

# WELS Choral Fest Handbook

**Version 3.2**

*Prepared by the Executive Committee of the  
Association of WELS High School Choir Directors  
for the planning and procedures of  
WELS National and Regional Choral Festivals*

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## REVISION LIST

**Versions 1.0-2.0:** Saturday, March 16, 2019, Trinity Lutheran Church, Keil, WI

*Updated: Mission & Objectives, Executive Committee Duties, and Timeline*

**Version 2.0 Finalized:** September 27-28, 2019, Brooklyn Park, MN

*Updated: Committees and Forms*

**Revision 2.5 Finalized:** November 15, 2019, Fond du Lac, WI

*Updated: Procedures & policies currently in use but not specifically noted in the handbook (notated in red). Other items not followed were crossed out.*

**Version 3.0 Started:** Nov. 12, 2021, New Ulm, MN

*Updated: Hotel Guidelines, Non-Refundable Student Registration Fees*

**Version 3.1** - Feb. 20-21 and Mar. 1, 2022, Kettle Moraine Lutheran HS, Jackson, WI

- p. 18, #8 Printing/Publicity, b, 3 - added “which choir they are conducting (Exultate, Laudate, Jubilate, etc.) and which schools are in that choir (Winnebago, Kettle, Evergreen, Shoreland, etc.).”
- Reread red fonts & cross outs from 2019 National
- Made Choral Fest two words
- Added the section “What hosting Choral Fest means”
- Updated Table of Contents, Headings, Page Numbers (*updated 2/6/23 at ILHS*)

**Version 3.2** (KML Feb 16, 2025 & FVL Feb 17, 2025)

- Added strong recommendation for CF concerts not being ticketed
- Linked [long range hosting schedule](#) (p. 5)
- Added link to St. Croix LA 2024 Regional [Budget](#) and [Google Drive Docs](#)
- Suggested increase of National Choral Fest Clinician honorarium from \$500 to \$750 (equal to regional clinicians)
- Linked [2024 WELS High School Choir Directors Contact List](#)
- Added “After Choral Fest thanking committees and their heads.” to Hospitality Committee
- Added “ILHS 2024 asked the colleges for a monetary donation instead of water bottles (Crete water issue)” p. 9
- Updated student registration fee to \$125.
- Clarified that Sunday morning singing in the worship service of a host congregation is purely optional and up to each individual director to coordinate. (p. 16)

- Promotion of WELS Choral Fest by WELS Event Planning (Michelle Gartner) added to the timeline at four months out. (added 3/7/25 after email from Michelle Gartner)

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## Mission and Objectives

*The mission of the WELS Choral Fest is to foster Christian fellowship among WELS high school students as they prepare, rehearse, and perform choral music, so that with one heart and voice they may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom. 15:6)*

1. To expose students to a wide variety of sacred choral literature that promotes spiritual, technical, and aesthetic musical growth.
2. To foster Christian fellowship among WELS high school students
  - a. Provide an opportunity for the students to develop Christian friendships during rehearsals and social activities
  - b. Create an environment of cooperation rather than competition
3. To promote the music program and ministry of the host school in their association and the community
4. To make Choral Fest financially feasible for all WELS high schools
  - a. Create and sustain a central WELS' Choral Fest account to fund the Executive committee, commissions, and other joint Choral Fest projects.
  - b. Provide a WELS' Choral Fest music library database to clinicians so they can program literature from past festivals

## Executive Committee Duties

1. [Bylaws](#) (Passed Nov. 2023 at WLC National Director's Meeting)
2. Fall Meeting: hold a face-to-face meeting to work on issues and conference with upcoming Choral Fest host school(s)
3. Spring Meeting: If possible, hold on-site visit of next year's host school(s) to help them work out any hosting issues they may have
4. Be of a general assistance to the host schools
5. Prepare and update Choral Fest Handbook
6. Prepare and update a Choral Fest website
7. Prepare and print the directors' meeting agenda for Choral Fest weekend
8. Request and align which regional festival the schools will attend
9. Line up speakers at the Sunday Sacred Concert
  - a. Chairman of the Executive Committee or their designee thanks the students and introduces each individual choir.
  - b. Host director thanks clinicians and audience
  - c. Host of next year's festival invites choirs and audience to attend and thank this year's host school, committee, and director

### **What Does it Mean to Host Choral Fest?**

- Opening up your school and its unique culture to guests and visitors from around the WELS and surrounding communities
- Being gracious to all
- You are providing for the needs and necessary functions of all participants to successfully execute the festival
- Thinking in the eyes of your guests
- Matthew 25:35-40 (NIV) 35 For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, 36 I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’ 37 “Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38 When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? 39 When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’ 40 “The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’

### **Choral Fest Planning Timeline**

#### [Long range hosting schedule](#)

#### **3-5 YEARS PRIOR**

1. Secure calendar date and announce to schools
2. Secure site if necessary for your area.
3. Contact your principal/administration, athletic director, and janitorial staff–secure the date for the gym/site use
  - a. 1st weekend is historically the National Festival (it may be the 2nd weekend)
    - i. beware of fall sports playoff schedules!
  - b. 1st & 2nd weekends are historically the Regional Festivals. Ultimately, work with what works best for your school’s schedule.
  - c. Exception: When Arizona Lutheran Academy hosts, they typically have hosted over spring break so that schools have longer time to travel and visit the Grand Canyon.

#### **2 YEARS PRIOR**

1. Begin work on selecting clinicians (3 for National, 2 for Regional)
2. Start planning the sacred concert theme. Either...
  - a. Pick a sacred concert theme, then select music based on that theme, or
  - b. Have clinicians propose music and select a theme based on the music
3. Secure a graphic artist to develop a festival logo that reflects
  - a. Promotional materials
    - i. posters
    - ii. website and social media
    - iii. inserts and projection slides for local congregations

- b. Event materials
  - i. concert programs
  - ii. (optional) school banners (use as homeroom signs?)
  - iii. student folders
  - iv. credential cards for lanyards
  - v. livestream video

### **OCTOBER - 13 MO. OUT**

1. Set up committees to include housing, food, entertainment, finances, production (sound engineer, lighting designer/engineer, recording engineer, streaming engineer), printing/publicity, transportation (bussing, airlines), hospitality
2. Pick your committee heads (10)
3. Finalize clinicians (3 for National, 2 for Regional)

### **NOVEMBER - 1 YEAR COUNTDOWN TO Choral Fest**

1. Solidify the sacred concert theme and ask clinicians to select titles (by March 15th). Have clinicians suggest more pieces than what is necessary for the concert to allow the host director to craft the program.
2. Have local Choral Fest planning committee up and running
3. If possible, have representatives from local committees attend Choral Fest weekend
4. At the Choral Fest directors meeting, the Executive Committee chairman asks each school which regional they will attend and the number of students they will be bringing.
5. By the end of the month, work with committee heads to set a preliminary budget (see [Form A](#)). **Plan for a non-refundable registration fee of \$125/student.** Directors and student teachers do not pay a registration fee. Chaperones desiring to eat could be asked to pay a meal fee.

### **DECEMBER – 11 MONTHS TO Choral Fest**

1. Think about your own Christmas Concert!
2. Don't worry about Choral Fest!

### **JANUARY– 10 MONTHS TO Choral Fest**

1. Find and contract sound (live & stream), recording (for archive purposes), lighting, and live stream engineers for both concerts. [See sound and lighting riders](#)
2. Consider contacting Eric Pasbrig (602) 476-4365 for live streaming. He does KML concert streams and recently did ILHS 2024 Regional Choral Fest [Pops](#) and [Sacred festival](#).

### **FEBRUARY – 9 MONTHS TO Choral Fest**

1. Work on the master schedule for Choral Fest weekend.
2. Refer to the sample schedules for regional and mass festivals as guidelines
  - a. [WLA 2019 National schedule](#)
  - b. cf. [MVL Regional schedule - Form D](#)
  - c. [MLC 2021 National Schedule](#)
3. Typical scheduling concerns:

- a. Build in time to rehearse instrumentalists separate from the choirs. Have a separate orchestra director to prepare the orchestra before combining with choirs.
  - b. build in time for each clinician to rehearse orchestra (if there is an orchestra)
  - c. balance time singing in rehearsals and rest breaks for students
  - d. balance time between sectional choir and mass choir rehearsals based on the number of pieces which need to be rehearsed
  - e. stagger lunch times for sectional choirs to maximize cafeteria space
  - f. plan for 15 minutes stage time/sound checks per group during the day on Friday
4. Once completed, give the schedule to the clinicians and Executive Committee for input
5. Have your graphic designer send the graphics package to to WELS Fine Arts Website manager Andrea Grasenick as PNG files:
  - a. Instagram, Facebook templates
  - b. Color/B&W photos
  - c. Folder graphics, program cover

### **MARCH – 8 MONTHS TO Choral Fest**

1. By March 15th, secure sacred selections from the clinicians
2. Clinicians are encouraged to suggest more titles than will be needed to allow the host director to choose from their selections for the final program
3. Pick a fellowship/entertainment Saturday activity for students
4. Pick an emcee for the Friday night Pops Concert. The emcee should mainly introduce the next act, not necessarily tell stories and jokes that lengthen the concert.
5. Work with your Food Committee to plan menu and costs for food for the weekend within the established budget. Consider securing food donations from local businesses, churches, and individuals to help bring down costs.

### **APRIL – 7 MONTHS TO Choral Fest**

1. By April 15th, host school director submits a first draft list of sacred selections to the Executive Committee Chair.
2. Decide transportation needs and costs (airport runs, activity shuttling). Guidelines for schools that are flying:
  - a. The expectation is that the host school will make an airport run for school flying in, but it may be necessary for schools flying in to rent a van or two from the airport to the host school.
  - b. There needs to be a conversation between the host director and the directors of the school who are flying in. Distance schools cannot just assume that the host school will pick them up from the airport, nor can host schools assume that distance schools will fly in and not need an airport pickup.
  - c. Transportation needs should be communicated well in advance.
3. Finalize sacred concert graphic artwork/logo and concert theme.
4. Send all available festival information to Website Manager.
5. Contact Martin Luther College, Wisconsin Lutheran College, and Bethany Lutheran College for donated items (information folders, pencils, lanyards, water bottles, etc.)
  - a. MLC - [Ted Klug, Admissions](#); Beth Scharf, Event Planner
  - b. WLC

- i. [Lucas Faust, VP of Enrollment](#)
- ii. Amy S. Kuether (2019 folder design) – Director of Design & Creative Services, Office of Marketing & Communication, Wisconsin Lutheran College
  - 1. amy.kuether@wlc.edu
  - 2. Office: 414.443.8790
  - 3. Cell: 262.347.9783
- iii. WLC Admissions:
  - 1. Katie Steinegger (414)-443-8811, katherine.steinegger@wlc.edu
- iv. BLC - [Estelle Vlieger, Associate Director of Admissions](#)
- c. ILHS 2024 asked the colleges for a monetary donation instead of water bottles (Crete water issue)
- 6. Contact local hotels to reserve blocks of rooms for parents of singers, clinicians, and high school directors who opt to not stay with a host family
  - a. send hotel information to Website Manager and all participating schools
  - b. try to provide a variety of locations and pricing
- 7. (Optional) Make contacts for hospitality bags for directors. Consider what your area is known for (cheese, beer, chocolate, fruit, association business, etc.). This is a way to say thank you to the participating directors for their preparation for the festival.

#### **MAY – 6 MONTHS TO Choral Fest**

- 1. Entertainment committee finalizes the Saturday student activity/entertainment plans and chaperones.
- 2. Finalize budget
- 3. Have housing coordinator find the individual congregation housing coordinators.
- 4. Send out the “Participating Director’s Responsibilities” to all participating schools.
- 5. Talk to your school’s janitorial staff, asking them to plan ahead for toilet paper, paper towel, soap, cleaning supplies, garbage bags, etc.
- 6. Talk to office manager, asking them to order extra copy machine paper, ink, toner as needed for printing needs (folders and signage)

#### **JUNE – 5 MONTHS TO Choral Fest**

- 1. By June 1st, email (Google Drive links) Choral Fest program selections for mass and sectional choirs and which schools are in which sectional choirs (Laudate, Jubilate, Exultate) to participating schools and Website Manager.
- 2. In communication with clinicians, find necessary rehearsal accompanists and instrumentalists. Consider student accompanists and instrumentalists from participating choirs or local WELS congregations.
- 3. Secure pianos and digital organ rentals & tuning appointments
- 4. Find devotion leaders (pastors on staff or in your association). We recommend at least one devotion each day (suggestion: morning on Friday and evening on Saturday night)
- 5. Find nurse(s) and determine where the first aid/sick room will be.
- 6. Finalize master schedule (Send to Website Manager)

#### **JULY – 4 MONTHS TO Choral Fest**

1. Verify ownership of correct streaming licenses for streaming the Pops and Sacred concerts. Talk to your streaming provider (BLC/WELS)
2. Secure a OneLicense.net or CCLI "one event" permission to print lyrics and refrains or melodies in the program.
3. Design posters, t-shirts, and publicity materials
4. Begin promoting the Choral Fest to your area on your school website, with "Save the date" information paragraphs in church bulletins. Consider ads and interviews with your local radio stations.
5. Contact the website manager to finalize online registration.
6. **Work with Choral Fest Social Media/Website manager to share information with WELS Event Planning (Michelle Gartner) for synod-wide promotion of Choralfest.**
  - a . The host school would share date, time, and location and their digital graphics package (Choralfest logo, posters, Instagram & Facebook assets) with the synodical offices and Forward in Christ magazine for use in WELS digital promotions and WELS website.
  - b . This would allow the event to be promoted in [Forward in Christ](#) October and November for Choral Fest and February and March for Band Fest.
  - c . E-mail [ficsubmissions@wels.net](mailto:ficsubmissions@wels.net) with this information. *(added 3/7/25 by Dale Witte after an email from Michelle Gartner to the Choral Fest and Band Fest committees)*

#### **AUGUST – 3 MONTHS TO Choral Fest**

1. By August 1st, get rehearsal notes and reference recordings/links for each sacred selection from each clinician and send to the website manager to allow directors to prepare the selections as the clinician intends (breath marks, phrasing, dynamics, etc.).
2. Work with website manager to open registration and communicate with directors the deadline for all online forms and choir photo by Sep. 25
3. Host director provides Google Doc for Website Manager where each director adds their Pops Concert selections on the website.
  - a . add a link to an upload folder for mp3 backing tracks for Friday Pops Concert
4. Consider the possibilities of decorations or other aesthetics to enhance your performance facility.
5. Work with your committee heads to make sure they have enough volunteers to stuff folders, clean and set up homerooms, setting and turning the gym, put labels on water bottles, design and print name tags
  - a . ask National Honor Society, athletic teams, student council, etc.
6. Print/email publicity materials (posters, bulletin inserts, etc.). Consider hanging posters in your local businesses, restaurants, etc.

#### **SEPTEMBER – 2 MONTHS TO Choral Fest**

1. By September 25th--Deadline for every school and director to complete all online registration forms for themselves and their students, including the Pops Concert/Program form.
2. **After each school has registered, the host school invoices all participating schools for the student registration fee. The student registration fee is non-refundable.**

3. Posters emailed/on website to high schools and congregations
4. Send bulletin inserts promoting Choral Fest to congregations
5. (If needed) Contact police to notify them of upcoming concerts for on-street parking and traffic flow.

### **OCTOBER – 1 MONTH TO Choral Fest**

1. By October 1, send invoices [to each participating school](#) for student registration fees (\$125/student). Request payment for student registration invoices by October 15.
2. By Oct. 15 all housing should be solidified. Contact directors with host congregation information, including church, pastor, contact info, housing coordinator's name, etc.
3. Post weekend schedule in the website
4. Send choir and clinician pictures and bios to graphic designer/program creator and to WELS Fine Arts Website manager (Andrea Grasenick)
5. Send the festival program to the printer.
6. (optional) Order flowers for the clinicians. Ask individual clinician flower preference (boutonnieres, corsages).
7. Work with the Housing Coordinator to prepare [host information sheet](#).
  - a. Names of students, allergies, dietary concerns, and relevant medical issues
  - b. Adapt [host information sheet](#) for your festival, including an instruction sheet for a host family outlining:
    - i. the schedule for the weekend
    - ii. host responsibilities (food, sleep, transportation, church times, etc.)
    - iii. expected to be at Pops concert and take students home after that concert
8. Create student seating for bleachers in conjunction with your clinicians. Preference is to mix schools up on the bleachers, not to block them by school. Consider placing two students from each school together so they have someone they know by them.
9. Prepare materials for folders (site maps, name tags, devotion order of service, hymns, pencil, seating charts ([Pops](#) & [Sacred](#), [emergency plans](#), etc.).
10. Print t-shirts (and extras!) (optional) Consider selling t-shirts to augment your income.
11. Remind each participating director to print their own school's medical forms and bring them along to Choral Fest.

### **NOVEMBER - FESTIVAL MONTH**

1. By Nov. 1, send master housing list to directors. Do not post to website.
2. Housing coordinator - Send out information sheet for host families (pick up, drop off times, meal responsibilities, etc.)
3. Prepare checks for clinicians, accompanists, and orchestra members
  - a. Example: WLA 2019 National
    - i. \$100/adult orchestra not connected to Choral Fest (paying for their time)
    - ii. \$75 to MLC students (mileage)
    - iii. \$50 for WLC students
    - iv. "free" high school students & directors
4. Verify transportation with all participating schools
  - a. flight info (carrier, flight #, airport)
  - b. bus/van arrival dates & times

## **CHORAL FEST WEEK**

1. Have pianos tuned the week before the concert or when they are delivered by a rental company. Tweak the tuning the day of the concert.
2. Cut checks and pay festival clinicians and main accompanists before they leave for the weekend.
3. Label rooms around your school (Homerooms, rehearsal rooms, “You are here” signs, etc.)
4. Stuff folders with all necessary documents
5. Prepare your performance space
6. Take the day off of school before Choral Fest to set up the school.
7. (recommended) Rolling robe racks in each homeroom to hang choir gowns.
8. Write and send thank you notes for orchestra, clinicians, accompanists
9. TAKE TIME FOR SELF-CARE. LET PEOPLE HELP YOU. ASK FOR HELP. DELEGATE APPROPRIATELY.
10. Schedule time for a [Director’s Meeting](#) on Saturday.
11. Staging props
  - a. Let the host school know what props you are bringing for your Pops Concert piece (at Pops Concert registration time)
  - b. talk to your stage manager to plan where school’s props will be staged backstage before the Pops Concert
  - c. possibly consider sharing choreography boxes between schools to save space backstage & travel expenses

## **AFTER CHORAL FEST**

- Work with your janitorial staff, faculty, parents and students to help clean up
- Make archival recordings of the sacred concert available to the participating directors.
- Consider thanking your committee heads and committees in some way.
- Work with your school’s business manager to pay all invoices and finalize expense report
- Send budget and Income/Expense sheet summary to Executive Committee.

## Duties and Responsibilities

### Festival Clinicians

- 1) In fellowship with the WELS.
- 2) Able to and comfortable with handling a mass high school choir of up to 500 singers.
- 3) Ask the Executive Committee for names of clinicians to consider. Consider directors who have not yet been a clinician or have not been a clinician in the last five years.
- 4) Work with host school director to select pieces for the sacred concert:
  - a. Select music to support the concert theme
  - b. Choose appropriate and doctrinally sound texts
  - c. Literature of varying difficulty levels and styles
  - d. Consider the overall vocal demands the literature will place on the students
  - e. Plan that 25% of the literature that any one school would have to sing come from previous Choral Fest programming
  - f. Encourage the use of public domain settings for period music ([CPDL.org](http://CPDL.org))
  - g. Sample guideline for number of pieces per concert:
    - i. Regional: 4 small group, 2 mass per clinician (everyone learns 8 pieces, 12 pieces total in the concert) – 2 clinicians
    - ii. National: 3 small group, 1 mass per clinician (everyone learns 6 pieces, 12 pieces total in the concert) – 3 clinicians
- 5) Work with host school director to finalize a rehearsal schedule.
- 6) Provide rehearsal notes and recordings if possible.
- 7) Lead vocal warm-ups both for daily rehearsals and before the Sunday sacred concert.

### Host Director

- 1) Facility
  - a. If necessary, obtain a site to host the festival if your school/gym/auditorium is not large enough for the Pops and Sacred concerts
  - b. Contact your school's Athletic Director to clear up scheduling and facility issues
  - c. Schedule janitorial needs for the weekend
  - d. Send stage dimensions to each director for choreography purposes
- 2) Choose a date along with your administration and present it to the Choral Fest Executive Committee **3-5 years in advance based on the long-range hosting schedule on [welsfinearts.org](http://welsfinearts.org)**
- 3) Choose clinicians according to guidelines for clinicians above.
- 4) Communicate with your area pastors the dates the WELS Choral Fest will be taking place at your school and that they might be asked to host a choir for the weekend.
- 5) Music
  - a. Select a theme for the weekend
  - b. Work along with clinicians to select music according to the Choral Fest Timeline
  - c. Send pertinent information to participating directors according to the Choral Fest Timeline

- d. Create names for the small choirs and assign schools to each choir balancing number and abilities of singers.
    - i. Example 1: Exultate, Jubilate, Cantate, Laudate
    - ii. Example 2: Red, White, Black (School colors)
    - iii. Example 3: Exultation, Jubilation, Adoration, Mass Choir - Heritage
  - e. Create and send rehearsal sound files (example and/or part predominant recordings) to the webmaster.
    - i. Derek Machan, Waterford HS ([WSMA solo ensemble tracks](#)), [dmachan@wuhs.us](mailto:dmachan@wuhs.us) - makes rehearsal tracks for [Chant Claire](#)
    - ii. Matthew Curtis, [Choraltracks.com](#), [matthew@choraltracks.com](mailto:matthew@choraltracks.com), former Chanticleer member
  - f. Send clinician's rehearsal notes and/or marked-up scores to the webmaster.
- 6) Set up schedule for the Festival weekend
- a. Use previous [regional](#) and [national](#) schedules as a guide
  - b. Dress Rehearsal to include processional, recessional, instrumentalists
    - i. consider not having a full dress rehearsal for vocal health
    - ii. rehearse every choir in the performance space with the accompanists/instrumentalists
  - c. Determine when the student activity/entertainment and director's social
- 7) Pops Concert Details
- a. Each school will rehearse 15 minutes on stage on Friday
  - b. Send background tracks (mp3/wav) to get to the audio engineer
    - i. bring backing track CD as a backup
  - c. Create a seating chart for each school for the Pops Concert
  - d. Create and rehearse procedure to get from seating to practice room to stage
    - i. [WLA Choral Fest 2019 North route](#)
    - ii. [WLA Choral Fest 2019 South route](#)
  - e. Regional: each group may perform 2 songs with a six minute limit
  - f. National: each group may perform a maximum of five minutes
  - g. When one stage is used: one groups leaves and emcee covers as the next group is taking their place
  - h. When two stages are used: one group is performing while the next performing group is taking their place on the other stage
- 8) Sacred Concert Seating Chart
- a. Work with clinicians to hear their needs and wants for a seating arrangement
  - b. Design [a master seating chart](#) for the sacred concert. This doubles as rehearsal seating for Friday and Saturday rehearsals. Traditionally, choirs are mixed together in pairs within sections.
    - i. seat students with someone else from their own school
    - ii. consider column seating so all voice parts are in the front
  - c. Make [signs](#) for rows (a, b, c, etc.) and columns (1, 2, 3, 4, etc.) for the bleachers or wherever your seating is. Make adequate signage so students can quickly identify their seat.
  - d. Consider placing the assigned seat on the student name tags / lanyards (optional)
- 9) Recording (Sound/ Video/ Streaming)

- a. Obtain license and royalty information on selected pieces
  - b. Pay royalties to proper agencies as necessary
  - c. School provides personnel or contacts other agencies to video stream the two concerts
  - d. Live stream both concerts.
    - i. If needed, consider contacting Eric Pasbrig (602) 476-4365 for live streaming. He does KML concert streams and recently did ILHS 2024 Regional Choral Fest [Pops](#) and [Sacred](#) festival.
    - ii. Example live stream video: [2022 Sacred Concert - Wisconsin Lutheran HS](#)
    - iii. other possibilities include
      - 1. Youtube
      - 2. KML, WLA, Lakeside, or Luther might be able to live stream for you in a pinch
  - e. Select an emcee for the Friday night pops concert. The emcee's job is primarily to introduce the next act, not to entertain. The less that the emcee talks, the shorter the concert will be. 30-45 seconds is enough between acts depending on staging and props
    - i. Say the school's name, the title of their piece, and something interesting about either them or the piece of music
    - ii. The emcee should talk to each performing school to find out "something interesting"
- 10) Communicate with the participating schools the deadline for student registration fees
- a. Work with your school's business manager to invoice participating schools for the non-refundable student registration fee
  - b. The student registration fee should be paid to the host school by two weeks after the registration deadline (i.e. Oct 15). Student registration fees are not refundable.
- 11) Send out the "Participating Director's Responsibilities" to all participating schools at least six months before the festival

### **Participating Directors Responsibilities**

#### [2024 WELS High School Choir Directors Contact List](#)

##### ***General***

- 1) Complete the required online registration forms by the set deadlines.
  - a. a \$50 late fee per school will be assessed if any registration materials are late.
- 2) Provide a photo of your choir by the deadline.
- 3) Pay the student registration fee by the set deadline.
- 4) Organize transportation to and from the festival for your choir. Contact the host school if you need help with transportation to and from an airport. Depending on the site of a festival, WLC, MLC or BLC admissions/recruitment departments may be willing to provide transportation and/or recruitment opportunities.
  - a. Guidelines for schools that are flying: (copied from APRIL - 7 months out)

- i. The expectation is that the host school will make an airport run for school flying in, but it may be necessary for schools flying in to rent a van or two from the airport to the host school.
  - ii. There needs to be a conversation between the host director and the directors of the school who are flying in. Distance schools cannot just assume that the host school will pick them up from the airport, nor can host schools assume that distance schools will fly in and not need an airport pickup.
  - iii. Transportation needs should be communicated well in advance.
- 5) **Attend all rehearsals to supervise and monitor students.** If unable to be present, bring an adult chaperone to supervise.
- 6) **Optional: Contact the host congregation to make preparations for Sunday worship.** Choirs historically have sung in the second service, but participation in Sunday worship is optional because:
  - a. The group attending CF may not be the group that sings on Sunday mornings or may not have enough voices to cover all the parts needed.
  - b. Historically, student voices are the most tired on the Sunday morning of CF.
  - c. Encourage hosts and congregations to come to the Sacred Concert to hear the students and the music.
- 7) Run sectional rehearsals if the need arises.
- 8) Have medical permission forms for your students with you at all times.
- 9) May stay either with a host family or in a hotel at your own expense. You are responsible for your own transportation.
- 10) Some of your students may ask to stay with friends or relatives at a festival. Make sure you know where all your students are staying.
- 11) Encourage your students to thank their host families with a card or small gift.

#### ***Pops Concert:***

- 1) Prepare one or two secular pieces, with or without choreography, that meet the time limit set by the host school.
- 2) If using a recorded accompaniment, it must not contain pre-recorded vocals.
- 3) Although not required, most groups wear outfits or costumes.
- 4) Supervise your own students during the concert. **This means keeping them quiet during the performances.**
- 5) Schools support each other at this event. It is not a competition.

#### ***Sacred Concert:***

- 1) Provide each student with original octavos. Sharing music is discouraged.
- 2) **Rehearse the music using the director's notes provided, making sure the students are well prepared, knowing their parts thoroughly before they arrive at Choral Fest.**
- 3) Robes are worn for each school.

#### **Housing Coordinator**

- 1) Provide housing in congregations for choir members and director based on information provided on the student and director online registration forms.
- 2) Recommend that each congregation has its own contact person for that congregation who will work with the Choral Fest Housing Coordinator.
- 3) Have each host family complete and return the [Host Family Information Form](#) (consider creating a Google Form to collect this information).
- 4) Check student's Health & Emergency Forms for special needs, allergies, medications, etc.
- 5) Coordinate host family pick-up and drop-off times and locations with school choir director and Transportation coordinator
- 6) Coordinate or plan Sunday lunch (Potluck at church or a host family meal.) This must correlate with arrival time needed for Sunday's Sacred Concert.
- 7) Confirm with each host family that they have the basic housing essentials for each student (i.e. beds, bedding) using the [Congregational Housing Coordinator Information form](#)
- 8) Collect Host Family Information Forms and return to the Choral Fest Housing Committee 4 weeks before the festival.
- 9) Compile and submit master housing list to the Choral Fest Housing Committee.
- 10) Communicate as needed with congregational pastor to keep him informed about pick-up / arrival times, meals at the church, and list of who is staying where for emergency contact information.

### **Host School Committees**

#### **1) Devotions / Spiritual Guidance**

- a) Line up devotional leaders and organists/pianists for opening and closing devotions
- b) Prepare 2-3 devotions including a short order of service
  - i) Friday morning
  - ii) Saturday morning (optional)
  - iii) Saturday evening
- c) Devotional materials are to be done and printed 1 week in advance to be placed in student and director folders
- d) Devotions last anywhere from 6 to 15 minutes

#### **2) Host Family/Congregational Housing**

- a) Line up a housing coordinator from each individual congregation. ([Sample communication](#))
- b) Develop a working relationship with each congregational coordinator.
- c) Assign schools to congregations based on size and requests.
- d) Assign students to host families in pairs or in groups of pairs.
- e) [Instruction sheet for a host family](#) outlining the weekend and responsibilities.
- f) Allergies and other medical information should be passed on to host families
- g) Noon meal on Sunday is at church or at hosts' homes
- h) Master housing list sent no later than ten days before festival to each high school director

- i) The congregational housing contact or host pastor should be present when and where the schools first arrive. Be there to be welcoming and to connect the host families with their students.
- j) Line up clinician housing at a hotel.
- k) Work with local tourism council to secure blocks of rooms and special rates at hotels, information for visitors to our area.
- l) Send a [list of local hotel, rates, and contact information](#) to website manager and all participating schools

### **3) Hotel Stays/Guidelines**

- a) Hotel hallways and rooms are to be kept reasonably quiet at all times. Do not shout or carry on loudly in the hotel. Remember you are not the only people staying in the hotel. Be courteous of everyone.
- b) Room checks and lights out at 11pm. If you want to go to bed earlier, contact your director. You must stay in your room after bed checks. If an emergency arises, contact your director by phone rather than going into the hallway and knocking on their door. Only do that if you can't contact them by phone.
- c) Pool hours are 11pm on the weekend (10 pm on the week nights). You can bring your swimming suits, but don't plan on having time for it every day.
- d) If members of the opposite sex are in a student's hotel room, the room door must be propped wide open so that everyone in the room can be seen.
- e) Do not leave the hotel without the direct supervision of a school chaperone or your director.
- f) Violations of rules (including vaping, drinking, etc.) will result in a student's immediate separation from the group and being sent home at their parents expense.
- g) The use of hotel facilities carries with it the responsibility of leaving them in the same conditions in which they were found. The student is responsible for any damage to hotel property.
- h) Put all directors at the same hotel so they can carpool.

### **4) Food**

- a) Provide four meals: Friday noon and supper, Saturday noon and supper
  - i) consult the student registration forms for food allergies
- b) Have snacks and beverages available at break times (consult sample schedules below)
- c) Secure donations from local businesses (Kwik Trip, Festival, etc.) and association members for meals and snacks
- d) Help coordinate food and beverages for directors' social (Saturday night)
- e) Recruit kitchen help

### **5) Entertainment/Recreation**

- a) Arrange for use of facilities for one activity for students
  - i) Examples: dance, swimming, roller skating, YMCA, bowling, professional concerts, baseball games
- b) Arranged for sufficient chaperones, set up, and take down of activity
- c) Work with Transportation committee

- d) Work with Food Committee to have snacks and drinks available at offsite activities

## 6) Finances/Sample Budgets

- a) Share all invoices with your school's business manager
- b) Budget samples
  - i) [KML 2015 National Budget](#)
  - ii) [WLA 2019 National Budget](#)
  - iii) [Wisconsin Lutheran HS 2022 Regional Budget](#)
  - iv) [St. Croix Lutheran Academy 2024 - Regional Budget](#)
  - v) [Illinois Lutheran HS 2024 Regional Budget](#)
  - vi) FVL National 2025 - used student registration \$125 for Rehearsal Tracks through Matthew Curtis' [Choraltracks](#)
- c) Coordinate all committee budgets
- d) Collect school fees (directors and student teachers are not charged) by Choral Fest weekend
- e) Clinician Gratuity (budget \$1500)
  - i) Regional Choral Fest Clinician \$750/each
  - ii) National Choral Fest Clinician \$500/each (\$750 suggested by CF Executive Committee 2/16-17/25)
- f) Other **suggested** gratuities and thank yous (Suggestion of using scrip/gift cards)
  - i) Accompanists (\$50/song)
  - ii) Instrumentalists/Orchestra musicians (from WLA 2019 National)
    - (a) \$100/adult orchestra not connected to Choral Fest (paying for their time)
    - (b) \$75 to MLC students (mileage)
    - (c) \$50 for WLC students (mileage)
    - (d) "free" high school students & directors
  - iii) Emcee
  - iv) Committee Heads
  - v) Head Maintenance
  - vi) Host Director
- g) Document all purchases and collect receipts
- h) Prepare and carry out budget
  - i) Sources of income
    - (1) student registration fees (non-refundable)
    - (2) Freewill offerings from both concerts
    - (3) Possibly seek other sources of funding such as matching funds, grants, corporate gifts, and other donations
    - (4) Consider online donations
  - i) Coordinate the writing of checks to cover expenses
  - j) Coordinate all rentals (pianos, organs, staging, light, sound, lift equipment, etc.)

## 7) Audio/Visual

- a) Stage
  - i) Line up stage manager
  - ii) Stage crew of 5-6 members

- iii) Line up stage needs of performing groups
      - (1) Risers
      - (2) Stools
      - (3) Microphones
      - (4) Take care of any other stage needs
    - iv) Minimum recommended size stage: 30' wide, 24' deep at no less than 24" high
      - (1) WLA 2019 National 48' wide x 24' deep @ 32" high
        - (a) choral risers sat on the back 4' of the stage
  - b) Sound
    - i) Hire or provide a sound technician
    - ii) Does the equipment that the school owns meet the needs of Choral Fest or do you need to rent? Consult [the sound and light rider](#)
    - iii) Pops Concert sound needs are different than the needs of the Sunday Sacred Concert
      - (1) movement vs. stationary
      - (2) potentially more solo/handheld mic need for Pops
    - iv) Make certain that there are overhead and solo microphones available for the Friday Pops concert.
    - v) Arrange for the Sunday concert to be recorded for archival purposes
    - vi) Work with a live streaming company to provide a sound feed.
      - (1) Orchestras, pianos, organs, some percussion, and congregational singing will need to be miked for a live stream
  - c) Lights
    - i) Hire or provide a lighting technician
    - ii) Does the equipment that the school owns meet the needs of Choral Fest or do you need to rent
    - iii) [Sound and light rider](#)
  - d) Photography
    - i) Have a photographer for the weekend to document your festival. Include candid as well as concert photos.
    - ii) Share photos with each school and webmaster (SmugMug, Flickr, Google Photos, etc.)
    - iii) Take a group photo for the website

## 8) Printing/Publicity

- a) Hire a graphic designer to develop your artwork
  - i) Logo/identity, concert program, posters, bulletin inserts, etc.
  - ii) Send all artwork to webmaster
  - iii) Recommend Seth Pahmeier, [Southpaw Projects](#) (WLA 2019 National graphic designer)
    - (1) [2019 identity pitch](#)
- b) Prepare and print the [concert program](#) including both concerts in the same book. Include the following:
  - i) Letter of welcome from host director/principal/administrator
  - ii) List of participating schools, directors, gown and stole colors, and choir photos

- iii) Clinician names, bios and headshots, which choir they are conducting (Exultate, Laudate, Jubilate, etc.) and which schools are in that choir (Winnebago, Kettle, Evergreen, Shoreland, etc.).
- iv) Friday Pops Concert program order with titles, composers, and which choirs are singing which pieces
- v) Sunday Sacred Concert program order with titles, composers, and which choirs are singing which pieces. **For mass numbers, list the clinician who conducted.**
- vi) List of donors and committees
- vii) Advertising by local businesses who may have donated goods or services
- viii) List of all students by voicing, school, and hometown
- ix) Instrumentalists and accompanists
- x) Thank yous and acknowledgements
- xi) The next year's Choral Fest dates and locations
- xii) The website address (welsfinearts.org) and WELS Choral Fest social media links (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)
- c) Newspaper / Press Release (see Form D below from Michigan Lutheran HS)
- d) Send bulletin insert for congregations
- e) Place information on host school website
- f) Print and distribute posters to all participating schools, association churches, local businesses
- g) (optional) Line up radio interview
- h) (optional) Banners for gym and individual schools to take home
- i) Signage for getting around the school
- j) Print t-shirts

## 9) Transportation

- a) Discuss early and often with schools traveling by plane their need for transportation to and from the airport. It is the expectation that the host school provides transportation to and from the airport for schools flying in.
- b) Develop a plan for parking for the concerts
  - i) Have parking attendants to direct parking in an organized manner
- c) Rent busses for transportation at the festival
- d) Line up bus drivers if you own your own busses.
- e) Strongly suggest that as many as possible participating schools have their busses available all weekend for transportation

## 10) Administration

- a) Print name tags using lanyards supplied by MLC, WLC, BLC) for participants, directors, and student teachers
  - i) Put on all water bottles and folders
  - ii) The seating chart row and column and food preference could be put on the student name tag.
- b) Folders (for students and directors)
  - i) Concert program
  - ii) Weekend schedule

- iii) Devotional materials
- iv) Seating charts (pops & sacred) of entire group
- v) Map of campus and school
- vi) Pencil
- vii) Emergency maps
- viii) Directions from bleachers to warm-up room to stage
- c) Database of names, addresses, and phone numbers for each host family
- d) Distribute T-shirts to each homeroom with name and size list

## **11) Hospitality**

- a) For the visiting directors
  - i) Director's Hospitality Room
  - ii) Director's Social for Saturday evening
  - iii) Provide directions to directors' social
  - iv) Gift baskets for clinicians
- b) For the guest clinicians
  - i) provide hotel room gratis
  - ii) (optional) Provide flowers for each clinician prior to the Sunday Sacred Concert
- c) School Homerooms
  - i) Post signs to help people find their way through the school
  - ii) Signs posted at each door to identify the homeroom and schools
  - iii) Line up student guides from registration table to homerooms when schools arrive
  - iv) Home room coordinator
    - (1) Opens/locks doors
    - (2) Checks for damage
    - (3) Leaves janitor a note if there is a real problem before Monday classes
    - (4) Tell teachers to take all valuables home for the weekend
- d) Nurse
  - i) Schedule nurses for the weekend
  - ii) The school director is responsible for having their student's medical permission form with them at all times.
  - iii) Determine nurse responsibilities/first aid kit for the weekend based on your school's and state's policies for school nurses and medicine distribution
  - iv) If possible, provide a quiet place with a cot for a student to lie down
- e) Other
  - i) Coordinate the sending of Thank You notes to participating individuals, businesses, etc.
  - ii) After Choralfest thanking committees and their heads.

## **12) Music & Concert Details:**

- a) **The Executive Committee strongly recommends that tickets are not used for Choralfest weekend. Both concerts (Pops and Sacred) should be general admission, free and open to the public. (added 2/16/25, KML)**
- b) Organ / Piano
  - i) Line up delivery and set-up of organ and grand piano(s) for weekend

- ii) Piano (s) in good tune
  - iii) Make sure that there are good pianos located in the sectional rehearsal areas
  - iv) When putting together your budget, make sure rental and tuning costs are included
- c) Concert Setup
  - i) The Friday Pops Concert is set before participants arrive for the festival
  - ii) The Sunday Sacred Concert is set after the Pops Concert is done on Friday night
  - iii) Organize a local crew to do this work
- d) Provide a director's podium for each sectional choir and the mass choir
- e) Line up enough quality music stands to meet director and musician needs
- f) Musicians
  - i) Organist/Pianist for devotions
  - ii) Accompanists for mass numbers
  - iii) Separate accompanists for each sectional choir
  - iv) Instrumentalists for sacred concert pieces
  - v) Organist or other instrumentalists for pre-service, processional, and postlude
  - vi) Distribute music to accompanists and instrumentalists
- g) Decorations for Sunday's Sacred Concert
  - i) Printing/Publicity Committee is in charge of school banners (optional)
  - ii) Consider flower/plant arrangements or other decor as needed
- h) Reserve seats for the Sunday Sacred Concert for all directors
- i) Ushers
  - i) Schedule ushers for Friday night Pops Concert
  - ii) Schedule ushers for Sunday afternoon Sacred Concert
  - iii) Provide offering baskets for both concerts

### **Sample Forms/Planning Documents**

- [Request for outside funding](#)
- [Press release](#)
- [Purchase order form](#)
- [Regional schedule](#)
- [National schedule](#)
- [Host family information](#)
- St. Croix Lutheran Academy 2024 Regional CF [Google Drive Docs](#)
- Illinois Lutheran HS 2024 Regional [Google Drive Folder](#)