

# The Sacramento Valley Concert Choir (SVCC)

## Operating Procedures

### Rehearsals

1. Weekly rehearsals are normally held on Tuesdays from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Society of Sacramento ("UUSS" or "Unitarian") facility on Sierra Boulevard. Dress rehearsals and technical rehearsals may last until 9:30 p.m. Special rehearsals may also be called by the artistic director, and a sectional rehearsal can be called by the section's leader.
2. Each member is strongly encouraged to attend both the weekly rehearsals and any optional sectional rehearsals. Members should notify their section leader if they are unable to attend any rehearsal.
3. In the event of three (3) unexcused absences in a row or a total of five (5) absences in a season, a member may be dropped from membership during that season. The artistic director shall make the final decision based on the reason for the absences and that member's knowledge of the music. Missing the final two rehearsals before a performance may result in a soloist being replaced in the performance.
4. The best use of time in the weekly rehearsals is focusing on blending voices and sections, rather than being occasions for teaching members to learn their individual parts. Therefore, a wealth of information and musical tools for learning our parts is made available on our website ([svcchoir.org](http://svcchoir.org)). A separate document explaining these tools and how to access and use them is also made available. In addition, at or near the beginning of each season, each member is given the opportunity to receive a practice CD containing both a piano and vocal version highlighting their voice part for each of the songs to be learned that season. Each member should learn these songs thoroughly by listening to and singing along with the material on our website or the CD. Memorizing those parts is not normally mandatory; however, the artistic director may require that a particular song be memorized. Nevertheless, members are strongly encouraged to commit to memory as much as they are comfortable with. This will allow them to spend most of their time at rehearsals and performances looking up at the artistic director and out at the audience, rather than having their attention focused exclusively on the music in their binder.
5. It is essential that all members give their full attention at all times to the artistic director during each rehearsal. Conversations and comments among members during rehearsals interfere with this objective. Any member having a question for the artistic director may not simply shout it out but must raise their hand and wait for the artistic director to acknowledge them before asking it.
6. Scents may be harmful to your neighbors and even impair their health and performance. Therefore, members should refrain from wearing cologne, perfume, after shave, hairspray, gel, mousse, lotions, or any other scented products during rehearsals and performances.
7. Members may mark their music but only lightly in black pencil—**no pen, colored pencil, or highlighter!** Music remains the property of the SVCC and not the individual member. Common courtesy requires that any pencil marks made by a member be erased before the music is turned in at the end of the season so that the next person to get that music can start with a "clean slate." (See #4 under "Music Deposit" below.)

## Parking

In accordance with SVCC's agreement with UUSS, for rehearsals members are free to park anywhere in the parking lot. On nights when we are performing for the public, choir members must park toward the rear portion of the parking area, leaving the front portion of the parking area for our guests.

## Music Deposit

1. Upon joining the choir, each new member pays a one-time \$35 music deposit. The member receives an envelope with a packet of the sheet music for each song in the season's repertoire.
2. The envelope and each piece of music in it has a unique number assigned to a member. The music and envelope remain the property of the choir and must be returned in good condition at the end of the season. The purpose of the deposit is to cover the cost of replacing any packet that is not returned.
3. If, during a season, the sheet music for any one song is lost, destroyed or otherwise rendered unusable, the member must pay \$5 to cover the cost of replacing that music. If the music for more than one song is involved, the cost to replace the music is \$5 each. If the entire packet is so involved, the cost to replace is \$35.
4. As noted in #7 under "Rehearsals" above, making notes on the music with an erasable pencil is acceptable if such notes are erased before the music is returned at the end of a season. Marking it in ink, a colored pencil, or a highlighter will be considered to be rendering it unusable and subject to the provisions set forth in #3 above.
5. A member who leaves the choir and makes a written request to the librarian within six months of leaving is entitled to a refund of the music deposit.

## Membership Fees

Each season's membership fee is established by the Board of Directors, is normally collected at the first rehearsal, and is delinquent if not paid by the second rehearsal. Please see the Treasurer to work out an appropriate payment plan if this is a hardship.

## Performances

Regularly scheduled rehearsal and performance seasons are:

- a. Fall: September through December (holiday theme)
  - b. Spring: January through May (various themes)
2. Approximately five to seven performances are scheduled for each season, most of which are scheduled for Tuesday and Thursday nights in the last month of the season. Most of these performances are at retirement or senior facilities such as Eskaton and Atria and are not open to the public. During the fall season, we provide a public performance, usually midday, in the rotunda of the State Capitol. Public concerts are also sometimes scheduled in other venues such as The Ascension Lutheran Church in Citrus Heights. In addition, our final performance each season is at our

home base, UUSS, and is open to the public. Members are given a calendar of all performances as soon as they are scheduled.

3. Unless announced otherwise, members should arrive at least one hour prior to the scheduled starting time of each performance, i.e., the “call time.” The actual starting time is better known as the “show” time.
4. For all performances, music must be placed in a black binder. When entering a performance venue, music shall be carried in the hand away from the audience. (This is usually the left hand.) The music binder shall be raised, opened, closed, and lowered only upon the artistic director’s signal.

### Performance Attire

#### **Women:**

##### Fall

Black top or blouse (elbow-length sleeve or long)  
Full length black skirt or slacks  
Black stockings or socks  
Black shoes

##### Spring

Black top or blouse (elbow-length or short-sleeved)  
Full length black skirt or slacks  
Black stockings or socks  
Black shoes

#### **Men:**

##### Fall

Black dress shirt (long-sleeved)  
Black trousers  
black shoes  
Black socks

##### Spring

Black dress shirt (long- or short-sleeved)  
Black trousers  
Black shoes  
Black socks

### Choir Size

1. Because some of our venues can accommodate a limited number of singers, efforts are made to strike a balance between: (a) admitting to choir membership as many people who want to join as possible; and (b) not overcrowding a venue. There are at least two options for achieving this goal: one is to establish a membership cap. The other is to allow and encourage members to “opt out” of certain performance venues. In the past, a membership cap has been difficult to administer and maintain.
2. Currently, we admit all persons who apply for membership and later both allow and encourage members to “opt out” of performing when the entire membership cannot be accommodated in a particular venue. If voluntary “opting out” does not provide the desired result, section leaders are encouraged to work with section members to reach a safer number of members and to ensure a balanced sound.

### Annual Meeting

The annual meeting will be held within the last three weeks in April. The start time will be at the discretion of the Board. Business conducted will be officer and committee reports, approval of the next year’s budget, and election of officers.

## Officer Responsibilities

### **President**

#### Pre-Season

- Send email announcement to choir members 2-3 weeks ahead of the start date
- Schedule and conduct a board meeting during the week prior to the choir start date

#### Season

- Develop an agenda, schedule, and conduct monthly board meetings
- Send periodic communications to members
- Provide any timely announcements during the break
- Work with the hospitality committee in planning socials
- Help with arrangements at each performance site
- Work with the artistic director to achieve SVCC's purpose

### **Vice President**

- Act on behalf of the president in the president's absence
- Support and assist the president in setting and meeting organizational goals for SVCC
- Assist the president with pre- and post-rehearsal duties
- Support the president and the artistic director in meeting SVCC's purpose

### **Secretary**

- Take minutes at all meetings
- Provide an annual report for the prior calendar year at the annual meeting
- Create and maintain a sign-in sheet for rehearsal attendance
- Create and maintain a membership roster
- Create and maintain an emergency contact list for each member
- Chair the Sunshine Committee to deal with get well and condolence cards for our members

### **Treasurer**

- Receive, deposit and account for all monies collected
- Disburse funds to all accounts payable
- Keep proper accounts, which shall be available for inspection or audit by the Board
- Use and maintain the Treasurer's Handbook, which contains
  - Month-by-month detailed descriptions of the activities to be completed each month
  - Examples of the forms or other materials needed
    - Sign-up sheets for the beginning of each season
    - IRS forms for the artistic director and the accompanist, etc.
- Submit a written summary of the SVCC finances at each board meeting
- As chair of the budget committee, prepare a budget for review by the board prior to submitting to the membership for approval at the annual meeting
- Notify the secretary of all paid members

## **Librarian**

- Prior to each season, visit storage unit and pull repertoire music (earlier for those that record the practice CDs)
- Organize music in number-assigned envelopes for members
- Arrive early for first three rehearsals each season to distribute and track music envelopes
- At season's end, gather music from members and re-file it
- Follow up on any missing or damaged music
- Order new and replacement music, as needed

## **Venue Coordinator**

- Maintain regular contact with activity directors at venues
- Explore and preview possible new venues
- Arrange and book performance dates for fall and spring seasons
- Prepare a listing of those dates and provide it to members
- Coordinate with the treasurer regarding venue donations
- Keep the Board and membership informed of dates and locations of scheduled performances

## **Member Liaison**

- Represent the interests of the choir members by conveying members' concerns to the Board. Members are encouraged to share their ideas, concerns, complaints, and praises with the Member Liaison via the "Suggestion Bachs," email ([suggestions@svcchoir.org](mailto:suggestions@svcchoir.org)), or personal conversations
- Provide information to members:
  - Greet returning members each season and introduce her/himself to new members
  - Introduce new members to their section leaders
  - Produce name tags for new members
- When possible, recruit new members by submitting SVCC information to websites and publications

## **Committee Responsibilities**

1. New Member
  - The Member Liaison is the chair of the New Member committee
  - Prepare an information sheet to be distributed to members at the beginning of each season
  - Prepare name tags for new members
2. Hospitality
  - Arrive at least fifteen minutes early on nights when food and/or treats are provided by members to share with other members (potlucks) or when treats are provided by members for guests on public concert nights
  - Set up three or more tables with table coverings
  - Ensure there are enough paper plates (large and small), cups, and plastic spoons and forks
  - Provide coffee and several bowls of punch with ice on the final concert night
  - On the final concert night, arrive early for set up and stay after for cleanup

3. Budget
  - The Treasurer is the Chair of the Budget Committee
  - Receive and review budget estimates
  - Prepare the annual budget for presentation to the SVCC for approval at the annual meeting
  - Provide context for budget decisions by supplying historical data
  - Give suggestions for budget modifications in accordance with SVCC's Purpose
4. Publicity
  - Prepare announcements and flyers for performances:
    - Customize a flyer for each scheduled public venue, as needed
    - Prepare and print a program to be distributed at performances, unless requested otherwise. For example, a venue may prefer to print its own copies, in which case the Venue Coordinator emails the program PDF to the venue's liaison. In addition, out of respect for other groups performing in the Capitol Holiday line-up, SVCC does not provide programs.
  - Promote and supervise the advertising activities of the SVCC
5. Sunshine
  - The Secretary is the Chair of the Sunshine Committee
  - Send get well or sympathy cards to members in their time of need
6. Historian/photographer
  - Maintain albums, records, etc. concerning events involving the choir
  - Take photographs of choir rehearsals and performances for the scrapbook and website
  - Maintain files of photographs and flyers from every performance in a season
  - Provide photos to the Webmaster
7. Bylaws
  - Review bylaws and operating procedures every odd-numbered year
  - Present recommended amendments to the Board

## Appointments

### Section Leaders

- Send a start-of-season email to all section members and welcome new section members when they come to their first practice
- Listen during choir rehearsals, taking note of parts of songs that need extra work
- Plan additional sectionals
- Relay any information from the artistic director or choir president to section members
- If a section member is absent from a practice where new information from the artistic director and/or the Board is presented, ensure that the absent member is made aware of that information as soon as realistically possible
- If more than one section member advises you that they will miss a performance, let the artistic director know so he/she can plan accordingly.

### Webmaster

- Ensure the SVCC website is current and user friendly