

ALPHARETTA FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**CHILDREN’S CHOIR VOLUNTEER MANUAL**

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# OVERVIEW

## *Introduction*

Through the AFUMC Children’s Choir program children:

- Experience and celebrate God’s love, through song.
- Learn how to express their faith through music.
- Get to know new friends and members of God’s family.
- Learn basic musicianship.



Although the Director of Children’s Music is a church staff position, the program relies *entirely* on volunteers for its success. Every Wednesday evening, over 70 dedicated volunteers help children learn about the gift of God’s music.

There are choirs for ages 2 years through 5<sup>th</sup> grade in the Children’s Choir program.

## **Purpose of Manual**

As the choirs, have grown, so have the number of volunteers. This manual is an effort to document answers to many of the questions that arise during the year.

This is a working document. Feel free to make notes and add any information you need. We will collect the manuals at the end of each year and update them during the summer.

## **List of Choirs, Ages and Colors**

There are choirs for each age group. Each choir has a name and a color. The colors are used for the cross and T-shirt programs. The names and colors for each choir can be found on the following chart:

<b>Age/grade</b>	<b>Choir</b>	<b>Color</b>
2 year	Creation	White
3 years	Cherub	Light blue
4 years	Sonshine	Yellow
Kindergarten	Melody	Green
1 <sup>st</sup>	Carol	Orange
2nd	Rise N’ Shine	Red
3rd	Celebration	Royal Blue
4 <sup>th</sup> & 5th	All God’s Children	Purple

### ***Practice Times***

The choirs meet on Wednesday nights. Choir personnel should arrive 15 minutes before their choirs begin.. Choirs for children 2 years old - Kindergarten meet from 6:00 – 6:30. First grade through 5<sup>th</sup> grade choirs practice from 5:45 – 6:30.

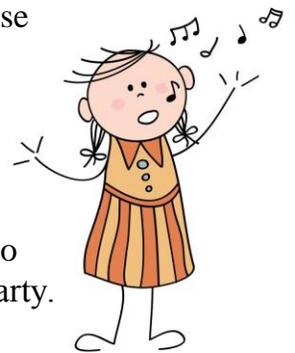
### ***Companion Choirs***

In many younger age groups there are enough children for two or more choirs. The number of choirs for each age group is determined after registration each year.

Companion choirs (e.g. Sunshine A & B) practice separately but sing together in church. Extensive communication and cooperation between the choirs' volunteers help the program run more smoothly. These choirs also combine for the Nativity Program and Children's Music Sundays. Otherwise, the directors determine the level of interaction between these choirs.

### ***Placement of Children in Choirs***

The children are placed in age groups strictly by their age/grade as of September 1, without exception. Ann and Cindy will assign children to the companion choirs within a given age group after the "Kick-Off" Party. Requests to place children in a specific choir within an age group are honored whenever possible.



### ***Cross Program***

Each child, age 3 and over, wears a cross on Sunday mornings when they sing in church. The crosses are personalized with the child's name and there are colored ribbons on the crosses which represent the years he/she has sung in the AFUMC choir program. The crosses are assembled and maintained by the choir parents.

We collect \$5.00 (at the time of registration) from the family of each child new to the program to help defray the cost. When children move or finish the 5<sup>th</sup> grade choir they get their cross to keep.

More information regarding this program is in the "Choir Parents" section of this manual.

### ***T-Shirts***



All the children and volunteers need a choir T-shirt. Each choir has a different T-shirt color. The cost of the T-shirts is collected at registration. We provide t-shirts for all volunteers.

T-shirts are worn on Children’s Music Sundays and when the choirs sing in church on Sundays. T-shirts are also worn anytime a choir sings in the community or on special “T-shirt” Wednesdays.

Families can purchase new t-shirts, used or previous year’s shirts or use hand-me-d own shirts.

### ***Overview of Choir Personnel and Roles***

The ***Director of Children’s Music Ministry*** is Ann Hudson. Ann oversees all facets of the program. She recruits directors, assistant directors, choir parents and pianists, schedules choirs to sing in church, coordinates programs, sets up workshops, training opportunities and orders resource materials. Ann is an important resource for all the choir personnel.

Cindy Poelking is the ***Administrative Assistant for the Music Department***. She manages the Children’s Choir data base, registration, choir rosters, communication with volunteers and other administrative functions. She also maintains all props and costumes. Cindy works closely with our choir parents.

***Choir Directors*** manage all aspects of their choir. They select music for their rehearsals and the songs their choirs sing for worship. They help recruit choir parents for their choirs, teach music each week, coordinate choir participation on Sunday mornings, and work with accompanists. ***Co-directors*** work together on these tasks.

***Assistant Directors*** assist the choir Director in the above responsibilities as requested by the Director.

***Choir Parents*** help the Directors manage the choir. They oversee checking in and checking out children, maintain name tags, keep attendance, handle the crosses on Sundays, plan and execute parties, send out correspondence and, if asked by the director, help with kids during choir and engage children in pre-choir activities.

***Accompanists*** play the piano (or other instruments) for the choirs.



## INFORMATION FOR ALL VOLUNTEERS

### GENERAL INFORMATION

#### *Childcare*

- Childcare is available for all choir volunteers.
- Children 2 and older may participate in a choir or go to the nursery. Some 2 year olds may not be ready to be in a choir without a parent and may be happier in the nursery.
- Children of choir volunteers should not go to their choirs before 5:45 for kids 2 years – kindergarten and 5:30 for kids 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Children may be taken to the nursery any time after 5:30.
- If child care (for any age) is needed before 5:30, choir volunteers may take their children to the nursery.
- Everyone has responsibilities, but please make every effort to pick up your children as quickly as possible after choir ends at 6:30.



#### *Safe Sanctuary*

AFUMC has a program to help prevent child abuse at our church. All volunteers and staff that work with children, in any capacity, must authorize a criminal background check and attend a training session. This includes all choir volunteers.

The training session will teach volunteers how to recognize the signs of abuse and how to respond appropriately. Volunteers will also learn to follow specific guidelines and procedures that will help protect them from false accusations. Every volunteer must renew their training yearly and background checks are performed every three years.

The goal of this program is to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all children and youth.

### *Nametags*

All choir volunteers need to wear nametags anytime you work with your choirs so that parents, older children and other choir volunteers know who you are.

## **CHOIR MANAGEMENT**

### *Choir Binders*

Each choir has binder, which is at the Choir Help Desk each week located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Trinity Hall. **Please pick it up each week.** All communications, directories, forms, notes to staff, items to send home, a Class Directory with allergies and birthday lists and any other information you will need for your choir will be in this binder. **All binders will be returned to the Choir Help Desk at the end of rehearsal.**

**If you need to contact Ann or Cindy with questions or problems, please place a note inside the front pocket of your binder.** The binders are checked every Thursday morning.

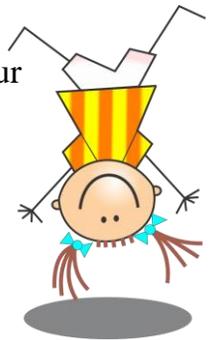
### *Director's Notebooks*

Each director will receive a binder with all of the music and CD's needed for the upcoming year. It includes the music for the Fall and Spring Children's Music Sundays and the Nativity. It does NOT include what your choir is singing for Sunday worship.

### *Companion Choirs*

In many younger age groups there are enough children for two or more choirs. Companion choirs (e.g. Sonshine A & B) practice separately but sing together in church. These choirs combine to sing for the Nativity Program and Children's Music Sundays. Otherwise, the directors determine the level of interaction between these choirs.

Directors of combined choirs need to meet in August to select the music their choirs will sing for church. You should also agree on tempo, phrasing and any hand motions. Periodically, the choirs should practice together to make sure the song is taught the same way in both choirs.



Otherwise, the amount of interaction between companion choirs is up to the directors. Generally, we have found the choir administration by the choir parents are best handled separately. Some choirs plan their parties together, but have the parties separately. However, this is also up to the individual choirs.

### ***When Children Arrive for Choir Practice***

Children will begin to arrive 15 minutes before choir starts. For practical purposes “choir” begins when the first child arrives. Engage these children in simple activities as they arrive; it is difficult to settle children down if they have “run wild” before choir begins.



### ***Children can:***

Color – We have music themed coloring sheets and worksheets for kids. See Cindy or Ann if you would like some for your choir.

Listen to a book on CD or have a choir parent read a book aloud in the corner. We have music themed children’s books on the bookcase in the Choir Room.

Play simple music games such as “Doggie, Doggie, Where’s Your Bone.” These musical games are also tools to teach music. Different games are available in your Resource Materials or see Ann for ideas.

### ***Dismissal from Choir Practice***

Parents or another designated adult must pick up children 3rd grade and younger from their choir room. Children 4<sup>th</sup> grade and over may be dismissed to meet their parents at 6:30 or picked up in the Choir Room by parents. Parents must let you know if they want to pick their kids up in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

### ***Room Closing Procedures***

When choir is over each week please leave room in the same condition you found it by putting away or cleaning up. We have pre-schools who meet the next morning. Turn off the lights & close the door as you leave.

### *Storing Supplies*

You may store supplies (rhythm instruments, CDS etc.) in your room if a cabinet is available. You may also store items on the shelves in the Children's Choir closet at the end of the third floor of Trinity Hall. Most rooms are equipped with a CD player. Blue tooth speakers are available on request.

## **CHOIR PROGRAMS**

### *Children's Nativity*

The Children's Nativity includes the 3 year old's through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade choirs. It is held the first Sunday in December. The dress rehearsal is the Saturday morning before. You will receive a detailed schedule about what time to meet and where at the "Meet & Eat".

**Kids will check in for the rehearsal in the Narthex.** They must be checked in by their Choir Parents on an attendance sheet and given a name tag. The parents will be given a matching pick-up tag. The children will be picked up in the Sanctuary.

**DEC. 2018: Check in and pick up will be in the classrooms under the Chapel.**

Check in and pick for the Nativity Program is in the regular choir rooms. The 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> graders will be in the Adult Choir Room. Parents will need to sign their kids in and the child will be given a stick-on name tag.

Each choir is assigned a specific part of the Nativity and learns a song that is appropriate for their part. All companion choirs sing together. The Rise N' Shine & Celebration (2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> grade) choirs provide most of the music and the narration. The choirs are normally assigned the following parts:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> grade - Angels
- 1<sup>st</sup> grade – Shepherds
- Kindergarten - Children
- 4 year olds - Animals and Cherubs
- 3 year olds - Lambs



*We need volunteers to help with set up and take down of the Nativity sets. We need to take the sets down after our Saturday rehearsal and set them up at 12:00 after church on Sunday.*

### *Christmas Eve*

We will have combined children's choirs at the 3:00 & 4:30 services for families with young children. Warm up is normally at 2:40 and 4:10 in the Choir Room. **For DECEMBER 2018 all warm up will be in the Sanctuary on the steps.** The kids wear Christmas colors. After they sing they sit with their parents. Ann will choose the songs, usually something from the Nativity.

**We do need help from directors and choir parents who are in town.**

The children do not wear crosses on Christmas Eve.

### *Children's Music Sundays Fall & Spring*



The 3's and 4's meet in Trinity Hall at 10:40. They have to be checked in at the tables inside Trinity Hall. The child and parent are given matching name tags. The younger choirs stand on the steps in front of the altar to sing. After they sing they will return to Trinity Hall for a special program.

The 2's, *Spring Music Sunday only*, meet in room TBA at 10:40. They will be signed and the child and parent are given matching name tags. They will return to the same room after they sing the Call to Worship.

The K – 5<sup>th</sup> graders will meet in the Adult Choir Room at 10:15. Kindergarten must be checked in. The child and parent are given matching name tags outside the Choir Room at the Choir Help Desk.

The 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> graders will be checked in on an attendance sheet in the Choir Room. **(Fall 2018 all 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> will meet in the Choir Loft at 10:30 and kindergarten will check-in in the Choir Loft at 10:30.)**

The Kindergarten - 5<sup>th</sup> grade choirs sit in the choir loft. The kindergarten kids will leave the service after the offertory and go to Trinity Hall for Children's Worship. The 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> graders will stay in the Choir Loft for the entire service.

The children wear their T-shirts, but not crosses, for this service. Most directors and choir parents wear a choir T-shirt.

We will have combined rehearsals on the Wednesday before each **Music Sunday**. The 2, 3 and 4 year old choirs will go to the Sanctuary and the kindergarten – 5<sup>th</sup> graders will rehearse in the Choir Room. **(Fall 2018 the 2, 3 & 4 year old choirs will rehearse in room TBA.) All choir kids will check in and out in their regular choir rooms.**

### ***Children’s Music Sunday (Fall)***

All the Children’s Choirs 3 years – 5<sup>th</sup> grade sing for an 11:00 worship service. *The date is usually the third Sunday in October.* The 3’s and 4’s sing a CTW and the Kindergarten – 5<sup>th</sup> grade sing an offertory and anthem. The 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> also sing the Benediction. Individual choirs do not sing.

### ***Children’s Music Sunday (Spring)***

All choirs, age 2 through 5<sup>th</sup> grade, participate in the Spring Music Sunday. This is not a performance; it is a wonderful worship experience.

The preschool choirs sing two songs and the K through 5<sup>th</sup> grade choirs sing three songs together and the 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> sing the Benediction.

## **DIRECTORS**

### **CHOIR MANAGEMENT**

#### ***Director Meetings***

We have a yearly planning meeting for volunteers. Directors, accompanists choir parents and teen assistants have a “Meet & Eat” in August, to plan for choir, review the choir calendar and schedule choirs to sing during the fall and spring. The meeting is normally the Wednesday after school starts. Directors and choir parents will have a chance to plan and visit with each other over dinner after the meetings. Childcare for kids of all ages is available.

#### ***Scheduling Choirs to Sing in Church***

The choir worship schedule is determined at the “Meet & Eat” in August. Children’s Choirs usually sing at the 11:00 traditional service. Singing at the 8:15 traditional service or the 9:30 Bridge Service is an option.

The 3 year old’s – 5<sup>th</sup> grade choirs usually sing the CTW once in the fall and again in the spring. The 2 year old choirs sing in January. Choirs may sing more often if additional time slots are available.

Once the schedule is final be sure to let Ann know immediately if your choir cannot sing on a given date.



### ***Music Selection***

Ann will choose the music for the “All Music Sundays” and the 3’s -1<sup>st</sup> grade Nativity songs. Directors will select music for worship. You may choose music you already know, songs you have heard other choirs perform, music you hear at workshops or music you find in online catalogs like Choristers Guild, Growing in Faith and JW Pepper. (See Ann)

The church has an extensive library of anthems and we have copies of all unison anthems owned by the church. See Ann for a current list and anthem recommendations. We also have a notebook of sample music. We have many books with songs appropriate for younger choirs. These are on the shelves of the tan bookcase on the back wall of the Choir Room.

Directors may order anthems; books or CD’s not owned by the church. Please use the form provided (see “Forms” section) and turn it into Cindy or send an email to Cindy at [cpoelking@afumc.org](mailto:cpoelking@afumc.org) with all of the product information.

### ***Hymnals***

We have a limited number of hymnals available for individual choirs. Please let us know ahead if you would like to use them.

## **RESOURCE MATERIAL & SUPPLIES**



### ***Stepping Stones***

*Stepping Stones* is a church choir curriculum that presents basic music concepts in a progressive and developmentally appropriate manner. There is a different book for each age group so the material is new for the children each year. It is available as an easy-to-use resource with many songs, activities and teaching ideas.

### ***Growing in Grace***

*Celebrating Grace*, from Celebrating Grace, is a great curriculum with songs, teaching ideas, worksheets, etc. We have the materials for all age groups. Some of these materials will be in the Director’s Binders. If you are interested in seeing the whole curriculum just let Ann know.

### ***Other Music Books***

We have a bookcase in the Adult Choir room filled with song books, CD's and other helpful ideas. You can stop by anytime and check out materials to use in your choir.

### ***Rhythm Instruments, Hand Chimes, etc.***

Rhythm instruments are available for all the Children's Choirs. Kids LOVE playing instruments. We have lots of rhythm sticks, egg shakers, triangles, etc. Autoharps, resonator bells, small hand chimes, hand drums and unusual rhythm instruments are also available. These items can be checked out for the year. All the instruments are stored in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor choir closet.

All K - 5<sup>th</sup> grade choirs will have a piano in their room.

### ***Workshops and Clinics***

Directors are informed when appropriate workshops, webinars or clinics are offered in the area. The church is happy to pay registration fees. We also bring clinicians to our church to do workshops. These are great opportunities to learn new ideas and improve your choir skills and we encourage all our choir volunteers to attend workshops if possible.

*The Atlanta Chapter of Choristers Guild* sponsors two workshops a year. In August, they offer a one day "Refresh & Recharge" workshop on a Saturday.

In January, they have the *Atlanta Mid-Winter Workshop*, featuring nationally known clinicians. The workshop will last two days – a Friday and Saturday. You can attend one or two days.

*The Southeastern Jurisdiction of United Methodists in Music and Worship Arts* presents "Music and Liturgical Arts in Worship Week". The conference is usually the third or fourth week in June and is held at Lake Junaluska Assembly (a Methodist assembly ground) in North Carolina. The conference runs Sunday through Friday. A group of people from our music program always attend.

Childcare and children's programs for your own children are available at an additional cost.



## *Webinars & Training DVDs*

Webinars and Training DVD's are available for all directors. You will receive an updated list of what is available at the August "Meet & Eat."

## **WHEN CHOIRS SING FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP**

Usually the children's choirs sing the Call to Worship (CTW) when they sing in church. Occasionally they sing the offertory or other special music. There are several details to consider:

### *Accompanists for Younger Choirs*

The 3 year old – 1<sup>st</sup> grade choirs do not have accompanists for weekly practice, but some form of accompaniment is necessary when these choirs sing in church. For most choirs, a piano is easiest instrument to hear and is the best choice

We have pianists willing to accompany the younger choirs on Sunday mornings. **Please let Ann or Cindy know when you need an accompanist. You will need to provide a copy of your music for the accompanist 2 weeks before you sing.** Some of the accompanists play regularly for the older choirs and may not be able to practice with the younger choirs on Wednesdays. Check with your accompanist to see if they are available to rehearse with you the Wednesday before you sing. Allow time during your Sunday warm-up go over your song with them.



### *Information for the Sunday Bulletin and Parent Handout*

Two Wednesdays before you sing, you will receive a form to fill out for the bulletin and a copy of the "It's Time to Sing" handout in your Choir Binder. Please fill out the form and check the handout and place it back in the front pocket of the binder.

The information for the Sunday Bulletin form includes:

- The name of the piece and the arranger or composer
- Note if you are using the piano or other instruments
- Let us know if you have someone singing a solo
- Do you need a music stand?

Please check the following information on the “**It’s Time to Sing in Worship**” handout to be sure it’s correct before we print them for your parents..

- Time and place the children should be at the church (Warm up in TBA)
- When they sing in the service. (*Normally the Call to Worship*)
- How dismissal from the service is handled. Normally the children are taken to Children’s or Preschool Worship after they sing and their parents pick them up in those locations after the service. That information will be on the sheet.



### ***Communication with Parents for Singing on Sunday Mornings***

We will have copies of the “**It’s Time to Sing in Worship**” handout in your choir binder the Wednesday before you sing to pass out to the parents.

**Ann will email a reminder to your choir on Thursday.** Please let her know if you have other information you would like included or prefer to do your own email.

### ***Rehearsal in Sanctuary on Wednesday Before You sing***

The Sanctuary is usually available on Wednesdays to practice. If you are interested in going to the Sanctuary, please see Cindy or Ann.

**Fall 2018: The Sanctuary is not available on Wednesdays**

### ***Warm-Up Time on Sunday Mornings***

**Fall 2018:** Warm-up will be in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Choir Room at 10:30. Choir parents pick up kids in Sunday School at 10:25. **Parents check their kids in at kiosks.** Temporary name tags and parent Pick-Up Tags will be available in the Choir Room with the Attendance Sheet, Extra T-Shirts, Choir Crosses, etc. **You will take the kids to the Sanctuary at 10:45 out the back of the Choir Room and across the church parking lot.** They will return to Trinity Hall for Children’s and Preschool Worship after they sing.

**Spring 2019:** Room TBA in Trinity Hall is available for warm up on Sunday mornings. There is a cabinet labeled “**Children’s Choir**” in room TBA. Inside you will find your Choir Crosses, Extra T-Shirts, an Attendance Sheet for checking the kids in and stick on labels for kids and

parents if they have not signed in at the kiosks. **Parents are supposed to sign their children in at the Kiosks before they bring them to room TBA.**

Choir volunteers need to get their choir members out of their Sunday School classes at 10:30 even if your warm up is at 10:40. **Be sure to take your choir attendance sheet with you when picking up preschool kids.**

Take the attendance sheet with you to the Sanctuary.

Most choirs find that 20 – 30 minutes is enough time to warm up. Some ideas for warm up:



- Line up the children.
- Distribute crosses
- Practice your song
- Move to the Sanctuary Narthex about 3-5 minutes before the service begins. You can take your choir into the Sanctuary and have them sit on the steps until they sing. Please leave a center space for the acolytes.

### ***Final check***

Ann will be in the Sanctuary and will do the Sunday morning checks for you. (microphones, music stands, moving the piano, etc) If you need me on a Sunday morning send a parent to the Sanctuary or Narthex. **You can also call my cell phone at 770-633-2862.**

If I am not at church I usually ask the accompanist to do the checks for me. If the microphones are not in place, talk to the sound person. If the piano has not been moved talk to the head usher. If you need a music stand get one from the Choir Loft or by the bathroom at the Main Street entrance to the Sanctuary.

### ***Dismissal Procedures on Sunday Mornings***

Use the following procedure to dismiss children on Sunday mornings after they sing. This procedure is the least disruptive to the flow of the service.

- **Fall 2018:** The children will exit out the Main Street door and return to Trinity Hall. K – 3<sup>rd</sup> kids go to Trinity Hall and 2's – 4's go to room TBA.

- **Spring 2019:** Have children recess off the steps down the center aisle of the Sanctuary.
- Allow the entire choir to exit the Sanctuary and Narthex by leading them down the hall onto the Bridge. When the first few children stop in the Narthex, the rest of the children back up into the Sanctuary.
- Collect the crosses from children before they go into Children's or Preschool Worship. Please return crosses to their bags in the Cross Box before you leave.
- Take all K – 3<sup>rd</sup> children directly to Children's Worship in Trinity Hall. The 3's and 4's go to Preschool Worship on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Trinity Hall. The 2's go back to room TBA. **Parents need to go to these locations to pick up their children.**
- The 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade choir will sit with their parents in worship.

## CHOIR PARENTS

Choir Parents are invaluable to our Children's Choir program. The choir directors can focus their time on teaching music because of the help that you provide. Without Choir Parents, our program could not continue!

### ATTENDANCE RECORDS

#### *Attendance Sheets*

You will have an attendance sheet in your choir binder each week. All children's nametags must match the choir they are attending. All children must wear their name tags. This is for safety purposes in case of an emergency.

#### *New Choir Members*

If a child does **NOT** have a name tag, they need to go to the Choir Help Desk and receive a temporary Name Tag before they come to your room.

Please write in or add any child on your attendance sheet who is not listed. We need to have an accurate list in case of emergency.

We will update your attendance sheets as needed and will send you an email list for your choir.



## OTHER CHOIR MANAGEMENT DUTIES

### *Choir Binder Pick Up and Distribution*

Distribute items in the binder appropriately. (See “Information for all volunteers”.) There may be forms your director needs to fill out or papers to send home with the children.

The binder also includes the attendance sheet, birthday and allergy lists and emergency procedures. On the front cover of the binder there is usually a sheet with important info for volunteers.

You need to pick up your Choir Binder at the Choir Help Desk each week and return it after choir.

### *Name Tags and Parent Pick-Up Badges*

We will provide the child’s name tag and Parent Pick-Up Badges. All children will be required to wear the provided name tag for their protection. The parent will be given a matching Pick-Up Badge. **The child and parent name tags and badges will be on the table outside your choir room.** When the parent picks up their child you have to match their Pick-Up Badge to the child’s name tag.

**A Pick-Up Tag is REQUIRED when picking up a child from choir.**



### *Wednesday Night Checklist*

1. Arrive 15 minutes before choir starts to help set up the room and be ready for children as they arrive.
2. Mark attendance on the Attendance Sheet for the child the adult is dropping off.
3. Give the child their name tag and the adult the Parent Pick-Up Badge.
4. At pick up time match the child’s nametag with the adult’s Pick-Up Badge.
5. Remember, **NO ONE** can pick up a child without the parent Pick-Up Tag.

### ***Helping During Choir***

Each Director has different ways to manage their choir. Discuss in detail with your Director how you can help on choir days.

- Choir Parents can help in the rehearsal if needed. Anyone in the room with the children must have completed Safe Sanctuary.



### ***Parent Communications***

We often have written information for you to give to the parents. Check your Choir Binder or check-in table each Wednesday to see if anything needs to go home that day.

### ***Mailing Procedures***

- Each week, place items to be mailed in the front pocket in your Choir Binder. They will be mailed on Thursday mornings.

### **CROSSES AND T-SHIRTS**

A general description of the cross program, and colors that are used for each choir's ribbons, is in the opening section of this manual. Volunteers maintain the crosses for choirs and keep them organized.

### ***No Crosses for 2's***

The 2-year-old choir's do not have crosses. The 3-year old's will have crosses without names the first year.

### ***Children New to the Program***

Crosses for new children will be assembled by the cross volunteer and the new cross will be in your choir cross box when you sing in church.

### ***Keep Track of Who Has Crosses***

If a child is missing a cross send a note in the front pocket of your choir binder.

### *T-shirts*

New T-shirts are ordered when the children are registered. New T-shirts will be given to choir parents to distribute to the children when choir starts in August.

We provide a T-shirt for all Choir Volunteers. We will have forms at the “Meet and Eat or in your Choir Binder to fill out and turn in.

Used or old-style shirts can be purchased by parents at the Kick-Off Party.

### **PARTIES**

We have found, for many reasons, that it is important to have consistent party formats from choir to choir. Following is the format for this year:

#### *Christmas party*

Choir parents should plan to feed the children a snack only at this party. **You MUST check on FOOD ALLERGIES in your choir before you plan your party food.** The allergies are listed in your choir binders.

We will provide a Christmas ornament or craft for the kids to make at the party or take home. You are welcome to plan your own activities as well.

#### *Important party instructions*

- Use clear drinks, like juice boxes or bottled water, to avoid carpet stains.
- No cupcakes or cake with icing. It is very hard to get out of the carpet and it is very difficult to clean up.
- Leave your party area clean. Bag all trash and wipe off tables and chairs.
- You may want to use a disposable tablecloth, spread out in the center of your room. The children can sit on it picnic style. When they are done, simply throw the trash in the center, roll it up, and throw it away.



### ***End-of-the-Year Celebration***

We will have end-of-the-year “celebrations” at the last rehearsal in April.

The **3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> graders** will meet in the Choir Room for food and games.

The **K – 2<sup>nd</sup> graders** will meet in their choir rooms for a pizza party.

The **2 – 4 year old’s** will meet in their choir rooms for a party. Choir parents and directors will decide on the type of food.

We will provide a treat or goody-bag for each child.



### ***Limit other parties***

Children can wear their costumes on the Wednesday nearest **Halloween**. No “horror” type costumes allowed. Volunteers are encouraged to dress up.

AFUMC Children’s Choirs will provide a small take home item for the children.

For **Valentine’s Day** each choir can decide what to do. You could bring a small treat, conversation hearts or a Valentine Card with a treat on it for each of the kids.



## KICKOFF PARTY

The Kickoff Party is held on a Wednesday in mid-August, from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm. It is in Trinity Hall.

### *Set up*

- A table is set up for each age group. Decorate your registration table, perhaps with a theme. Use your choirs' color. (This helps parents find the right table when they arrive in Trinity Hall. The hostess can easily tell them to "go to the Orange table.") You can make a poster for your choir and hang it on or around the table if you like. Bring favors for the children (pencils, stickers, stamps, treats, etc.).
- Balloons that match your choir color will be tied to your table. These are for you to give the children.
- Wear your nametags!

### *Directors Jobs at Kickoff Party*

- Directors stand at the tables to greet children and parents.
- Ask parents to sign up to help with the Christmas Party, Nativity Program, rehearsals, etc if needed. **If you need more Choir Parents, this is the time to ask for help.**
- Encourage parents to fill out a volunteer form where they can help with Choir Crosses, t-shirts, costumes, admin work, etc. for our Children's Choir Program.
- Registration will only be online and parents will register at home. We will have the kiosks open the night of the Kick-Off Party for parents who want to register at the party.
- Parents may purchase used t-shirts and pay for new t-shirts. They may pay for their crosses and t-shirts at the Cashiers tables when they leave Trinity Hall.
- After the Kick-Off Party, the choir directors will clean off their tables and return papers, notebooks, scissors, etc to Ann or Cindy.
- Ann and Cindy will divide the larger choirs. Please write down any special requests from parents or any suggestions you may have. We are happy to place friends together.



### ***Choir Parents' Jobs at the Kick-Off Party***

Choir parents will help at different posts during the Kick-Off Party. These will be assigned at the "Meet & Eat."

- Everyone will help with Clean up at the end of the party. (wash all dishes and lemonade containers, wipe tables, pick up trash, etc.)
- Selling used t-shirts
- Popcorn Machine
- Cashiers
- Tie balloons to each table
- Pick up cookies, water and juice boxes for the party.
- Hostesses - Greet parents as they arrive



### **Additional Note:**

**Scholarships are always available for anyone who needs them to pay for crosses or t-shirts.!**



