director and rehearsal accompanist. The singer does not need to bring an accompanist, but may do so if desired.

SINGER RESPONSIBILITIES

YCCS requires the following commitments of its singers

Vaccinations:

All singers are required to be *fully vaccinated*. Proof of vaccination (by original vaccination card or photograph of card) will be required at the first rehearsal attended. *Fully Vaccinated* means at least 2 weeks have passed since your last shot.

Masks:

Masks will be required upon entry into the rehearsal venue and worn during rehearsals. There is a high possibility that our concerts will also require all singers to wear masks. The masks for the concert should be a specifically designed black singer's mask or a black KN95 mask.

Disclaimer:

Singing with YCCS is strictly voluntary and all singers will be asked to sign a waiver releasing YCCS or any YCCS designed rehearsal/performance venues from any potential liability.

Musical Diligence:

Most **musical scores are purchased by singers** and become their property. Certain pieces will be on loan from various organizations and must be returned in good condition with all marks removed. The Music Librarian will have scores available for purchase at cost before the first rehearsal. Should a singer already own a copy of the music, he/she must ensure that it is the edition being used. **Singers are encouraged to take notes diligently during rehearsals and rehearse independently in some manner outside scheduled rehearsals by playing and/or singing their parts at home or practicing with suggested recordings.** Learning the music quickly and thoroughly so the director can concentrate on ensemble **technique and interpretation is vital to a professional performance. *The purpose of the rehearsal is to perfect the requirements of the music and create excellence. Every member is expected to arrive on time with a sharpened pencil with eraser and give their undivided attention to the director.*** Talking and chatting during rehearsals is a distraction to other singers and the director, and wastes rehearsal time. **Cell phones should be silenced; no texting.** Smart phones may be used for taking rehearsal notes only. Socializing may be done before and after rehearsal or at events planned so members may become better acquainted. Water bottles are allowed and encouraged during rehearsals.

Attendance:

Members are expected to attend all rehearsals, dress rehearsals, and performances. Singers are required to notify their **section's attendance taker** (see contact information on page 12) if absence is unavoidable. At the director's discretion, a singer may be asked to sing his/her part, privately, for the director if absences become excessive (more than three in a season). **All YCCS members are required to attend every dress rehearsal and all performances. Singers may be excluded from a performance if they miss the dress rehearsal for that concert.** Under *extreme* circumstances, the director may grant an absence from the dress rehearsal. Each situation will be considered on an individual basis.

SEASON SCHEDULE

Season Dates, Times and Venues:

- **Rehearsal Venue:**
 - **Oakland Baptist Church Sanctuary** (*Enter: Ebenezer Road entrance*)
- **Rehearsal Times:** (*Thursday Evenings*)
 - **MAIN CHOIR:**

The format to rehearse members together or in sectionals as well as starting and concluding times will be decided on a yearly or “semester” basis. Much of this depends on the impact of the pandemic. **Singers should be prepared to arrive by 6:15 p.m. for sectionals; combined rehearsals (men and women) will begin at 7:30p.m. and end at 9:30 p.m.**
 - At times, additional rehearsals become necessary due to unforeseen circumstances or may be called at the discretion of the conductor for the purpose of meeting performance goals.
- **First Fall Rehearsal and Business Meeting:**
 - **Sept 2, 2021, 7:30 p.m. (Sanctuary; please wear a mask)**
- **Fall Dress Rehearsal and Concert #1:** This will be edited/completed and sent to you online!
 - Dress Rehearsal: **Saturday, Dec. 4, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.** (*Location TBA*)
 - Concert: **Sunday., Dec. 5, 4 p.m.**
- **Spring Dress Rehearsal and Concert #2:**
 - Dress Rehearsal: **Saturday, Mar. 5, 2022; 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.**
 - Concert: **Sunday, Mar. 6, 2022, 4 pm**
 - Location: **St. Johns’ United Methodist Church** (321 S Oakland Ave., Rock Hill, SC)
- **Spring Dress Rehearsal and Concert #3** (*Location, TBA*)
 - Dress Rehearsal: **Saturday, May 21, 10a – 12 pm**
 - **Concert #3: Sunday, May 22, 4 p.m.**
- **Alternate Date Information:**
 - *Alternate Rehearsal:* **Tuesday, Nov. 23; combined rehearsal 7:30 p.m.**
 - *No Rehearsal:* **Thursday, Nov. 25 (Thanksgiving)**
 - *No Rehearsals* **Dec. 9 – Jan. 6 (2022)**
 - **Resume Rehearsals: Jan. 9, 2022**
 - *No Rehearsal* **Maundy Thursday, April 14, 2022**
 - Alternate Location: **Thursday, May 19; call time – 7:15 p.m., St. John’s UMC**

Chamber Singers may resume in the Spring and those dates/times will be discussed in late fall or January.

PERFORMANCE VENUES

Detailed information regarding the utilization of our concert venues and parking information will be conveyed to the choir **via email prior to rehearsals** for those spaces. We usually perform in more than one venue within a season. You will have the opportunity to experience these spaces through alternate rehearsals/prior to the concerts or at our dress rehearsals the day before we perform. ***Please read this info carefully as it comes your way!***

CONCERT ATTIRE

Attire for all YCCS performances is “concert black.” In order to achieve the highest possible professional presentation, please follow the guidelines outlined below.

In addition to the concert attire guidelines, be prepared to wear a **black singer’s mask or black KN95 mask**. While we hope that wearing masks will not be necessary, this requirement may have to be implemented due to stipulations presented by our venue hosts or the nature of the pandemic at the time of concert performances.

In addition, please be aware that proper personal grooming is essential. Please be sure to clean your concert attire on a regular basis, wear deodorant, and freshen your breath prior to each performance. **The use of perfumes, scented lotions, aftershave, or scented laundry products is prohibited;** many of your colleagues may be allergic or highly sensitive to these types of scents.

Women:

Women are expected to wear a long or tea length black dress/skirt or black slacks, and long, $\frac{3}{4}$ length, or short sleeves tops with a modest neckline (*no sleeveless* outfits, please); black opaque stockings (*if legs are showing*); black closed-toe, matte-finished dress shoes (ballet flats are fine); small, stud earrings (no large or dangling jewelry); preferably no hair ornaments (head bands are acceptable if black or blended with hair color; no sequins). Jewelry should be kept to a minimum and not visible from the audience.

Men:

Men are expected to wear black tuxedos, white formal shirt, black cummerbund, black bow tie, black shoes, and black socks. Please no colored handkerchiefs, colored socks, jewelry, or other ornamentation.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Dues and Music Fees:

Every singing member pays annual dues to be a member. Dues are necessary to help underwrite the expenses of YCCS. Dues are not prorated for a portion of the year and not refundable. Current dues are **\$50 for adults and \$25 for students** with a valid student ID. Every singer is responsible for helping YCCS meet its financial responsibilities and remain financially solvent. This shared responsibility is the only way that this organization will remain viable and offer the singer the exciting experience of singing the great repertoire.

To provide the funding required for artistic directors, accompanists, contract soloists, orchestra players, programs, and posters, YCCS is ***required to raise significant funds***. It does this by soliciting corporate sponsors, selling advertisements in the concert playbills, soliciting patronages from concert goers and interested people, selling tickets to the performances, and holding fundraisers.

Singers with business connections are encouraged to help sell corporate sponsorships and ads in the playbills. Officers of the YCCS Board of Directors head up this effort and will help you with materials for presentation. All singers have friends and acquaintances who are interested in their participation in YCCS and who will become patrons of the society. Singers themselves have the opportunity to become patrons and are encouraged to do so. For each ad purchased and patronage secured, rewards in the form of tickets to YCCS concerts are given to those who make the purchases.

Fundraisers

It is preferred and requested that members of the YCCS participate in our funding raising activities. These activities will require minimal effort and have been quite a success!

- **BBQ FUNDRAISER:**

Our inaugural BBQ fundraiser in 2020 was such a success that we decided to have it once more this year. On Saturday October 24, 2021, from 11 am -2:30 pm, we will be selling BBQ plates of Pulled Pork or Pulled Chicken with Baked Beans, Coleslaw and Roll for \$10.00. We will also sell both pork and chicken for \$14.00 per pound. Tickets can be purchased on our website beginning in late September. The funds we raise will be used to hire musicians for our March and May concerts.

- **Pecan Fundraiser:**

Delicious pecans are sold in the months of Nov., Dec., and Jan. as a fundraiser. You will be provided additional information in rehearsals regarding these projects. *Please participate in these sales in order to secure quality performance opportunities and to meet the expenses of our concerts.*

Ticket Sales

YCCS sells tickets to performances to insure that there is an audience for which to sing. All singers are encouraged to contact their friends and family to purchase tickets to hear the amazing music that YCCS performs. Only the singers know how much work has gone into the concert production and consequently feel a warm, personal desire to share it with others. Consult our website (www.yorkcountychoralsociety.org) for ticket prices.

Technically, **YCCS is a 501 (C) (3) non-profit organization** governed by a Constitution and Bylaws. YCCS has no office and no paid administration. It receives no funding from any governmental department or tax supported agency. All administrative duties are executed by a Board of Directors. Each year new directors are appointed to the Board by the existing Directors upon the recommendations of the Society and the public at large. Raising funds to pay the salaries of the Artistic Director and Assistant Director/Accompanist and to underwrite the expenses of concerts and operations is part of the responsibility of every singer and is coordinated by the Board of Directors.

Each participant in the YCCS has the responsibility to see that the mission of YCCS continues and that the joy of making excellent music together is available to us now and for future generations.

ARTISTIC STAFF

Artistic Director

Dr. Katherine (“Kathy”) Kinsey was appointed Artistic Director and Conductor of the York County Choral Society on May 10, 2012 following co-founder Dr. David Lowry’s 31 years of musical leadership who retired in spring 2012. From 1997 to 2017, she served as the Director of Choral Activities at Winthrop University (Rock Hill, S. C.) and currently holds the title Professor of Music, Emeritus. During her time at Winthrop University, she directed the Winthrop Chorale and the Winthrop Chamber Singers. In addition she taught both undergraduate and graduate conducting, oversaw and instructed courses related to the Master of Music in choral conducting program and was integral to the secondary choral music education program as well. A resident of Charlotte, N. C. for over 30 years she holds a Master’s degree of Music Education from UNC-Greensboro and a Doctorate of Musical Arts in conducting from the University of South Carolina where she studied with Dr. Larry Wyatt and Dr. Emanuel Alvarez. She also has been professionally influenced by her predecessor Dr. Robert Edgerton (Winthrop University), the late Dr. Mary Nell Saunders (Charlotte Oratorio Singers), and the late Dr. Arpad Darazs (USC). She began her teaching career in the Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools where she taught middle and high school choral music for thirteen years prior to her appointment at Winthrop and simultaneously worked with the Community School of the Arts (Charlotte, NC) teaching voice, piano, and music theory for seven years.

Dr. Kinsey has served in numerous state offices for the SC American Choral Directors Association including that of state president and vice president (2007 – 2011). She frequently is invited to work with teachers within professional education in-service clinics, to serve as a clinician of choral festivals, as an adjudicator for choral contests/festivals and works annually as a consultant with high school choral programs offering pedagogical guidance and assistance with festival preparation.

Dr. Kinsey considers her musical strengths to be periodic/stylistic interpretation and vocal blend. She is adamant about maintaining the strong musical and artistic traditions of the York County Choral Society. She recognizes the wealth of vocal talent in Rock Hill and the surrounding area and hopes to continually feature both established and young artists in annual YCCS performances. Ultimately, she encourages singers in our area who have a love of choral music and a need to perform quality music to join us in our performances of great choral works.

Assistant Director/Accompanist

Amy Morris is the Assistant Director of Choirs at Charlotte Latin School, where her responsibilities include teaching choir in grades 5 – 12, AP Music Theory, serving as the music director for the upper school's theater productions, and teaching private piano and voice lessons. Prior to her appointment at Latin, Amy was a member of the music faculty at Winthrop University from 2010 – 2020 where her responsibilities included class piano, private piano lessons, staff accompanist for private studios, choirs, and the opera program, and music director for the theater department's mainstage productions.

She has sung with Opera Carolina, Oratorio Singers of Charlotte, Oratorio Chamber Singers, Cantata Singers, and the Ethos Consortium, and is currently a member and soloist of the chancel choir at Myers Park Baptist Church. As a pianist, Amy has been Artist-in-Residence at Opera Carolina, has played for countless theatre, opera, choral, and recital programs throughout the Charlotte metro area and is in demand as a coach/accompanist for both opera and musical theatre performers. Amy holds a BM in vocal performance from Queens University and a MM in accompanying and chamber music from UNC-Greensboro, where she was a student of Benton Hess and Andrew Harley.

Rehearsal Assistants

- **Tex J. (TJ) Williams:** Tenor, soloist; Director of Choral Activities, Northwestern HS, Rock Hill, SC; Music Director, Trinity United Methodist Church, York, SC
- **Jessica Hall:** Alto, rehearsal accompanist; Organist, Woodland United Methodist Church, Rock Hill, SC; Owner/Quilting Roost, Rock Hill.
- **Irene Pointon:** Alto, soloist, former choral director/Charlotte Latin, choral adjudicator, YCCS Board Member (media marketing/fundraising); active member and choral youth leader/Grace Lutheran Church, Rock Hill.

YCCS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS:

Nora Sliney

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ncsliney@gmail.com

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Art Design

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Irene Pointon

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Leigh Poole

Publicity/Fundraising

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Non-Voting Members:

Katherine Kinsey, *Artistic Director/Conductor*

Amy Morris, *Assistant Director/Accompanist*

Samantha Bradner, *Webmaster/Technology*

Our YCCS Board of Directors will meet on the first Monday evening of each month via Zoom beginning in October, 2021.

SINGER REPRESENTATIVES

Singer Representatives to the Board of Directors: Please contact these singers (the Director, President or any Board Member) if you have **ideas or concerns regarding our organization!** Our Singer Representatives assist us with providing you with information as well as giving you an outlet to express concerns related to our organization.

- Nora Sliney (Soprano): ncsliney@gmail.com
- Jessica Hall (Alto): volzjc@yahoo.com
- John Arant (tenor): john29732@aol.com
- Andy McKusick (Bass): ndmcq6@juno.com

ATTENDANCE SECRETARIES

Section Attendance Secretaries (*Let these folks know when you are absent/late.*)

Section	Name	Email
Soprano:	Judy Cowell	jdycowell@gmail.com
Alto:	Linda Caines	lmcaines@hotmail.com
Tenor:	Chris Fischesser	cwf@comporium.net
Bass Section	Will Kiblinger	wkiblinger@comporium.net

York County Choral Society Protocols for Rehearsals

Health & Safety Protocol for the start of 2021-2022 York County Choral Society Concert Season

The YCCS Board and Oakland Baptist Church are following guidelines set by municipal and national public health agencies and are guided by best practices and research provided by The American Choral Directors Association as of August 2021. Health and safety precautions may be adjusted at any time based on guidelines from these organizations and the CDC.

Rehearsal Policies

Members must be able to show proof of being “fully vaccinated” at their first rehearsal to participate in the 2021-2022 YCCS season.

Pre-rehearsal Health Self-Check: Every member will be asked to self-check their health according to the health screening guidelines prior to leaving for rehearsal. Members having a temperature, cough, or any potential sign of illness should not come to the in-person rehearsal.

Members who have been exposed or have been identified by health professionals as part of a contact investigation, must contact the YCCS President immediately by email or phone and shall not attend rehearsals for 14 days after potential exposure.

Contact Tracing: Attendance for rehearsals will be recorded and retained for potential contact tracing. Members shall always maintain current contact information with YCCS.

Communications: Emails and texts from YCCS will alert singers of rehearsal changes and contact tracing, if necessary.

A Waiver indemnifying the YCCS Board, YCCS officers, designated rehearsal/performance venues and their staff will be required from each member by/at the first rehearsal attended.

Facial coverings are required for all members including vaccinated members in rehearsal spaces and common areas, and every effort shall be made to maintain social distancing. Masks should be a specifically designed singer’s masks or an N-95 mask. These masks 1) shall be made with at least 2 layers of breathable material 2) fully covers nose and mouth and secure under the chin, 3) fits snugly but comfortably against the side of the face and 4) be secure with ties or ear loops.

Singers are asked to not share music or pencils and only bring necessary items. No water fountains will be available.

YCCS will supply sanitizing wipes, and a limited number of KN-95 masks.

ASSUMPTION OF RISK: I have read the above requirements to proceed with in-person rehearsals with the York County Choral Society at their designated location and understand the possible risks of contracting or spreading COVID-19. These activities are of such value to me that I accept the risk of being exposed to, contracting, and/or spreading COVID-19 in order to attend YCCS rehearsals inside their designated rehearsal venues.

WAIVER OF LAWSUIT/LIABILITY: I hereby forever release and waive from potential liability York County Choral Society and/or any YCCS designated rehearsal/performance venues and their owners, officers, directors, managers, officials, trustees, agents, employees, volunteers, or other representatives in connection with exposure, infection, and/or spread of COVID-19 related to attending rehearsals/performances with YCCS and/or any YCCS designated performance venues. I understand that this waiver means I give up my right to bring any claims, including for personal injuries, death, disease, or property losses, or any other loss, including but not limited to claims of negligence and give up any claim I may have to seek damages, whether known or unknown, foreseen or unforeseen. I also understand that my family members, representatives, agents, etc. give up their right to bring any claims, including personal injuries, death, disease or property losses or any other loss on my behalf, including but not limited to claims of negligence and give up any claims they may seek for damages whether known of unknown, foreseen or unforeseen.

“I KNOWINGLY, INTELLIGENTLY AND VOLUNTARILY ASSUME THE RISK OF POTENTIAL EXPOSURE TO COVID-19 AND OTHER TRANSMITTABLE DISEASES BY PARTICIPATING IN THE YORK COUNTY CHORAL SOCIETY AND THEREFORE HOLD MYSELF RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL HEALTH SAFEGUARDS FOR YCCS ACTIVITIES.”

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Name: (printed): _____