

TRINITY EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL
COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA

CHORISTER HANDBOOK 2016-2017

*O God, whom saints and angels delight to
worship in heaven: Be ever present with
your servants who seek through art and
music to perfect the praises offered by your
people on earth; and grant to them even
now glimpses of your beauty, and make
them worthy at length to behold it unveiled
for evermore; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

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WELCOME

Welcome to the Cathedral Choir. The principle mission of the choir is to offer praise to God through leadership in music and liturgy. The first responsibility of every chorister is to be a leader in the worship life of Trinity Cathedral.

Our choir has a reputation as a leading choir in the Anglican tradition. The choir represents a tradition of music-making that has been at the center of the Anglican Church since the 16th century. We honor the historic role of boys and girls in leading worship through singing at a high level of excellence.

Choristers maintain a busy schedule of rehearsals, services, concerts, and tours. They learn to read music quickly and to understand what they are singing. They receive a professional training in the fundamentals of music, including sight-reading, ear-training, and music theory. They also receive voice lessons and opportunities for piano lessons. Choir tours are a regular and glamorous part of choir life.

Choristers develop skills that last a lifetime and help them in other aspects of their lives. They also tend to love working together and to develop strong friendships. Many also develop a love of service to their communities.

This handbook outlines the structure of the Cathedral Choir and explains its operating procedures.

STAFF

The Very Reverend Timothy Jones, *Dean of Trinity Cathedral*

The Cathedral Music Office

Jared Johnson, *Canon Organist and Choirmaster*, is responsible to the dean and oversees all Cathedral music, and is the director of the Cathedral Choirs.

Brent teVelde, *Associate Organist and Choirmaster*, provides administrative and musical support to the music program through regular rehearsal accompaniment and service playing. He assists in training the choristers and in directing the choirs.

Linda Rogers, *Music Administrator*, provides administrative support and oversees distribution of music to choristers.

Doak Wolfe, *Associate for Liturgy, Music, & Administration*, provides administrative and musical support to the program.

Important Quick Reference:

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Trinity Choirsite:	www.choircal.com/trinity	
Trinity Music website:	www.trinitysc.org/music	
Cathedral Office fax number:	803-245-4885	

THE CHOIRS



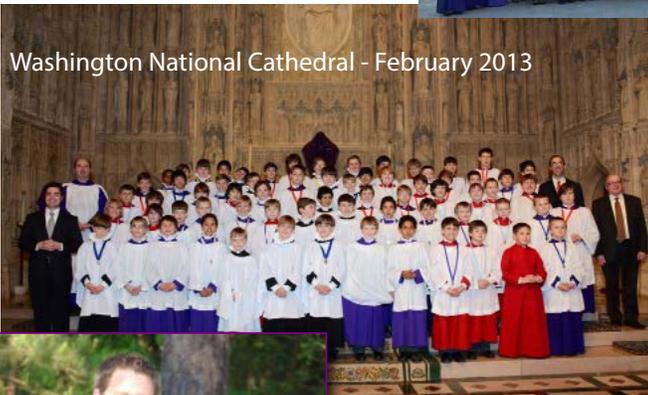
St. Peter's Basilica,
Rome

Italy - August 2012

Basilica of St. Francis, Assisi



St. Philip's Cathedral, Atlanta - March 2014



Washington National Cathedral - February 2013

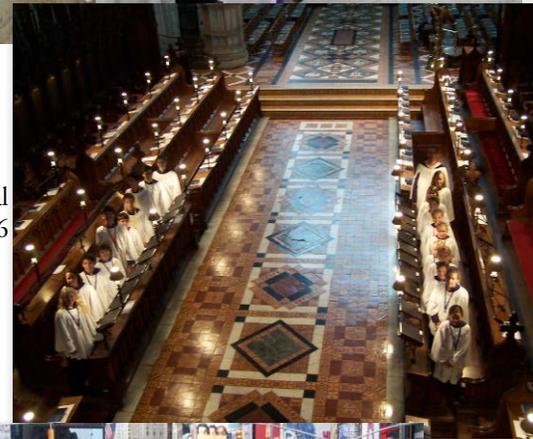


Wells Cathedral - July 2015



Spring Concert
- April 2009

Gloucester Cathedral
- July 2006



Canterbury Cathedral - July 2009



New York City - January 2008

There are four choirs for boys and girls operating within the Music Program of Trinity Episcopal Cathedral.



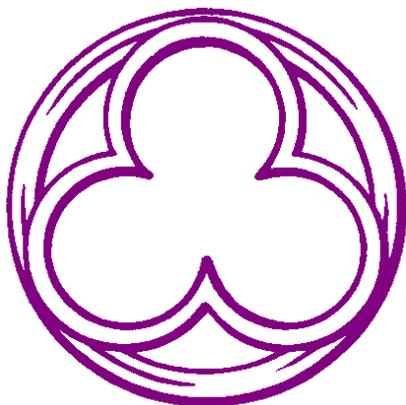
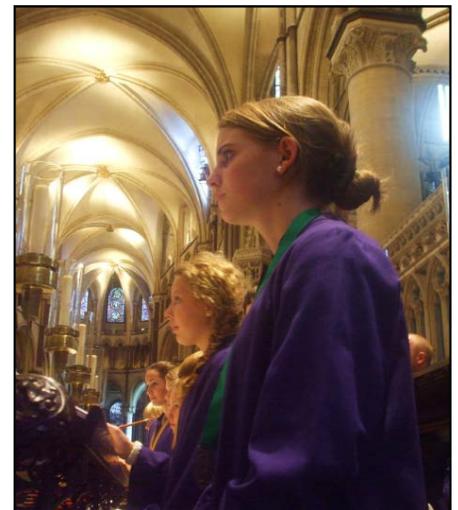
The Cathedral Choir of Men & Boys is an accelerated choir for boy trebles in grades 3-8 who are drawn from all over Columbia and South Carolina. They are supported by a team of professional men and former choristers, and adhere to a unique schedule of rehearsals and responsibilities as outlined in this handbook. In addition, accelerated boy choristers participate in special services, tours, recordings, and retreats. Auditions are required.

Enrollment limit: 20 boys and 12 men

The Choir of Young Men is made up of boys with changed voices who sing bass, tenor, and countertenor parts with the Choir of Men & Boys. Normally young men of the choir are graduates of the Boys' Choir. They maintain a separate rehearsal schedule that allows for small group instruction as well as singing with the full men of the choir. Those who desire to make an additional commitment are also invited to sing with the Choir of Adults.

The Cathedral Choir of Girls is an accelerated choir for girl trebles in grades 6-12¹ who are drawn from all over Columbia. They are supported by a team of professional adult singers from the greater Columbia area who do not “double” the treble line but rather sing the alto, tenor, and bass parts. This choir adheres to a unique schedule of rehearsals and responsibilities as outlined in this handbook. In addition, accelerated girl choristers participate in special services, tours, recordings, and retreats. Auditions are required.

Enrollment limit: 24 girls and 12 adults



The Trinity Youth Chorus is open to all children in grades 3 and higher who enjoy music and singing. This choir rehearses once a week and participates as scheduled at Sunday liturgies. Each rehearsal takes place in a fun atmosphere that requires a smaller time commitment than the accelerated Cathedral Choirs. The Trinity Youth Chorus is excited to welcome new members in the fall of 2015. Rehearsals are on Tuesdays from 4:30-5:30 p.m.; Sundays are scheduled for the 9:00 a.m. service (no more than once per month).

¹ Rising 5th grade girls may be admitted in special circumstances.

THE ACCELERATED CHORISTER PROGRAM

THE CATHEDRAL CHOIR OF MEN & BOYS

THE CATHEDRAL CHOIR OF GIRLS

The purpose of the accelerated chorister program is to execute sacred music at a high level of excellence. To this end choristers receive a thorough training in the fundamentals of music theory, sight-reading, and vocal production.

Choristers participate in a small, select group of peers who are committed to the same goal. They sing great works of art and receive opportunities for tours, retreats, concerts, and recordings. They also receive scholarships in keeping with the terms of the Chorister Scholarship program. The skills that choristers develop last a lifetime and foster growth in other areas of life at a young age: leadership; commitment; focus; attention to detail; patience; teamwork; and love of service.

Accelerated Choristers are those who have passed the audition and committed to full participation in the Cathedral Choir of Men & Boys or the Cathedral Choir of Girls. They participate in the Chorister Training Program, which educates choristers in music theory, sight-singing, and healthy vocal production. Choristers benefit from an advanced music curriculum and receive voice lessons and group piano instruction. Private instruction in piano and/or organ may be offered by music staff for senior choristers; all choristers are encouraged to learn to play an instrument. The program provides each chorister with the necessary musical foundation to carry out the Cathedral's full schedule of services and concerts.

The music theory curriculum offers graduated instruction over three years in the rudiments of music theory, sight-singing, and basic keyboard literacy.

NOVICE COURSE

The Novice Course comprises the first year of the Chorister Training Program where students learn the basics of music theory, vocal production and sight-reading. It gives choristers the skills they need to contribute to the choir and gives newcomers a structure through which they can learn about life in the full choir. Novices are not full members of the choir until they are formally inducted by the Cathedral Dean upon successful completion of the Novice Course.

The Novice Course is presented in three successive terms, beginning in the fall. At the completion of each term the Choirmaster and the chorister's family discuss his/her progress and determine if the chorister will advance to the next stage of the program (novices may also transition into the TYC at these term breaks). Novices receive special instruction from the music staff in small groups and private lessons, and are taught all the skills they will need to become full choristers.

JUNIOR CHORISTERS

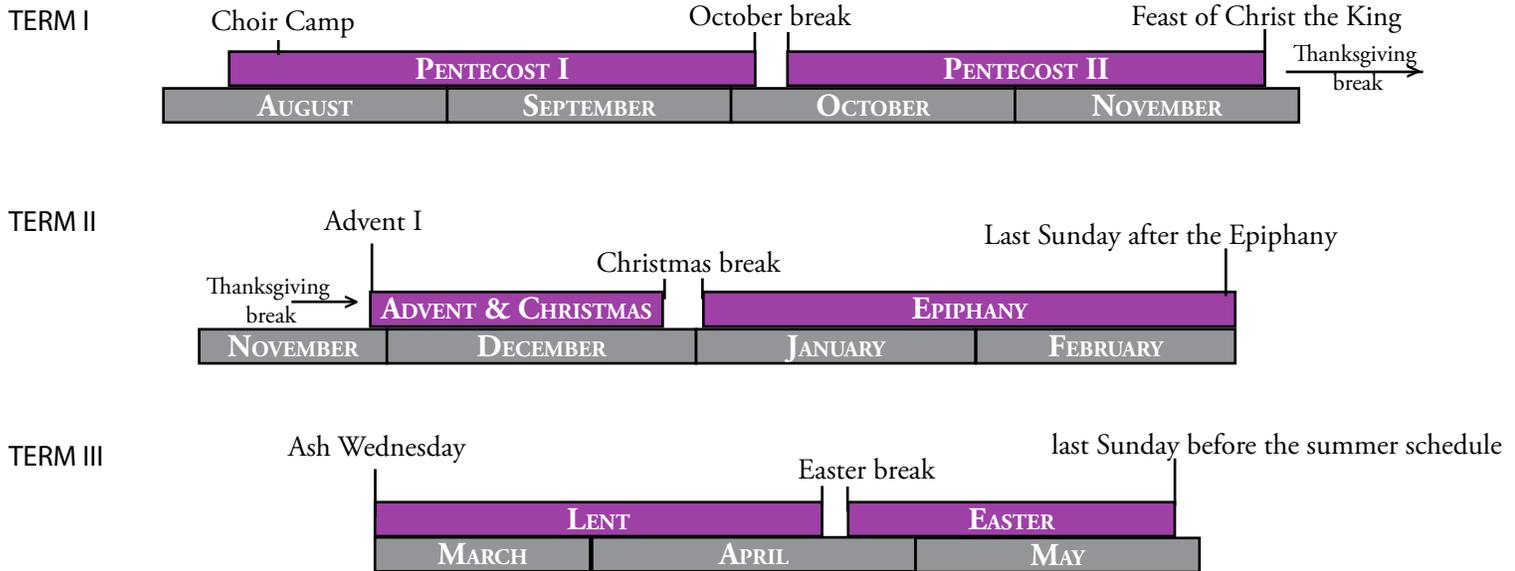
Junior Choristers are typically boys in grades 4-5 and girls in grades 7-8 who have completed their Novice year and have been installed as members of the Cathedral Choir. They participate fully in rehearsals and in leading the liturgy at the Cathedral.

Junior Choristers not only rapidly build their experience by singing Cathedral services but they also continue to strengthen and integrate their knowledge of advanced music theory through regular instruction. Additionally, Junior Choristers will begin to have group piano instruction in the piano lab, and individual voice instruction with the Cathedral Voice Teacher.

SENIOR CHORISTERS

Senior Choristers are typically boys in grades 6-8 and girls in grades 9-12 who have completed the music theory component of the Chorister Training Program. Senior boy and girl choristers combine for major concerts and special services, as well as for special tours. As a senior chorister, private vocal study and group keyboard study will continue. Senior choristers may participate in the end-of-the-year group recital organized by the Cathedral Voice Teacher.

Choir Terms:



Draft of weekly schedule

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRI	SAT	SUNDAY (choirs as assigned)
	TYC: 4:30-5:30 p.m.	B: 5:30-6:45 p.m.				8:15 a.m. (9:00 service)
B: 5:30-6:45 p.m.	G: 6:00-7:50 p.m.	YM: 5:30-7:00 p.m.	A: 6:00-8:00			10:15 a.m. (11:15 service)
		G: 6:45-7:55 p.m.				2:45 p.m. (4:00 service)

Note: On most Wednesdays, dinner is served in Satterlee Hall from 5:45-6:30 p.m.; all choristers and families are welcome.

The full Choir Calendar including service assignments is posted online on the Choirsite; it is also available through the Cathedral website: www.trinitysc.org/music.

The choirs scheduled are:

- B = Accelerated Boys (trebles of the Men & Boys Choir)
- M+B = Men & Boys Choir
- G = Accelerated Girls
- M+G = Men & Girls Choir
- TYC = Trinity Youth Chorus (general chorus for boys and girls grades 3 and up)
- YM = Young Men
- A = Adults

Carpools

The music office will make every effort to help choristers organize carpools to and from the Cathedral. In special cases the Cathedral Outreach committee may help provide transportation to those in need, in keeping with Safe Church guidelines.

Opportunities for parents during rehearsals

During rehearsal parents are welcome to wait in the peaceful atmosphere of the Choirmaster's office, or, when available, the Daughters of the Holy Cross Room. You may also use our gym and walking track in the Trinity Center for Mission & Ministry.

Audition

The accelerated chorister programs are limited to 20 boys and 24 girls, by audition. Children do not need to have any prior experience in music to audition. They need to demonstrate intelligence, focus, a good ear, and a willingness to work as part of a team.

Covenant Agreement

Choristers and their parents are asked to sign a covenant agreement outlining the mutual commitment between the Cathedral and the chorister. This contract states the chorister's commitment to participate fully in the Cathedral Choir. Equally importantly, it summarizes the commitment that all choristers make to each other.

Retention We hope that all choristers will love the program and want to remain in it. We expect that all novices will make a term-by-term commitment (see page 7). Junior choristers should make a commitment to complete the training curriculum (2 years). At that stage, they will have acquired the skills necessary to become senior choristers, and should commit 3 more years of service using the skills they have acquired through the chorister training program for the benefit of the community. Each spring boys and girls who have successfully completed their tenure in the choir will formally graduate in a special Evensong. Boys are then eligible to audition for the Men's choir, the Cathedral Choir of Adults, or the TYC.

Attendance

Attendance at all rehearsals, services, and concerts is the primary responsibility of all choristers. All choristers are expected to be present at all rehearsals, to have all music required, and to be equipped with a pencil and eraser at least five minutes prior to any call. It is expected that the Accelerated Chorister Program is a primary commitment of every chorister and that it will take priority over most other engagements. Every effort will be made by the music staff to accommodate conflicts presented with sufficient notice. An accumulation of unexcused tardiness or absence will result in suspension/dismissal from the choir.

Absences Good attendance is the primary commitment of every chorister. Everything in choir life flows from being present, on-time and accountable to your fellow choristers.

In the event of a scheduling conflict, all choristers are asked first to attempt to resolve the conflict and to be present at choir. In our experience almost all coaches, play directors and other leaders are willing to compromise so that children can fulfill their commitments to the choir. The Choirmaster is always willing to discuss these situations and to work hard to resolve scheduling conflicts for the benefit of every child. Advanced communication is the key.

When a scheduling conflict cannot be resolved, choristers may request an excused absence through the Choirsite (*see next page*). An "excused" absence must be requested well in advance (2-4 weeks).

Choir Camp and Special Events

During the week prior to the beginning of school, accelerated choristers attend Choir Camp where they will continue their studies in music theory and vocal technique, rehearse new music for the coming year, lead services in local churches, and get to know fellow choristers. Attendance at choir camp is required. The dates for 2014 Choir Camp are August 3 - 8.

Other special events such as tours, recordings and concerts are announced well in advance. Certain special events are reserved for "senior choristers." See page 8 to read about upcoming special events.

Piano and Voice Lessons

All choristers are strongly encouraged to study an instrument, and the music staff is willing to help match students with teachers on any instrument. All accelerated choristers will receive individualized instruction in

voice from the Cathedral Voice Teacher, and will receive group piano instruction in the music lab. Guidelines for good vocal health are presented in Appendix 1. Senior choristers who want more advanced keyboard instruction may receive free teaching from the Cathedral music staff by special arrangement.

Progress Reports

Each month choristers will receive a progress report from the Music Administrator along with the choir scholarship. These monthly reports summarize attendance and track the scholarship earned.

Communication

Availability The Choirmaster encourages all members and their families to stay in close contact with the Music Staff. He is always willing to meet with families of choristers, to discuss their progress, to listen to their ideas, and to answer their questions.

Choirsite The Choir calendar website is specifically designed with an interactive calendar to request excused absences from the Choirmaster. Following are the steps to use Trinity's choir website.

How to Log into the Website:

1. Enter the web address www.choircal.com/trinity into your browser
2. Type in the username for your chorister that is given to you by the Music Department
3. Notice the Tabs labeled "Home", "My Calls", "Absences", and "Master Calendar". These tabs will help you navigate the choir calendar with ease!

How to View the Calendar:

1. Click the "My Calls" Tab-This is a personalized view of your chorister's calls. It is tailored to his or her specific choir and rank.
2. Click the "Master Calendar" Tab- This is an overview of the entire choir schedule. It shows every call for every choir on a month-to-month basis.
3. For a quick reminder of the schedule, one may also view the Master Calendar without logging in! Simply click the red, highlighted sentence above the space for your chorister's username on the Login screen of the Choir calendar.

How to Request an Absence:

1. To request singular, individual absences (one service, or one rehearsal) Begin by viewing the Calendar through the "My Calls" Tab. Within the day of the conflict, click on the time of the call for which the absence will be requested. This will automatically format a letter to the Choirmaster requesting an excused absence.
2. To request long-term conflict with the choir calendar (out of town for more than once service or rehearsal) click this tab. This will automatically format a letter to the Choirmaster requesting an excused absence.

**The Choirsite does not receive absence requests within 48 hours of a call time. This is to prevent your request from going unseen. The Music Office is closed on most Fridays so requests made 48 hours before a Sunday call would go unseen. In the event of last-minute, emergency absences, feel free to email the choirmaster directly (johnson@trinitysc.org).*

Citizenship

Demeanor and Appearance All choristers will execute their duties in a pleasant and friendly manner, showing due courtesy and respect to their colleagues and to the working environment of the Cathedral and its staff. Choristers are expected to maintain a high level of maturity in services, rehearsals, and while traveling. They should be silent in hallways before and after services and concerts. Talking during a service or concert is

THE ACCELERATED CHORISTER PROGRAM

distracting to the congregation and is forbidden. Choristers must keep their music cubbies tidy at all times and hang their vestments carefully.

Dress code It is important to come to services prepared, well-rested and properly dressed.

This dress code helps choristers present themselves as a team in the liturgy rather than as individuals, so they do not draw attention to themselves in worship. It also establishes a tone of respect and dignified preparation for leading worship.

For services:

- Boys wear grey pants, black shoes and socks, and either white button-down shirts and choir ties or white or purple polo shirts.
- Girls must wear black ballet flats for services.
- Anything visible above the collar of the cassock must be white.
- Choristers wear a purple cassock for all pre-service rehearsals, and a white surplice on top of that during services.

For rehearsals:

Casual dress is fine; many choristers come to rehearsal in sports uniforms directly before or after games.

Special Events

Recordings and Tours Accelerated choirs participate in tours, retreats, and recordings as a part of their commitment to the music program.

Safe Church Policies

All Choir events operate under the Safe Church guidelines of the Episcopal Church. The music staff takes these rules seriously, both at the Cathedral and while traveling. Two adults are always on duty to supervise children, and no chorister may be alone with one adult. Cathedral staff are not allowed to give rides to choristers.

Sign-in/out

Every time you arrive at the Cathedral you should report directly to the choir room to sign in. An adult or lead chorister will be taking attendance. Every time you leave, you must “sign-out” with the leader keeping attendance. This insures that we know who is in the building, for your safety. If you fail to sign out we will call your parents to make sure you are OK. On rehearsal days you may arrive as much as one hour early. You will be supervised by adults and can use this time to do your homework or visit with friends.

CHORAL SCHOLARSHIP

Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Luke 12:34

The first and foremost part of a chorister’s scholarship is a free education. Accelerated choristers receive a college-level education in music taught by a professional staff, at an approximate value of \$2,500 annually.

Since 2004 choristers have received scholarship funding in the form of subsidies for travel and special events. In 2008 these scholarships were tied directly to chorister attendance, and families were given the option of receiving the scholarship directly or having the amount held in savings by the Cathedral towards travel expenses.

With the establishment of the Accelerated Chorister Program, the chorister scholarship evolved further to support the work of each chorister and to signal directly to all members the value of their committed work in service to the Cathedral. In keeping with Christian teaching the scholarship is intended to increase the love they have for service.

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All accelerated choristers are encouraged to participate in the scholarship program. Those who feel strongly may opt out of this program while still participating fully in the choir.

Scholarships are accounted based on rehearsal attendance. The base "per call" rate ascends as choristers are promoted through the ranks of the choir. Note that the second weekly rehearsal will be awarded at a higher rate than the base. A chorister must be present for a week's Sunday service in order to receive that week's scholarship. Excused absences for illness will be determined at the discretion of the choirmaster.

Chorister scholarships are distributed according to the Anglican liturgical year in which the choir operates and divided into trimesters. In addition each chorister with monthly perfect attendance at rehearsals and services will receive a bonus. The distribution of scholarships and bonuses is shown below:

Liturgical Terms:

Term I: Pentecost – Choir Camp through the Feast of Christ the King.

Term II: Advent, Christmas & Epiphany – First Sunday of Advent through the Last Sunday after Epiphany.

Term III: Lent & Easter – Ash Wednesday through Trinity Sunday.

Chorister Rank	Rehearsal 1 (\$)	Rehearsal 2 (\$)	Scholarship Total per Term ¹ (\$)	Scholarship % Withheld per Term	Monthly Bonus for Perfect Attendance ² (\$)
Novice	0	0	0	0	0
Junior Chorister 1	1	2	36 (108/year)	100 (10% charity; 10% tithe; 80% travel fund)	10
Junior Chorister 2	2	4	72 (216/year)	50 (10% charity; 10% tithe; 30% travel fund)	10
Junior Chorister 3	2	4	120 (360/year)	30 (10% tithe; 20% travel fund)	10
Senior Chorister 1	3	7	120 (360/year)	30 (10% tithe; 20% travel fund)	25

CHOIR PARENTS' GUILD

All chorister parents are members of the new Choir Parents' Guild which is led this year by Carole Rowden. The role of the guild is to support the work of the music program in the following ways:

- To nurture the development of our children spiritually and musically
- To ensure our choristers arrive at the Cathedral on time and correctly dressed
- To be ambassadors for the music program both in the Cathedral and the community at large, including helping to sell tickets for concerts
- To raise funds for the choir tours and activities through Friends of Music
- To be a network of volunteers for the activities listed below:

Volunteer opportunities

- o Participate in rotation as duty parents during choir rehearsals
- o Help maintain the chorister vestments by laundering and repairing/sewing buttons as required
- o Assist with receptions and other special events as arranged by the Music Staff
- o Ushering at choir concerts
- o Other

Parental Expectations

The Cathedral Music Staff invests a great deal in the lives of all the boys and girls in its choirs, originating from a profound commitment to their spiritual and personal growth. Our children receive free training from professional musicians and educators respected in the field. Accordingly, we ask all parents to support the work of their children and Music Staff by upholding the following:

- Contribute to the life of the choirs and the Cathedral through service and prayer
- Help us to maintain a safe, nurturing environment for all choristers
- Ensure that they are prepared and punctual for all scheduled commitments and are correctly dressed
- Volunteer in at least one of the activities outlined above
- Arrive on time to greet your child at the end of rehearsal
- Do your best to acquaint yourself with the traditions of the Episcopal Church, so that you can better assist your child to understand
- Remain in good communication with the Music Office, including regularly checking the choir calendar at www.choirca.com/trinity

APPENDIX 1: VOCAL HEALTH

Proper attention to hydration, vocal rest, plenty of sleep, and nutrition are the most important tools any chorister has to take good care of their growing voices. It is vital that all choristers take careful note of the following guidelines to maintain a healthy voice for rehearsals, services, and concerts.

Hydration: Drink lots of water! One of the easiest steps a chorister can take is to bring a water bottle to school, after school activities, and sports. Avoid sugary sodas and juices. Choristers are encouraged to bring water to choir, and may fill up from the water cooler before rehearsals and services begin.

Plenty of Sleep: Choristers should sleep eight hours a night, if not more! As with many daily activities, sleep deprivation has a detrimental effect on a chorister's vocal health and ability to contribute to the choir as a whole.

Vocal Rest: With many choristers active in sports and plays, not to mention cheering for their favorite football team, a chorister may use his or her voice strenuously without ever realizing it! Take special care to avoid screaming and speaking loudly. If a chorister's voice begins to be strained, take a "vocal nap" and refrain from speaking for a brief period of time.

Nutrition: Eat balanced meals! Have protein-filled snacks and make sure to come to choir well-fed. Singing takes a lot of energy, and a well-balanced diet is an important factor in healthy vocal production

APPENDIX 2: NOVICE AND JUNIOR CHORISTER CURRICULA

NOVICE CHORISTERS

- Term I
 - Basic singing and breathing alignment
 - Liturgy – what is it? Where does it come from? Decani/Cantoris
 - Prayer Book & Hymnal: holding/managing books at all times in rehearsals and services
 - Hymnal anatomy: Differences between Service music and hymns
 - Prayer Book anatomy: The Eucharist – The Daily Office
 - The Lord's Prayer
 - The Chorister's Prayer
 - Singing one note (G—introduce staff, pulse, proper singing alignment)
 - Singing the major scale (simultaneously learning note names as they correspond to the keyboard)
 - Identifying whole and half steps while singing stepwise melodies from the major scale
 - Clapping basic rhythms from the board (quarter, half, whole notes and rests)
 - Introduce clapping rhythms from scores (related to rhythms on white board, following notes with your finger)
 - Reading/marking scores linearly and vertically (always following notes with finger)
- Term II
 - Review Term I
 - Prayer Book (Rite I – Rite II and how they apply to Trinity liturgies)
 - Hymnal (Organization of hymnal into chronological liturgical seasons and what those seasons are)
 - Begin to link melody to rhythm (students clap rhythm on page while melody is played on piano)
 - Theory and Practice combined in basic intervals, dots, ties, basic key/time signatures
 - Sing pitches from hymnal (no rhythm)
 - Combining pitch and basic rhythm from the hymnal
 - Quick visual identification of basic intervals
 - Expression marks
 - Introduction to Anglican Chant
 - Reading/marking scores linearly and vertically (always following notes with finger)

JUNIOR CHORISTERS – YEAR ONE

- Term I
 - Review Novice Terms I/II
 - Anatomy of a Cathedral:
 - Names and functions of liturgical pieces (altar, pulpit, lectern, narthex, apse, crossing, north, south, east, west.....schnoodle!)
 - Liturgy:
 - Order for Holy Eucharist (Rite I and II) and its liturgical significance
 - Order for Evensong
 - The Creed
 - Theory and Practice: The keyboard
 - All accidentals
 - Review simple meters

Review singing pitch only from the hymnal
Review pitch and rhythm combined
Speaking words in rhythm from hymnal
Combine pitch, rhythm and words
Intervals beyond a third introduced in relation to music and melodic context
Major key signatures/circle of fifths
Anglican Chant continued
Reading/marking scores linearly and vertically (**always** following notes with finger)

- Term II
Review
The General Thanksgiving
Continue to combine pitch, rhythm, words from Hymnal, trouble- shooting steps as needed
Reinforce intervals as they appear in the hymnal
Compound time signatures introduction
All major key signatures
Reading/marking scores linearly and vertically (**always** following notes with finger)

JUNIOR CHORISTER – YEAR TWO

- Term I
Continue combining pitch, rhythm, words over and over always relating theory to practice of reading the score
Compound time and simple time signature review
Intervals (all including interval inversion, excluding augmented/diminished)
All major key signatures
Major scale review
Reading/marking scores linearly and vertically (**always** following notes with finger)
- Term II
Continue combining pitch, rhythm, words over and over always relating theory to practice of reading the score
Compound time and simple time signature review
Introduction to Natural Minor Scale
Basic melodic dictation
Reading/marking scores linearly and vertically (**always** following notes with finger)

SENIOR CHORISTERS

- Continued understanding of church history, liturgy and the relationship of music to the church
- General Review of all aspects of the Junior Chorister Curriculum
- Natural minor scale
- Harmonic and Melodic minor scale
- Harmonic introduction through diatonic triads of the major and minor scales
- Four triad types (major, minor, augmented and diminished)
- Basic two-part sight singing
- Continued basic melodic dictation

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Why is the accelerated boys' choir younger than the accelerated girls' choir?

A: Blame God for the voice change. Boys' voices change register dramatically during adolescence and they can no longer sing treble. So the boys must start younger and develop skills quickly. Girls voices gain richness in adolescence, and because girls can continue to sing treble, an appropriate choir for them skews a bit older.

Q: What happens to boys when their voices change?

A: They will undergo formal graduation from the chorister program. Those who wish to continue singing in the Cathedral Choirs have three options: 1) they may audition for the men's section of the Men & Boys Choir; 2) they may audition for the Cathedral Choir of Adults; or 3) they may join the TYC.

Q: Why is the enrollment limited in the accelerated choirs?

A: Practically, this is the seating limit of the first two rows of the choir pews in the Cathedral (remember those?). More importantly, this is a number at which all choristers can feel ownership of the choir, and will know how much they matter to the team.

Q: Will accelerated boys and accelerated girls ever sing together?

A: Occasionally. At special services like the rededication of the Cathedral, or for major tours. They will go on the same choir retreats. Generally at the Cathedral they will have their own distinct schedules.

Q: What happens in an audition?

A: Choristers are asked to read a few verses of psalms; to sing a few melodic patterns after they are played on the piano; and to answer a few questions about music. The best way to prepare for an audition is to get a good night's sleep and to relax.

Q: Do children have to be members of Trinity Cathedral to participate in the choir?

A: No. The choir is open to all children, regardless of their religious affiliation.

Q: Will the Trinity Youth Chorus be involved in choir tours?

A: The TYC is not fundamentally a touring ensemble.

Q: Will the Trinity Youth Chorus ever participate in the special programs of the Cathedral music program?

A: Yes, on occasion they will be invited to sing at concerts, and they may travel to RSCM festival weekends in the future.

Q: Will there be optional / make-up choir rehearsals?

A: No. The make-up rehearsals have run their course and no longer help the choir. Although they make it easier at first glance to work out scheduling, they prevent choristers from being mutually accountable to one another; they prevent the group from bonding; and they prevent energetic teamwork that is required for the choir to excel.

Q: Do other churches offer scholarships to children?

A: Yes. This is common practice in many good Episcopal choirs. It signals to children, adults, and church leaders the significance of the contribution that the choristers make to our common life.

Q: What happens to choristers who pass the audition, sign the covenant agreement, and then have poor attendance?

A: God will smite them.

*Bless, O Lord, us, thy servants
who minister in thy temple.
Grant that what we sing with our lips
we may believe in our hearts;
and that what we believe in our hearts
we may show forth in our lives;
through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Amen.*