



Trinity Church in the City of Boston

Handbook for the Choirs

2006–2007



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Welcome! This handbook is intended to help acquaint new choir members with the ways of our community of singers, and to be a useful source of information for anyone involved in the choir program at Trinity.

Our vision is to be a community of music-loving children and adults united by a shared sense of purpose: to serve integrally the mission of Trinity Church by summoning, forming and becoming a voice of Christ's body in worship and outreach.

Trinity's choir community consists of children and adult singers who unite in various groupings, chiefly:

- 1) **Trinity Choristers** – children and youth ages 8 and up, singing at the Sunday 9:00 service, rehearsing Wednesday evenings.
- 2) **Trinity Schola** – a small group who sing SATB repertory with the Trinity Choristers at the Sunday 9:00 service, rehearsing Wednesday evenings.
- 3) **Trinity Choir** – adults of all ages, singing together at the Sunday 11:15 and 6:00 services, rehearsing Thursday evenings. (Each member has a “home service” and is asked to sing at least two services per season in the alternate service.)
- 4) **Trinity Chamber Choir** – a small group drawn from the Trinity Choir who sing Choral Evensong on Thursday evenings during certain periods of the season, learning music on their own and rehearsing an hour before Evensong.

Detailed choir schedules for 2006-2007 are printed on separate sheets accompanying this handbook.

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Attendance and Absences

Trinity Choir members are expected to strive for perfect attendance. However, in recognition of the fact that modern life competes mightily with that quest, 80% attendance is required. Because we prepare our material well in advance and because we need to count on critical mass in each part, we expect that those who join us will meet this attendance requirement. The rule of thumb: choir members are asked to restrict their absences to one service and one rehearsal monthly, September 6 through June 3.

Each choir subgroup has a sign-out/sign-up book for the entire liturgical season. Each choir member is asked to sign up or sign out for events at least one month in advance, cooperating with one another and the music staff to ensure that all voice parts in the music are adequately covered.

Members of the Schola and Chamber Choir are asked to secure a substitute singer from the Trinity Choir to cover their absences.

Singers scheduled to miss a Sunday should still attend the preceding weekday rehearsal, as the choirs prepare music several weeks in advance.

Singers scheduled to miss a weekday rehearsal may sing the following Sunday if they are confident that they know the music from earlier rehearsals or previous performances. If uncertain, they should have a word with the director.

There are five dress rehearsals for which attendance is mandatory for singers who will perform in the respective event:

Thursday, 11/2, 7:15–10:00 pm – for All Saints Concert on 11/5

Thursday, 12/7, 7:00–10:00 pm – for Messiah Concert on 12/10

Wednesday, 12/13, 6:30–9:30 pm – for Candlelight Carols on 12/16 & 17

Saturday, 3/31, 9:00 am–Noon – for Good Friday concert on 4/6

Wednesday, 4/4, 6:30–9:30 pm – for Easter Services on 4/7 & 8

In case of illness or other unanticipated problems, choir members are asked to leave messages for Tom Jansen, Music Manager: 617-536-0944.

Guidelines for Rehearsals

Courteous and responsible choir members routinely do the following when rehearsing:

- Have a sharp pencil at the ready
- Turn off cell phones and other electronic devices
- Arrive early enough to be sure they have all the music they need
- Arrange their music in the order listed on sign boards before rehearsal begins
- Make light markings in music with pencil only, marking all parts, not only own
- Raise a hand to signal understanding of a mistake they made while singing
- Wait, before raising an issue, to see if it will first be addressed by the director
- Eat only before, during a break, or after rehearsal, otherwise putting all food away
- Carry and consume no beverages when rehearsing in the church, except water
- Move quickly, non-stop, from choir room to church when a rehearsal migrates, entering chancel quietly
- Notify the Music Manager as soon as possible if they must arrive late or leave a rehearsal early: 617-536-0944

Guidelines for Services and Concerts

The choirs' primary role in worship is to lead the congregation's singing and to help, through liturgical "body language," to invite their attention to the appropriate place at the appropriate time. Every singer is expected either to worship or play the role of a worshipper: respectful, engaged, and attentive.

Courteous and responsible choir members routinely do the following:

- Arrive early enough to vest (put on their black cassock) before rehearsal
- Don their surplice (white overlay) only for worship, otherwise draping it over an arm
- Read special instructions posted in the choir room and assemble their music early
- Take responsibility for locking security closet when last to leave choir room
- Present themselves for procession line-up at least five minutes before service start time, and quietly encourage a mood of reverence
- Participate in music-sorting when it is assigned to their voice part

About liturgical body language – general remarks for choirs at Trinity:

- During processions, walk two pews apart
- In choir stalls, face congregation at 45 degree angle when singing; it helps get the sound out
- Watch for last priest in procession to approach altar, all bow with him/her to reverence the altar (while singing), then turn to face congregation at 45 degrees
- Face reader when lessons are being read
- Face altar for recitation of the creed
- Remain standing for prayers at Eucharist; kneel for prayers at Morning Prayer

- Face celebrant during the Eucharistic prayer (also known as the “Great Thanksgiving”), turning to face congregation only to lead singing of service music, i.e. Sanctus (“Holy, holy, holy”) and Fraction Anthem
- For visual uniformity during anthems, sheet music is held in open folders unless otherwise announced

Attire under vestments:

- Anything showing below should be dark dress-up; anything around collar light dress-up, i.e. ties for men (the collar rules are relaxed in summer)
- Please do not wear colored turtleneck garments under vestments
- Please do not wear sneakers unless they are black
- Please do not wear jewelry, other than the most inconspicuous ear ornaments
- Please do not wear perfume or other scented products

Caring for the Tools Entrusted to Us: Folders, Sheet Music, and Vestments

All choir members are assigned a numbered folder, hymnal, storage slot, and vestments. These things, our library of sheet music, the pianos, organs, and rehearsal spaces, are not ours. We have been given the privilege of using them, and the responsibility of caring for them. Every effort is made to keep our sheet music supplies sufficient so that sharing is not necessary.

In caring for their sheet music, courteous and responsible choir members routinely:

- Mark music lightly, only with a pencil
- Bring torn/tattered copies to the Music Manager for repair or replacement

- Turn in sheet music immediately after it is performed, unless otherwise announced
- Participate in sorting and filing music when it's their section's turn to do so
- Respect the folder numbering system, changing the folder number on a piece of music only in consultation with the Music Manager
- Bring sheet music back to church if they've taken it home to practice
- Leave their folders and hymnals at church

In caring for vestments, courteous and responsible choir members routinely:

- Hang their vestments neatly after use
- Keep their vestments and hanger labeled with their name
- Hang stray vestments in the spare vestments closet
- Take their vestments home to wash them, and remember to bring them back to the church at their earliest convenience. Note: For best results, use only non-chlorine bleach on surplice (white overlay), and hang black cassock to air-dry after washing.

The Choir Community

Informal socializing – Choir members often join up after rehearsals or services to go out for a meal or a drink. Announcements of these outings are occasionally simply shouted out by an inspired person at rehearsal's end; all are invited!

Parties – Whether in celebration of the start of a new season, the joy of Christmas, or to mark any auspicious occasion, Trinity's choirs love to party. Parties have ranged from smart-attire dinners in rented spaces to potlucks in our homes or in the church's Undercroft Commons.

Retreats – Two or three times a year, all choir members retreat from their busy lives to be together for half a day. The time is spent in some combination of getting better acquainted with one another, sharing spiritual/musical journeys, developing a specific musical skill, sharing a meal, rehearsing a little, and airing concerns.

Town meetings – Three or four times a year, often as part of a retreat, the choir(s) have a facilitated meeting in which all are invited to point to milestones and accomplishments in our life together, as well as to raise concerns and issues having to do with our life together. These meetings, attended by staff, serve to keep communication open and healthy.

Committees – Choir members are encouraged to contribute time and talent to one of several choir committees. The Director typically appoints members to chair committees, but, except in the case of the Music Strategic Planning Committee, membership is generally open. Not all committees are active at all times.

- **Music Strategic Planning Committee** – This large group of choir members, chorister parents, and staff meet regularly to shape the vision and long-range plans of the music department.
- **Membership Committee** – Welcomes new members; organizes recognition of departing members; assembles photo directory; assigns mentors to new choir members
- **Vestments Committee** – Keeps cassocks and surplices in order, with numbers and labels; assigns vestments to new members, placing orders for new vestments with staff.
- **Stewardship Committee** – Maintains a program of occasional discussions among all choirs pertaining to our collective and individual responsibility to pledge a portion of our treasure as well as our time and talent.
- **Social Committee** – Plans parties, retreats, and informal social events.

Money, Food, Parking, and Childcare

Expenses – There are costs associated with a few choir community events each season, such as Lunch at retreats and Catered food for the Christmas party. These amount to about \$75 for the year. No one for whom this may present a hardship should feel they can't participate; confidentially arranged "scholarship assistance" is available. Feel free to speak privately about this with the Music Manager or Directors.

Wednesday dinners – Members of the Trinity Schola will be interested to know of the weekly dinner offered in the Undercroft on most Wednesdays during the season, 5:45-6:15 p.m. The Choristers, their families, and several adult choir members eat together before going to their various rehearsals and activities. All are welcome. The hot meal, salad, desert, and beverage costs \$6 per adult; \$3 per child under 12 years; maximum \$12 per family.

Parking hints – Meters in the neighborhood are on until 8 p.m., Mondays-Saturdays (free on Sundays). There is a "turn over" of metered spaces around 6 p.m., when for \$2 in quarters, one can park for the evening. Trinity enjoys discounted parking in area garages at certain times. Vouchers are available at the front desk of the Parish House:

Day	Garage	Fee with voucher	Time allotment
Sundays	Back Bay Garage 500 Boylston Street	\$3.00	7 am–1:30 pm 5 pm–midnight
Weekdays	Hancock Garage 100 Clarendon Street	\$6.00	3 hours between 7 am and 5 pm
Weeknights	Hancock Garage 100 Clarendon Street	\$6.00	Enter after 5 pm; exit by 7 am next day
Weekends	Hancock Garage 100 Clarendon Street	\$6.00	Enter after 5 am; exit by 7 am next day

Childcare – Childcare is available on Sunday mornings, and for most of the principal liturgical events during the season. Every season, a liaison from within the choir community is appointed to the Children’s Ministries Program of Trinity Church. For more information, contact Carol Roberts, Director of Children’s Ministries: 617-536-0944.

About Church Membership and Stewardship

Trinity’s definition of membership:

A member is anyone 16 years of age or older who has been baptized and participates regularly in Trinity Church’s corporate worship. A member commits to serve Christ at Trinity Church through the investment of time, talents, and an annual pledge of financial support. A member has both voice and vote at the parish’s annual meeting.

– Definition accepted unanimously by Vestry, March 2006

No one’s life is earned. It is a gift from God, the Cosmos, one’s Parents, the Force, the Holy One: there are many names for the Source of all gifts. The Christian response to the gift of life is thanksgiving, generosity, and selflessness – all modeled exquisitely by Jesus Christ. Learning to live into this response is a life-long journey, at times made difficult by the fearful instinct of self-preservation.

Choir members are not required to be church members, to be baptized, or to be Christian. But they are heartily invited to be all these. Whether or not they choose fully to embrace church membership, choir members are nonetheless asked to contribute financially to the church. The music program at Trinity is a significant part of the annual operating budget of the church, funded partially by endowment, but mostly by the payment of annual pledges of financial support from church members, choir members, parishioners, and friends of the parish. It is reasonable to expect

choir members to support financially an institution that supplies a beautiful venue, well-lit rehearsal space, sheet music, well-maintained organs and pianos, vestments, conductors, organists, a full-time music manager, staff singers, and spiritual nourishment. New choir members are asked to consider, after six months or so, pledging a portion of their income to Trinity Church. A pledge of one percent is a good place to start.

General Information

Worship staff:

- The Reverend Anne B. Bonnyman, *Rector*
- The Reverend Pamela L. Foster, *Vicar*
- The Reverend Mary E. Conroy, *Associate Rector for Worship*
- Margaret Lias, *Administrative Assistant for Worship and Pastoral Care*
- Michael Kleinschmidt, *Director of Music and Organist*
- Richard Webster, *Associate Director of Music and Organist*
- Thomas Jansen, *Music Manager*

Staff singers:

- Emily Hindrichs, *Soprano*
- Margaret Lias, *Alto*
- Lawrence Jones, *Tenor*
- Aaron Ingersoll, *Bass*

The Mission of Trinity Church in the City of Boston is to:

1. Glorify God with thanksgiving through worship in the Word, prayer, music, and the breaking of the bread.
2. Welcome seekers, form disciples, and send apostles, building an ever stronger community of friends, through sharing the Good News of our Lord Jesus Christ.
3. Be led by the Holy Spirit to learn and dream how best to serve our city and world, care for and share our parish home, and through lifelong conversion become ever more

- generous stewards and servants of Christ.
4. Epitomize a big-hearted, “big tent” Christian parish that welcomes diversity of thought and outlook and pledges commitment to Anglican Unity.

The vision of Trinity’s choir program:

Our vision is to be a community of music-loving children and adults united by a shared sense of purpose: to serve integrally the mission of Trinity Church by summoning, forming and becoming a voice of Christ’s body in worship and outreach.

The action plan to support this vision in 2006-2007 and beyond:

1. Make room for chorister program to grow into parity with adult choir program
2. Offer Choral Evensong on a more regular basis
3. Develop adult volunteers’ confidence; decrease dependency on staff singers
4. Provide weekly choral leadership at the Sunday 6:00 p.m. Eucharist
5. Build an understanding that we sing to serve the mission of Trinity Church
6. Create a flexible, versatile, virtuosic body of singers of all ages
7. Cooperate with one another to allow for Sundays off
8. Reach a pledge goal of at least 80% participation among all choir members

Glossary

What denomination is Trinity?

Episcopal Church – Trinity Church is part of the Diocese of Massachusetts and the Episcopal Church in the United States, which in turn is part of the worldwide Anglican Communion. Periodically, clergy at Trinity offer Inquirers’ Classes to educate prospective members about the details and peculiarities of the Episcopal Church.

For dates and information, look in the Sunday bulletin, visit the website at www.trinitychurchboston.org, or call 617-536-0944. Reading The Book of Common Prayer, available in The Shop at Trinity, is also a great way to get a sense of the Episcopal Church. A chief difference from Roman Catholicism is that the Episcopal Church is not under the authority of the Pope. However, neither are we Congregational. We, like all Episcopal parishes in our Diocese, submit to the authority of our Bishop. Our “chain of command” starts with him/her, then proceeds down to the parish level through our Rector and Vestry. The Rector is the chief priest of a parish, chosen by a search committee appointed by the vestry, and responsible for all spiritual matters, including worship. The vestry is the governing body of a parish, elected by the church members, responsible primarily for its physical and financial resources.

What are we singing?

Anthem – the English-speaking Protestant Churches’ equivalent of the Latin motet. It is a union of text and music composed for choir alone or with organ or other instruments. While hymns, Psalms, and canticles are often sung with the congregation at Trinity, anthems are the choirs’ unique offering in worship.

Canticle – a biblical song (*cantare* = sing). There are many instances in bible stories of people breaking out into song in response to God’s love. The best-known is probably the *Magnificat*, the song of Jesus’ mother, Mary. Sometimes canticles are set to elaborate music for choir, and offered in the manner of an anthem.

Hymn – poetry in praise of God and Saints. Hymns are coupled with tunes that match their metre and mood. While hymns are known by their first lines, the tunes have their own names, sometimes fancifully chosen from places in which their composer first conceived them.

Psalm – Hebrew poetry for singing, excerpts of which are used in every worship service. The Book of Psalms, found in the bible’s Old Testament, was essentially Jesus’ hymnal.

What forms of worship do we sing in?

Eucharist – a word coming from the Greek for “thanksgiving.” It is a worship service in which bread and wine are blessed and shared, as Jesus did with his disciples. It is also known as a service of Holy Communion. It is offered several times a week at Trinity, but with choir on Sundays at 9 a.m., 6 p.m., and at 11:15 a.m. on the first Sunday of the month.

Morning Prayer – a service of song, readings, and prayers to start the day. While it is intended to be a daily devotion supplemental to the Eucharist, some churches give it a prominent place among the public services offered on Sundays, i.e. 11:15 a.m. at Trinity most Sundays, with sermon.

Evensong – basically, the evening version of Morning Prayer. Choral Evensong, in which everything except the readings is sung by a choir, often in elaborate settings, is one of the treasures of the Anglican Church. We seek to offer this at Trinity on Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. during certain seasons.

Where are we?

Apse – in the Eastern-most end of our church building, the semi-circular wall behind the altar.

Chancel – the raised area toward the Eastern end of the church building, in which is found the altar and choir stalls and apse.

Narthex – a room spanning the Western-most end of the church building; a buffer zone between the Copley Square porch and the nave.

Nave – the main trunk of the church building where the congregation sit, so-called because in many church buildings it resembles an inverted ship’s hull (*navis* = Navy), and may be thought of as a vessel for safe passage, as in Noah’s ark.

Transepts – the two arms of the church building extending North and South from the central tower. Our transepts feature balconies with large seating capacity.

Trinity Church in the City of Boston
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