



Fairfax Choral Society Symphonic Chorus
Membership Handbook
2016-2017 Season

Welcome to membership in the Symphonic Chorus of the Fairfax Choral Society. Here are important telephone numbers and information to guide you throughout the season.

Fairfax Choral Society Fairfax Choral Society Office
4028 Hummer Road, Annandale, VA 22003
(703) 642-3277
office@fairfaxchoralsociety.org
http://fairfaxchoralsociety.org

Artistic Director Dr. Douglas Mears, dmears@4thpres.org
Managing Director Patty Laing, plaing@fairfaxchoralsociety.org
Director of Operations Amanda Boundy, aboundy@fairfaxchoralsociety.org

Symphonic Chorus Officers
President Chuck Weger, cweger@mac.com
Vice President: Gayle Lorenz, Gayle19387@yahoo.com
Membership Chair Kate Simonds, kmsrn@earthlink.net
Soprano Section Leader Maureen Hanson, sopranosectionleader@fairfaxchoralsociety.org
Alto Section Leader Kirsty Elstad, altosectionleader@fairfaxchoralsociety.org
Tenor Section Leader John Keady, tenorsectionleader@fairfaxchoralsociety.org
Bass Section Leader Dave Saunders, basssectionleader@fairfaxchoralsociety.org

THE AUDITION

All members, returning and new, audition with Artistic Director Dr. Doug Mears before the season begins. At your scheduled time, Dr. Mears will evaluate your vocal and musical skills through the use of prepared music, vocalizing exercises, and sight-reading. New members are expected to demonstrate their ability to prepare a pre-determined piece and sight-read a simple score.

TIME COMMITMENT OF MEMBERSHIP

Symphonic Chorus members are expected to perform in all of the season's regularly scheduled concerts. Regular rehearsals are held every Monday night, including holidays, from 7:30-10:00 p.m., usually at Fairfax Presbyterian Church. Members are expected to be in their seats at the start of warm-ups (7:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted) and to stay until the end of rehearsal. A calendar is available on the website and is distributed at the beginning of the season so that members can plan to attend all rehearsals and concerts. We also expect our members to spend time learning their music outside of rehearsal, and to have their scores marked.

EXPENSES OF FCS MEMBERSHIP

Dues for the 2015-2016 FCS concert season are \$405 if paid by June 30, or \$415 if paid after that date. Payment plans are available. Dues may also be paid in two or four installments throughout the season.

Dues Refund Policy: Should you decide to withdraw from the chorus at a later date, dues are refunded according to the following scale:

Table with 2 columns: Rehearsals attended, Percent refunded. Rows: 0-1 (100%, minus a \$35 processing fee), 2 (50%, minus a \$35 processing fee), 3 (25%, minus a \$35 processing fee), 4 (No refunds given)

Scholarships: FCS is open and dedicated to accommodate any singer who wishes to become a member but may also be fiscally constrained. It is FCS policy to never turn away a singer due to the inability to pay. Please contact the FCS office to get more information on these accommodations and scholarships.

Concert Attire:

**Men:** Single-breasted black tuxedo jacket, black tuxedo pants, white tuxedo shirt with wing collar, black tie and cummerbund, (red bow tie & cummerbund for holidays) black socks and shoes (all purchased on your own).

**Women:** a concert skirt and sparkle top is purchased through FCS for about \$75.

**Everyone:** Black folder

Music: All members are expected to purchase their own music for each concert. FCS will provide the opportunity to purchase music through our offices. If you order music through the FCS offices, you must prepay and are responsible for payment, whether or not you sing in the concert. All music should be placed into a black folder of your choosing for performances. One late music order will be placed for each concert, 2 weeks after rehearsal begins. If you have not purchased music through FCS by this date, you will be expected to purchase music on your own.

Because many of our members suffer from allergies, singers are strongly encouraged to refrain from the use of scented products (cologne, scented creams, etc.) during both rehearsals and concerts.

Rehearsal Etiquette: Be on time, bring a pencil, phones off, no perfume, thanks. If you must be absent let your Section Leader know ahead of time.

**Dues and ticket sales do not cover the costs of concert productions and organizational activities.**

Members are strongly encouraged to actively solicit donations as well as purchase or sell concert tickets to family and friends, and participate in volunteering. There are many fundraising opportunities throughout the season, and we ask that each member participate in at least one fundraising activity.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY**

If members find it necessary to miss a rehearsal, it is expected that they will inform their section leader of that absence in advance. The section leaders' names and e-mail addresses can be found on our roster or on the FCS website. Failure to contact your section leader prior to a missed rehearsal will result in the absence being unexcused and will be considered at audition time at the end of the season.

The Chorus Committee and Dr. Mears have determined the number of allowed rehearsal absences for each concert. Members who miss more than one-third of the rehearsals for a concert, or who miss the dress rehearsal, may NOT sing in the concert.

Before annual auditions, the Chorus Committee will meet to review every member's attendance at rehearsals and concerts in order to provide Dr. Mears with recommendations on returning members wishing to reaudition.

**DRESS REHEARSAL POLICY**

All FCS Symphonic Chorus dress and orchestra rehearsals are closed to the public. Requests for special exceptions to this policy must be directed to the artistic staff or the FCS office before the day of the dress rehearsal. A nominal fee may be charged for admission.

Youth Chorus (YC) rehearsals, and combined Symphonic and YC dress and orchestra rehearsals are open to YC parents/guardians and siblings ONLY, and they will be permitted to sit in an area designated for them.

**SCORE MARKINGS**

Before rehearsals for each concert, members are required to transfer Dr. Mears' markings into their personal score. The markings are available in PDF format through our website. Once you have returned

your signed music order form (which includes the selection “I own a copy of this music”) you will be provided with the link to these markings. Due to copyright law, you must purchase the hard copies of this music even though the marked copies are available online.

## **COMMUNICATION**

The FCS Office and the Chorus Committee communicate to the Symphonic Chorus members through regular e-mails and the organizational website ([www.fairfaxchoralsociety.org](http://www.fairfaxchoralsociety.org)). Please be sure that we have your most current e-mail address and that you check your e-mail regularly. You will receive a weekly Symphonic Chorus Newsletter with rehearsal notes, concert updates and member information. You may also receive special notices with changes or updates.

To access membership information on our website, click on “log in” at the top of the webpage above the search box. Your username and password will be supplied once you have been accepted (returning member usernames and passwords will not change). Then click the Adult Chorus tab and you will see a “Members Only” link. This page is updated regularly, and often contains useful information, including marked scores available for download, audio recordings of choral works, concert schedules, and other information. Please check the website regularly to keep up to date with the latest information.

Important announcements are often made at rehearsals, and periodic office bulletins are distributed to members when necessary. The FCS office is not staffed to support member communications beyond ticket sales, dues and fundraising. Contact your section leader or chorus officers or a member of the Board of Directors with all other questions or concerns.

## **EMERGENCY WEATHER ANNOUNCEMENTS**

FCS will communicate closure due to weather via the website, telephone message, and often e-mail as well. Concert cancellations are also communicated via local news outlets when possible.

## **VOLUNTEER COMMITMENT**

FCS is a non-profit organization with a strong history of reliance upon volunteers. In addition to singing with FCS, your participation is relied upon to assist with ticket sales, CD sales, general operations, mailings, concert production, fundraising, publicity and marketing, etc. We know your time is valuable, and we trust that you will consider FCS worth the gift of your time and energies as well as your voice. All chorus members will be placed on an FCS Symphonic Chorus committee based on your responses in our volunteer registration form. Members may serve on multiple committees and change committees at any time by consulting with the Committee Chair. A list of specific Volunteer Opportunities may be found on the website in the Symphonic Chorus Members Area on the website.

**It is crucial that every member of the FCS Symphonic Chorus volunteer with FCS in some way.**  
We need everyone to make FCS a success!

## **Volunteer Committees**

### **Marketing & Technology Committee**

The marketing & technology committee will be focused on the implementation and distribution of marketing materials and technology for FCS. Examples of tasks that the committee may be asked to complete include distributing press releases to the media, contacting organizations with information about FCS’s free or reduced ticket prices, finding new media outlets for FCS to pursue, follow-up with media outlets, working on the FCS website, creating podcasts, updating blogs, etc. The marketing & technology committee may also assist in the creation of these materials if necessary or desired.

### **Concert & Rehearsal Committee**

The concert & rehearsal committee will be primarily used to ensure that all activities associated with rehearsals and concerts are accomplished. This may include staging, marketing, ticket sales, orchestra relations, putting materials on chairs at rehearsals, selling tickets at rehearsals etc. They are also available to help with the creation of materials. This committee may also get requests from the directors on things with which they would like assistance.

### **Writing & Proofreading Committee**

The writing & proofreading committee will be primarily responsible for the content creation and editing of our "printed word." "Printed word" can include press releases, programs, information on the website, grants etc. This committee won't necessarily work on design aspects (although if there is interest they are more than welcome to help out), but will be the number one source for the text that we use.

### **Fundraising Committee**

The fundraising committee will be primarily responsible for holding all of the fundraisers throughout the season. This will include finding new fundraising opportunities, planning and executing fundraisers, completing direct mail solicitations, etc.

### **Office Committee**

The office committee will be the first point of contact for the FCS offices when office work volunteers are needed. Tasks may include mailings, organizing music, checking databases, assistance in office moves, etc. Most of the tasks associated with this committee will be required to be completed in the FCS office.

### **Membership & Outreach Committee**

The membership committee will work to increase and improve FCS membership. Tasks may include recruiting members, planning social events for members, recognition of excelling members, planning outreach and special opportunities, etc.

### **FCS BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Board Chair: Paul Salbert  
Deputy Chair: Barbara Tuset  
Treasurer: Ann Pucci  
Corporate Secretary: Carl Altheide

Joseph Fischinger	Ann Pucci
David Gerber	Lori Rogers
Jeff Goldstein	Kathleen Tetrault
Susan Jones	Lee Westell
Frank Mirkow	

The Board of Directors governs and guides the Fairfax Choral Society in all activities. If you are interested in attending a meeting or becoming a member of the board, feel free to contact any of the board members listed above. FCS is always adding members to the board, so please check the website or contact the office for the most up to date Board of Directors list.