



Wesley-Knox United Church

91 Askin Street, London, ON N6C 1E7

519.673.4803

www.wesleyknox.com | wesleyknox@bellnet.ca

Wesley-Knox Community Choirs

**Wesley-Knox
Children's
and Youth
Community
Choirs**

Handbook

Cherubs

Primary Choir

Junior Boys' Choir

Junior Girls' Choir

Mysterium

Karen Schuessler

Barbara McGill

directors



2016

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A Note to Choir Parents...

There is no requirement that a chorister or choir parent be a member of Wesley-Knox United Church. We do ask choir parents to help the church underwrite the cost of this program by choosing one of three levels of support: **\$90, \$60 or \$30 per child per year**. Please note that no child will be refused participation in the program because his or her parents are unable to make a donation. Also note that all donations are tax deductible and tax receipts will be provided.

Information on the Web

A special **Music Calendar** showing rehearsal and performance dates, times and locations for all choirs may be found on the Wesley-Knox website.

www.wesleyknox.com

We try to keep this calendar up-to-date. To view, open the Home page and scroll down. **Link to the calendar is at the bottom of the right sidebar.**

a member's value to the choir. Achieving a blue ribbon indicates that a child has enough ability to enjoy choral singing for the rest of his or her life. **Here are the five levels of achievement:**

White

- Achieved by everyone in second year of choir

Blue

- Sings melody and words in tune
- Watches conductor carefully when singing

Red

- Can follow printed music with finger
- Can sing descants confidently without confusion

Green

- Takes low singer's breaths
- Can sing alto parts confidently without confusion

Gold

- Shows responsibility and leadership in the choir
- Can sight sing parts in four-part music

Contact Information

Wesley-Knox United Church

- **Website:** www.wesleyknox.com
- **Church Office:** 519.673.4803, wesleyknox@bellnet.ca

Choir Attendance Line: 519.673.4803, ext 203, wkchoirs@gmail.com

Choir Administrator

- **Mary Bee Haworth:** 226.237.4337, marybee@larchelondon.org
Note: text preferred

Director of Cherub and Primary Choirs

Director of Children's and Youth Ministries

- **Barbara McGill:** 519.673.4803.ext 203, mcgill4556@gmail.com
home: 519.438.4556

Director of Junior Boys' and Girls' Choirs and Mysterium

Director of Music

- **Karen Schuessler:** 519.673.4803, ext 202, kasch500@rogers.com
home: 519.473.1668

The Five Choirs

Directed by Barbara McGill

Cherubs

- for children in JK–SK
- gathers every Thursday 4–4:45 pm
- develops basic music skills: keeping the beat, singing in tune
- perform two to four times each year
- performance attire: a favourite outfit

Primary Choir

- for children in Grades 1–3
- rehearses every Thursday 5–6 pm
- performs in church four or six times each year
- performance attire: white t-shirt, black pants, choir robe (supplied)

Directed by Karen Schuessler

Junior Boys' and Junior Girls' choirs

- for boys and girls in Grades 4–8
- rehearse every Thursday, Boys 4:45–5:30 pm, Girls 5:15–6 pm
- perform five to eight times each year
- performance attire **when wearing choir robes** (supplied): white t-shirt (short or long sleeve, lettering is OK), black pants, black socks, black shoes; **when wearing teal choir t-shirts** (supplied): white t-shirt (short sleeve only, lettering is OK), black socks, black shoes

Mysterium

- for enthusiastic, music-loving teens in Grades 9–12 and beyond
- rehearses every Thursday 6–7 pm
- performs five to eight times each year, various venues

Levels of Achievement

In performance, members of the **Junior Boys and Girls' choirs and Mysterium** wear a medallion on a ribbon over their gowns or T-shirts. Colour of the ribbon indicates years of experience and level of achievement and is awarded at the discretion of the conductor. **Ribbon colour does not indicate** ►

Welcome and Introduction

Thank you for choosing to be part of our Wesley-Knox Children's and Youth Community Choir program, a unique and vibrant musical experience in the heart of Old South London. Your child or young person's participation in this program will add much to the life of our church and help deepen our Sunday worship experiences. We do look forward to having you with us for this choral season!

We hope that this handbook will help you understand our program and also help provide a smooth start to the year. Please read it carefully and do not hesitate to contact any of us if you have any questions.

The Choir Program and its Philosophy

The **Cherub and Primary choirs** comprise a lively, interactive music program that teaches the basic elements of music through movement, vocal play, singing games, simple rhythm instruments and excellent choral repertoire.

The **Junior and Mysterium** choirs further develop vocal techniques and the ability to read music and sing in parts. We feel these vocal experiences can lay the foundation for future music learning and a lifelong love of music. Further, singing several Sundays each year allows choristers to become an integral part of a worship service and to develop confidence and performance skills.

Why do we do this? Why do we teach music at all?

Not because we expect you to major in music
Not because we expect you to sing or play all of your life
Not so you can relax
Not so you can have fun
But, so you will be more fully human
So you will experience beauty
So you will be sensitive
So you will be closer to the infinite beyond this world
So you will have something to cling to
So you will have more love, compassion, gentleness and goodness
In short, so you will have more life
For of what value will it be to make a prosperous living
unless you know how to live? —Anonymous

Chorister Expectations

1. Consistent attendance: Attendance at all rehearsals, Singing Sundays and other performances is important. **Parents, please let us know if a chorister is unable to attend a rehearsal or performance. E-mail wkchoirs@gmail.com, call 519.673.4803, ext 203, or text Mary Bee at 226.237.4337.**
2. Leave cellphones, electronic gadgets and toys at home.
3. Hands off other people.
4. The sanctuary and its balcony are always off-limits unless the chorister(s) is/are accompanied by a director.
5. Please pick up after yourself.
6. Include everyone in what you are doing and have fun!

Parent Participation and Support

Rehearsals can be intense and much is accomplished in a very short time. To keep the choral experience positive and running smoothly, Barb and Karen need support from all parents.

- Parents are asked to check their e-mail for messages from Karen, Barb and Mary Bee. A once-a-month Choir Newsletter will keep e-mails to a minimum.
- Parents are expected to sign up and serve on one of these committees:
 1. **Gym** (Junior Choir parents only): assist with supervision in the church gymnasium, Thursdays on a predetermined schedule
 2. **Robe**: robe upkeep, robing children and putting away their robes and ribbons, etc, plus “backstage support” for musicals
 3. **Worship Support**: assisting with lining up and demeanor, handing out hymns and bulletin sheets, serving as spotters for signs of illness, etc.
 4. **Social**: planning activities, organizing and setting up food, cleaning up afterwards
 5. **Attendance**: taking early attendance and then telephoning absentees or e-mailing them on Barb or Mary Bee’s computer
 6. **Transportation**: providing rides for choristers who need transportation
 7. **Rehearsal Support** (Junior Boys and Junior Girls only) attending rehearsals with the children, intervening when necessary with a tap on the shoulder or a move to the back of the room

Facebook

We are on Facebook! We have two Facebook pages: Wesley-Knox Choirs and Mysterium Youth Choir. These pages are primarily used to share photos of our choirs and news about upcoming events in our choir program. Both pages are public which means that anyone can view them, even if you do not otherwise use Facebook! The links for our Facebook pages are:

www.facebook.com/WKChoirs

www.facebook.com/MysteriumYouthChoir

Both links can be easily accessed from the Wesley-Knox website Home page. Go to www.wesleyknox.com and click on the links in the left sidebar.

About Photographs and Videos

As part of Wesley-Knox’s Community Choir Program, photographs and videos may be taken for use on the church website, the church’s Facebook pages and in church publications and presentations. Some parents and guardians may have concerns about these photos and videos. Please note that we have several policies in place. We never include any personal information (names, ages, etc) or “tag” individuals in photos and videos. We also try to avoid posting individual shots of choristers, and instead, post group shots of choristers together. **You will have an opportunity to give or withhold permission for your child to be included in these photographs and videos** when you complete his/her registration form. Also, please note that, while most parents and guardians do not object to their child being in photographs and videos, some do. **Please respect their wishes** by not posting your personal choir photographs and videos on Facebook and other social media sites.

A Note about Wesley-Knox...

Wesley-Knox is an open, diverse and inclusive faith community. We try hard to be a welcoming, caring church. About one half of our members come from Old South London, the rest from all over London and beyond. **We are not a church that has all the answers.** Some of us are settled in our faith, others are seekers. But, wherever we are on our faith journeys, we try to be respectful of one another as we come together to proclaim and celebrate the love of God through worship and through service.

To learn more about Wesley-Knox, please see our colour brochure, **Welcome to Wesley-Knox**, or visit us on the web at www.wesleyknox.com.