



YOUTH
CHOIR
HANDBOOK
2014

INTERIOR DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA AND NEVADA
MESSENGERS OF PEACE

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**Interior District of California and Nevada
Youth Choir
2014 Handbook**

This Booklet Belongs To:

Name: _____

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PREFACE

The purpose of this handbook is to acquaint you with the general guidelines and information concerning the expectations, responsibilities, and requirements of all choir members, potential choir members, musicians, and the choir staff.

In addition, it includes information that should answer many questions regarding your participation with the IDCN Youth Choir.

Being a member of this music ministry means being a member of a team. We are not just a music ministry but a ministry training artists to develop their voices both physically and artistically. Thus, implementation of these guidelines requires the cooperation and understanding of everyone involved in this music ministry.

Hopefully, this booklet will be helpful in assuring a successful experience for all singers and musicians. Please keep it handy as a reference throughout the year. Furthermore, please feel free to contact us if you don't find the information you need in this handbook.



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WELCOME LETTER

Praise the Lord!

Greetings! It is with much joy and enthusiasm that we welcome you into the IDCN Youth Choir. We are pleased that you have chosen to join this ministry. Your presence and participation will be of great value. This choir needs and deserves your assistance and cooperation in order to gallantly press forward in fulfilling our vision for this music ministry. We trust that the glory of God will be shown through you and that your effort and time will not be in vain. If you come with a sincere and serious heart, it will transform our worship and praise into a ministry - a ministry that will impact our audience!

Also, we will make every effort in assisting you with any questions or concerns you may have. Moreover, one of our goals is to develop your talent vocally, artistically, and musically. In addition, we hope to encourage and simulate a stronger relationship between you and God. Furthermore, we hope this ministry will cultivate you into a true worshipper that will ignite a fire in your praise and worship.

Thank you for your time and attention, and we look forward to your involvement. We hope you share our enthusiasm about the future of the IDCN Youth Choir. With that said, once again, we extend a warm welcome!

Sincerely,

Choir Staff



MONTHLY SCHEDULE

Please note that all days, times, and locations are subject to change. Also, please lookout for these communications from us announcing dates and/or event changes and updates.

EVERY SECOND AND FOURTH SUNDAY OF EVERY MONTH

First Session of the Month:

Vocalists and musicians have separate practices.

Lead Vocalists (Sectional Leads) from 5-6PM

All Choir Members from 6-8PM

Second Session of the Month:

All vocalists and musicians are required to be present.

Lead Vocalists (Sectional Leads) and Musicians from 5-6PM

All Choir Members and Musicians from 6-8PM

CHOIR FAST

Choir fasts every last Wednesday of every month (see pg. 27 for details).



IDCN YOUTH CHOIR ENROLLMENT

The IDCN Youth Choir reopens enrollment every January and June of every year. The deadline to sign-up is the first practice of the following month (2014 Choir Enrollments start January 12 and June 8 and deadlines are February 9 and July 13).



IDCN YOUTH CHOIR MISSION STATEMENT

To exalt Christ in excellence and purity through song, and that with each offering of praise, we would minister to the hearts of those who hear us.



IDCN YOUTH CHOIR PHILOSOPHY

We believe that one of the incredible values of music is that it can transport us to the experiences of other people. Music ties people together; it is a universal language. Music becomes the wings of our praise and worship helping it to reach the throne of God.

Moreover, a fine musical performance goes beyond just singing all of the notes correctly. An expressive, worshipful, meaningful, musical performance requires more. It requires you to give a part of yourself. True vocal performance is a sacrificial worship as well as an aural experience. You must involve your soul and heart's interpretation of the music on your face; you should convey your worship and praise in every way possible.



STRUCTURE AND DESCRIPTION

A CHOIR OF PRIESTS

When we think of a choir, worship team, and even the band, we like to consider them to be the legacy of a biblical priesthood—they are a choir of priests. Sure, we are the sound engineers that play and sing the music; however, we *are* far more. Let's take a look at what this means.

The bible says in Deuteronomy 10:8, *“At the time the Lord set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the Ark of the Lord’s Covenant, and to stand before the Lord as His ministers, and to pronounce blessings in His name. These are their duties to this day”* (NLT). This scripture describes the duties of the tribe of Levi that can be equivalent to a choir, worship team, and a band today. From it, we can derive four basic components that should be our measuring stick (requirements) of being a member of this choir:

➤ **Being Set Apart (“The Lord set apart”):**

God has our life well in control. According to Jeremiah 1:4-5: *“The Lord gave me this message: ‘I knew you before I formed you in your mother’s womb. Before you were born I set you apart and appointed you as my prophet to the nations’”* (NLT). These beautiful words were spoken not only for Jeremiah’s benefit but for ours. God has designed us for a purpose. He has given us specific desires and dreams and set us apart for a special work. We were created with certain innate abilities and gifts—for a specific reason. As with Jeremiah, God has an express interest in our life.

Furthermore, in Psalm 139:15-16 we read: *“You were there while I was being formed in utter seclusion! You saw me before I was born and scheduled each day of my life before I began to breathe. Every day was recorded in your Book”* (LB). Did you catch that? God has every day of our life scheduled. Nothing

happens in our life by accident. Here we find again He has a divine plan and purpose for us and wants us to understand what it is. By identifying the gifts, abilities, and desires He has given us and by surrendering our life to Him, we will have a fuller understanding of His call.

Thus, a choir member must be “set apart” for this ministry. What do we mean? We consider being a member of a choir, worship team, or band as a calling from God. This calling is more than having a musical talent, but about one’s identity as a worshiper of God. While everyone of God’s people are called to be worshipers, we believe there are some who are called to be worship leaders, or in other words “lead worshippers.” And we’re not referring to the one leading service, but a choir of worship leaders simulating the congregation’s worship. With that said, you must ask yourself this question: “Am I called to lead worship?”

The identity of a “lead worshipper” is equally true whether you are on or off the platform. You must consider yourselves to be worshippers and instigators of worship wherever you go.

And lastly, let us not forget that being “set apart” is a privilege and an honor. Remember, God doesn’t need us, we need Him. God used a donkey, whale, fish, a staff, fire, and so much more to demonstrate His power, glory, and to deliver His message. He can use anything, but out of all the things He could choose, He chose you! So, always give God glory for entrusting us with such a work as this.

➤ **Carrying God’s Presence (“*Carry the Ark of the Lord’s Covenant*”):**

The Ark of the Covenant represents the very presence of God. As a “lead worshipper,” we must usher in God’s presence in our services. However, it is also far more than that, we must carry

Christ with us everywhere we go. His Spirit should be felt by all with whom we come in contact. God's Spirit in the heart is like a spring in the desert, flowing to refresh all and making those who are dying of thirst, eager to drink of the water of life. God's Spirit in us should flow into people who are thirsty for change.

With that said, you must ask yourself: Am I *really* reflecting Christ? When was the last time someone said to you, "There's something about you that's so different and I want it!"? How do we do this? We carry God's presence by holding each other to high spiritual standards by being accountable through discipleship and building our relationship with Christ through consistency in studying His word, living His word, prayer and fasting. Each member must understand they cannot impart what they do not possess. Are you carrying God's presence? Does He reside in your heart?

➤ **Ministering to Christ through the Ministry of Music (*"Stand before the Lord as His ministers"*):**

As a "lead worshipper" we sing and play our music first and foremost for our main audience—God. Worship is vertical and not horizontal. Our life, service, and words should minister to Christ. Christ should be the center of our universe. We must place Christ before all else. To be a true follower of Jesus Christ, you need to be wholly devoted to Him and let nothing else get in the way of your devotion.

Furthermore, we must always have a balance between service and worship. Each member must not get so caught up in "serving" the Lord that we forget to worship Him and get to know Him better. We find a great example of this in Luke 10:38-42. Mary and Martha both loved Jesus. On this occasion they were both serving Him. But Martha thought Mary's style of serving was inferior to hers. What she didn't realize was that in her desire to "serve," she was neglecting her Creator in flesh in

her own living room. You must ask yourself: “Am I so busy doing things *for* Jesus that I’m not spending time *with* Him?”

Our service should not become “self-serving.” Jesus did not blame Martha for being concerned about household chores. He was only asking her to set priorities. Service to Christ can degenerate into mere busywork that is totally devoid of devotion to God.

With that said, do you want to be a part of this ministry because of your “service to Christ”? Or even because, in essence, it’s a “social gathering,” or do you truly want to connect with and worship your Creator?

➤ **Proclaiming God’s Power (“*Pronounce Blessings in His name*”):**

Our responsibility as a “lead worshipper” is to declare through our actions, life, words, worship and praise, His blessings, truth, power, grace, love, and mercy. The bible says in Psalm 71:15, “*I will tell everyone about your righteousness. All day long I will proclaim your saving power, though I am not skilled with words*” (NLT). There are two parts to this scripture. First, it expresses God’s character. Secondly, it expresses what God can do. Even though many of us may not be “skilled with words,” as a group we need to tell everyone about who God is and what God can do.

Our choir should be creating an atmosphere of worship that goes beyond mediocrity to a place of excellence that will connect us with God and His people. A place where, through our worship and praise, we are conveying positive messages that will impact our churches and communities.

Moreover, every aspect of our lives should affect other people. All of the gifts we receive are to serve others, pointing them to the Giver of all good things. The very public act of someone

standing up in church to praise God would naturally call others to do the same, to invite the community around him—or her—to participate together in praising God for His wonders. It is a public and corporate display of gratitude for the demonstration of His sovereign lordship over the difficult and real circumstances of living.

Each choir member should stand up straight and honor their Maker. And, indirectly and directly, inviting others to join them in acknowledging the Man who could transform broken, meaningless existences into purposeful lives of dignity. What happens when we do? Others are drawn to our attitudes of thankfulness, and our joy becomes contagious. And in God's mercy, other people are automatically attracted to that place known as God's kingdom, where crippled bodies are restored, hearts are refreshed, and tired souls are invited to rest in the One who broke into our humanity with His grace.

That kind of good news is worth standing for and proclaiming.

EXCELLENCE

Let's take this a little further. In the book of Leviticus you will find how God was very specific on how He wanted the people's sacrifices to be offered. There are two things He required: it had to be the best of their firstlings (excellence) and it must have no defects (purity). Now God is asking our choir of priests, that our sacrifice should be done with excellence and with a sincere, clean, and honest heart.

Excellence vs. Perfection

First, let's take a look at what's the difference between excellence and perfection, because God isn't asking for perfection—but excellence!

This is what the bible says about perfection, *"...People are like grass that dies away; their beauty fades as quickly as the beauty of wildflowers.*

The grass withers, and flowers fall away. But the word of the Lord will last forever..." (1 Peter 1:24-25, NLT). Our glory is short-lived. Heroes today are quickly forgotten tomorrow. With perfectionism you always end up with one of two results. You either end up with pride or discouragement. We become prideful because we think we're better than everyone else. Or we experience discouragement because we see ourselves as a dismal failure at life.

But we must understand that perfection isn't ours to give. Only God is capable of offering perfection. In the Bible we discover:

- God is perfect (Matthew 5:48)
- God's works are perfect (Deuteronomy 32:4)
- God's way is perfect (2 Samuel 22:31)
- God's law is perfect (Psalm 19:7)
- God's plans are perfect (Psalm 64:6)
- God's peace is perfect (Isaiah 26:3)
- God has a perfect will (Romans 12:2)

However, we can certainly aim for perfection (Matthew 5:48; 2 Corinthians 13:11), but perfection is God's gift to us through the justifying death of Jesus Christ. Through whom we've been forgiven and lavished with His grace. Perfection is God's gift to you, so you won't be able to boast of yourself but boast of our Lord.

Excellence Is Our Gift:

With that said, we can never give God perfection, but we can give Him excellence. Perfection is God's gift to us and excellence is our gift to Him. Perfectionism is our grasping for supremacy. Excellence is giving Christ supremacy in everything. Perfectionism is our attempt to earn favor, earn status, and gain access to glory. Excellence is accepting what only Christ can achieve. Perfection is about outward performance. Excellence is about inner surrender. Perfection is driven by a fear of failure. Excellence is driven by God's grace, by gratitude, and by what

God has done in your life. Perfectionism praises man, but excellence praises God.

Excellence is found in 2 Corinthians 8:7, *“Since you excel in so many ways—you have so much faith, such gifted speakers, such knowledge, such enthusiasm, and such love for us—now I want you to excel also in this gracious ministry of giving”* (NLT). It’s about giving back what God has given you, but giving with excellence as stated in Colossians 3:23, *“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men”* (NIV). Furthermore, excellence is instructed in 1 Corinthians 10:31, *“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God”* (NIV).

Excellence is our response to God’s perfection. Excellence is our desire to identify with and bring pleasure to a holy and perfect God. Excellence is about boasting in Christ’s work, not in our own. Excellence is surrender to Christ.

With that said, how are we going to give God excellence?



CHOIR MEMBER EXPECTATIONS AND ETIQUETTE

The following expectations and requirements will help us give God that excellence:

AS A MEMBER...

All members are required to attend all rehearsals and services we are invited to. Every member is expected to remain active and committed to this ministry for the entire season of his or her contract agreement, which is six months. However, the director reserves the right to dismiss them from their membership at any time if they do not meet the expectations listed in this section.

In addition, as a member, you are required to abide by all rules, regulations, policies, expectations, etiquette and procedures listed in this handbook.

Lastly, every member must be filled and sealed with the Holy Spirit. In addition, you must be baptized in Jesus Name or have the full approval of the IDCN MOP Board and General Board of Directors of IDCN. Furthermore, each member must be a member of the Apostolic Assembly of the Faith in Christ Jesus and a member of a church in the IDCN. Unfortunately, members from churches outside the IDCN cannot join.

EVALUATIONS

In order for one to be placed in this ministry, one must be evaluated. The IDCN Youth Choir reopens their enrollment every six months, during that time evaluations will be held.

This is NOT an audition! Acceptance into this music ministry is not so much based on one's musical ability. However, there should be some inherent level of musical ability, but your talent will be honed and

improved. Acceptance is based off of one's call to be a lead worshipper, commitment, availability, discipline, and maturity.

This evaluation is easy! You may sing a song of your choice or the director will provide one for you. Singing or playing a prepared song is the easiest and quickest way for assessment of your vocal or musical ability by the director.

The purpose of this evaluation is to improve the choir's vocal, musical, and artistic abilities. The evaluation is meant to be relaxed, fun, and non-intimidating, and takes approximately one (1) minute. The better prepared you are, the shorter the evaluation. Your evaluation is private in nature; only the directors will be at the evaluation.

SINGERS INTRODUCTORY COURSE

In addition to a singer's evaluation, he or she must take a one-time introductory course. This must be completed in order to finalize one's membership. This is only required by new members, returning members do not have to retake this course.

The purpose of this course is to familiarize new members with:

- Basic Vocal Technique
- Vocal Maintenance
- Vocal Exercises and Warm-ups
- Balance, Blend, and Timing
- Practicing Tips and Regimen
- Choir Vision
- Expectations and Disciplines
- And getting to know our choir staff and directors

Please look out for dates and times for the Singers Introductory Course.

MUSICIAN AUDITIONS

On the other hand, in order for a musician to be placed in this ministry, he or she must audition. Each musician will be evaluated by the Choir Director, Music Director, and Assistant Music Director. They will determine the acceptance as a musician for the IDCN Youth Choir. We will evaluate all your skills as a composite.

Musicians are expected to play a song of their choice. They should prepare well in advance for this audition. He or she may also be asked to play a piece for a variety of genres. He or she will also be asked to play along with another musician.

Musicians will be evaluated based on their musicianship (rhythm, dynamics, pauses, tempo, etc.), interpretation (embellishment, energy, power, emotional makeup, etc.), stage presence (confidence, expressions, gestures, etc.), intonation (production of musical tones in relation to the pitch), balance and blend (demonstrates the concepts of balanced musical lines and blends their instrument to produce a desirable sound), and ensemble (degree of precision and unity exhibited by musicians performing together).

The IDCN Youth Choir reopens their enrollment every six months, during that time auditions will be held. Please look out for dates and times for these auditions.

COMMITMENT TO IDCN YOUTH CHOIR

It is mandatory for every singer and musician to be an active participant in this choir. Being a member of this choir requires the 3-D's:

➤ DIRECTION:

If we are aiming toward a successful and more excellent music ministry, we must have goals along our way. This is what we call Direction. Another word for this would be vision. Vision is the ability to see. When

someone goes blind, we say he lost his vision, and that is true in life as well. Helen Keller said, "The most pathetic person in the world is someone who has sight but no vision." Being able to "see" is a skill that must be present or developed in this ministry. In Proverbs 29:18, the bible says, "*Where there is no vision, the people perish...*" (KJV). Let's focus on this word "perish." With no vision in this district choir, or any music ministry for that matter, it will perish. It will become unsuccessful. With that said, we can only blame ourselves if we fail, because the real problem was loss of, or lack of, vision.

Vision turns into goals. This is where we leave strategy and go into the tacticity. This means enough talking and start doing. Goals convert vision into energy.

➤ **DEVOTION:**

When someone has devotion, they are passionate about what they are doing. They are willing to sacrifice their time and efforts. Every member must have devotion. This is what is needed to move full force ahead, without it there is no gas to move the car.

Attendance and Punctuality

With that said, this brings us to the subject of attendance and punctuality. An enjoyable, strong, and vibrant music ministry cannot exist without the prompt attendance of all personnel at all performances and rehearsals. This helps reinforce the idea that every individual is very important to the whole. One person that is gone or even late has an adverse effect on the whole group. This is a valuable like skill for all members to learn to become a success as they go through life.

If a member is unable to attend, they must inform their Sectional Lead. A choir member may have four (4) excused absences for each term (six months). Any absence beyond the allotted number may result in termination of their membership with the IDCN Youth Choir. Also,

failure to notify your Sectional Lead of an absence will result as an unexcused absence.

There are a number of reasons you should not miss. First, you cannot learn from the session with the director if you are not there. It also takes up time we don't have to repeat back information that has already been presented. Every member is important and must be there on time. Secondly, the sessions provide the perfect opportunity for you to ask questions and get the help you need. Thirdly, you will not be prepared to sing if you don't know the song.

Lastly, please get to our sessions on time; this is simply a matter of professionalism and courtesy. Being on time is being 5 to 10 minutes early to every session.

➤ **DISCIPLINE:**

This means the willingness to train your skill by someone teaching you. Singing requires not only the will and ability to expose your emotions through songs, as I just mentioned, but also good technique—the way we use our voice. Our emotions are directed through the vocal instrument, and the instrument must be fully developed first. Can you imagine playing a piano before all the keys were in place? You cannot, the product isn't finished. The same is true for singers. The only difference is that rather than going out and buying an instrument, every singer must build his or her voice from scratch. Thus, singing has a technical aspect to it.

Practice

Improving the singing voice and musicianship skills takes willingness to experiment and the discipline to practice what you learn. It takes time to build new habits and overcome the old habits that are non-productive. By replacing these old habits with new patterns, it will produce a healthy, quality, vital technique that you will need in order to develop your voice and instrument.

When one practices, they will make discoveries about themselves. It may be helpful to think of practicing as exploring. Practice in a room free from distractions and encourage yourself to experiment with your voice or instrument and express yourself through singing and playing. Remember it is okay to make mistakes, for failure is our greatest teacher! For singers, sing at a comfortable volume. Singing loud can strain the very muscles we are seeking to train and singing too soft cannot gain full benefit from the exercises. Moreover, a standing position is preferable while practicing. For musicians, learn to experiment with dynamics and improvisation.

Singers will be sent via email or Dropbox digital audio files (.mp3) of vocal exercises and songs the choir is rehearsing for you to use when practicing at home. There will be assigned exercises and each exercise should be repeated until you mastered it. Every choir member (both singers and musicians) is required to practice and apply what is taught in rehearsals for thirty (30) minutes or more each day. Regular vocal practice keeps your voice aligned for efficient coordination and practicing your instrument will improve technique.

Here are some guidelines that will help you organize your practice time:

- Do a little outdoor exercise (i.e. calisthenics) before practicing
- Warm up the voice with warm-up vocal exercises (Musicians will also be given warm up exercises)
- Relax during the practice session
- Go easy and don't tire yourself out
- If you start experiencing any strain in the voice, stop immediately. If you continue, it will only reinforce bad habits. Come back at a later time.

Vocal training and musicianship is a journey of mental and physical development. Struggles are bound to happen, but without them no true progress can be made. You can't say you have the victory until you have

won a battle. If you keep working at it, you will continually improve each day.

Rehearsal Procedures and Etiquette

The following procedures help us achieve the discipline and professionalism for this ministry. These procedures are enforced to ensure orderly rehearsals, and out of respect and courtesy for each other.

1. Please report promptly (within 5 to 10 minutes of established start time).
2. Be prepared and on task ready to sing and worship, that is, bring your equipment that is required (i.e., lyrics).
3. Do not bring food or drinks into the sanctuary, this includes gum chewing. Try to eat a nutritious meal before you arrive at the rehearsal facility. However, refrain from eating a large and heavy meal two (2) hours before rehearsal and performances. Also, it is recommended to bring bottled water to rehearsals.
4. If, for any reason, you cannot actively participate in a rehearsal, observe quietly and attentively.
5. Be respectful to all members of this ministry, which means don't gossip and criticize.
6. Members are not allowed to have their cell phones out. If you have a cell phone, please turn it off, or place it on silent or vibrate during rehearsal. If you must answer, please step out quietly.
7. Please be respectful and professional when waiting to ask questions.
8. Prayer is an essential element in our success. Each function will begin and end with a prayer. Each member is required to consistently pray for this ministry.
9. Keep personal conversations before or after our session.

Performance Procedures and Etiquette

1. Singers and musicians should always eat a nutritious meal and get plenty of rest before a performance/service.
2. Every member should arrive one (1) hour before the performance/service call time for prayer and rehearsal.
3. Tardiness to a performance/service may exclude a singer or musician from participation at that performance/service.
4. All members must arrive wearing proper dress attire as noted in the section: "Attire and Dress Standards." Failure to wear proper attire will result in nonparticipation in the performance/service.
5. All singers and musicians must know the music. Each musician must have a confident command of the performance repertoire. Failure to demonstrate this at the final rehearsal may result in release from the corresponding performance/service commitment.
6. Remember that the choir represents the IDCN and most importantly Christ, please keep that in mind.

Therefore, in order to have a great music ministry we need the directions to our destination (vision), the gas (devotion), and then finally the driving skills (discipline).

PURITY

And then finally, purity, if we want God to use us for His service we must be purged. The bible says in 2 Timothy 2:21, *“If you keep yourself pure, you will be a special utensil for honorable use. Your life will be clean, and you will be ready for the Master to use you for every good work”* (NLT). We must first meet the condition according to this verse in order to be used by God, which is purity. We must present ourselves as a holy living sacrifice (see Romans 12:1-2). Then, God will come through with the promise: you will be a special utensil for honorable use.

Unfortunately, we live in a world full of sin and corruption that leaves us with impurity, clogs our minds with filth, and fogs our spiritual glasses. That’s when we need to discover God’s holiness. We need to seek His face so that He can cleanse us.

Our daily frustrations, society’s economic woes, our shortcomings, life’s difficulties all narrow our view of God. When we are in His presence we see God’s greatness as He is high and lifted up, and this will empower our faith to move mountains, deal with our problems and concerns. Seeing God for who He is will open your eyes to who you are.

When we have a genuine encounter with God it will permanently affect our character. We will reflect the God we represent. The more clearly we see God for who He is the more aware we become of our own powerlessness and inadequacy to do anything without God.

The painful cleansing process is necessary before we could fulfill the task to which God is calling us to do. Before we can be anointed, we must first be cleansed, fully trusting God’s will, and submitting to God’s control. Letting God purify us may be painful but we must be purified so that the only thing we are reflecting is Christ.

Consider the story of how gold is refined.

The assayer of gold takes the raw pieces of gold fresh from the mountain dig and places them in a pot and slides the pot into a fiery hot furnace. Once the gold is melted, he then removes the pot from the furnace for the first wave of purification. The impure elements that were not real gold float to the top. He then skims the impurities, called dross, off the top of the gold and slides the pot back into the furnace once again. This exercise of skimming dross and placing the pot back in the fire occurs over and over until finally the dross is totally removed and the gold is pure.

How did the assayer know when the dross was completely removed and the gold was pure? When he looked into the pot full of molten gold, he could see his reflection as in a mirror shining in the gold itself.

God needs to see His reflection in us. Are we reflecting Christ?

Character

You are to maintain a Christ-like character in every aspect of your life, from your responsibilities to relationships, from work to school, and so forth. Your actions are to be above reproach, not perfect, but always striving to become more like Jesus. Remember, you are literally on the stage for everyone to see. Thus, lead by example. Jesus said, *"But you are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect"* (Matthew 5:48, NLT).

Choir Fast

This choir will fast once a month. This is mandatory! Our fast will be every last Wednesday of every month. Let us unite in spirit and consecrate our mind, body, and heart. The focus is to humble our flesh while strengthening our relationship with God. We are doing this so that God can use us in a profound and powerful way. You can choose the guidelines to how you want to fast. Once again, this fast is not a suggestion. It's a need! Heed to the call!



CHOIR STAFF EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following descriptions and duties shall be the expectations and guidelines for the staff of the IDCN Youth Choir. All staff members are to abide by all policies, procedures, regulations and expectations that are listed in this section. Failure to adhere to the policies, procedures, regulations and expectations stated in this section of the Choir Handbook may result in removal from his or her position.

The staff of this ministry must be baptized and in good standing at their local church. He or she must abide by the standards, doctrine, traditions, and teachings of the Apostolic Assembly of the Faith in Christ Jesus as outlined in the Apostolic Assembly's Constitution. Furthermore, all staff members' actions are to be above reproach, not perfect, but always striving to become more like Jesus. Their actions, on and off the platform, should resemble those of a growing Christian. As with any leadership position, there comes a higher set of expectations and responsibilities.

Choir Overseer

The Choir Overseer oversees everything regarding all operations of this ministry.

The Choir Overseer's duties and responsibilities include:

- a. Making a difficult final decision that is out of the hands of the Choir Director
- b. Supervising Choir Director(s) and all subordinates within the ministry
- c. Providing guidance and evaluating the direction of this ministry
- d. Looking for and helping train potential choir directors
- e. Acting as the official liaison between the IDCN General Board of Directors, IDCN MOP Board, and the Choir

Choir Director

The Choir Director must be well-trained in the fundamentals of music, conducting, and vocal and choral techniques. A choir director should strive to possess the following attributes:

1. Has a working knowledge of the fundamentals of music, vocal fundamentals, choral techniques, and is able to instruct singers in them
2. Can play a keyboard/piano instrument
3. Has a good ear for pitch and rhythm
4. Understands how to create balance for a choral ensemble
5. Has a working knowledge of the rudiments of conducting, including:
 - a. Beat patterns
 - b. Attacks and releases; cueing
 - c. Expression

The Choir Director's duties and responsibilities include:

- a. Acting as the official liaison between the Choir, Choir Staff, and Choir Overseer
- b. Supervising the overall functioning of the choir
- c. Making the final decisions regarding choir business
- d. Delegating responsibilities to choir staff
- e. Presiding over all staff meetings
- f. Directing and supervising the choir at all practices and engagements
- g. Finding songs for engagements
- h. Making decisions regarding practice schedule
- i. Evaluating new and current members and assessing their capabilities and qualities and placing them in the proper sections
- j. Conducting effective, productive rehearsals
- k. Detecting and correcting errors
- l. Training choir members both as individual vocalists and as ensemble musicians to create the most appropriate choral sound

- m. Developing and training assistant directors as necessary
- n. Being the spiritual and worship leader for the choir and must be sensitive to God's spirit and follow His direction

Assistant Choir Director

The Assistant Choir Director's duties and responsibilities include:

- a. Assisting the director in fulfilling his or her duties
- b. Fulfilling the role of the Choir Director in case of his or her absence

Music Director

The Music Director supervises the musicians within this ministry.

The Music Director's duties and responsibilities include:

- a. Being responsible for communicating with Choir Director and Choir Overseer
- b. Being available for required rehearsals and engagements when scheduled
- c. Attending all staff meetings
- d. Informing Choir Director of all his or her planned and/or emergency absences
- e. Relaying song list and music to musicians
- f. Being responsible for the musical direction of the musicians
- g. Finding a replacement or backup musicians when a musician will not be present. However, this replacement or backup musician must be approved by Choir Director and Overseer
- h. Directing and supervising musicians at all musicians and choir rehearsals
- i. Working closely with Assistant Music Director
- j. Working with Choir Director and Overseer when auditioning a new musician
- k. Training other musicians
- l. Demonstrating leadership and proficiency in the music ministry

Assistant Music Director

The Assistant Music Director's duties and responsibilities include:

- a. Assisting the Music Director in fulfilling his or her duties
- b. Fulfilling the role of the Music Director in case of his or her absence
- c. Scheduling musician rehearsals
- d. Maintaining attendance records, keeping up-to-date roster and attendance of musicians; working with Choir Secretary
- e. Helping auditions and assessing new musicians
- f. Being responsible for notifying musicians
- g. Informing Choir Director of all his or her planned and/or emergency absences
- h. Attending all staff meetings, events, and musicians rehearsals and assigned choir rehearsals

Choir Secretary

The Choir Secretary is a position appointed by the Choir Director and approved by the Choir Overseer to assist the Choir Director with the choir administrative needs.

The Choir Secretary's duties and responsibilities include:

- a. Being responsible to the Choir Director and Choir Overseer
- b. Recording and maintaining records of all staff meetings
- c. Recapping previous meetings in a timely and brief manner
- d. Attending all rehearsals, events, and staff meetings.
- e. Maintaining attendance records, keeping up-to-date roster and attendance
- f. Sending out communications to all members, musicians, and staff of practices, song list, music and sheet music, singing events, and all other engagements
- g. Overseeing and managing Choir's Twitter, Facebook, Instagram accounts; posting updates and informing through these accounts

- h. Preparing regular reports detailing the number of absences and tardiness for each member of the choir and communicating this information to the Choir Director
- i. Being responsible for any other duties as delegated by the Choir Director
- j. Informing Choir Director of all his or her planned and/or emergency absences

Sectional Leads

Sectional Leads are appointed primarily because of their musical skills, so that they would provide musical leadership for their section. Excellent musicianship, leadership skills, and a willingness to work as a motivator within the section and the choir as a whole are the desired qualifications for Section Leaders.

The Sectional Lead's duties and responsibilities include:

- a. Meeting with the Choir Director to learn their respective parts in new material and then to perform it for the choir to give the choir an idea of what we are aiming for
- b. Being prompt and punctual
- c. Attending all rehearsals, events, and staff meetings.
- d. Teaching and assisting their section with their parts
- e. Being the person to whom section members report if they are unable to attend a rehearsal or performance and relaying that information to the Choir Secretary
- f. Keeping an eye on lateness or excessive absences in their section
- g. Being responsible for taking attendance at rehearsals
- h. Transmitting messages when emails won't do
- i. Identifying and managing the group dynamics and abilities of their section
- j. Bonding with their section and nurturing a friendly and hospitable atmosphere

- k. Maintaining a quiet and professional attitude in their section during the rehearsal in the unlikely event that unnecessary talking has begun
- l. Speaking quietly to their sections during rehearsals if they have a helpful suggestion
- m. Rehearsing with their sections on days devoted to sectionals
- n. Arranging outside sectional practices if needed, must inform Choir Director of these practices
- o. Informing Choir Director of all his or her planned and/or emergency absences

Color Committee Director

Acting as the official liaison between the Color Committee and Choir Director, Staff, and Choir

The Color Committee Director's duties and responsibilities include:

- a. Communicating color scheme for each performance to Choir Secretary, Staff, and Director one week before first rehearsal for the event we are performing at

Color Committee

Five (5) individuals shall be appointed by director to determine and establish a color scheme for every choir event in consultation with the Choir Director.



ATTIRE AND DRESS STANDARDS

Just as the ensemble's sound is important, so is the ensemble's appearance. A well groomed, neatly uniformed ensemble is essential for a truly professional and artistic experience. ALL members must abide by the Apostolic Assembly's holiness standards, that is being modest and decent, pleasing and honoring God. For specification, please refer to the Apostolic Doctrine.

PERFORMANCE ATTIRE

➤ **Gentlemen**

Formal dress apparel for all performances/services unless otherwise stated. The following is required: collared dress shirt, tie, pants, socks, and shoes. Also, must be clean shaven (no facial hair, mustaches are okay).

➤ **Ladies**

Formal dress apparel for all performances unless otherwise stated. The following is required: dress shirt, skirt or dress, and shoes. Skirts and dresses must be below the knees. Also, veils must be worn throughout services and rehearsals.

NOTE: All performances will have a color scheme, unless otherwise communicated. Colors will be announced in a timely and ample manner, please watch for communications and make any necessary preparations.

REHEARSAL ATTIRE

The dress code for rehearsals should reflect Assembly's standards, not required to come formal. For ladies, veils must be worn.



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