



## Welcome Back! Winter 2026

Please take time to look over this letter, as it contains important information, musical and otherwise, that will prove useful throughout the year. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact me or your section leader. I look forward to making beautiful music with you! Laura Sam, (336) 263-7754, [director@womensvoiceschorus.org](mailto:director@womensvoiceschorus.org)

### Rehearsal Location, Crucial Dates

WVC meets in the Ministry Center (older building) of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 300 E. Rosemary St., Chapel Hill. Parking information is available on page 4 of this file. The main doors will be open from 7:00 to 7:30p. (beginning at 6:30p when there's a sectional rehearsal). If you arrive late and the doors are locked, please call or text Marsha (919-491-3946) or Kinley (347-835-0901).

You can join the Zoom Rehearsals [here](#). Meeting ID: 858 3293 4624; Password: 121074.

Please put the following dates on your calendar immediately and check the website calendar for additional events and updates throughout the year. Remember: The first fall rehearsal counts toward attendance.

Aug 25, 2025: First rehearsal

Oct 18, 2025: Fall retreat

Jan 12 and 22, 2026: Tech rehearsals

Jan 25, 2026: Winter concert

Jan 26, 2026: Listening party

Feb 2, 2026: First Spring rehearsal

Apr 11, 2026: Spring retreat

April 27 and 30, 2026: Tech rehearsals

May 2, 2026: Spring concert

May 11, 2026: Banquet/Listening party

### Dues

Membership dues are \$175 per year if paid at the beginning of the season or \$180 (three payments of \$60) if paid in installments (at your first regular rehearsal, by **November 3, 2025**, and by **January 4, 2026**). Dues may be paid with cash, check, or credit card at rehearsal or online at any time [here](#) (scroll down to dues) or via [Venmo @WomensVoicesChorus](#). Checks can be mailed to Women's Voices Chorus, PO Box 2854, Chapel Hill NC 27515.

No one should feel the need to leave or hesitate to join the chorus for financial reasons. When paying online, an option is available to pay what you can, no questions asked. As always, you can also contact the Treasurer (Karla – [treasurer@womensvoiceschorus.org](mailto:treasurer@womensvoiceschorus.org)) about scholarship help or to set up an alternate payment schedule or amount. All financial arrangements are confidential.

### Chorus Communication and Website Access

The AD's weekly rehearsal notes (usually sent on Tuesday) and President's weekly announcements (usually sent on Sunday) go out via our Google listserv. Please make sure that [WVCmembers@googlegroups.com](mailto:WVCmembers@googlegroups.com) is not blocked by your spam filter. The AD and the WVC president are the only people who send *regular* chorus-wide messages. However, members occasionally share information about other nonprofit or music-related activities (nothing pertaining to business, politics, or religion allowed). The subject line of these messages starts with **OT:** (off topic).

The **Members** section of our website contains extensive information you'll need, including links to the chorus handbook and practice files. Your personal account and password should be active from last season. If you have any technical problems, send a note to [contact@womensvoiceschorus.org](mailto:contact@womensvoiceschorus.org). Use the same address for any updates to your existing Faces and Stories entry or log in to the website and submit your revision online (<http://womensvoiceschorus.org/members/faces-stories/update-your-story/>). Remember that especially new members want to know more about *you*.

## Attendance

Regular attendance is vital to the health of any chorus. Tone, blend, vocal production, and a host of other choral skills are honed at rehearsal, and inconsistent attendance weakens both the musicality and morale of the group. The membership liaison of each section will take attendance. Please let her, your section leader, and the AD know about any absences you can predict. For last-minute problems, ALWAYS phone or e-mail Laura Sam at (336) 263-7754 or [director@womensvoiceschorus.org](mailto:director@womensvoiceschorus.org) and leave a message.

If you have any non-music related questions, contact your Membership Liaison: Soprano 1 – Brystana Kaufman ([brystana@gmail.com](mailto:brystana@gmail.com)), Soprano 2 – Kate DeAlmeida ([thedealmeidas@aol.com](mailto:thedealmeidas@aol.com)), Alto 1 – Ann Harrison ([annrharrison@gmail.com](mailto:annrharrison@gmail.com)), Alto 2 – Sharon Smith ([1soccerfan@earthlink.net](mailto:1soccerfan@earthlink.net)), or Membership Chair, Shelley Turkington ([ssturkington@gmail.com](mailto:ssturkington@gmail.com)).

It's also important to be on time, at your seat and ready to sing by 7:30pm. Warm-ups are an integral part of the rehearsal, developing tone, choral skills, and concepts that we use throughout the evening and the year. If you have a scheduling problem that will cause you to be late, one time or on a regular basis, please inform the AD as soon as possible.

Members who miss a tech rehearsal or miss more than four regular rehearsals during the fall/winter semester will not be allowed to sing in the concert except at the discretion of the AD. See the chorus handbook (posted on our website) for complete details on attendance and leaves of absence. **Attendance via Zoom is allowed for circumstances such as illness or travel. Your first two zoom rehearsals count as ½ an absence. Additional zoom rehearsals count as a full absence, but you are still welcome to attend.** Note that a retreat counts as two rehearsals for attendance purposes.

## Sheet Music and Practice

Music is provided on loan from WVC. Feel free to make notations on it, but only in pencil. All music must be returned immediately after the concerts. If you cannot finish the season, return music ASAP to our librarian, Marsha Ferguson ([marshachorus@gmail.com](mailto:marshachorus@gmail.com)). A packet of music costs the chorus about \$75 to replace; you will be expected to reimburse WVC for any music not returned.

Most chorus members find it essential to practice their music between Monday sessions. Even the best sight-readers can benefit from some review at home. Many of these review techniques can be practiced at the bus stop or over your morning coffee. In addition to going over the notes at a keyboard, you may find it helpful to:

- Speak the lyrics in rhythm, taking breaths only at breath marks, and paying attention to dynamics; practice pronunciation; work on clean consonants at beginnings of words, and pure vowel sounds.
- Read the text: Do you know what the song is about? What's being expressed? What story is being told?
- Listen to online practice files (more on this below) and recordings posted on the website.
- Participate in extra sectional rehearsals; ask your section leader!

## Practice Files

We input scores for the pieces we are currently rehearsing in Sibelius, a software notation program. From this we create YouTube videos, which let you view and play musical scores from any internet browser. Upon request, MP3 files can be provided which you can play on your device or download to create a practice CD.

To access the files, go to our website and log in. Under the Members tab, click "Practice Files". Detailed descriptions of the file types are at the bottom of the page. If you wish to hear all parts played at equal volume, click on "All." If you wish to hear your own part played at a higher volume, click on the appropriate link (section name or part number). A new window will open with that specific piece of music loaded. If you have technical difficulties, talk to your section leader and she will direct you to someone who can help.

## Musical Sections and Splits

Singers are assigned to one of four sections for rehearsals and chorus activities – Soprano 1, Soprano 2, Alto 1, or Alto 2. Each member will be also assigned what part to sing for 2, 3, 6, and 8-part music depending on our repertoire for the semester.

Some music is divided neatly into two parts (Sopranos and Altos) or four parts (Soprano 1, Soprano 2, Alto 1, or Alto 2). Easy! You should automatically know which part you sing. But for other configurations, referred to as “splits,” you may be unsure which line to follow. For 8-part music, you will be assigned to sing the Upper (U) or Lower (L) part of your primary section.

Three- and six-part splits do not follow the four primary parts. For a six-part split, the chorus is divided into Parts 1 through 6. In a three-part split, all 1s and 2s sing the Soprano (top) line, all 3s and 4s sing the Mezzo (middle) line, and all 5s and 6s sing the Alto (bottom) line.

A list of the parts you are assigned will be emailed to the membership and available in the member section of our website on the Chorus and Board Info page and on the Practice Files page. The part arrangements for each piece in our repertoire is also on the Practice Files page below the first set of tabs.

Our scores do not always call parts by the same names the AD uses. If you have any questions (which is quite normal!), talk to your Section Leader: Soprano 1 – Rebecca Bruening ([rebecca.bruening@gmail.com](mailto:rebecca.bruening@gmail.com)), Soprano 2 – Virginia Byers Kraus ([vbk@duke.edu](mailto:vbk@duke.edu)), Alto 1 – Kay Johnson ([2ndalto@gmail.com](mailto:2ndalto@gmail.com)), Alto 2 – Janet Huebner ([janetwvc@gmail.com](mailto:janetwvc@gmail.com)).

## Concerts

Concert dress is all black, from neck to toe, including dress pants or floor-length dress or skirt, top, shoes, and opaque socks or tights. Sleeves should be elbow length or longer. Please don't wear any visible jewelry (small stud or hoop earrings are OK). And no perfume or other scented products—somebody may be allergic to them. **See the [chorus handbook](#) in the member section of our website for more details. We will also wear solid-colored 'WVC blue' scarves during our concerts. Scarves are to be worn around your neck, loose or tied however you choose. WVC will provide the scarves for a suggested donation of \$10.**

A few weeks before each concert, you will receive five tickets to sell to friends, family, coworkers, etc. For every five tickets you sell, you will receive one complimentary ticket to use as you wish. Any friends or family members who work crew or box office will receive free admission to the concert. Please return any unsold tickets to your membership liaison.

## Rehearsal Parking Options

Two lots comprising 66 parking spaces are associated with the church. On any given Monday some of these spaces may be taken by church administrators and/or Lutheran Campus Ministry students, who have 24/7 access to the building. The church has asked us to park in designated spaces only. Please respect church policy on this point and be certain to never block any parked car. See <https://www.holytrinitychapelhill.org/worship> for more info (scroll to the bottom of the page.)

Parking is no longer free in the evenings in most UNC lots. For [many lots on campus](#), visitors may obtain a [\\$1 temporary one-night pass](#) through the [ParkMobile App](#), ParkMobile phone number, ParkMobile website, or a designated [weeknight pay station](#). See [www.parkonthehill.com](http://www.parkonthehill.com) for more info.

We highly encourage carpooling! Ask someone who lives or works near you if she would like to share a ride. Also, if you have a handicap tag, please try to park in one of the handicap spaces so that they do not go to waste. If you need a prime spot for access purposes, please plan to arrive early. The doors will be open no later than 7:00pm.

## Spread the Word

If you know people who would like to receive mailings and information about chorus concerts and activities, please provide their contact info. Friends, family members, neighbors, business associates—anyone you think would be interested. We do not share or sell our list, so your information is safe with us. Send the list to [contact@womensvoiceschorus.org](mailto:contact@womensvoiceschorus.org), with the subject line “Mailing list additions.” For each person, please provide this data: name, mailing address, phone number, and e-mail address.

*WVC strives to foster a climate of purposeful inclusion. A diverse, multicultural, multiracial choral community enriches a chorus and its music. We welcome sopranos and altos regardless of race, sexual orientation, gender identity, culture, religion, disability, or educational, financial, or class status.*