

CHAPTER HISTORY OF THE THRESHOLD SINGERS OF THE CHIPPEWA VALLEY, EAU CLAIRE, WISCONSIN

The Threshold Singers of the Chippewa Valley started practicing in 2008 under the direction of Ruthie Rosauer. In 2009 the group became an official chapter. Ruthie moved away, so Denise Madland agreed to become the Rehearsal Director. Members set up a Coordinating Committee to make decisions for the chapter.

Also, in 2009 the chapter contacted the Palliative Care department of the Eau Claire Sacred Heart hospital the Threshold mission and songs to staff. They were delighted and accepted the singers after going through volunteer training. Thus, the chapter did its first sing at the hospital in 2009 and continued to sing there weekly, using a list of referrals from the Palliative Care staff. After creating the ongoing relationship with the Eau Claire Sacred Heart hospital, it was easy to contact other hospitals and nursing homes to do a staff presentation and set up regular slots for singing to patients and residents as per their referral lists.

The chapter's membership numbers have always remained around 20, with some people going and others coming in. Five people have been members almost since the chapter's beginning. Denise Madland is still Director. Since the chapter is an independent 501c3 chapter, (set up by a lawyer who used to be a member) the chapter has an official Treasurer and a Coordinating Committee which functions as the Board of Directors. Other committees and jobs include Outreach, Music, Tech, Facebook, Retreats, National contact, Facilities contacts, Email checkers, Scrapbook etc.

Currently the chapter sings regularly at one hospital and eight care facilities, usually twice per month at each. Chapter members also sing to individuals at home or in facilities as contacted by family members or hospice nurses. The chapter averages 85 bedside sings per month as well as singing to some groups in facilities, memorial services as requested, 1-2 public song baths per year, and an annual presentation to a Death and Dying class at the local university.

The chapter rehearses in the church facilities rented by local Quakers, once or twice a month. New members can join in rehearsals anytime. The chapter leaders mentor as needed, setting up core song rehearsals as extra help. Music is stored on Kindles. The original Kindle purchase was funded by two grants from local organizations. A new singer is issued a Kindle, after attending three rehearsals and paying local and international dues, to use as long as the singer remains in the group.

During COVID, the chapter practiced via Zoom once per month. Practices held longer personal check-ins to keep connections going. Then the Zoom facilitator would mute and play sound files from the Threshold International website while each member practiced along at home. Singers learned some new songs that way!

January 22, 2026