



# **PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK**

**2019 - 2020**

REHEARSAL LOCATION:  
St. Peter's United Methodist Church (SPUM).  
20775 Kingland Blvd., Katy, TX 77450

<http://katyyouthchoir.com>

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## ABOUT KYC

### KYC MISSION & PURPOSE

The *Katy Youth Choir* (KYC) is an award-winning choral program dedicated to “Inspire the Artist Within” each child. Our choral program provides high quality vocal and choral music education to the youth in the Greater Houston area who represent richly diverse racial, economic, and cultural backgrounds. KYC ignites a love of singing, nurtures each individual's potential for personal excellence in vocal music education, and instills self-discipline and confidence. Our highly qualified directors offer meaningful and enriching rehearsals each week. Each choir, in our program, builds on the vocal techniques learned in the previous choirs allowing our choristers to grow throughout our program. Our KYC choristers return home from rehearsals uplifted and inspired to keep singing! We take pride in expanding the arts in the Katy community.

Choral singing provides an opportunity for children to learn how to work with others to create something beautiful. Allowing children the opportunity to sing in a choral setting helps them build confidence in their own voice. It gives children and youth a safe place to experience different genres of music while growing as a musician. Choral singing helps in all areas of life from team building, establishing and maintaining relationships with peers, musicality, understanding different cultures and beliefs and more. Choral singing provides an opportunity to learn about pitch and harmony in music. If they are involved in other musical pursuits, choral singing enhances the ear to hear music in a more rounded way.

We have 4 different choirs. Our Preparatory choirs consist of children from Kindergarten to Second Grade. Our Prima Voce choir goes from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> grade and our Bella Voce choir goes from 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade. We have choristers from all different walks of life. Some have been reading music since they were young and some have never seen a music note. Our program takes these students and helps them to work together to create a unified sound. We are a perfect program for:

- someone who would like to start singing in a formal setting
- someone who loves to sing and wants more performance opportunities
- someone who would like to sing in a choir but doesn't have time in their school day to join the school choir
- homeschooled students
- students who are actively trying to get into their Varsity Choir

There is a place for every student, no matter what their level of musicality is. Our choral programs are designed to align with the choral program standards outlined by the Texas Music Educators Association and all of our Directors are active registered members.

### WHY KYC WAS FOUNDED

KYC was founded in 2012 to educate children and youth in the proper way of singing, expose them to rich varieties of music, as well as offer performance opportunities. KYC will not only benefit and add culture to the lives of those who participate, but it will also benefit their families and generations to come. Today more than ever, we are in need of wholesome quality music, and inspirational performance experiences. These influential types of musical experiences change and shape young lives for the better.

### WHO CAN PARTICIPATE

KYC welcomes all youth in the Greater Houston Area who are in grades K- 12 and who agree to abide by our Participant Handbook and Rehearsal Respect Policies. There is no audition. There is an opening orientation for all participants (returning and new) and their parents at the beginning of each semester (mid-January and mid-September.) as stated on the website: <http://katyouthchoir.com>

## KYC ENSEMBLE OVERVIEW

### Youth Chorus:

Bella Voce (Grades 6 – 12, Treble Choir, Girls & Boys)

*Rehearsals: Mondays 5:45 – 7:15pm at St. Peters United Methodist Church (20775 Kingsland Blvd, Katy, TX)*

Tuition includes:

- 2 Choir bootcamps per year
- 2 Concert performances per year
- 5 public performances per year
- 1 festival competition per year
- 1 performance of national anthem at sports games per year
- And MORE!!

Prima Voce (Grades 3 – 5, Treble Choir, Girls & Boys)

*Rehearsals: Mondays 4:30 – 5:40pm at St. Peters United Methodist Church (20775 Kingsland Blvd, Katy, TX)*

Tuition includes:

- 2 Choir bootcamps per year
- 2 Concert performances per year
- 2 public performances per year
- 1 performance of national anthem at sports games per year
- And MORE!!

### Preparatory Choirs

First/Second Grade Choir (Grades 1 – 2, Treble Choir, Girls & Boys)

*Rehearsals: Thursdays 4:40 – 5:30pm at St. Peters United Methodist Church (20775 Kingsland Blvd, Katy, TX, 77450)*

Tuition includes:

- 2 Concert performances per year
- 2 Classroom Showcases per year
- And MORE!!

Kindergarten Choir (Kindergarten, Treble Choir, Girls & Boys)

*Rehearsals: Thursdays 4:40 – 5:30pm at St. Peters United Methodist Church (20775 Kingsland Blvd, Katy, TX, 77450)*

Tuition includes:

- 2 Concert performances per year
- 2 Classroom Showcases per year
- And MORE!!

- All choristers will have an opportunity to enjoy the musical and social experience of singing in a quality performance ensemble with others who have similar interests and values.
- Repertoire draws from choral literature appropriate for children's choirs, including a variety of genres as stated above.
- An interactive curriculum designed to teach students the basic concepts of choral singing, sight reading, singing in unison, and adding two to four-part harmony for the youth choruses.

## SEASON CALENDAR

KYC has two semesters each season with winter and summer breaks in between semesters. Each semester is 12-13 rehearsals in length and includes one major concert near the end of the semester, as well as at least one performance appearance for a community event. Also there are optional “choir day camps” during the off-seasons (summer) open to the public for participation. Specific dates of current semester are on the website.

### FALL SEMESTER

September – early December

### WINTER SEMESTER

January – early May

### SUMMER OPTIONS

One and two week optional Choir Day Camps during June or July.

## COMMITMENT EXPECTATIONS

KYC participants are asked to commit for an entire season (two semesters) as much as possible. This results in consistent musical progress in each ensemble (group) and steady progress for individuals in their musical education and skills. We understand conflicts may arise, and thus we do offer a semester-based registration, as well.

If it is a tour year for the Bella Voce choir, all choristers registered at the beginning of September are eligible to go on tour. Any chorister that joins the Bella Voce choir in January will be evaluated after 3 rehearsals to see if they qualify to tour with the choir.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents whose children join Katy Youth Choir automatically takes upon themselves three important responsibilities as a participant of the organization:

1. Parents are required to volunteer for at least one rehearsal
  - Assist in drop-off/pick-up monitoring, help mark attendance, and hall monitoring
2. Concert Advertising
  - Each KYC household is responsible to sell at least five tickets for concerts (*Tickets are \$7 for general seating and \$14 for VIP seating*)
3. Recruiting singers
  - Each participant is responsible for spreading the word and encouraging other families to participate in KYC. The bigger our choirs are, the better our sound becomes. Besides, it's always more fun to go to choir with your friends!
4. Fundraising Participation
  - In order to continue to keep tuition costs low, each family is to participate in the fundraising program(s) set out by the organization or contribute a financial donation of \$125/child to the organization

KYC understands the financial and scheduling demands of today's families, and thus requires very little of our parents when compared to other musical, athletic, and extracurricular organizations. There is no requirement to fulfill an extenuating amount of service hours to the organization, however we welcome help in this area if/when you are able.

## REGISTRATION and ORIENTATION

Tuition is due at the time of registration. This helps the directors to begin the significant planning for placements/group size, and music purchasing/sorting immediately at sign-up. Online registration is required for the information needed from each participant. There is a discount for early registration, year-round tuition and siblings. A payment plan is available for all students who select the full year tuition.

## TUITION/FEES

The Katy Youth Choir is among the most affordable children's choirs in America, and an inexpensive supplement to academic education and private music lessons.

The proceeds from tuition and fees help to defray the expenses of the organization.

- Tuition is due at the time of registration.
- Early registration gives a discount of \$25/child and late registration has a surcharge of \$25/child
- Students paying full-year tuition receive a discount and the ability to select a payment schedule

### BELLA VOCE

Full Year Tuition: \$425/season

Semester Tuition: \$225/semester

### PRIMA VOCE

Full Year Tuition: \$375/season

Semester Tuition: \$200/semester

### PREPARATORY CHOIRS

Full Year Tuition: \$325/season

Semester Tuition: \$175/semester

## PERFORMANCE ATTIRE COSTS

Performance attire depends on the semester and venues. Most performances will be the KYCT-shirt. All participants are required to purchase a \$10 t-shirt. Parents may purchase one as well. There will be plenty of notice if there are additional attire requirements for any performances. We are actively trying to recruit a sponsor to donate the funds for our Bella Voce choir to have formal uniforms so we can look more professional at our national music competitions. If you are interested in contributing to this cause or becoming a sponsor, please email Artistic Director, Megan Comin at [megancomin@gmail.com](mailto:megancomin@gmail.com). Bella Voce choristers also have a formal uniform which will be required for some of their performances. We will be doing uniform fittings during the second rehearsal of the semester. Each chorister will need to bring a post-dated check dated to May 1, 2020 to the second rehearsal of the semester. If the uniform is not returned at the end of the season in good condition, the check will be cashed. If the uniform is returned in good condition, the check will be returned to the chorister.

## TERMINATION OF PARTICIPATION – REFUND POLICY

KYC expects participants to commit to an entire semester at a time. However, we understand extenuating circumstances may prohibit you from continued participation. Extenuating circumstances include a move out of the area, a death in the family, and other life-altering situations, reviewed by the Administrative Team. Unexpected scheduling conflicts do not constitute an extenuating circumstance. Refunds are issued on a case-by-case basis within the first month of the semester. The \$50 registration fee portion is not refundable.

## REHEARSAL OVERVIEW

KYC weekly rehearsals not only expose the participants to various genres of music and performance readiness, but also teach the fundamentals of technique, music history and theory, conducting, and an appreciation for quality music. In addition, inspirational themes that permeate the texts of the songs we sing are discussed. There will be Christian themes in the sacred music.

### REHEARSAL ROOMS:

All rehearsals are held in St. Peter's United Methodist Church (20775 Kingsland Blvd) either on Mondays. Please watch for an email prior to your child(ren)'s first rehearsal for rehearsal times and room assignments.

## REHEARSAL EXPECTATIONS

Participants in all ensembles must abide by the following rehearsal expectations:

- At all times abide by the **REHEARSAL RESPECT POLICIES**
- Maintain good attendance as described in the **ATTENDANCE POLICY** below.
- Refrain from carrying on side conversations or inappropriate behavior.
- Stand and/or sit with good posture, and eye contact with director during instruction/singing.
- Refrain from chewing gum, eating food, or drinking beverages (except bottled water).
- Have folder/music at all rehearsals.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance will be taken in each ensemble (group) at every rehearsal. In an effort to maintain consistent progress for each ensemble, choristers may not miss more than three rehearsals each semester. Missing more than three regular weekly rehearsals may result in the chorister not being allowed to perform in the final concert, unless special arrangements have been made with the Musical Directors.

Please contact the Director for any absences, since there will be part assignments, solo assignments, position placements, etc. “No-shows” (no prior notification) at rehearsal may result in a loss of opportunity for any special assignments (solos, speaking parts) that may happen to be assigned that day. We have little time to rehearse, and get a lot done in one rehearsal.

*Attendance at the final two rehearsals before the concert is mandatory unless extenuating circumstances occur.*

Participants who miss a concert run-through without prior notification will not perform in the concert. Participants who foresee a conflict with the final two rehearsals must notify Director ASAP.

If the participant is unavailable for the final concert, the participant is still welcome to register and be a part of the choir. Likewise, the ‘group performances’ during the semester are not mandatory. Community opportunities and invitations to perform come on a regular basis, and we schedule what we can. There will be notice for these performance opportunities, but they are not mandatory. *It is mandatory, however, to communicate with the directors if you are not available as soon as dates are announced.*

## OBSERVING REHEARSALS

In order to keep all participants *safe*, and to keep rehearsal buildings and grounds in which we are renting in pristine condition, the following policy is in effect:

- Only choir participants and parents who are *volunteering* will be allowed into rehearsal building. The following exceptions apply:
  - Parents may observe a rehearsal with prior notification to the Director, but it is not encouraged unless there are behavior needs of their child discussed ahead of time between the director and parent.
- Other guests may observe a rehearsal with the prior permission of the Director.

## DROP-OFF/PICK-UP

For Preparatory Choirs, parents are to park their cars in the parking lot and enter the building with their child(ren). You must accompany your child(ren) to the registration desk to check them in and receive any important handouts. You may then leave while your child is in rehearsal. Once the rehearsal is finished, you will need to pick up your child in the main foyer of the “Children’s Entrance” of St. Peters.

For Youth Choirs, parents may drop off and pick up children at the main entrance of St. Peters.

Parents/family members/friends or car pool assignees of KYC participants should not walk through the building while waiting. They may park in the parking area and wait inside their cars, or go to a nearby park or shopping center. Pick-up and drop-off procedures are set up for the safety of KYC participants, to honor the building granting us use, and to maintain a consistent flow of traffic.

## PERFORMANCES

We seek to inspire, teach, and uplift members of the organization and the community. A list of the performance requirements for each choir is listed above in the **KYC ENSEMBLE OVERVIEW** section.

## DRESS CODE

It is important to remember that participants are representing the organization and its mission when they are in attendance at rehearsals, concerts, and other performances and events. All participants will abide by the dress code at all of the organization's rehearsals and events.

### REHEARSAL DRESS CODE

Participants will dress modestly at all rehearsals and events. Children should not wear revealing clothing. Tank tops, sleeveless/strapless tops, short shirts, short shorts, short skirts/dresses, and tight, revealing clothing are prohibited at all of the organization's rehearsals and events.

### PERFORMANCE ATTIRE

Up to this point the performance attire has been the KYC T-shirt and blue jeans. This will remain for most local appearances, but KYC will now include more formal wear for the final concert as well as other concerts. KYC believes in the professionalism and refinement of performing ensembles wearing matching attire in concerts and other performances. All ensembles must wear the required performance attire. Performance attire is decided upon by the Musical Directors.

## KYC LEADERSHIP

Katy Youth Choir functions under the *The Katy Youth Choir & Symphony INC*, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The *Katy Youth Choir & Symphome Inc.* has a Board of Directors comprised of a Chairman of the Board, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and other directors as needed. The board of Directors is listed on the website at:

[Kycs.com](http://Kycs.com)

## MUSICAL DIRECTORS

KYC is led by a team of Musical Directors. These directors oversee the selection of music, and all rehearsals and performances. They also oversee the local leadership volunteers and volunteer committees. The list of directors is on the website at: [katyyouthchoir.com](http://katyyouthchoir.com)

## KYC REHEARSAL RESPECT POLICIES AND CODE OF CONDUCT

To best serve the rehearsal time the following expectations need to be understood by the student and parent. Proper order within the rehearsals allows the director to spend all energies on the power of music as we learn and sing, rather than spend energies to discipline or compete with attention. Please go through and discuss each item with your child(ren). (Keep in mind these are modified according to the maturity of the age group.)

Abiding by this code of conduct will allow a pleasant experience for yourself and those around you:

1. We understand rehearsals are weekly at the SPUM church. (Extended time may be necessary for concert run-through rehearsals, and will be given plenty of notice.)
2. We understand drop off starts 10 minutes before rehearsal. There are no responsible adults available before then.
3. I will be seated in the room by rehearsal start time. If I must be late I will let the director know ahead of time. I understand promptness is very important in all musical disciplines.
4. I will use the restroom/drinking fountain before rehearsal starts.
5. Upon arrival, (after restroom needs if necessary), I will proceed directly to rehearsal room and engage in entrance activity provided. I will be respectful at arrival.
6. We understand when our dismissal time is. A parent/guardian will arrive by rehearsal end time for pick up. I understand all of the directors and assistants need to leave within 10 minutes of rehearsal ending. In an emergency causing lateness I will notify 832-940-5717.
7. We understand the drop-off and pick-up procedures as explained in this handbook. Parent understands to allow 10 minutes to get through the line if needed. I will be patient and courteous at pick-up.
8. I, the participant, will abide by dismissal guidelines and immediately gather with any siblings/car pools, and look for our parent/guardian upon dismissal. I will not engage in 'play' during pickup, for the safety and flow of the pick-up procedure.
9. I, the parent, will properly communicate to any friends, Aunts, Uncles, Grandmothers, etc. who come to pick up my child(ren) the drop-off/pick-up policies.
10. I understand attendance is very important. We will notify the director ahead of time for any absences. I understand choral unity and blending, positions in songs, solos, harmony, movement in songs, etc. depends on each individual.
11. I will bring my folder at every rehearsal (except dress rehearsals and performances).
12. I understand a small fee may be charged for any folders or music that will have to be replaced due to being lost or damaged.
13. I will have any snacks/drinks done before rehearsal time. I will aim to come refreshed and excited.
14. I will have no food, gum, toys, or phones in hand. (Water bottles OK.)
15. I will leave all electronics at home. I understand there will be NO time to pull out the electronics. If I own a phone I will keep it out of sight.
16. I understand my full attention is expected during rehearsal. I will avoid any side chatting during instruction. I understand there is no leaving the room, or no unnecessary restroom visits for safety reasons as well as the distraction.
17. I will give eye contact to the director during instruction. I understand this is standard choir etiquette, and is respectful and crucial to unifying a choir both during singing, and during instruction.
18. I understand participation is required. I understand if any student is 'not in the mood' (behavior/'attitude' issues) then they will be immediately asked to sit to the side and watch until they are ready to participate.
19. I will keep hands and feet to self during rehearsal.
20. I understand if there needs to be discipline intervention: Where the student will be given one official "warning" from the director if a negative behavior is distracting/taking teaching time away from rehearsal. If the behavior ensues, the student will be asked to sit and watch. If defiance continues, parent will be notified and asked to intervene.
21. I will be positive. I will not blurt out negative remarks, such as, "I don't like this song! / or this game!"
22. I understand enthusiasm is powerful and contagious! My very attitude can affect the WHOLE CHOIR!
23. I understand I am an important contribution to this choir!