

ALL SOULS'

EPISCOPAL CHURCH



CHOIR CUSTOMARY
2018-2019

1475 CATALINA BLVD. SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA

PREFACE

MUSIC is an integral part of All Souls' worship and offering to God, seeking to express what is otherwise inexpressible. In response to the Psalm, *Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness*, or its corollary, *Worship the Lord in the holiness of beauty*, we offer the best liturgical music possible respecting the intelligence, richness, and diversity of this congregation and surrounding community. Music at All Souls' relentlessly utilizes the uniqueness of our Anglican choral heritage to fill the hearts and minds with the glory of God as revealed through our Lord Jesus Christ.

This customary seeks to provide the fundamentals of service in the ministry of music at All Souls' Church. The guidelines are not intended to be rigid, but rather goals of consistency and professionalism toward which to strive. The more polished and confident the choir is, both in rehearsal and worship, the better it serves its purpose in worship, and the more satisfaction its members receive.

PURPOSE

The choir's foremost purpose is to offer praise to God through the blessed gift of music. Inherent in this goal is the uplifting of God's people in spirit and mind toward worship.

Of primary importance to the church choir is its role as leader, supporter, and teacher of the congregation, and as a model and teacher for the congregation in good liturgical and worship habits.

ATTENDANCE

Upon joining the choir at the beginning of each season, a high level of commitment is expected, including mutual respect and cooperation with your fellow choir members and the Director of Music. Ideally, each member's involvement is intended to cover an entire season, not just a portion thereof. The choir's season typically runs from the Thursday following Labor Day (September) through Trinity Sunday (usually late May or early June). Although a high-level percentage of attendance should remain the goal, it is understood that some personal or professional commitments outside of the choir may need to take precedence from time to time.

REHEARSALS

As the backbone of the choir, rehearsals should be considered extremely important and approached responsibly. The following will make better use of everyone's time and effort: consistent attendance, punctuality, and preparedness.

All singers should discuss with the Director of Music any conflict with a scheduled rehearsal so that adjustments to the seating and singing arrangements can be prepared beforehand. [*Conflicts should be notated on bulletin board calendar well in advance.*]

- Arrive for rehearsals and services with sufficient time to have all music in order as outlined on the board, or in the service leaflet.
- Unnecessary talking is disruptive to any rehearsal and should be kept to a minimum. Please strive to avoid any behavior that interferes with the flow of the rehearsal. In general, reserve all fellowship time for before or after the rehearsal.
- Good posture should be kept at all times, and when seated, please avoid crossing your legs as this constricts breath support.

- Upon missing a Thursday rehearsal, it is important to clear with the Director of Music in advance whether it is appropriate to sing with the choir on the following Sunday. It is also the singer's responsibility to receive from another member of the section any markings on music previously given in rehearsal.
- As a courtesy to others, perfumes and colognes should not be worn to rehearsals and services.
- Cell phones are not permitted in rehearsals. (*Emergencies are an exception.*)

MATERIALS

Each choir member is personally responsible for a number of items:

- Music should be handled carefully, marked only in pencil, and returned as soon as finished to the "music return" area (blue basket) for filing by the choir librarian on a weekly basis unless instructed otherwise.
- Folders should be kept up to date and free from unnecessary papers, leaflets, hard candies, throat lozenges, or anything that may likely drop noisily during the service.

VESTMENTS

The purpose of the vestment is to provide uniformity:

- Please be vested in black cassock *prior* to the service rehearsal (*Does not apply during periods of warm weather during which vesting will take place at conclusion of warm-up and rehearsal*).
- Additional adornment (hair ribbons, large and/or dangling earrings) by singers is discouraged.
- Black dress shoes are required (*Women: Black closed-toe shoes*).
- The cassock is worn buttoned to the top. Should the cassock not fit properly, please let the Director of Music know in order to find a solution.
- Each choir member should maintain his or her vestment on a regular basis. Vestments are machine washable and should be laundered regularly with like colors using cold water.
- Vestments should be hung neatly in the assigned location in the vesting rooms.

SERVICES

Singers are expected to attend the weekly Sunday 10.15 AM Choral Eucharist as well as the monthly Evensong on the 3rd Sunday of the month, as outlined in the Season Schedule. Each member will be given a copy of the entire season's schedule of services and rehearsals at the beginning of the season, which will also be posted in the choir room. As with rehearsals, any conflicts with scheduled services should be reported to the Director of Music as soon as they are known.

SERVICE GUIDELINES

Some guidelines of decorum include the following:

- Following the service rehearsal in the church, please leave quietly in respect of those already praying in the church. This includes the vesting area prior to assembling in the Chapel.
- Conversation should be held to a minimum while assembled in the Chapel, or any other gathering spot, and subsequently in the Narthex prior to the procession.
- Casual conversation is not appropriate during the service, or after the sounding of the bells prior to the service. The choir is in full view of the congregation, and its purpose is to enhance worship, not detract from it.

PROCESSIONS

While processions may begin from several points, several rules of thumb apply consistently:

- Normally, the choir processes in pairs following the Verger and Acolytes down the center aisle, thereafter splitting into a single file at the 'crossing' en route to the choir.
- Each pair of singers follows at two pews' length the pair preceding. The lead pair of singers should follow at three pews' length behind the Acolytes. Should the Crucifer and Torchbearers be inclined to process too rapidly, the first pair of leaders in the choir should not follow suit, but rather continue the procession at a comfortable and dignified pace. There is no need to 'catch up' to an overly hasty group of Acolytes. If the procession slows down, the choir should slow down and pace themselves accordingly, keeping the appropriate distance between them.
- When singing during a procession, the folder should be held securely, with both hands in front of the singer. In a silent procession, the folder is held in front of the singer in a diamond shape against the body secured by the arms, one hand grasping the wrist of the other (the 'Anglican clutch')

DURING THE SERVICE

Once in place after the procession, each singer is responsible for following the flow of the service.

- Remain attentive to leading service music and verbal responses.
- Please remain attentive to the correct postures of standing and sitting as outlined in the rubrics. Due to the lack of kneelers, the rubric 'to kneel' should generally be interpreted as 'stand'. In some cases, such as at the CONFESSIO and following the SANCTUS, it is the choir's custom to remain standing.
- All singers who have been baptized, regardless of denomination, are invited to receive Holy Communion.

- **CONCERNING COMMUNION:**
During most of the choir's season when the altar rails are in place, the choir will follow the Director of Music single file past the organ into the Narthex. Thereafter, assemble into pairs quietly then proceed down center aisle, with the first group of singers turning right single file at the crossing to take position at the communion rail. Thereafter, simply fill the rail as you see an open space. Once completed, return quietly to the choir.
- During periods of time when the altar rails are removed (*Eastertide*), proceed down center aisle in pairs and stop at first pew in preparation to receive Communion by station. Having received the host (bread), continue right for the chalice station then return quietly to the choir.
- When applicable, the choir sings the Anthem/Motet *after* receiving Communion.
- Cell phones, books and the like are not permitted during the service or before.

RETIRING PROCESSION

- Unless otherwise noted, the choir's retiring procession begins following the Dismissal.
- At the conclusion, the choir processes single file to the crossing, thereafter pairing. Once in pairs, the choir follows the Verger and Acolytes.
- Though the service has ended, the procession should remain stately, never awkward, never hurried.

REGULAR SERVICES & REHEARSALS

- Thursday Rehearsal: 7-9pm (Choir Room)
- Sunday Choral Eucharist: 10.15am
+ Pre-Service Rehearsal: 9-9.45am
- Evensong (3rd Sunday of the Month): 5pm
+ Pre-Service Rehearsal: 3.30-4.30pm

MUSIC STAFF

Dr. Ruben Valenzuela, *Director of Music & Organist*

Gaye Macy, *Choir Librarian (Cataloging)*

Ann Evans, *Choir Librarian (Circulation)*

STAFF SINGERS & CHORAL SCHOLARS

Anne-Marie Dicce, *Soprano*

Sarah-Nicole Carter, *Soprano/Alto*

Evangelina Woo, *Alto*

Brad Fox, *Tenor*

Phil Simon, *Interim Bass*

Libby Weber, *Choral Scholar*

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The Reverend Joseph Dirbas, *Rector*