

July 2020

Greetings to all of you!

This is a very different choir letter you are receiving in 2020. As with everyone in all corners of the globe, the usual plan for our organization needs to be modified. We acknowledge that God is in control and we desire to do His work. He is Omniscient and will bring us through this year, no matter what that means for RAACHE Choirs or your individual family. You may choose to join us for all, part, or none of the year—no judgment in any of these scenarios. :-) But before you make your decision, we ask that you read this letter and know that we wish all of you well and that your lives will be filled with music.

We still believe music is a critical component of each of our lives. After all, God created us to sing! The way that we go about singing together will be new and (likely) changing as we move through this particular academic year. We are choosing to continue this vital ministry to home educated students in the 2020-21 school year for three specific reasons.

**Everyone is given a singing voice to use to praise the Lord.** RAACHE Choirs can continue (or begin) to encourage vocal development in our student singers.

**Singing can bring healing to our souls.** Joining choir will encourage your children (and hopefully your entire family) to keep singing.

**Choir can bring us together as a community.** Seeing fellow students (and families) dedicate time and effort toward a common goal is encouraging and fosters positive relationships among us all.

We purpose to do everything we are able to do to make choir “work” during the pandemic: distancing, outdoor rehearsals, masks (when needed) online rehearsals (when no other options seem reliably safe), etc. We ask for your prayers, your participation, and your support in whatever way you can. But no matter what you decide, please sing with your children at home. Singing may be in question regarding its power to super spread COVID-19, but it should be safe to sing with family members you live with. Sing a cappella, sing with recordings, sing with instruments, and if you can, sing with RAACHE Choirs!

*“Let everything that has breath, praise the LORD. Praise the LORD! Psalm 150:6*

Note: We are not including the typical choir details in this letter since this year is unique. To read about our usual approach, see our website: [www.raachechoirs.org](http://www.raachechoirs.org). Now on to the details...

### **Three choirs meet weekly this year—Staccato different**

Con Brio (ages 8 and up/non-audition), Cantabile\* (ages 12 and up/audition), and Arioso\* (ages 14 and up/audition) will be meeting weekly on Thursdays. **Con Brio will meet from 2:00-2:45, 3:00-4:15 for Cantabile and Arioso. The plan is for outdoor rehearsals in the parking lot at Calvary Evangelical Free Church (5500 25th Ave. NW) beginning August 27**, culminating in a late October outdoor performance (including Con Brio presenting Daniel, Darius, & DeLions).

*Staccato will be done differently.* We ask that you register your children ages 5-7 so we know who is participating, but there will be no cap on the number of participants! Instead of rehearsals or working on songs for performance, Clavonne will create weekly videos which will be sent to participants and accessible via the RAACHE Choirs website. Further information will be sent to those of you who register for this choir.

\*If you have not had an opportunity to audition for Cantabile or Arioso, let us know of your desire and we will find a way to get that done.

**Sign up for each “session”—not the entire year**

We will need much grace and flexibility as we approach this choir season, and we want to extend that to you as well. Please fill out the registration information to participate this fall. If you would like to wait for now, you are welcome to join us in January for the next session, which will be likely be held online, but at this point is TBD.

**Do not pay a fee for choir**

We want everyone to feel free to try choir. We are choosing not to ask for payment up front as things are unknown. At the end of the session, we will invite you to donate what you can to help cover ongoing costs. This is a terrific opportunity to join us for the first time since many extracurricular activities have not been scheduled.

**We still need parents to monitor and volunteer**

As you can imagine, we will need assistance in keeping outdoor rehearsals going smoothly. Parents will be needed for monitoring and check-in plus other tasks. Please let us know the ways you can assist in addition to this by filling out the volunteer form.

**We invite you to join a committee**

We value parent and student input and we invite you to contribute in decision making as we navigate these tricky times. Let us know of your willingness to participate with us. We promise to keep meetings (likely via Zoom) to a minimum.

**Masks will be part of the outdoor rehearsal**

We are uncertain at this time if we will be able to distance enough in the parking lot such that we can consider taking masks off to sing, but we do know they will be needed as children arrive and get in place. Overall, we will choose to be overcautious so that we can feel confident we are doing all we can to minimize the risk for all ages and health conditions of the people present at rehearsals. We are looking at a new(ish) mask pattern that may work well for singing. We will share more about that once it is constructed and tested. If you or someone you know would like to make masks that stay away from the face when taking a breath, let us know.

In closing I want to leave you with an exhortation made at the beginning of this letter—  
Sing a cappella, sing with recordings, sing with instruments, and if you can, sing with RAACHE Choirs!

*“Let everything that has breath, praise the LORD. Praise the LORD! Psalm 150:6*

Sincerely,  
Suzy Johnson  
Artistic Director, RAACHE Choirs

Questions?

For Arioso, email Stephanie Rauh at [ssrauh@gmail.com](mailto:ssrauh@gmail.com).

For Cantabile, email Alissa at [akludtke@gmail.com](mailto:akludtke@gmail.com).

For Con Brio, email Suzy at [suzyj999@gmail.com](mailto:suzyj999@gmail.com).

For Staccato, email Clavonne at [danclavonne@gmail.com](mailto:danclavonne@gmail.com).

For registration/administration, Susan at [sdkludtke1981@gmail.com](mailto:sdkludtke1981@gmail.com). (NOTE—New email address.)

*RAACHE Choirs has an ongoing fundraiser selling Kwik Trip gift cards and currently receives a 10% benefit when you purchase them. Contact Amy Sauder to purchase: call/text 507-269-4429. She can arrange to mail them to you or meet in person. Cards can be used at the pump for gasoline or in the store for merchandise.*