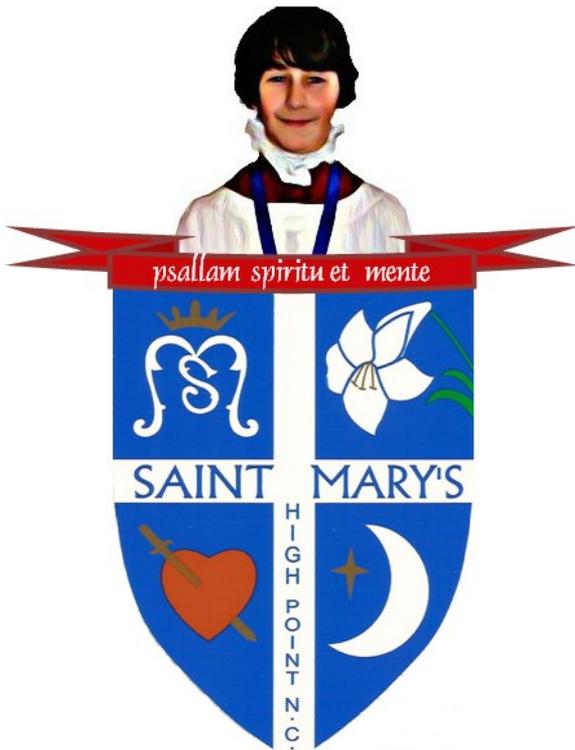


St. MARY'S CHOIR SCHOOL

Fact Sheet



What is St. Mary's Choir School?

The Choir School is an opportunity for young boys (from third grade through voice change) and young girls (from third grade through high school) who are dedicated to the pursuit of excellence in choral singing. The Choir School offers the opportunity to grow musically and socially within a fun-filled atmosphere. We give training in voice, music theory (music reading, harmony, and ear training), and citizenship. The choirs perform several times a year. The young singers are then able to return to other music making opportunities – whether in their own church or school choir, classroom, or music lessons – energized and enabled with their experiences and new skills.

Do the singers go to school there?

No, not quite. The Choir School is an extracurricular activity that does not replace or interfere with their traditional schooling.

Is this a community choir or a church choir?

Frankly, it is a bit of both. It is a community choir, in that young singers from around the Piedmont are welcome to participate. It is our vision to see that youth in our area are given the opportunity to excel, artistically singing high caliber choral music. St. Mary's sponsors the Choir School, offering rehearsal and performance space, administrative assistance, and the time of the choirmaster and his assistants. In return, the choirs will sing about once a month at St. Mary's, in addition to other performance opportunities. Music will be drawn from the vast sacred choral repertoire, as well as secular pieces. There is no expectation that choristers will become church members.

How will they be trained?

We incorporate the *Voice for Life* training scheme of the Royal School of Church Music (RSCM). In this training scheme, choristers work on five modules – vocal skills, music theory (visual and aural), repertoire, behavior, and citizenship – corporately within the rehearsals and performances and individually in workbooks.

When the choirmaster sees that the singer has completed a workbook, and he determines that the appropriate time has come, he administers an exam. Upon successful completion of the exam, the chorister is awarded an RSCM medal with a ribbon of appropriate color. These varying colors denote the current level of completion: Light Blue, Dark Blue, Red, and Yellow. Intermittent with these levels, some youth may choose to take other, more advanced exams at a regional center. This is not required, but is encouraged.

When will they rehearse?

Currently, Junior Girls rehearse Tuesdays from 4:30 to 5:30. Senior Girls rehearse Sundays from 3:00 to 4:00. Boys rehearse Wednesdays from 6:30 to 7:30.

We designed the schedule to accommodate busy family lives. As membership grows, we will offer each group of girls and boys times on Sundays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays so that you can choose rehearsal times that fit your schedule.

If admitted to the touring choir, a second rehearsal is required, again with flexibility of time.

Rehearsals begin and end on time, *en punto*.

It's hard enough to plan dinner on Wednesdays...

Each Wednesday, St. Mary's has a family dinner at 6:00. Rehearsals are coordinated so that you can count on dinner on Farriss Avenue, if life is getting hectic! The dinner is free with contributions welcomed (\$5).

Must my son or daughter attend each rehearsal and performance?

Certain issues may arise from time to time which may keep one from rehearsal. This is understood and anticipated. It is expected that singers will attend each rehearsal unless an unavoidable conflict arises.

It is further expected that singers arrive punctually. This expectation is ten-fold for performances. If a chorister is to miss a performance or a number of rehearsals, there should be a consultation with the choirmaster regarding her or his enrollment in the Choir School.

What if there is a conflict with school or sports?

This is partially contingent on the degree of conflict. An occasional conflict with a school play or with a soccer match is inevitable and acceptable. Consistent conflict with rehearsals (and absolutely with performances) necessitates choosing participation in one activity over the other. Speak with the choirmaster to work out a solution if you foresee any time-conflict arising.

What is the motto of the Choir School?

PSALLAM SPIRITU ET MENTE

is our motto. These words come from St. Paul: "I will sing with spirit and understanding." This underscores our emphasis on whole-hearted singing with an underpinning

of music theory, history, and each one's role in the community.

Who will lead the choir?

The choirmaster is Charles Hogan. He has significant experience in the training of young voices and building youth choirs and administered RSCM Summer Training Courses for several years. He acquired a Doctor of Musical Arts from the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from the University of Kentucky. He has taught at several colleges and performs recitals and workshops around the globe.

How much will this cost?

The cost is \$25 per month during the academic year. Additional costs revolve around touring possibilities, which will be supplemented by fundraising opportunities, so that the cost of the tour can be divided among the Choir School budget, the fundraiser, and participants. In return for their sponsorship, St. Mary's members have their monthly fees waived. Checks should be made payable to "St. Mary's Episcopal Church," with "Choir School" in the memo line.

What if I can't afford the choir?

Money neither should not nor will be a deciding factor of anyone's participation. Discreetly contact the choirmaster for information on scholarship funds.

Will the parents be involved?

There is a parent auxiliary, which acts as a booster organization for the choir. Your involvement in this group is strongly urged. The choirs are not only performing groups, but also communities. Your involvement in this community is involvement in your son's or daughter's life.

Is there to be travel?

Initially, we will focus on singing in Guilford County. Assured that quality will allow, we will venture in subsequent years to sing in other regions of our state, country, and beyond.

Are there summer opportunities?

Through the RSCM, week-long training courses offer musical mountaintop experiences. Music directors and other staff for these courses come from top programs for youth voices in the United States and Britain. There are courses for girls, boys, girls & boys, and advanced girls across North America. In our own backyard, a course for girls in Raleigh typically draws 40 – 50 girls, and a course in Charlotte typically draws 90+ boys and girls from across the USA.

How do I make contact?

You may contact the choirmaster by the following means:

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108 West Farriss Avenue
High Point, North Carolina 27262

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336-886-4756 x30

