

# Sing City expanding its vocal horizons

## Choir starting up new group to perform on North Shore

No music training? No problem. Vancouver-based rock choir Sing City is expanding to the North Shore and the only prerequisite for prospective members is a love of singing.

The new group will rehearse Monday evenings, starting Jan. 26, at St. Catherine's Anglican Church in North Vancouver under the direction of performer and vocal instructor Laura Lang, who founded Sing City in 2007. The original choir, based in the West End of Vancouver, has since ballooned to some 100 members.

"Our downtown choir's about as big as it can be," says Lang, who also serves as conductor, choreographer and producer. "I wear a lot of hats," she says, noting she also directs a smaller jazz choir called Fat Chants.

Over the years, Lang says she has often been asked when Sing City will expand to the North Shore, so it seemed like a smart move. Plus, a contingent of her downtown members ventures over the Burrard Inlet each week to attend rehearsal.

Sing City specializes in contemporary rock, pop and Motown music. This season's repertoire includes hits from the latter half of 20th century - "Rock This Town" by the Stray Cats, "Footloose" by Kenny Loggins and "Life is a Highway" by Tom Cochrane - and more recent pop and indie songs such as "Say Something" by A Great Big World, "Tonight, Tonight" by Hot Chelle Rae and "Some Nights" by Fun.

The North Shore choir will start off with a half season, running 12 weeks from January to April. Lang isn't yet sure what they will sing - it depends on the size and makeup of the group - but she hopes to have her downtown and North Shore ensembles on the same page by the time the 2015/16 season starts next fall.

"By next September I hope to be in full swing doing exactly the same material as we go along so that whenever we do a guest appearance everybody can come from either choir, which is the ultimate goal."

Sing City is for anybody who loves to sing, Lang says. The downtown choir represents a diverse demographic, she adds, with ages ranging from 20s to 70s.

"It's a really wide range of age groups, which is really great, and everybody's really friendly and accepting of one another," Lang says, noting that rehearsals often end with a social gathering at a nearby pub.



Vocal instructor Laura Lang founded the Sing City ensemble in 2007. The original choir, based in the West End of Vancouver, has since ballooned to some 100 members.

Like most mixed-gender choirs in the Lower Mainland, Lang says Sing City struggles to attract as many males as it does females, but she is hopeful the choir's modern repertoire is a draw for North Shore men. "I'm really hoping that the fact that we do rock in North Vancouver will bring out some of the men that would never normally join a choir," she says. Interested members lacking prior music experience can rest assured they don't need to know how to read sheet music. Instead, singers can download their individual harmony parts, all professionally recorded in a studio, and use that to practise at home. Lang is pleased with the quick growth of Sing City, but she isn't too surprised by its popularity. "I don't know that I've ever met anyone in my life that either doesn't love to sing or wouldn't love to be able to sing," she says. "It's kind of a universal language and it's very joyful."

Members often show up to rehearsal dragging their feet after a long day at work, she says, but by the end of the session they are completely energized.

"And they get a marvelous feeling of accomplishment," adds Lang, always impressed by her choir's collective improvement from the start of the season, when the sound is "really rough," to the final show. "Then we have this incredibly wonderful finished product and they feel so proud of themselves."

St. Catherine's Anglican Church is located at 1058 Ridgewood Dr., North Vancouver. Sing City rehearsals will take place Monday nights from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. The cost is \$60 per month. To register, or for more information, visit [singcity.ca](http://singcity.ca) or email [singcity@live.ca](mailto:singcity@live.ca).