



Vivace Youth Chorus of San José

Parent Handbook 2018–2019

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Contact Information

Administrative Office

Vivace Youth Chorus of San José

915 Meridian Avenue Suite 110

San Jose, California 95126

408-885-1746

www.vivaceyouthchorus.org

info@vivaceyouthchorus.org

Rehearsal Locations

Stone Church of Willow Glen

1108 Clark Way, San Jose CA 95125

Foothill Presbyterian Church

5301 McKee Rd, San Jose CA 95127

Vivace Youth Chorus Directors

Peggy Spool, Artistic Director

peggy@vivaceyouthchorus.org

Joshua Lanam, Executive Director

joshua@vivaceyouthchorus.org

Administrative Staff

Cathy Yuan, Program Coordinator & Interim Development Coordinator

cathy@vivaceyouthchorus.org

Lisa Whelan, Volunteer Coordinator

volunteer@vivaceyouthchorus.org

Artistic Staff

Jay Jordana, Conductor, Intermediate Choir

jay@vivaceyouthchorus.org

Albee Mabeza, Conductor, Teen Men's Ensemble

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Masumi Maei, Conductor, Preparatory Choir

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Peggy Spool, Conductor, Teen Women's Ensemble, Concert & Chamber Choirs

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Barbara Wong, Teacher, Rising Notes

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Board of Directors

Donald Foster, President

Teresa Meyer-Calvert, Vice President

Alan Spool, Treasurer

Susan Peterson, Secretary

About Vivace

Vivace Youth Chorus of San José's mission is to provide youth with the opportunity to experience the power and poetry of song in an inclusive, co-educational, and nurturing environment that fosters community, confidence, and artistic growth, and creates awareness of our participants' cultures and shared human experience.

Vivace Youth Chorus is an inclusive and co-educational choral music education program offering services to youth ages 4-18 in Santa Clara County. Children are introduced to diverse and engaging repertoire ranging from folk to classical music. Choral singing is both an individual and a group musical experience. Using a Kodály-based music theory program, children gain the tools to sing in tune and the ability to read music, while learning the basics of good vocal technique. At the same time, they learn to sing as part of an ensemble and experience the power of a shared musical experience.

Vivace is a highly sought-after collaborator by some of the South Bay's finest ensembles, including The Choral Project, San José Chamber Orchestra, San José Symphonic Choir, and Opera San José, among others. Vivace presents four formal concerts each year (two for our teen ensembles and two for our youth choirs), as well as additional performances at civic events, public libraries, retirement homes, corporate engagements, and many other events.

Vivace Youth Chorus of San José is a nonprofit public benefit corporation registered under the Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(3) and California Revenue and Taxation Code section 23701(d).

Vivace was formed in July of 2003 by several motivated and dynamic individuals, including artistic director Peggy Spool. Today, Vivace is managed by a professional staff led by an executive director and governed by a volunteer board of directors who meet regularly to guide Vivace's business and programs. Vivace employs an Artistic Director, Executive Director, Program Coordinator, four music directors and teachers, and additional music staff including four professional piano accompanists and other instrumentalists.

Choirs and Additional Programs

Vivace Youth Chorus has 13 programs available to youth ages 4–18.

Our core youth programs primarily serve children ages 4-10 and consist of 2–4 sections each of Rising Notes*, Preparatory Choir, and Intermediate Choir. Children can also participate in ancillary programs, including Summer Music & Art Camp and Real Kids Sing Workshop.

Our core performing programs primarily serve youth ages 11-18 and consist of Concert and Chamber Choirs and Teen Men's and Women's Ensembles. Ancillary programs include Opera Workshop, a biennial tour (in 2019 to San Jose, Costa Rica), Teen A Cappella Ensemble, and numerous collaborations with Opera San José, David Benoit, and The Choral Project, among others.

As singers progress through the levels, they rehearse longer and have more and varied performance opportunities. At the semester-end concerts, each choir through the Chamber level performs its individual repertoire along with songs sung by the combined choirs. It is thrilling especially for younger singers to sing with the large group. The teen choirs sing in separate concerts.

*Rising Notes classes are for children ages 4-5. They do not need an assessment, do not perform at concerts, do not need a uniform, nor require parent volunteer hours.

Placement Auditions and Year-End Assessments

Singers ages 7 and up require a placement audition prior to enrollment. Singers are placed in one of the choirs according to current ability and knowledge at the discretion of the Artistic Director or other Vivace director. Proper placement is critical to your singer's success in our program. Our goal is to make your child's experience educational and enjoyable. Correct placement helps facilitate both.

As part of the program, each singer will be evaluated by their teacher at the end of the year. A written assessment will be emailed to your family. Private consultations with the Artistic Director or other director are also available. The Year-End Assessments serve two purposes: 1. To document singers' growth and opportunities, and 2. To place them appropriately for the following year.

Administrative Information

Further information or support can be obtained by contacting our office at 408-885-1746 or info@vivaceyouthchorus.org. Our general office hours are Monday to Friday, 10:00 AM–4:00 PM. Our offices are located in the Farmers Insurance building at 915 Meridian Avenue Ste 110, San Jose CA 95126. Please call ahead as our hours vary from time to time.

How We Communicate

Email is our main channel of communication. Our staff and volunteers email from our domain, vivaceyouthchorus.org. Please add us to your safe-sender list or address book so that messages do not go to your spam folder.

Urgent and important messages will be sent by email and will be summarized in our monthly newsletter. We also encourage regular use of our website, where you will find information on rehearsals, retreats, workshops, concerts, and holidays as posted on our calendar, as well as useful information about our choral program, including choir levels, program overview, and contact lists for staff and board members.

Privacy Policy

Vivace Youth Chorus respects your privacy. We will never sell your personal information. We may share your contact information with our partners if our choirs are collaborating with them. We will continue to contact you as long as your singer remains in Vivace. After that time, you may unsubscribe from our mailing lists.

Driving and Carpooling

Vivace Youth Chorus of San José takes no responsibility related to carpooling or results thereof.

Volunteering

Community involvement is crucial to our success.

Our volunteers work to keep our events coordinated, safe, and fun for all our singers, families, and audiences.

Each family agrees to volunteer for at least 10 hours during the program year. If you are unable to fulfill your 10 volunteer hours during the year, you have the option to pay a buyout fee of \$150. Please either pay on our website or mail a check to our office with the words “volunteer buyout” in the memo section.

Current volunteer jobs can be found on our website at <https://www.vivaceyouthchorus.org/volunteer/>.

Examples of volunteer jobs include choir parent, uniform coordinator, concert manager, chaperone, ticket seller, rose coordinator, and riser crew.

Volunteers also serve as volunteer coordinators, music librarians, social media ambassadors, event photographers, and administrative volunteers and make up Vivace's Board of Directors; finance, development, marketing, and facilities committees; and task forces for special projects, such as our 2019 Costa Rica Tour and anniversary concerts. If you have specific skills or resources to offer, please contact the volunteer coordinators at volunteer@vivaceyouthchorus.org.

Occasionally, when jobs are not filled with initial sign-ups, our volunteer coordinators will solicit families individually. To spread the work evenly, we endeavor to record each family's volunteer hours. If you have volunteer hours to report or would like to know how many hours are recorded for your family, then please contact our volunteer coordinators at volunteer@vivaceyouthchorus.org.

We offer select opportunities for high school students wishing to complete service hours. For more information, please email us at info@vivaceyouthchorus.org.

Continuing Registration

Prior to the start of each semester, all families must register and pay online. We need this information entered through the website so that all current and relevant information is captured in our database, including emergency contact information. If changes occur during the year, please notify the office.

Tuition

Commitment to Vivace is for the full program, or academic, year (10 months). Tuition is paid per semester, is due at the beginning of the semester, and can be paid by credit card, ACH, or check.

Vivace offers several payment options and incentives.

- Full year, lump-sum payment (discount automatically applied during registration)
- Sibling discount: 5% off two singers, 7.5% off three singers, 10% off four singers
- Split payments: 50% is due at registration; 25% due the second month; 25% due the third month
- Bring-a-friend incentives: please email info@vivaceyouthchorus.org for current incentives

Registration and Service Fees

Vivace strives to include all costs in tuition; however, some additional fees are unavoidable, including

- Credit card processing fee: 2.99% per transaction (\$10 maximum)
- One-time \$50 registration fee per singer (covers placement audition and initial set up)
 - Discounts available for additional siblings registering at the same time
- Uniform purchases
- Audio/video purchases

Tuition Assistance/Scholarships

Vivace Youth Chorus offers generous tuition assistance in the form of scholarships to families with financial need. Full or partial scholarships are awarded by the Scholarship Committee, which meets once each semester. Decisions are made on an as-needed basis, with the utmost of discretion. Scholarship applications are available at <https://vivace.asapconnected.com>. For more information, please contact the office.

Refund Policy

Every singer is important, and significant effort and resources are spent on choosing music and events to best fit our current ensembles. Because every singer is expected to fulfill his or her commitment for the entire program year, tuition is non-refundable, with very few exceptions.

- If a singer leaves the choir after their first rehearsal, \$50 will be deducted from the tuition paid and the balance refunded.
- If a singer drops after two rehearsals, \$100 will be deducted from the tuition paid and the balance refunded.
- After three rehearsals, the full amount of tuition is non-refundable.
- For tours, summer camp, and other additional excursions, the full amount is non-refundable unless otherwise stated by Vivace.

The executive and artistic directors may make exceptions to our refund policy for extreme circumstances, such as a singer leaves due to a serious illness or injury or the family moves outside the Vivace attendance area. These exceptions are decided on a case-by-case basis.

General Rehearsal Policies

Rehearsals - Each level of the choir has its own rehearsal schedule, which you can view on our website as a PDF or as a Google Calendar. All chorus members, excluding Rising Notes and Preparatory singers, should bring their music in their music folder and a pencil to each rehearsal. Eating food or chewing gum is not permitted during rehearsal, so please have children properly fed. *Singers' cell phones must be turned off and put away during rehearsals or they may be confiscated until the end of rehearsal.*

Music Folders - Music and the music folders are the property of Vivace Youth Chorus of San José. Singers will be charged \$25.00 for lost or damaged music. Students are required to promptly return music at the last rehearsal of each semester.

Behavior - Every singer should be dedicated to making each rehearsal a success. Disruptive behavior on the part of one child can ruin the experience for the entire group. **Continuing disruptive behavior is grounds for dismissal from Vivace Youth Chorus.** Please see the Student Behavior Contract on page 14 for more information.

Safety - A first aid kit will be available in the rehearsal room, and our staff has emergency contact and health information for every child. We require a list of any persons who might pick up your child (let us know of any changes to this list). Inside Stone Church, children are asked to stay away from the staircase leading to the basement. *A parent or guardian must supervise play outside of rehearsals, including but not limited to play outside of rehearsal venues. Vivace is not responsible for children outside of rehearsals.*

Parent Observation - Parents are welcome to observe at any time. We do expect quiet so as not to disturb the rehearsal. Please silence all electronic devices, including cell phones. Please limit talking to outside earshot of the rehearsal.

Commitment - Singers are asked to make a commitment of one academic year (10 months) to Vivace in order to gain the full benefit from participating in a sequential learning experience. Every singer is integral to the success of the entire ensemble.

Attendance Policy

Consistent attendance at all regular rehearsals, dress rehearsals, workshops, retreats, and performances key to our combined success. The sound of each piece is incomplete without every singer's voice. Regular attendance of every student is vital for other singers as well as your child's musical development. At the beginning of each semester, we ask that you carefully review the calendar on our website for the dates of rehearsals, workshops, and performances to help you plan for your singer's participation.

A singer may have two excused absences a semester. If two or more absences occur, the singer must sign up for a makeup session. Makeup sessions during the season will be held by appointment with the director. The director will determine if students are prepared to perform in upcoming concerts. Please notify the teacher and program coordinator in advance of absences. Absence notification at the beginning of the semester is preferred, but please give at least a two week notice. Continuing absences are grounds for dismissal from the chorus.

Please be prompt to rehearsals and performances.

Please pick up children on time.

Retreat, Workshop, & Festival Policies

Vivace has a **required** annual weekend retreat for the Concert and Chamber Choirs in the fall and for the Teen Ensembles in the spring. These retreats are a part of your singer's tuition and are an important part of the advanced choir program. Retreats allow time for intensive advanced music study and work with regional and renowned clinicians who are specialists in the field. Additional activities may include in-depth study of vocal technique and related disciplines that inform singing such as yoga. Another important goal of retreats is to build community through structured activities and some unstructured time. Choir members share meals, take hikes, and give an in-house recital. All of this contributes to a feeling of camaraderie and contributes to better music making. Retreats are typically held in a location in the South Bay area. Parents are welcome to chaperone for a \$50 fee.

All singers in Intermediate Choir are expected to attend Saturday workshops and the annual Kodály Festival.

Concert Choir, Chamber Choir, and Teen Ensembles are expected to attend all Saturday workshops and the annual retreat. Please check your schedules and note the days of these special events.

Dress Rehearsal Policy

All singers are **required** to attend the dress rehearsal before the end of semester concerts. These dates are given at the beginning of the semester so that you can plan accordingly. Dress Rehearsals provide the opportunity for the singers to practice in the space in which they will be performing. They get used to where they need to stand, sit, wait, and most importantly, how they sound before the concert.

Concert Policies & Information

The concert is the culmination of the semester, is a vital part of each singer's musical education, and is, therefore, **required**.

Although we pride individuality, concerts are a time to present a unified, polished performance. Singers are expected to follow behavior policies and uniform dress codes before, during, and after performances.

Your child will have an assigned chaperone. They will facilitate group movement from the holding room to the hall for practice. The singers will warm up, practice, eat a snack, have a restroom break, and get some free time before they perform. They will sit in the front rows or in the choir loft with their chaperones when they are not performing during the concert. At the end of the concert, your child will return to the holding room where you can pick them up.

Each concert is professionally audio and video recorded. Please note that the audio/video engineer has priority; if they ask you to move, please do so. After the concert, audio and video downloads are available for purchase via our website.

Taking cell phone pictures or video from your seat is prohibited as it disrupts the performance for other paying audience members. Parent photography and videography of concerts is permitted from the back of the hall only as aisles are often used during concerts. Exceptions may be made on a per concert basis; please see staff at the event. If you record, we kindly ask you to share your video or photographs with us. Please contact info@vivaceyouthchorus.org with sharing information.

Tickets for Vivace-produced events are available at the door and online at <https://www.vivaceyouthchorus.org/events/>. All major credit cards are accepted online and at the door.

Seating is first come, first served. The doors will open at approximately 15 minutes before the performance. You can hear well from anywhere in the sanctuary or auditorium, however if you wish to sit closer, you will need to wait in line. No one except chaperones, directors, musicians and concert managers are allowed in the sanctuary before the doors open. You must speak with the Lobby Manager if you need to save a seat for a volunteer or a family member who is disabled.

Uniform Dress Code

The appearance of the choir is a vital component of a polished performance. It is the parents' responsibility to see that their children are dressed appropriately in their uniforms for every performance.

Preparatory and Intermediate Choirs

Singers in Preparatory Choir wear purple polo shirts with a Vivace logo. Singers in Intermediate Choir wear red polo shirts with a Vivace logo. Polos are available at <https://vivace.asapconnected.com>. Parents provide the following:

- Black pants
 - Black pants can be found at Target, Merry Mart Uniforms, Land's End, and sometimes at Old Navy, the Gap, and Kohl's
 - The following are NOT allowed:
 - Black leggings
 - Black skirts
 - Black cropped pants
 - Black sports pants (dance pants okay)
 - If you are not sure if your child's pants are acceptable, please bring them in to be approved by the Uniform Coordinator.
- Black shoes
 - Black shoes can be found at Payless, Target, Kohl's, and other stores.
 - The following are NOT allowed:
 - Black sandals
 - Black sneakers

Concert and Chamber Choirs

- **All singers**
 - Vivace teal t-shirt available at <https://vivace.asapconnected.com>.
- **Girls**
 - Black dress available at <https://vivace.asapconnected.com>.
 - The dress is ankle length with short sleeves and a tie in the back.
 - Dresses often need hemmed.
 - Sizing is completed at the beginning of the semester
 - Vivace will place a group order for all of the dresses.
 - Black dress shoes
 - Closed-toed, flats or low heeled (max. 2")
 - Nude-colored hose
 - Jewelry – single strand of collarbone-length pearls
 - Makeup (optional) – light amount in subtle shades
 - Hair off faces; hair ornaments must be unobtrusive
 - No perfume, brightly colored nail polish, or body glitter
- **Boys**
 - Red necktie (borrowed from Vivace and returned after each performance)
 - Black dress pants
 - Black long-sleeved dress shirt
 - Black dress shoes
 - Black socks
 - Black belt

Teen Ensembles

- **All singers**
 - Vivace black t-shirt available at <https://vivace.asapconnected.com>.
- **Young Women**
 - Black dress available at <https://vivace.asapconnected.com>.
 - The dress is ankle length with cap sleeves and a sweetheart neckline.
 - Dresses often need hemmed.
 - Sizing is completed at the beginning of the semester
 - Vivace will place a group order for all of the dresses.

- Black dress shoes
 - Closed-toed, flats or low heeled (max. 2")
- Nude-colored hose
- Jewelry – single strand of collarbone-length pearls
- Makeup (optional) – light amount in subtle shades
- Hair off faces; hair ornaments must be unobtrusive
- No perfume, brightly colored nail polish, or body glitter
- **Young Men**
 - Teal necktie available at
 - Black dress pants
 - Black long-sleeved dress shirt
 - Black dress shoes
 - Black socks
 - Black belt

A Note about Used Clothing

Vivace does not sell previously worn uniforms or dress clothing, but we encourage reusing. Look for our used clothing box at the beginning of the semester and at dress rehearsals to donate or reuse uniforms.

Required Forms

Prior to Vivace's implementation of ASAP Connected for student registration in December 2018, Vivace transitioned to a digital format for required forms. During each registration process, parents are required to read and acknowledge the Parent Handbook, Student Behavior Contract, Emergency Contact/Doctor Form, and Parent Consent Form. Families returning from the fall semester will have already completed these waivers/required forms and do not need to do so again for the spring semester unless updates need to be made.



915 Meridian Avenue | Suite 110
San Jose, CA 95216
www.vivaceyouthchorus.org

Student Behavior Contract

In order for the choir to develop fully and for each singer to obtain maximum benefit from participation, it is important that each singer make a minimum one-year commitment. Issues such as choral blend and understanding of vocal technique take time, and you will notice the progress of individuals as well as the ensemble at the end of the year. The purpose of this contract is to enable families and the directors to work toward the same goals, and for all members of the choir to commit equally to the development of the ensemble.

So that each rehearsal will be fully successful, we ask that you:

- Bring your music folder or binder* to each practice with a sharpened pencil and a bottle of water.
 - Turn off cell phones, iPods, and any other electronic devices before coming into the room.
 - Arrive 5 minutes ahead of time, so your singer will not have to rush, and will always get a warm up.
 - Leave all food and gum outside or away in your bag.
 - Do not bring any other objects that may be a distraction during rehearsal.
 - Exemplary behavior is expected during rehearsals. There will be a break so singers can greet friends.
 - Place all calendar dates on your main calendar and make sure to record updates of the calendar.
 - All singers are needed for all performances, and need to be excused by the director well in advance if they are going to be absent. This includes festival trips.
 - Dress rehearsals are required for all singers.
 - Two absences are excused each semester. If a singer misses more than 2 rehearsals, she/he will need to schedule a makeup with the director.
 - Please take care of your music, and turn it in at the end of the semester in good condition. Lost folders will be assessed a \$20.00 fine.
 - Willow Glen Location: The tree in front of Stone Church is prohibited. All students who climb the tree must be watched by their guardian.
 - Willow Glen Location: It is illegal to park or stop on Clark Way (church side).
 - Do bring your voice, enthusiasm and energy to rehearsals and be prepared to make beautiful music!
 - Chamber ensemble: If you are early for Chamber Ensemble, please keep track of the time and be in your seat at 4:30 p.m.
- * Preparatory singers do not receive a binder or folder.

I have read the above contract and agree to observe the guidelines.

Print Student Name:

Print Parent Name:

Student Signature:

Parent Signature:

Date:



Emergency Contact / Doctor Form

Family Name: Date:

Emergency Contact 1:

Name Phone 1
Relationship to Student(s) Phone 2

Emergency Contact 2:

Name Phone 1
Relationship to Student(s) Phone 2

Emergency Contact 3:

Name Phone 1
Relationship to Student(s) Phone 2

If there is an emergency, *Vivace Youth Chorus of San Jose* will first attempt to reach the parents/guardians at the numbers provided (unless otherwise notified), then attempt to reach the alternate contacts. In the event of an emergency where *Vivace* cannot reach anyone at the above listed numbers, we will call 911.

Insurance Doctor
Insurance ID Doctor Phone

Special Information that would help us work best with your singer: (medical, learning or other needs)

I, , grant permission to Vivace Youth Chorus or its designee to seek medical attention for in the event of an emergency.

Parent Signature:



PARENT CONSENT FORM

Volunteer Information

YES, I hereby understand that 10 hours of volunteer time is mandatory per year. If I am unable to fulfill my hours, I will pay a \$100 buy out fee in place of the hours worked. (All choirs except Rising Notes)

Photo/Video Release

YES, I hereby consent that the photographs, slides, videotapes, or film in which my daughter/son/dependent appears may be used by Vivace Youth Chorus of San Jose, its assignees or successors, in whatever way they desire, including television, for Vivace Youth Chorus of San Jose publicity/public relations purposes. I understand that such items shall be the property of Vivace Youth Chorus of San Jose or its assignees or successors.

Dress Rehearsal, Concert and Workshop/Retreat

YES, I hereby understand that my child will be required to attend a dress rehearsal, concert, and workshop/retreat during each semester on the weekend.

Parent Handbook

YES, I have read the Parent Handbook which is available on the Vivace website and agree to follow its guidelines. Link: <https://goo.gl/5V77Mh>

Additional Note: Vivace Directors and Staff cannot be responsible for children who are dropped off early at rehearsal. You must stay with your children until rehearsal begins. Staff is setting up and preparing for class and cannot be expected to watch children around the facility. Please do not leave children unattended.

Good Neighbor Policy: Vivace Youth Chorus would also like to remind everyone to be courteous to the neighborhood residents of our rehearsal locations. This includes but is not limited to following all traffic/parking regulations and avoiding traffic obstructions.

Parent Signature:

Print Parent Name: