



GRAND RAPIDS  
YOUTH CHORUSES

Handbook of General Information  
2023-24

Grand Rapids Youth Choruses

P.O. Box 68665

Grand Rapids, MI 49506

[www.gryouthchorus.org](http://www.gryouthchorus.org)

616-901-2778

Our Mission Statement:

The Grand Rapids Youth Choruses strive to instill in the children of West Michigan a lifelong love of music by providing a program in which they can discover and refine their musical talent as choral singers, demonstrate personal growth and leadership, and develop a lifelong passion for singing. Grand Rapids Youth Choruses aspire to provide a mutually respectful system of preparation, a dedication to excellence in the performance of quality choral literature, and a commitment to seeking collaborative musical opportunities locally, nationally, and globally.  
***It is our mission to make the world a more beautiful place through music and community.***

## **Contact Information**

### **Artistic Director**

Leah Ivory 616.856.8093 [leah@gryouthchorus.org](mailto:leah@gryouthchorus.org)

### **Collaborative Pianist**

Sean Ivory 616.856.8092 [sean@gryouthchorus.org](mailto:sean@gryouthchorus.org)

### **Melodia Director**

Cameo Haaksma Elzinga [cameo@gryouthchorus.org](mailto:cameo@gryouthchorus.org)

### **Administrator**

Emma Ivory 616.901.2778 [info@gryouthchorus.org](mailto:info@gryouthchorus.org)

### **Youth Chorus rehearsal accompanist**

Emily Blink 616.460.8363

## **GRYC Board Members**

Perrin Rynders, President  
Ken Jacobs, Vice President  
Camille DeBoer, Secretary/Treasurer  
Candice Sytsma  
Max VanWyk

Dear Grand Rapids Youth Chorus community,

Welcome to the GRYC 23-24 season! We are thrilled to be able to continue to offer our singers and their families the high level of music education and performances that you have come to know and love. Our choristers regularly deliver inspiring concerts wherever they sing - at our family concerts, at public events like the Griffins games, in collaboration with professional musicians, and on tour in the United States and overseas. We teach music from around the world to increase appreciation for other cultures and awareness of historical and current events happening both locally and in places far away from us - because issues of justice, peace, reconciliation, and restoration affect us all, no matter where we live.

The Grand Rapids Youth Choruses is in its 16th season as a west Michigan choral community and its 2nd season as our own independently operating organization. We have a great line up of concerts for you. The fall and spring concerts will take place at our home base of Calvin University. We will be offering our annual holiday concert in the beautiful sanctuary of Mayflower Congregational church. In January, Mandala will present a combined concert with two choirs from Grand Rapids Christian High School, Bella Voce and Chamber Chorale. We will carry on our fundraising tradition in March for our concert at St Cecilia. Our outreach into the community continues with singing the National Anthem at the Griffins game in October and two performances with the Grand Rapids Symphony - Holiday Pops, December 21-23 and Star Wars and More, May 3-4.

The GRYC retreat at Camp Manitou-Lin is early this year - the first weekend after our first rehearsals! Plan to attend. This is a wonderful way to get to know your fellow choristers and get a jump start on learning music. Retreat is a special time for our singers to be together. Developing friendships and building community makes us sing better! BIG THANKS to a generous sponsor for underwriting this event to make it available to all choristers at no extra cost!

At GRYC, we strive to provide singers and families with wonderful musical experiences in an atmosphere which recognizes the unique gifts of every individual. Our goal is for every chorister to feel safe and included in the GRYC family. All are welcome - there is a place for you at GRYC!

Thank you for being a part of this village. Thank you for your commitment to excellence in singing. Thank you for choosing community. Thank you for making the world a more beautiful place with us.

Sincerely,

*Leah Ivory*

## **MELODIA, grades 1-3**

**Director, Cameo Elzinga**

**Collaborating pianist, Sean Ivory**

Tuition: \$400

Rehearsals: Thursdays from 5:00-6:00pm, room 135 in the Fine Arts Center of Calvin University

## **MOSAIC SINGERS, grades 4-6**

**Director, Leah Ivory**

**Collaborating pianist, Sean Ivory**

Tuition: \$525

Rehearsals: Thursdays from 5:00-6:30pm, room 115 in the Fine Arts Center of Calvin University

## **YOUTH CHORUS, grades 7-12**

**Director, Leah Ivory**

**Collaborating pianist, Sean Ivory**

Tuition: \$575

Rehearsals: Mondays from 6:30-8:30pm, room 115 in the Fine Arts Center of Calvin University

## **MANDALA, select treble voices grades 7-12**

**Director, Leah Ivory**

**Collaborating pianist, Sean Ivory**

Tuition: \$575, *\*\$100 if already a member of the Youth Chorus*

Rehearsals: Thursdays from 6:40-8:40pm, room 115 in the Fine Arts Center of Calvin University

## PERFORMANCE ATTIRE

For GRYC family concerts, the performance attire will be GRYC t-shirts with blue jeans and comfortable shoes.

For the holiday concerts, choristers will wear all black concert attire.

MELODIA and MOSAIC SINGERS: Find your own concert-appropriate combination of dress pants, dress shirt (long sleeve), skirt or dress. All clothing must be opaque black (not see through). Black opaque leggings must be worn with skirts or dresses. No designs or sequins on clothing. All black shoes - comfortable but concert appropriate. No sneakers or athletic shoes. No high heels.

Melodia are invited to wear a red accessory of your choosing - ie. Scarf, belt, necklace, tie

Mosaic Singers are invited to wear a green accessory of your choosing - ie. Scarf, belt, necklace, tie

YOUTH CHORUS/MANDALA: Black formal dresses purchased through GRYC or black dress pants, black long-sleeved buttoned collared dress shirt, black belt/shoes purchased on your own.

## TUITION PAYMENTS

We will send an invoice via email, to be paid online.

Payment option 1: one payment for the season

Payment option 2: two payments for the season, first semester/second semester

Payment option 3: 8 monthly payments processed on the 15th of each month (Sept-April)

\*note: this option includes a \$3 processing fee each month

The tuition form must be filled out and turned in at rehearsal or mailed to Emma **by September 12.**

Grand Rapids Youth Chorus, P.O. Box 68665, Grand Rapids, MI 49506

***No refunds will be offered.***

### **Tuition Scholarships:**

We offer scholarships to families who are experiencing financial hardship and may not be able to participate in the choir without assistance. Please see the "Parents" section of our website [www.gryouthchorus.org](http://www.gryouthchorus.org) for a link to an application.

## **Tuition Discount for Multiple Children:**

For households that have more than one child in our choirs we offer the following discounts:

1st child: full tuition,

2nd child: 25% deduction off of the lesser expensive choir. Each additional child is an increasing 5% discount. IE - the 3rd child would receive 30% off and the 4th child would receive 35%. Please see the "Parents" section of our website [www.gryouthchorus.org](http://www.gryouthchorus.org) for a link to an application.

## **CLOSURES/CANCELLATIONS**

If rehearsal is cancelled, GRYC will notify you by email and we will post on social media.

## **BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS**

Each singer represents the Grand Rapids Youth Choruses. We are a professional organization and our students are expected to behave in a courteous manner at all times. GRYC does not provide supervision for choristers prior to their rehearsal times. Young choristers should be accompanied by their parents/guardians until their rehearsal begins.

All singers should plan to arrive five minutes before the scheduled start time of their rehearsal so that they can be in their places and ready to sing at the designated hour.

Singers do not leave after rehearsal has begun unless special permission has been granted. An email is necessary for late admittance to or early dismissal from a rehearsal. Please give payments, paperwork, etc. to Emma, our choir manager.

Singers may bring a bottle of water. Please make sure it has a lid or cap on it to prevent spills and if possible labeled with their name. No food, candy or gum is allowed in the rehearsal space. For optimal focus and energy, please have your chorister eat a nutritious snack before rehearsal.

Cell phones must be turned off during rehearsals and will be confiscated if used to make calls, play games, send text messages, or take pictures. This rule also applies to any game-playing devices that are brought into rehearsals.

Music passed out must be treated with care. Choristers are invited to make notes in pencil only. If a piece of music has doodling or writing that interferes with another person being able to use the music, you may be asked to pay for a replacement copy.

Thank you for your attention to these details! With their compliance to these guidelines, your children help promote the good name and reputation of GRYC.

## COMMUNICATION

Directors will send regular communication via email as needed. **These emails will contain important information and should be read thoroughly.**

Parents, please communicate through our manager, Emma. If she is unable to answer a question or if a response is needed from a director, she will pass it along and make any necessary connections. Do not expect immediate responses on a performance day. Thank you for understanding!

## ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS

Regular attendance is expected and integral to our success as a choir. **Unavoidable absences must be communicated to the director in advance and/or as soon as possible.** Illness and emergencies are examples of excused absences. Homework is not an excusable absence. If more than two unexcused absences are accrued/semester, a chorister may be excused from participation in a concert or possibly for the semester.

**Please sign below and turn in the signature page at the first rehearsal. :) Thank you.**

Parent Signature Page:

I \_\_\_\_\_ (printed name) acknowledge that I have read the GRYC 2023-24 handbook, and accept the information and terms that were provided.

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of parent/guardian: \_\_\_\_\_