



Dear Pastor, Youth Director, or Church Musician,

Thank you for your interest in the Lutheran Youth Choir International! It is not just another High School choir tour – it is SO MUCH MORE, the ultimate mission trip!

I am the Founding Conductor of this choir; an ecumenical, international summer choir for high-school-age singers from the United States and Germany, based in the Chicago, Illinois area at Faith Lutheran Church in Glen Ellyn. Since 2005, the choir has formed eight times for 10-14 days in the summertime: four times for a North American tour or festival, and four times for a tour or festival in Germany. The general age of our students ranges from 14 to 19 years old (entering grade 9 through graduating grade 12). Some are returning students but many are new each year. Participants do not need to be Lutheran or able to speak German, nor do they need to be members of a choir at church or at school.

In 2011, we initiated a biennial *Festival of Global Vocal Music* at the beautifully restored 14th-century Mansfeld Castle in Mansfeld, Germany, the boyhood home town of Martin Luther. At this festival, young Americans come together to live in a real German castle for one week with young German singers, rehearsing and singing sacred music from all around the world, including gospel and jazz. After several days of rehearsal together, we perform our choral music in local venues, including churches in Berlin, Wittenberg, Erfurt, and Eisleben. Students who enjoy playing an instrument are welcome too. Of course, there is also ample opportunity for the German and American students to enjoy great times of service, recreation, discussion, and sightseeing together during this festival!

Our next Festival is July 12-25, 2017, beginning with a few days in the Chicago area before leaving for Germany, where the 500th anniversary of the Reformation is being celebrated in 2017!

The cost of the 2017 Festival is \$3,199, including roundtrip flight from Chicago to Germany, room and board, all admissions and music. Scholarship help is available, and LYCI will match each dollar received in financial support through a student's home congregation (up to \$500 per student or \$2000 per congregation).

And new this year: ONE ADULT CHAPERONE TRAVELS TO GERMANY FOR FREE WITH EVERY TEN STUDENTS FROM ONE CHURCH OR SCHOOL (OR AT A DISCOUNT FOR FOUR OR MORE)!

The application deadline is December 1, 2016. Please hang the enclosed poster and share the enclosed postcards with your youth and youth leaders. (Contact me at the address below if you would like the postcard sent electronically.)

There is more information about the Lutheran Youth Choir International and our Festival of Global Vocal Music on our website: www.lutheranyouthchoir.org. If your young people cannot participate in 2017, perhaps you would know of other youth leaders or pastor who might be interested whom I could contact. I would appreciate a contact at philipspencer@sbcglobal.net.

This unique, active partnership between young German and American singers has been a remarkable, life-changing musical and cultural blessing for all of the students, and for all of us adult volunteers too! We hope that it will continue and thrive for many years into the future.

Thank you for your time, and best wishes to all churches and families in your future musical endeavors!

Philip Spencer, Founding Conductor, Lutheran Youth Choir International (philipspencer@sbcglobal.net)