



Singer & Parent Handbook

2025-2026

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CONTACT INFORMATION

Amiaza:

Judy Williams, Director

jwilliams@luminayouthchoirs.net

813-841-4121

Aurora:

Kyla Bailey, Director

kbailey@luminayouthchoirs.net

813-992-5517

Serata:

Brian NeSmith, Director

bnesmith@luminayouthchoirs.net

813-713-1516

Stele:

Deah McReynolds, Director

dmcreeynolds@luminayouthchoirs.net

813-966-9257

Voci de Lumina:

Deah McReynolds, Director

dmcreeynolds@luminayouthchoirs.net

813-966-9257

Board of Directors (2024-2025):

Matt Williams, President

mwilliams@luminayouthchoirs.net

813-699-9460

Terri Brown, Acting Treasurer

tbrown@luminayouthchoirs.net

813-495-9639

Hollie Morris, Secretary

h Morrison@luminayouthchoirs.net

813-833-1896

Sheraine Araujo

saraujo@luminayouthchoirs.net

813-368-8540

Zeenat Monteiro

zmonteiro@luminayouthchoirs.net

813-391-1199

Julie Smith

jsmith@luminayouthchoirs.net

863-873-1188

LYC Mailing Address & Phone:

Lumina Youth Choirs

P.O. Box 291129

Tampa, FL 33602

813-290-7464

Rehearsal Location: Hyde Park United Methodist Church, 500 W. Platt St. Tampa, FL 33606

LYC Student Accounting: Terri Brown at tbrown@luminayouthchoirs.net 813-495-9639

LYC Email: admin@luminayouthchoirs.net

LYC Website: www.luminayouthchoirs.com

LYC Business Financial Info: Matt Williams at mwilliams@luminayouthchoirs.net

WELCOME!

Lumina Youth Choirs exists to give talented young musicians the opportunity to elevate their musicianship while experiencing unique performance opportunities. These opportunities come through collaborations with professional organizations such as The Florida Orchestra, The Master Chorale of Tampa Bay, visiting choirs from around the state, country and the world, and concert tours that sharpen their performance skills, allow them to share their talents in unique places, and open their eyes to the world around them.

Our individualized choral music education curriculum serves as a supplement to the excellent training singers are receiving in their school programs and private lessons. Our directors train the voice, build music literacy skills, and encourage appreciation of a wide variety of musical styles & genres.

We hope that all singers and family members who are part of LYC will form the foundation of a life-long love of music through their experiences with us!

Our Mission

Lumina Youth Choirs offers passionate young singers the opportunity to explore and experience the power of music in their lives.

Our Core Values

Lumina Youth Choirs is committed to:

- Developing musicianship, vocal technique, and performance skills by experiencing quality choral music of many styles
- Educating young musicians through sight-singing and music theory instruction
- Inspiring artistry through presentation of high-quality, engaging performances
- Building a community of friends where the youth of Tampa Bay can grow together in their love of music and singing
- Providing a supportive and inclusive environment that encourages participation of singers and families of diverse backgrounds
- Advocating the life-long benefits that are inherent in choral music making, such as teamwork, problem solving, interpersonal communication and self-discipline.

OUR CHOIRS:

Aurora (Children's Choir) – These singers, Grades 2 – 5, experience the foundational elements of the choral arts (music theory, vocal pedagogy, performance techniques) through fun activities such as movement and dance, music technology, and playing instruments in addition to traditional choral rehearsal techniques. Aurora performs at two major concerts each year as well as outreach performances and special events. No audition is required but a pre-registration interview is highly recommended.

Kyla Knauer, Director

Amiaza (Intermediate Treble Choir) - This is an ensemble for singers who exhibit vocal skill and basic musicianship. Amiaza focuses on the development of healthy vocal production, a deeper understanding of music theory, and experiencing core choral repertoire. This choir performs at three major concerts each year, at outreach performances and special events, and tours domestically each season. No audition is required but a pre-registration interview is highly recommended.

Judy Williams, Director

Serata (Tenor/Bass Choir) – This choir is comprised of singers with changed voices who have previous choral experience either through Amiaza, school, church, or private music instruction. This choir continues with development of excellent vocal technique and mastery of music theory concepts. Serata performs at three major concerts each year, at outreach performances and special events, and tours either domestically or internationally each season. No audition is required but a pre-registration interview is highly recommended.

Brian NeSmith, Director

Stele (Soprano/Alto Advanced Choir) – This choir is comprised of treble singers who have previous choral experience either through Amiaza, school, church, or private music instruction. A continued emphasis on excellent vocal technique and mastering advanced music theory concepts allows this ensemble to successfully perform some of the most challenging treble choral literature available. Stele performs at three major concerts each year, at outreach performances and special events, and tours either domestically or internationally each season. Placement in Stele is based upon vocal ability and knowledge of music theory as demonstrated during the required audition.

Deah McReynolds, Director

Voci de Lumina (Chamber Choir) - Selected by audition from Stele & Serata, this smaller ensemble explores choral music of all styles from chamber music to vocal jazz, both accompanied and a cappella. Voci performs at three major concerts each year, at outreach performances and special events, and tours either domestically or internationally each season.

Deah McReynolds, Director

WEEKLY REHEARSAL PROCEDURES

- Rehearsals for all choirs take place on Monday nights at Hyde Park United Methodist Church.
- Aurora, Amiaza, Serata, and Steele: 6:00 – 8:00 pm
- Voci di Lumina rehearses on Monday nights from 8:05 – 9:00 pm

Holidays:

LYC generally follows the Hillsborough County Schools public calendar observing these major holidays:

- Fall Thanksgiving Break
- Winter Break
- Spring Break

Inclement Weather:

In the event of severe weather, tropical storm or hurricane approaching our area, please keep an eye on our website, social media, and email for updates. In the event of rehearsal cancellation, we will utilize all available forms of communication, including Remind messages, to contact everyone.

Illness:

Contagious singers are asked to notify their director/choir coordinator and stay home to rest and recover. If your singer has a fever, they should not attend rehearsal. If your singer is not contagious and able to sit through rehearsal, she/he should come and listen and sing as able. If the singer's illness is more serious or more contagious (i.e., Covid-19, flu, croup, strep throat, chicken pox), we ask that the singer return when recommended by their doctor and with a doctor's note.

Pandemic Procedures

In light of recent events involving Covid 19, if a similar situation occurs in the future where gatherings of large groups are prohibited, we will explore and pursue every avenue to fulfill our commitment to our singers and their families in the safest way possible. LYC follows the guidelines and recommendations for closures set forth by the Hillsborough County School Board. All other safety protocols are based upon current CDC guidelines and state and local government and healthcare recommendations.

Home Practice

Home practice is essential to each singer's participation in LYC. The minimum home practice expectation is 15 minutes twice per week for our youngest singers, and daily practice for our upper division choirs, as assigned by the choir Director. Part tests and small group assessments will be given on a regular basis to ensure musical readiness.

DRESS REHEARSAL and CONCERT PROCEDURES

Concerts are held at various venues around the Tampa Bay area.

All Concerts and Dress Rehearsals are required events for singers.

Dress Rehearsals:

Dress Rehearsal is simply the final rehearsal prior to the performance. It is considered a full run through of all the music and logistical considerations without stopping. The Dress Rehearsal is the opportunity for singers to become accustomed to the venue, acoustics, riser placement, and logistical layout. While the Dress Rehearsal is intended to be a mock performance, singers are not required to wear their concert attire unless specifically asked to do so by their Director.

Dress Rehearsals are not open to the public, family, or friends. As with regular rehearsals, only background checked staff are allowed access to the singers during this time.

Call Time/Concert Time:

The Call Time is when singers are expected to arrive for warm up prior to the performance. The Concert Time is the precise time the performance begins.

Parent/Guardian Involvement for Concert Weeks:

Assistance is needed and encouraged in a wide range of areas including:

Set-up & Clean-up crew

Door monitors & Ushers

Ticket tables

Moving risers & equipment

Lunch/dinner monitors

Carpool Transportation

Concert publicity

To volunteer to assist during Concert Week:

Complete this simple survey. Click the link below or snap the QR code:

<https://forms.gle/Br4xv1sYJr5FLq2A6>

For more information, contact us at lycvolunteers@luminayouthchoirs.net



SINGER BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

Lumina Youth Choirs is a community built on trust and mutual respect. LYC believes that self-discipline is more valuable than imposed discipline. It is the responsibility of each singer to know and follow established rules and expectations as described in the LYC Code of Conduct and the LYC Policy on Harassment. Parents and family members are expected to support their singer in this effort while supporting LYC by respecting the rules. The behavior of each chorister impacts the effectiveness and reputation of LYC as a whole. Good conduct and behavior enable the Choir to achieve its goals, ensure the respect of each individual, and strengthen our community.

In addition to consequences outlined in the LYC Code of Conduct and the LYC Policy on Harassment, infractions that may lead to suspension and potential dismissal from LYC include but are not limited to:

- Dishonesty
- Theft
- Physically or verbally abusive behavior
- Destruction or abuse of property or rehearsal/performance facility
- Possession of an object deemed dangerous to self or others
- Disrespect for Directors, Accompanists, Staff, Choir Coordinators, Volunteers, other choristers, chaperones, or any other individual involved with any LYC activity
- Excessive unexcused absences from rehearsals and/or performances
- Possession or use of drugs or other illegal substances, alcohol, or tobacco, at LYC events or LYC-related functions will, likely, result in dismissal from the Choir.

Code of Conduct for Lumina Youth Choirs Choristers

Lumina Youth Choirs is a team. As a member of the team, I must be at my best.

To do this I must:

- Attend all rehearsals and performances.
- Behave in an appropriate manner with those around me.

I will:

- Respect all those around me.
- Behave in an appropriate manner with those around me.
- Be positive.
- Be obedient.
- Be patient.
- Be kind.
- Be helpful and supportive.

I understand:

- Disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated.
- Inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated.
- Negative behavior will not be accepted.
- Disobedient behavior will not be accepted.
- Impatient behavior will not be accepted.
- Unkind behavior will not be accepted.
- Unhelpful and unsupportive behavior will not be accepted.

Consequences

1st Warning: Singer is reminded about inappropriate behavior. When a singer has been warned 3 times in one rehearsal, the parent/guardian will be notified.

2nd Warning: If disruptive behavior continues and singer has received 3 warnings at a second rehearsal, the singer is on probation and will be removed from rehearsal as necessary.

3rd Warning: If the behavior continues beyond these consequences, the chorister will be asked to leave the choir.

Consent & Acknowledgement of Risk

In consideration of the right to attend and participate in the activities of the Lumina Youth Choirs, each participant (or parents/guardians of minor participants) hereby:

1. Gives permission and the absolute copyright to publish, reproduce, and publicly display or use the Participant's name, voice, or likeness for any purpose connected with promoting the purposes and goals of the Lumina Youth Choirs and waives any right to inspect or improve the finished product or the copy that may be used in connection therewith.
2. Agrees to abide by all the rules and regulations and responsibilities as established by Lumina Youth Choirs.
3. Gives the Lumina Youth Choirs or any of its agent's authority to provide and/or obtain emergency treatment for the Participant in the event of the Participant's illness, injury, or incapacity and hereby accepts the responsibility to pay for such treatment.
4. Acknowledges that there is an element of risk involved in any activity; certifies that the Participant is physically, mentally, and emotionally capable of participating in Lumina Youth Choirs activities; assumes all risk of and financial responsibility for any loss or injury to the Participant that may occur, and releases the Lumina Youth Choirs, its employees, directors, staff, officers, and agents from any and all costs, claims, charges, liabilities, obligations, judgments, executions, costs of suit and actual attorney's fees incurred or suffered by any of them as a result of, or arising out of personal injury to or loss of property of the Participant.

The Consent and Acknowledgement of Risk shall not be amended, supplemented, or abrogated without the written consent of the Lumina Youth Choirs. The participant and the participant's parent or legal guardian have read this Consent and Acknowledgment of Risk and understand its contents.

COMMUNICATION

LYC makes every effort to ensure that singers and their families are provided with up-to-date information regarding all LYC events.

Email: This is our official source of communication. We ask that you check your email regularly since updates and changes will be sent out as they become available.

Remind: Each choir has a unique code which will be given out at the beginning of the season. This is a text-based messaging system.

Google Classroom: will be used to house digital rehearsal tracks and music and to communicate homerehearsal instructions and information directly with the singers.

Paper notices will occasionally be sent home with singers providing details regarding directions and logistics for upcoming events. Please remind singers to share any printed materials with you on a regular basis.

LumiNotes newsletters are also distributed via email.

Singer Absences

- A singer may miss no more than **three** rehearsals within each semester (Fall/Spring), or dismissal from the choir will be considered (**Homework, clubs, sports, etc., are NOT appropriate reasons to miss rehearsal**). 3 Tardies constitute 1 Absence.
- Directors must be notified via email 24 hours in advance in the case of unexpected absence. It is a safety concern if we do not hear from you and your singer fails to show up.
- If a singer is absent for two rehearsals, evaluation of musical readiness will be required to participate in the upcoming concert, which will be determined at the director's discretion.

Please alert your Choir Director and/or Choir Coordinator of singer absences as soon as possible. Contact information is listed in the front of this Handbook.

Social Media

We regularly use social media to post information about upcoming events, ticket sales for concerts, and pictures of rehearsals, concerts, and tours for you to share with family and friends.

Please join us at:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/luminayouthchoirs>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/lumina_youthchoirs/

X (Twitter) <https://twitter.com/LuminaChoirs>

Although we post reminders and information on social media, *please remember these are not a form of official communication with singers and parents/guardians.* Similarly, sending messages to LYC staff through social media may not result in a timely response. **Email is our official mode of communication.**

We do our very best to communicate with our singers and families and would appreciate hearing from you! Please don't hesitate to ask a question or share feedback with any member of our Staff.

CONCERT ATTIRE

Amiaza, Stele & Serata Formal Concert Attire

Basic Formal Concert Attire is required (including Shoes, Socks, and Belts).

- Black Formal Gown & Character Shoes
- Formal Dress Shirt, Tie, and Dress Pants
 - black belt
 - black dress shoes with black socks

Aurora Formal Concert Attire

Basic Formal Concert Attire is required (including Shoes, Socks, and Belts).

- Black Formal Dress & Ballet Flats
- Formal Dress Shirt, Tie, and Dress Pants
 - black belt
 - black dress shoes with black socks

Stele & Amiaza Gown Hemming, Character Shoes

- All Stele & Amiaza members must have BLACK CHARACTER SHOES WITH A 1½ INCH HEEL as part of their LYC concert attire. NO OTHER SHOES WILL BE ALLOWED.
- BLACK CHARACTER SHOES WITH A 1½ INCH HEEL are available at various dance and shoe stores around town and online at Stage Accents. You may purchase the shoes at any dance store or online.
- Hem of gown is to cover your shoes and be no more than ½ inch off the ground. Please note – these gowns are very difficult to hem. Unless you are a very experienced seamstress, please do not attempt to hem the gowns on your own.
- Gowns must be properly hemmed prior to performance or singer will not be allowed to perform.

Informal Event Attire

Certain engagements require our singers to dress in a less formal but still “uniform” way. This informal “uniform” will usually be as follows:

- Lumina embroidered logo t-shirt or polo* (provided by LYC)
- Dark wash jeans – no rips (NOT provided by LYC)
- Closed toe shoes (or tennis shoes) (NOT provided by LYC)

On some occasions black dress pants and dress shoes will take the place of dark jeans and tennis shoes.

**Every singer is provided with a Lumina embroidered logo t-shirt or polo upon acceptance into Lumina Youth Choirs. Replacement of polos and t-shirts due to loss, damage, or growth are the singer’s responsibility.*

**Singers are responsible for making sure their concert attire is well maintained and fits properly.*

TUITION AND PAYMENT GUIDELINES

The payment of all fees is mandatory for your child's participation as a member of Lumina Youth Choirs. We understand that financial circumstances may change at any time. If a situation arises that impacts your ability to pay tuition, we ask that you talk to us as soon as possible so that we can come to a mutually agreeable course of action. Financial questions regarding singer's accounts can be directed to Terri Brown at treasurer@luminayouthchoirs.net

The following guidelines will be observed:

LYC Annual Tuition is \$700 for Aurora, Amiaza, Serata, and Stele. Every enrolled singer will receive a tuition bill at the time of registration. Tuition can be paid in full at the start of the season or in installments as listed below. NOTE: If the installment plan is selected, a form of payment will be required to be maintained "on-file" with LYC, and installment payments will be automatically deducted on the dates listed below.

New singers are required to purchase formal concert attire. Returning singers whose attire is in disrepair or no longer fits are also required to purchase formal concert attire.

Payment Schedule:

- \$100 Non-refundable registration fee due at the time of registration
- \$175 due at or before the choir's first scheduled rehearsal*
- \$175 due on September 15th
- \$80 formal concert attire fee for new singers due on Sept. 15th
- \$175 due on October 15th
- \$175 due on or before November 15th
- *The first rehearsals of the season will correspond with the opening of Hillsborough Public Schools.
- ALL TUITION FOR PARTICIPANTS ON THE PAYMENT PLAN MUST BE PAID IN FULL BY November 15th. If the account is not current, singer will not be permitted participate until the balance is paid.
- **Singers who join after January 1:**
 - \$100 registration fee due at the time of registration
 - \$350 must be paid in full at or before the singer's first rehearsal
- **Installment Payment Method**
 - Invoices are sent electronically to the primary email address provided at registration.
 - **Payments will be accepted in the form of credit card or debit card only.**
- **The registration fees documented above are payable upon registration, are non-refundable, and are not discounted for those entering mid-season.**
- An insufficient funds fee of \$25.00, or current service charge, whichever is higher, will be assessed for any check or credit card transaction returned unpaid for any reason.
- **A 10-day grace period will be in effect for installment payments. Payments received after the 10-day grace period will incur a \$20 late fee.**
- **Should your account become more than 30 days past due at any point, your singer(s) may not return to rehearsals until the account has been brought current.**
- Tuition fees do not cover any additional or incidental expenses that may be incurred through your child's participation in LYC. These expenses include, but are not limited to, an LYC tour.
 - Any tour payments received for a singer with an account in arrears will be applied to outstanding tuition first.
- No refunds are given in the event your child discontinues his/her participation in the choir or is dismissed from the choir and all scheduled/outstanding fee amounts remain due and payable.
- **NOTE: Any outstanding fees unpaid by November 15th will be referred to a collection agency until fully paid to LYC**
- In the event of relocation or circumstance deemed extenuating by the Board of Directors, a **Choir Withdrawal Form** must be submitted to the Board of Directors. All decisions by the Board of Directors are final.

FAMILY INVOLVMENT & FUNDRAISING

The Lumina Youth Choirs community needs YOU! We encourage you to find a way to get involved to help make our organization the best it can be for our amazing musicians now and for years to come.

Ways you can help:

- Concert logistics (ushers, meal monitors, set-up, clean-up and more!)
- Event Promotion (help us get the word out)
- Assisting with fundraisers
- Assistance with the annual fundraising activities
- Assistance with social activities for the choirs

Let us know how you can help!

Complete this simple survey. Click the link below or snap the QR code:

<https://forms.gle/Br4xv1sYJr5FLq2A6>

For more information, contact us at lycvolunteers@luminayouthchoirs.net



Fundraising:

Each season Lumina offers a variety of opportunities for singers and their families to raise funds to offset the cost of tour and to contribute to the general fund benefitting our entire organization. Sponsored by the LYC Board, the success of these opportunities lies directly in your participation. Although participation is not mandatory, it is highly encouraged!

Detailed information for each fundraiser will be shared at the beginning of the season.

Donor Opportunities:

Join the LYC family of donors! We have varying sponsorship levels available for businesses, families, and friends that want to support Lumina Youth Choirs. All donors are included in our concert programs and on our website. For information, contact Matt Williams, Board President, at mwilliams@luminayouthchoirs.net or visit www.luminayouthchoirs.com and click SUPPORT on the main menu bar.

The choir is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and we are supported by sponsors and donations received from the community. If you know of anyone who would be interested in becoming a donor or business sponsor, making an in-kind donation of goods and services, please let us know. A choir information packet is available as well as tax information receipt of donation. For more information, please contact Terri Brown at treasurer@luminayouthchoirs.net

LUMINA YOUTH CHOIRS TOUR PHILOSOPHY

Touring and choral festival participation are fundamental aspects of the Lumina Youth Choirs program. Beyond the intrinsic value of learning unique repertoire and preparing to sing for unfamiliar audiences in various circumstances, singers grow as individual musicians and as a choir through days of fun and hard work together “on the road”.

Tour provides once-in-a-lifetime opportunities for singers to meet and interact with people from different backgrounds and cultures, including other choirs, singers, and people in the local community. Tackling the challenges and responsibilities of traveling as a group – sharing a hotel or dorm room with other choristers, planning activities with a small group exploring a new city, communicating with locals in a foreign language – helps each singer gain confidence and independence. Many Lumina Youth Choir graduates speak of choir tours as some of the most memorable and transformative experiences of their choir careers.

Through touring and participation in choral festivals Lumina Youth Choirs builds relationships with directors, choristers, and composers from around the world. These relationships broaden our perspective, and the reach of our choir increases on the national and international stage. Particularly in festivals, our choirs have the unique opportunity to perform new and distinctive repertoire while observing different rehearsal and performance techniques.

Lumina Youth Choirs intends for each singer to experience these things on Tour:

- Singing the concert repertoire at the highest levels of musical understanding, interpretation, expression, and excellence.
- Musical growth together as a choir as we perform in a wide variety of venues and acoustics, at various times of day, for many different kinds and sizes of audiences, and under many different circumstances (jet-lagged, after a long day of touring, right after another excellent choir sings, etc.).
- Performing music for audiences that are not guaranteed to be supportive— an audience not full of parents and family members, and often for people of different cultures and languages.
- Personal growth through the excitement, challenges, and responsibilities of group travel (keeping track of your belongings, sleeping/eating/spending time outside of one’s familiar comfort zone, ordering lunch in a foreign language, observing the customs of another culture, getting back to the bus on time, forging friendships with people from different backgrounds, etc.).
- Growth as a “choir team” forming new friendships and deepening bonds with current choristers through days of unique, shared experiences “on the road.”
- The privilege of traveling to another region/country and sharing part of your hard work and culture—not just being a tourist but bringing something (music and singing) to share with others.
- Forging friendships with people from around the region/country/world.
- At choral festivals, the opportunity to work with world-class clinicians in an intense, high-energy environment, alongside other young people from around the region/country/world who share our love of singing.
- Watching, hearing, and meeting choirs from around the region/country/world—seeing that there are many ways to do “choir” well.
- Making life-long memories singing, growing, and traveling together.

We look forward to making great memories together this season!