

Bellevue Presbyterian Church  
**Children and Youth Choirs Membership Standards**

"I'm about to enter into my senior year of college. I can honestly say that I learned so many lessons as part of this group—musicianship, faith, fellowship, compassion, service, discipline, hard work, and joy all came from those years. I miss it a lot, and I miss it often. Thank you to everyone who was part of that remarkable part of my life—it was forever changed." *Chloe Wilson, Bel Canto class of 2009*

**More than music.** Children and youth who participate in choir develop a love of music, healthy vocal production, and basic musical literacy, gifts which last a lifetime. They build self-esteem, confidence, and academic skills; in a church choir, singers also experience worship and spiritual growth, serving others while also being supported themselves through music and relationships. The experiences of achievement, success, working towards excellence, teamwork, discipline, and commitment will shape their future endeavors. The support of a community of peers and adults who believe in God and believe in them provides support along the tightrope walk of childhood through adolescence and into adulthood. Choir is much more than a musical experience for your child.

**Choir is a team sport.** For any team to be successful all of its members participate in each activity. By participating in the choir ministry you agree to support the choir team regardless of the venue or worship hour in which they sing, or your church affiliation.

**All in, all season.** Choir membership requires a weekly commitment from September through May (June for Bel Canto). The choir is a team and builds throughout the season on the foundations established at the beginning of the year.

Singers who join the season late, are erratic in attendance or drop out before the end of the season often have difficulty fitting in, experiencing frustration and distraction. They miss the full benefits of choir and can undermine the singers around them as well.

**Choirs in worship.** Many factors determine when and where our choirs participate in worship and what they sing. Fundamentally, choirs are intrinsic to traditional worship, but we extend the children choir ministry into modern worship whenever possible because our church is one family worshipping in two languages of praise.

Our first concern is that all our children are safe, singing appropriate music for their growing voices, and participating in activities that are age-appropriate and developmentally sound. Calendaring the nine choirs and ensembles of the traditional music ministry is complex and begins with the children and youth choirs' availability based on the school district calendars.

**His Kids and JoySong** are scheduled to sing monthly during the offering in one morning service (except for festival Sundays) in the Sanctuary. In the spring, JoySong has advanced enough to safely navigate the community center risers and can participate in multiple services in different venues to include modern worship, usually starting with Palm Sunday.

**The Good News Group** participates in four morning services in both traditional and modern worship venues nearly every month throughout the season.

**Bel Canto**, similar to adult choirs, provides worship and music leadership monthly throughout the traditional worship services.

**Festivals and holidays.** All children and youth choirs sing Thanksgiving morning, combine for an Advent worship presentation, and sing Palm Sunday. The Good News Group and JoySong lead 5pm Christmas Eve;

Bel Canto leads at 11pm. His Kids do best worshiping with their parents and families on Christmas Eve. The season ends on the second or third Sunday in May with an alternating schedule, so the opportunity to minister through music on Mother's Day is shared among the choirs in the church, not just the children or youth.

**Calendar and Communication.** With today's technology to communicate anytime, anywhere, we ask that all choir participants communicate all conflicts, all the time.

If you have a conflict with a rehearsal, please notify the director in advance.

If your child is ill or has another last-minute emergency and can't attend rehearsal, please contact the director as soon as possible. We care about you and want to know if you are okay, and if you would like prayer!

Some absences, such as illness or family emergencies, are unavoidable. But absences due to avoidable conflicts such as doctor's appointments, social activities, or other non-essential events, undermine the choir's ministry and commitment to one another. Consistent absences from rehearsals or worship participation can seriously weaken the choir's ministry, do not model positive standards to your child and may be cause for dismissal.

If you have missed too many rehearsals to participate in a worship presentation, the director will contact you before the event.

If you are having a difficult time maintaining your choir commitment, please talk with your director before it becomes a problem.

**Plan ahead.** Our directors select music based on the number of singers in the choir months in advance of the choir's participation in worship. If your singer is ever going to be absent, please be considerate of the choir and director and their ministry by communicating absences as far in advance as possible.

**Dress rehearsals and final rehearsals.** In performing groups sometimes it comes down to the last rehearsal or dress rehearsal to put it all together. Even if a singer has attended every prior rehearsal but has missed the final or dress rehearsal, they may have missed crucial information. Please be understanding if you miss a dress rehearsal, or final rehearsal before a presentation, and are asked not to participate.

**Parental volunteer support.** Your support matters! Managers who can organize other volunteers or special projects are particularly helpful, as are those who can assist during rehearsal, or contribute food. Please let us know how you will help your choir and complete the Parental Assistant Survey for your choir. (Notice: Volunteers working directly with children are required to submit to a Background Check and agree to the church Sexual Misconduct Policy.)

**Costs.** Staff, facilities, sheet music and all other support materials are provided through the general church budget. The only costs you will incur are for the singer's outfit and volunteering snacks. Financial support for up to 50% of the choir uniform cost is available upon request. If you value this ministry and wish to financially support it, please give to the ministry budget of FPCB.

**Questions and concerns.** Please talk to your director or contact Scott Dean, Director of Music and Worship: Scott Dean: X3308, [sdean@belpres.org](mailto:sdean@belpres.org); Administrative Assistant—Adam Lindgren X3366, [alindgren@belpres.org](mailto:alindgren@belpres.org).

### Contact Information

**His Kids:** Cynthia Dean [cdean18@gmail.com](mailto:cdean18@gmail.com)

**JoySong:** Karen Nelson 425.454.3082; X3346, [knelson@belpres.org](mailto:knelson@belpres.org).

**Good News Group:** Daisy Li Emans [taksundaisyli@gmail.com](mailto:taksundaisyli@gmail.com)

**Bel Canto:** Scott Dean (see above)