

HANDEL CHOIR
OF BALTIMORE



Members' Guide
2017–2018 Concert Season

Handel Choir of Baltimore
6200 North Charles Street #104
Baltimore, Maryland 21212

667.206.4120

membership@handelchoir.org

anne@handelchoir.org

info@handelchoir.org

www.handelchoir.org

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Welcome to Handel Choir of Baltimore! Please keep this guide with your music and Handel Choir calendar.

Singers are selected each year by audition with the Artistic Director and Conductor. Handel Choir continually seeks new members and we encourage you to recommend potential new members.

Handel Choir expects members to take a professional approach to the process of making music. This includes:

- committing to the entire concert year, Sept 2017 through May 2018
- attending all rehearsals
- spending a minimum of one hour per week preparing for each rehearsal
- dedicating yourself to building musical, vocal and ensemble skills
- maintaining a positive and collegial attitude
- being willing to be challenged
- advocating for the organization, including selling tickets, volunteering, recruiting volunteers and seeking new singers, board members and donors.

I. PROCEDURES AND EXPECTATIONS

REHEARSAL & PERFORMANCE SCHEDULES

A complete schedule of rehearsals and performances is distributed at the beginning of the season. It is subject to change and may be updated throughout the season. Members are expected to sing in all scheduled appearances of the Choir.

Rehearsals begin Tuesday, September 5, 2017 and continue Mondays through April 30, 2018, except Monday December 11, 18 and 25, 2017 and Monday January 1, 2018. Rehearsals resume on Tuesday, January 2, 2018, and continue Mondays thereafter. This year, the final performance commitment takes place Sunday, May 6, 2018. Selected Tuesdays and Wednesdays in each concert period are set aside for sectional rehearsals, to be held as needed at the conductor's discretion.

In each of the two concert periods of fall (through *Messiah*) and spring (January through May), no more than three absences are permitted. In the week of a concert, one working rehearsal and one dress rehearsal with orchestra and soloists are held at the concert venue, usually within the three days preceding the concert. These final rehearsals and the prior two Monday evening rehearsals are mandatory. Please notify the ensemble manager and your section leader well in advance if you anticipate a schedule conflict for any rehearsal. An ensemble that rehearses well together does indeed perform well together.

Unless otherwise noted in your Choir calendar, Monday night full Choir rehearsals will be held at Towson Unitarian Universalist Church, 1710 Dulaney Valley Road in Lutherville, from 7:30 to 10:00 p.m. Arrive 15 minutes in advance to greet your colleagues, take care of communications and transactions at the desk, and be seated **before 7:30**. Bring a pencil and *all* of the music the Choir is

planning to perform for the year. Rehearsals include a 10-minute break with refreshments provided by the membership.

Sectional rehearsals (soprano/alto and tenor/bass) are held at Church of the Holy Comforter, 130 West Seminary Ave. in Lutherville, from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m., unless otherwise indicated.

Full Choir rehearsals: Mondays 7:30–10 p.m., Towson Unitarian

Sectional rehearsals: Selected Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 7:30–9:30 p.m., Church of the Holy Comforter

ATTENDANCE

Choir members are expected to arrive 10 minutes early to all rehearsal and performance calls. In the event of illness or other unanticipated absence, it is your responsibility to notify the Ensemble Manager **in advance**. This allows seating to be adjusted before 7:30 so rehearsal can start on time.

When you miss a rehearsal, contact your section leader immediately to get rehearsal markings or other instructions that you missed. See p. 10 for contact info. Get this information **before** the next rehearsal.

Members who miss more than three rehearsals during the period of preparation for a concert may be excluded from participation in that concert at the artistic director's discretion, and may be asked to re-audition in order to participate in future performances.

In the event of hazardous road conditions due to weather, you will be notified no later than **three hours** before a scheduled rehearsal or performance as to whether the event has been postponed. Information about the make-up date and time might not be available right away. You will be notified of the make-up date as soon as possible, so please refrain from checking in for new information.

MUSIC

Vocal scores for the season are available to members for purchase at cost. Members are welcome to use scores from their own collection provided the editions are the same. Scores on loan to Handel Choir by third parties must be returned after the concert in which they are performed. Black choral folders are required for concerts; a limited number are available for purchase from Handel Choir.

DUES

Annual membership dues of \$170 and payments for music are invoiced individually at the start of the season. Members may pay the entire dues amount at the first rehearsal or pay in two installments: \$85 no later than **Monday, September 11**; and a second installment of \$85 on **Tuesday, January 2, 2018**. Members are expected to pay for music and dues in a timely fashion to be in good standing. Financial aid is available to ensure that all qualified singers are able to participate. Please contact Ensemble Manager Leroy Ludwick to request assistance (see p. 10 for contact info).

PAYMENT

Handel Choir accepts payment by cash, personal check or credit cards (Visa, MasterCard, Discover and American Express) for all transactions, including music purchase and tickets and dues. Paying by cash or check saves the Choir up to 3% of your payment amount.

BREAKS & SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Vocal sections take turns providing food and drink (coffee and tea) for the mid-rehearsal break. Carpooling is recommended for social as well as economic benefits. Relaxing and convivial events will be organized by and for Choir members, families and friends throughout the year. Stay tuned!

COMMUNICATION

The Ensemble Manager is the primary communication link between community Choir members and the Artistic Director. Bring concerns or questions to the attention of the Ensemble Manager in person or via e-mail or phone.

You will receive a weekly email missive with Choir business that requires your attention: instructions and prep for the next rehearsal, concert schedules, ticket sales, etc. You are responsible for knowing what is in these weekly messages and preparing accordingly. Any attachments are also posted on the Handel Choir members site at <http://www.handelchoir.org/MembersSite/MembersPageIndex.htm> (login is **singer** and password is **handel**).

You will also be on Handel Choir's email mailing list for promoting concerts and events and sharing news with our patrons, supporters and friends, and the broader community. Please forward these to your networks to help promote awareness of Handel Choir in the community, add new people to our email mailing list, help sell tickets to our concerts, and help bring in donations to support the Choir. People are far more likely to act on the content of an email if it comes from someone they know personally—you!

If you would like to receive information about other music events in which your colleagues are performing, or to which they have a personal connection, sign up for the "Save the Date" email list.

II. PERFORMANCES

2017–2018 PERFORMANCES

Handel Choir will present a season of three subscription concerts. We produce or co-produce and market these concerts and sell tickets for them. Patrons may subscribe for the full season at a discount up until Sunday, Dec. 10, 2017. Handel Choir also presents community concerts sponsored by other organizations, e.g., the City, a retirement community, civic group or social service organization. For community performances, Handel Choir receives a contracted fee-for-service payment, or the event is supported by a grant, or Handel Choir has elected to perform *gratis* as a community service. In addition, Handel Choir will be performing in a collaborative concert on May

5 and 6, 2018 with Deer Creek Chorale and Towson University Symphony Orchestra featuring Dan Forrest's *Requiem for the Living*.

CONCERT TICKET SALES AND CHOIR MEMBER DISCOUNT

A full house at every concert is crucial to Handel Choir's financial health! Each Choir member is expected to purchase **two half-price standard tickets** for each subscription concert. These are your "Choir discount" tickets. Members are expected to sell a *minimum* of four tickets to each subscription concert, including these two Choir discount tickets. You will be provided order forms. To assist in building our audience, please provide names and addresses (snail-mail or email) of those who purchase tickets from you, with their permission, so that we may send them mail (season brochure and three postcards per year) or email (@ weekly, easy opt-out). Your tickets will be available for pickup at the next regularly scheduled rehearsal, emailed to the specified patron email, or placed in will call for pickup at the venue on the day of the concert, beginning an hour and 15 minutes before the concert. Tickets can also be purchased online at www.handelchoir.org for all the same delivery methods.

DIRECTIONS

Directions and parking information for rehearsal and performance venues are at www.handelchoir.org. Please carpool if you can!

CONCERT DRESS

Professional and consistent appearance is imperative for concert performances. Unless otherwise noted, concert dress for all performances is as follows:

Men: A black dinner jacket (tuxedo) with white shirt, black bow tie, black cummerbund, black pants, black socks and black dress shoes.

Women: A long-sleeved black top or dress with a floor-length black skirt (hem 1/2 to 1 inch from floor) or dressy, loose fitting black pants; black hosiery; and black dress shoes. *Not acceptable:* A hem shorter than floor length, fitted or cropped pants, anything resembling jeans, and absence of hosiery. Jewelry must be small and inconspicuous, since concert lighting magnifies even the slightest glint.

Absolutely do not wear perfumes, colognes, or other scented products at rehearsals or in concert, as some members are sensitive and/or allergic to these scents. Refrain from eating foods with strong odors, such as garlic, before a concert or rehearsal. **Absolutely DO maintain good hygiene.** We are often in very close quarters. *Please note:* Dress rehearsals simulate concert conditions but *do not* require concert dress.

CONCERT DECORUM

Before each dress rehearsal, paperclip and/or mark your music in order to turn to the sections you sing. Do not follow along with the solo portions except for *segue* entrances.

When processing to concert formation, carry your music in the hand *away from the audience with the binding in your palm*. Open your music when the conductor steps up to the podium. At the conclusion, “hold the moment” (do not move until conductor lowers his arms). Wait to close your music until the applause begins.

The appropriate time to show your appreciation of the soloists and orchestra is by applauding in rehearsals. In concerts, please leave applause to the audience. You are welcome to shuffle your feet on the riser or tap your music folder in order to show appreciation for other performers. It’s always good—if you indeed are enjoying yourself—to SMILE.

III. COMMUNITY SERVICE

HANDEL CHOIR IN OUR COMMUNITY

Handel Choir of Baltimore is committed to public service. Each season we schedule community concerts at retirement communities for the benefit of residents no longer able to attend a subscription concert. The Choir regularly donates tickets for its subscription concerts to help other worthy non-profit organizations raise funds. Over the years, the Choir has been involved in arts partnerships with schools and after-school programs in Baltimore City and Baltimore County.

MAKING YOUR CONTRIBUTION

Like other non-profit, independent arts organizations, Handel Choir of Baltimore relies heavily on volunteerism and individual financial contributions in addition to ticket revenue; grants from the City, the County and the State of Maryland; and grants from foundations and corporations.

Handel Choir relies on the generosity and entrepreneurial spirit of our singing membership as well. Your active participation brings us audiences and new singers, board members and donors. The success of the organization depends on you not only artistically but in these other roles.

To do your part, please

- 1) talk about Handel Choir;
- 2) post or distribute brochures and concert fliers and postcards at work (where permitted) and in the local businesses you frequent: bookstore, grocery store, café, gym, salon, etc., as well as sharing these materials with friends, neighbors, family, colleagues and your place of worship—believe it or not, this works!;
- 3) offer to provide people’s names and contact info to the Handel Choir office for our mailing or email list if they show interest—then do it!;
- 4) forward patron email from Handel Choir to your networks;
- 5) if you are on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, “Like” or “Follow” Handel Choir and visit our pages to share our content, especially audition announcements and concerts. Facebook’s algorithms dictate that if no one shares Page content with their networks, no one sees it;
- 6) identify and encourage potential new singers and board members;
- 7) seek out new performing opportunities and venues; and

8) when possible, provide contacts for new funding sources.

We who love to sing fine choral and choral-orchestral music have the distinct and profound responsibility of ensuring that the Choir remains strong. Support Handel Choir by singing well and doing more.

IV. HISTORY AND ORGANIZATION

HISTORY

Handel Choir of Baltimore had its genesis as a group of volunteer singers who joined the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra in 1934 to perform Mendelssohn's *Elijah* for the National Music Teachers Convention. In 1935, the singers officially regrouped as the Handel Choir of Baltimore, and that spring sang their first performance of Handel's *Messiah*. This began an annual tradition that continues uninterrupted to this day. Handel Choir gratefully acknowledges its debt to Katharine E. Lucke (1875–1962), Chair of the 1934 Baltimore National Music Week Committee, Peabody Conservatory faculty member and director, and founder of Handel Choir of Baltimore, and to the many gifted music directors who have led the Choir ever since.

Historically, the Choir has been privileged to present not only traditional masterpieces but also music new to Baltimore audiences. Rather than performing in a permanent venue, the Choir is proud to carry out its mission by taking music to audiences throughout the metropolitan area, performing in concert auditoriums, recital halls, church sanctuaries and synagogues. Singers audition, rehearse weekly, buy music and pay dues for the privilege of singing.

ORGANIZATION & GOVERNANCE

Incorporated in 1986 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, Handel Choir of Baltimore is governed by a board of trustees made up of community leaders and Choir members. They all volunteer their time, expertise and financial support toward the Choir's artistic and educational goals. Trustees meet throughout the year and are responsible for establishing long range goals of the organization, developing strategies and resources to implement these goals, fundraising and promoting the Choir in the community, ensuring the recruitment and retention of the best artistic and administrative personnel, and ensuring that the organization is operated in a fiscally responsible manner. This work is accomplished by committees which depend on additional participation from the membership and community at large. The board also receives regular feedback from the membership through the ensemble manager, section leaders and singing board members. The Handel Choir office is staffed by Managing Director Anne Wilson, Bookkeeper Caroline Mapp, and volunteers. Administrative duties related specifically to the singing membership are handled by Ensemble Manager Leroy Ludwick. Librarian Cathy Koch keeps track of the music scores we buy and re-sell to you at cost.

A copy of the organization's by-laws and other information about the board are available by request from the office.

2017–2018 Board of Trustees

PRESIDENT

Cindy Levering*

Retired Pension Actuary
619 Stevenson Lane
Baltimore, MD 21286
P: 410-825-6357
C: 443-827-9566
leveringcindy@comcast.net

VICE PRESIDENT

Mark McGrath

Asst. VP, Stifel Nicolaus
One South St., 30th Fl
Baltimore, MD 21202
W: 410-659-2373
C: 410-493-3675
mark.mcgrath@stifel.com

TREASURER

Leslie Greenwald*

Health Economist
Research Triangle Institute
5104 Wetheredsville Road
Baltimore, MD 21207
H: 410-448-5637
W: 410-448-2611
C: 240-205-4381
lgreenwald@rti.org

SECRETARY

Michael Kersten

Attorney
Ballard Spahr, LLP
300 East Lombard St.
18th Floor
Baltimore, MD 21202
W: 410-528-5853
W Fax: 410-361-8938
kersten@ballardspahr.com

TRUSTEES

Jeffrey Ayres*

Attorney
Venable, LLP
3 Yearling Place
Lutherville, MD 21093
H: 410-337-9065
C: 410-274-6633
jpayres@venable.com

Brian Bartoldus *ex officio*

Interim Artistic Director &
Conductor (2017-2018)
334 Park Avenue
Frederick, MD 21701
C: 703-600-9751
brian.bartoldus@gmail.com

David Hamburger*

Retired pediatrician
10 E. Lee Street, #1701
Baltimore, MD 21202
H: 410-685-8074
C: 410-404-6868
hamburger_david@yahoo.com

Marta Harting

Attorney
Venable, LLP
829 W. Central Ave.
Davidsonville, MD 21035
W: 410-244-7542
mdharting@venable.com

Leroy Ludwick*

Visual Connections, LLC
2704 Montebello Terrace
Baltimore, MD 21214
C: 410-241-7209
laludwick@comcast.net

Philip Olsen

Director, Upper School Choirs
McDonogh School
3 Wandsworth Bridge Way
Lutherville, MD 21093
C: 410-769-8505
polsen@mcdonogh.org

Anne C.A. Wilson *ex officio*

Managing Director
221 Stony Run Lane, H2
Baltimore, MD 21210
C: 410-294-8074
W: 667-206-4120
anne@handelchoir.org

* Choir member

Last updated: Aug 4, 2017

V. CONTACTS

Artistic Staff

Brian Bartoldus, Interim Artistic Director and Conductor
brian.bartoldus@gmail.com 703-600-9751 (cell)
Thomas Hetrick, Associate Conductor and Accompanist 443-695-0412 (cell)

Administrative Staff

Anne Wilson, Managing Director anne@handelchoir.org 667.206.4120 (ofc) 410.294.8074 (cell)
Caroline Mapp, Bookkeeper (Fridays only) cmapp@handelchoir.org 667.206.4120 (ofc)

Choir Management

Leroy Ludwick, Ensemble Manager membership@handelchoir.org 410-241-7209 (cell)
Cathy Koch, Choir Librarian catkoch1@yahoo.com 410-627-5375 (cell)

Section Leaders

Soprano	Eloise Bensberg	ekbens@yahoo.com	410-456-0267 (cell)
Alto	Cathy Koch	catkoch1@yahoo.com	410-627-5375 (cell)
Tenor	Jeffrey Ayres	ipayres@venable.com	410-274-6633 (cell)
Bass	Andy Jones	jones.andy@gmail.com	706-593-0300 (cell)

Office Volunteers: John La Costa, Cindy Levering, Linda Talley

Handel Choir Members' Site (calendar, *Messiah* markings, rehearsal handouts, etc)

<http://www.handelchoir.org/MembersSite/MembersPageIndex.htm>

Login **singer** Password **handel**

Handel Choir Office

6200 North Charles Street #104, Baltimore, Maryland 21212

667.206.4120

Hours: Mon–Fri 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

Please note: Anne is frequently out for errands, meetings and other business.

If there is no answer when you call, please leave voicemail or send email to anne@handelchoir.org

The inbox for info@handelchoir.org is checked once a week or less.

For a faster response, call 667.206.4120 and leave voicemail (preferred), or send email to anne@handelchoir.org

Social Media

facebook.com/handelchoir

twitter.com/HandelChoir

instagram.com/handelchoirofbaltimore