



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
DOWNERS GROVE



The Chapel Choir

42nd Annual Spring Break Tour

March 23 – March 30, 2013

Pre-Tour Concert:

Sunday, March 17

7:00 p.m.

LaGrange UMC

LaGrange, Illinois

Tour Performances in:

Carbondale, Illinois

Walls and Clinton, Mississippi

Slidell, Louisiana

Cape Girardeau, Missouri

Home Concerts:

Sunday, April 7

4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

PARENT & YOUTH INFORMATION

WHAT TOUR IS ALL ABOUT

Why do we tour? What is this week all about? There are several things we want to accomplish:

1. Share our faith in Jesus Christ through music, and witness to our faith through our music and actions while being good ambassadors for our church.
2. Grow in music skills through the rehearsal and performance schedule
3. Develop new relationships within our own group.
4. Deepen our fellowship and spirit.
5. Develop a faith that grows daily.
6. Receive educational benefits from traveling, meeting new people, and visiting other churches.
7. Be rewarded for hard work and dedication to the choir and church.

We are very excited about this year's Chapel Choir Tour and want to share some important details of the trip. It is a real blessing to spend time with such a dedicated and enthusiastic group of young people.

If not already submitted, the Intent to Participate form, Covenant and \$150 is due immediately. Final payment is due by Wednesday, February 20.

Youth and parents will have to make difficult decisions regarding work schedules and other outside activities because attendance at tour rehearsals will be expected and closely monitored. Participating on tour is not a right but a privilege that must be earned!! It is also a reward for the hard work and dedication put into the choir throughout the year. Failure to attend rehearsals may result in youth losing that privilege.

There are only 18 Wednesday and Sunday rehearsals before tour. Youth participating on tour will be expected to be present for at least 75% (13) of these occasions. Participation in ALL choir activities (including the Pre-Tour performance) is expected after March 1, unless advanced written notice of known conflicts is given to an Adult Leader or discussed with Chad. *Illness or emergencies will not count as an absence as long as Adult Leaders are notified.* Arriving late or leaving any rehearsal early is also STRONGLY DISCOURAGED and may be considered an absence unless approved by Chad or an Adult Leader.

Chapel Choir is a team and when one member is absent, the entire team suffers.

Youth with solos and speaking parts will be expected to be at all rehearsals once they have been selected. Taking music or speaking lines home does not excuse anyone from attending rehearsals.

EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES

All youth and Adult Leaders participating in choir and on tour will sign a Covenant to accept responsibility for their own actions. They pledge to: act responsibly; think about consequences; represent the group in a positive light; respect fellow choir members and the adult leaders; endeavor to treat fellow choir members and adult leaders as they would like to be treated; and do nothing that would reflect negatively on the fine tradition of this group, themselves as a Christian, their home and family, or First United Methodist Church. They promise not to engage in any form of gambling, use or have in their possession tobacco materials of any kind, any alcoholic beverages, or any illegal non-prescription drugs while engaged in choir activities.

Prior to the tour, all participating youth will receive a list of guidelines regarding overall behavior while on the bus, in public, at host churches and families; acceptable dress; and daily routine.

Tour is the culmination of many hours of rehearsal and work and the highlight of the choir year. Memories of this week will last a lifetime. For some youth, however, tour may be the first time they have traveled any place without family. The anticipation of leaving home for a week can be both exciting and a real source of anxiety. The Adult Leaders spend all year getting to know the youth and trying to establish trust relationships. We know, however, that teens go through many stressful and emotional times. We ask that parents and other family members be especially supportive and understanding in the coming weeks when there may be times of doubt, frustration, and anxiety.

We also want to encourage youth who cannot go on tour due to conflicts to be part of our choir family by attending rehearsal, learning the music and participating in the pre-tour and home concerts.

TOUR COSTS

The total cost of this year's tour will exceed \$40,000. That includes bus transportation, daily lunch money, tour music, sound, two tour shirts (additional shirts may be ordered for \$10), lodging of adult leaders and bus drivers, all group and free night group activities in New Orleans, bus snacks, and miscellaneous expenses. A portion of these costs have been offset by proceeds from Grove Fest parking, car washes, tent rentals, ticket sales to the Christmas concert, restaurant fundraisers, and the Sponsor a Seat campaign. *The per person cost for the tour this year will be \$535*, but most participating youth will owe less because of credits. An accounting of balances owed after credits and payments is available from Don Dunham. **Thanks to the generosity of various benefactors, scholarship funds are available, so no child will ever be excluded from participating on tour for financial reasons and families should not hesitate to ask Don Dunham, Tour Director, for help.**

TOUR ITINERARY

With the exception of the two days in the Orleans area, a typical day on Tour will be as follows:

- Youth will be fed breakfast by host families and returned to church between 7:00 and 7:30 a.m.
- Following devotions, sharing time and instructions, we will depart between 8:00 and 9:00 a.m.
- Arrival time at each host church will be approximately 3:30 p.m.
- Following set-up and a short rehearsal, host churches will provide dinner.
- Concert time will be either 7:00 or 7:30 p.m. depending on preference of the host church.
- Departure for host families will be approximately 9:00 p.m.

MONIES/VALUABLES

- Final payment is due Wednesday, February 20th.
- Everyone will receive \$7.50 for lunch daily (\$10 one day, \$5 the next).
- Youth will only need spending money for secret pal gifts, souvenirs, one dinner and admission to certain optional tourist venues in New Orleans they choose. Options and costs will be distributed in February. Youth are discouraged from bringing excessive amounts of cash, but any money they bring is their responsibility.

OVERNIGHT HOUSING

- All participating youth will select roommates.
- No youth can change or modify his/her housing arrangement without approval from an Adult Leader.
- Although there have been few negative incidents with hosts in the 40+ years the Chapel Choir has been touring, we expect and trust host churches to provide appropriate and safe accommodations for our youth. To help ensure the comfort and safety of all youth, they are pre-assigned to homes in pairs or groups. **We never allow individual youth to go to a host home alone.**

- All youth will be told to immediately call an Adult Leaders if they feel unsafe or need medical attention.
- Youth are expected to **remain** at their host's home during their stay, unless a special activity is arranged for the youth by the host, they are accompanied by a member of the host family, **and** an Adult Leader has been notified. **This includes running and other athletic activities.**

TOUR TRADITIONS

Tour Design Contest

Once the tour theme has been announced, choir members are invited to create the design that will appear on the tour shirts and program. All artwork submitted will be voted on by choir members. Specific guidelines will be provided.

Secret Pals

All youth and Adult Leaders are included in this tradition. Prior to tour everyone completes a brief information sheet about themselves. Assignments of Secret Pals revealed the Wednesday before departure. Then, throughout the tour, everyone is encouraged to anonymously do something nice or leave something for their Secret Pal **daily**. This can include such things as candy, chips, crayons, stickers, hugs, etc. Creativity is important. Daily "gifts" should be limited to under \$3 a day. More can be spent for the final gift (\$15-\$20 maximum). The identity of the Secret Pal is revealed the final evening.

Crews

Each youth is a member of a crew with specific roles and responsibilities. Crews include:

Tour Reporters – gather photos and write daily report about tour for the church web site and assist with preparation of tour recap presentation at home concerts.

Load, Furniture & Sound - load and unload sound and performance equipment on/off bus; move sanctuary furniture; set-up and take down sound system, including cords & microphones.

Hospitality - keep buses clean and stocked with water, snacks and arranging fun activities. In advance of the tour they will help rearrange chairs and pick up trash following rehearsals.

Luggage - load and unload personal gear to/from buses.

Search & Rescue – make sure host churches are left clean, collect any left behind or "lost" items that will be "auctioned" off after the tour.

Room Delivery – Anyone not involved in another crew responsibility when we arrive at a church will help carry luggage to designated rooms.

Last Night (Friday PM)

The last night is very special on tour. It is a time for sharing, reflecting, laughing and crying. We will "camp out" at Aldersgate UMC in Slidell, LA following the performance. We will order pizza, prepare and present class skits, and then have circle time when all youths and adults have an opportunity to share their thoughts about tour, reveal their Secret Pal and sign the tour poster. Once everyone has talked, we will load up the buses and leave for home. We expect to return home by mid-morning on Saturday, April 1, but parents will be contacted by cell phones with more precise information that morning.

SHOPPING OPPORTUNITIES

In addition to our time in New Orleans, there will other chances to do some shopping. We will stop every day for lunch and whenever time allows, the stops will be at malls or shopping centers so everyone can stretch their legs and seek Secret Pal gifts and other items.

PRE-TOUR PERFORMANCE

There will be a pre-tour concert on Sunday, March 17 at 7:00 p.m. at LaGrange United Methodist Church. We will need parents to provide transportation and want to encourage attendance from family members and friends. More details will be distributed later.

NIGHT BEFORE/DAY OF DEPARTURE

To help expedite the departure process Saturday morning, overnight luggage, sleeping bags and garment bags are to be brought to the church parlor between 5:00-7:00 p.m. on Friday evening, March 22. Carry-on luggage and pillows can be brought the next morning. We will have a long bus ride the first day and need to leave the church by 6:30 a.m. The hospitality, luggage and load crews will arrive by 4:30 a.m. Everyone else should be at church by 4:45 a.m. ***Loading of carry-on items and seat selection will take place the day of departure once both bus partners have checked in and received their bus tag.***

THINGS TO BRING

Luggage size and weight will be limited, so please pack responsibly. Guidelines and a suggested packing list will be provided several weeks before departure.

ADULT LEADER CONTACT INFORMATION

Every choir member has been placed in a "Shepherd Group," headed by an Adult Leader. Each Shepherd will communicate regularly with their sheep about schedule updates and other important information. Youth or their parents should let their shepherd know about illness or upcoming conflicts that will affect attendance.

Chad Goetz

Cell: 309-533-0105

Katie Kiss

Cell: 440-781-4598

Bobbi Mielcarski

Cell: 217-972-9879

Devra Dunham

Cell: 630-362-3166

Don Dunham

Cell: 630-362-3164

Jim Gracey

Cell: 312-446-0403

Kathy Gracey

Cell: 630-624-2174

Susan Hopkins

Cell: 630-212-6136

Bruce Ritter

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Bob Walters

Cell: 630-544-4610

Choir Director

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Youth Pastor

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Accompanist

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42nd Annual Spring Break Tour

Sunday, March 17

Pre-Tour Performance
LaGrange UMC
100 W. Cossitt Ave.
LaGrange, IL
7:00 p.m.

Saturday, March 23

First UMC
Carbondale, IL
7:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 24

Sing at First UMC 8:15 a.m. worship service
Carbondale, IL
Overnight and performance at
Minor UMC
Walls, MS
7:00 p.m.

Monday, March 25

Mission work in the afternoon at Methodist Children's Home
Jackson, MS
Overnight and performance at First UMC, Clinton, MS
7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, March 26 – Wednesday, March 27

Aldersgate UMC
Slidell, LA
Performance on Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday is a free day in New Orleans with no performance

Thursday, March 28

First UMC
Granada, MS
7:00 p.m.

Friday, March 29

Centenary UMC
Cape Girardeau, MO
7:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 7 - Home Concerts

4:00 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.