Westchester Oratorio Society

MEMBER HANDBOOK

Membership

Joining WOS means joining two things at once: a chorus with real musical standards, and a community of dedicated singers from Westchester, Fairfield, Dutchess, and Putnam counties as well as the greater New York metropolitan area. We span a wide range of ages and professions and are united by nothing more or less than a shared love of choral singing. Voices in all categories are welcome, including those of high school and college age. The Artistic Director will hold brief vocalizations with new members to ensure proper placement in the right section; the ability to read music, or to learn an independent choral part aurally, is a must. Solos are not mandatory.

That same spirit of shared commitment governs how we treat each other. Every member, regardless of background, training, or how long they've been with WOS, is treated with the same respect. We take the music seriously, and we take each other seriously too.

During rehearsal, we ask members to:

- Arrive on time and ready to sing at the downbeat.
- Hold side conversations for the break — even quiet ones pull focus from everyone around you.
- Bring questions during rehearsal to a minimum, so the group's limited time stays productive.
- Extending patience and good humor to fellow singers and to the Artistic Director alike. Learning difficult music is a shared process, and mistakes (yours and others') are simply part of it.
- Routing any disagreement about how rehearsal is run, or how the music is being interpreted, to a Board member rather than raising it in the room. The Board is always glad to hear from you.

If you ever experience or witness behavior that doesn't reflect these values, please bring it to David Štech, your section leader, or any Board member. You may do so confidentially, and there will be no retaliation for raising a concern in good faith. We'd rather hear about a problem than have someone quietly leave the organization or stew in torment over it.

Membership fees and other obligations

Membership fees are due at the beginning of each season or concert cycle. Additional obligations for regular members include the purchase of scores (see below) and a requirement to purchase 4 regular tickets for each WOS-produced concert. We will not turn anyone away who cannot afford these fees. Please speak with our board president Joe Spallina directly.

Regular Membership (half year)	$150
Regular Membership (full year)	$300

Vocal scores

Vocal scores available for purchase at the first rehearsals of each concert cycle. Prices vary by concert. For Fall 2026, the price is $40 total:

- Maurice Duruflé, *Requiem*, organ-vocal score, Durand edition
- John Corigliano, *Fern Hill,* piano-vocal score, G. Schirmer.

Electronic copies in PDF or ForScore format can be made available after purchase of paper copies. Members must use the edition specified by the conductor. It is critically important that all musicians are on the same page. If you already have these editions, buying new music is not necessary.

Learning your part

There is an expectation that singers will learn the music at home so that rehearsals can be used to refine the final work rather than teach individual notes to singers. Crucially, it is important to bring a pencil to each rehearsal and actively mark your music, taking notes as needed, and not to rely on one's memory for details such as breaths, diction, or changes to notations for clarity.

Electronic learning materials will be made available on the members' website with practice resources such as markings (which you will need to add to your score), recordings, practice tracks, translations, and more. All singers are encouraged to make use of these materials. In addition, websites such as Cyberbass offer facilities to listen and learn your parts for most major works.

REHEARSALS

Weekly rehearsals are held on **Tuesdays 7-9pm** at

St. Luke's Episcopal Church
331 NY-100, Somers, NY 10589

The church is accessed via the door to the office.

Fall
September 8,15,22,29
October 6,13,20,27
November 3,10,17

Spring
January 12,19,26
February 2,9,16,23
March 2,9,16,23,30
April 6,13,20,27

Presbyterian Church of Mt. Kisco (PCMK)
605 Millwood Rd, Mt Kisco, NY 10549

The church is accessed via the door on the left parking lot area.

Mandatory Rehearsals (Fall)
November 17, 7-9pm
November 20, 6:30-9:30pm

Mandatory Rehearsals (Spring)
May 4, 7-9pm
May 7, 6:30-9:30pm

PERFORMANCES AT PCMK

November 21, 7:30pm concert, 6pm call with choir “Green and Golden”
May 8, 7:30pm concert, 6pm call with choir “Sol invictus”

Attendance Policy

Regular attendance is essential to a strong performance. Members may miss up to two rehearsals per Fall concert cycle and three per Spring cycle without needing to discuss it further; beyond that, please speak with the Artistic Director about how to stay performance-ready. If you'll be absent, let your section leader know in advance whenever possible, and use the attendance sheet at every rehearsal you do attend. Participation in any given concert remains at the discretion of the Artistic Director.

Concert Attire

Men: Black suit, white shirt and black bow tie, black socks & shoes.
Women: Long black skirt or pants, long sleeves, black socks & shoes, minimal jewelry.

Please refrain from using perfume, after shave, or hairspray at concerts as their scents can significantly interfere with singing. We greatly appreciate your sensitivity to this matter.

Unless indicated otherwise by the Artistic Director, all music must be stored **in black hard-cover folders** for the concerts. WOS does not provide such concert folders.

Leadership

The **Board of Management** has the overall responsibility for the long-term vision of the choir, its financial status and general operation. The Artistic Director is *ex officio* a member of the board.

Joe Spallina	*President & Treasurer*
Vicki Lucas	*Vice President*
Irene Muller	*Secretary*
Toni LaPietra	
Irene Alcoforado	*Publicity & Website*
Linda Travis	
Peter Reit	*Development & Publicity*
Alyssa Reit	(*ex officio*)
David Štech	(*ex officio*)

David Štech, Artistic Director

David Štech is a conductor, pianist, and organist in New York City, where he serves as organist at St. John's Anglican Church in Passaic, NJ. He is also co-artistic director of the Riverdale Choral Society and the associate conductor of Opéra Bastide in Aveyron, France. He is Music Director Emeritus of the Astoria Symphony

Orchestra and served as assistant conductor at Sarasota Opera, St. Petersburg Opera, Opera Southwest, Opera in Williamsburg, Charlottesville Opera, and several others throughout the country. Recent guest conducting engagements include The Florida Orchestra, Brooklyn Ballet, and the University of North Texas. This season marks his conducting debut with Bronx Opera in *The Tales of Hoffmann*.

Mun-Tzung Wong, Pianist and Assistant Artistic Director

Hong Kong native, Mun-Tzung Wong began as pianist for WOS in 2013 and was appointed Assistant Artistic Director in June 2015.

A collaborative and solo pianist in New York City, she has appeared on WQXR and performed at venues such as Carnegie Hall, Symphony Space, Steinway Hall, and Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center. Ms. Wong has worked with maestros Kurt Masur, Philippe Entremont and George Manahan.

As a teaching artist, Ms. Wong maintains a private instrumental and vocal coaching studio in New York City.

Supporting WOS

WOS is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt not-for-profit organization whose annual operating budget runs $40,000–$60,000 depending on the season. Member dues cover only part of it; the rest comes from ticket sales, fundraising events, grants, and donations.

Beyond dues and ticket purchases, we ask every member to pitch in where you can: helping at a fundraiser or two each year, spreading the word about concerts, asking your workplace about a matching-gift program, selling ads, and other creative ways you can help.

Full details on giving levels, program advertising, grants, and other ways to support WOS are online at westchesteroratorio.org/support.

Westchester Oratorio Society
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www.westchesteroratorio.org