

## **Senior Choir Guidelines 2009-2010**

Welcome to the Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church Senior Choir! Comprised of 120 adults, the Senior Choir sings twice every Sunday morning, from the beginning of September to mid-June. Rehearsals are held Thursday evenings from 7:00-8:30 PM with opportunities for small group ensembles and musical enrichment on selected Thursdays from 8:40 – 10:00 PM.

The Senior Choir sings more than 80 services each season, presenting over 175 anthems, from Bach to Brubeck. In addition, the choir presents two major concerts with orchestra each season in the Vespers series. Recent seasons have included Verdi's "Requiem," Berlioz's "Te Deum," Mozart's "C minor Mass," Brahms' "Requiem," Barber's "Prayers of Kierkegaard," and David Brubeck's "La Fiesta de la Posada," with the composer at the piano. Committed to new choral works, the choir has presented the world premiers of works by Tina Davidson, Alice Jordan, Amy Scurria, Rob Maggio, Jonathan Trumbull and Jeffrey Brillhart.

Seasoned travelers, the choir has toured Russia, Northern Ireland, Great Britain, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Brazil and Cuba. In June-July 2007 the choir traveled to S. Africa for performances in Johannesburg, Kwa Thema, Knysna, Capetown, Guguletu, and in Grahamstown with an acclaimed concert in the Grahamstown Arts Festival.

The Senior Choir has been featured at the national conventions of the [American Choral Director's Association](#) (1999) and The Hymn Society of America (1988). In January 2003, the Senior Choir made its debut with The Philadelphia Orchestra, under the direction of Bobby McFerrin.

### **Responsibilities of Members**

#### **Choir Commitment**

Choir members are expected to commit to one or both Sunday services and to maintain that commitment throughout the year. You may sing either or both services. If you sing both services, you may choose to leave the second service after the anthems have been sung, usually during the Doxology.

At the beginning of the choir season, we ask that you put your commitment in writing. Please consider your commitment carefully because we count on your presence. Indicate your preference on your Registration Form and put it in Stephanie's envelope on the bulletin board in the rehearsal room no later than September 20, 2009.

#### **Music**

The music librarians distribute music to the assigned numbered slots in the storage cabinets located in the Fine Arts Center (FAC). Check your music slot before each rehearsal for new music. You are responsible for your music until it has been returned and received by the librarians. You will be charged for any music that you do not return. Your music may be marked in PENCIL only. NEVER use a pen, highlighter, or marker. Do not "borrow" music that has

been assigned to another choir member; if you need a piece of music, speak to one of the librarians.

Music will be collected as soon as it has been performed unless the Director says otherwise. You may either place it in one of the baskets as you leave the choir loft or in the labeled boxes on top of the music storage cabinets. Also on top of the storage cabinets are boxes for music turned in “early” (prior to performance) and “late” (after music has been collected).

The Music Librarians for 2009-2010 are Sue Gibbons and Carolyn Gerrish.

### **Robes**

Be careful to ensure that you have selected the correct robe prior to the service and that it is returned to its proper numerical sequence in the robe closets before you leave. Your robe and stole can be washed in cold water and hung to dry. Robes are assigned by the Robe Coordinators. For 2009-2010 they are Marian McMullan and Kathy Shields. Do not “borrow” a robe; speak to Marian or Kathy.

### **Attendance**

Regular attendance at all rehearsals, warm-ups, and services is a critical part of your commitment to the choir. When a conflicting obligation requires that you miss a rehearsal or service, please sign out IN ADVANCE in the notebook on the table next to the music storage cabinets. If a conflict arises unexpectedly, you may call the Fine Arts Office during office hours at 610-525-2821 x. 8836. On weekends and during the evening, you may notify your Section Captain. Please note that messages left on the Fine Arts Office voicemail over the weekend WILL NOT be received until Monday morning. For last minute Sunday absences call Jeff’s cell phone 610-639-5515.

Each Sunday morning, there will be an attendance sheet at the top of the stairs before you enter the loft on which you will put a “checkmark” next to your name as being present. If you sing a service other than the one you committed to, simply add your name to the list and check yourself as being present.

If you miss four consecutive weeks of rehearsals and services without prior notification, it will be assumed that you have voluntarily dropped your choir membership. Reinstatement will require a vocal interview with the Director. A leave of absence for up to one year may be granted following a consultation with the Choir Director. A successful vocal interview with the Choir Director will be necessary for your return.

Newly auditioned members are required to attend a rehearsal before singing in a service.

### **Rehearsal/Warm-up**

Thursday rehearsals begin **promptly at 7:00 p.m.** (or earlier if specified on the choir schedule). Choir members are expected to be IN PLACE and READY TO SING at the starting time. Check your music slot for new music and the magnetic seating chart prior to the scheduled starting time. Remember to wear your nametag at every rehearsal, please.

If you miss two consecutive Thursday rehearsals, you may not sing on the following Sunday since you will not have had sufficient preparation time for the scheduled anthems. Any exceptions to this rule are solely at the discretion of the Director. Even if you have signed out for

a particular Sunday, you should plan to attend the rehearsal the previous Thursday since music for future Sundays and other events will also be scheduled for rehearsing.

Sunday morning warm-ups are essential preparation for the worship service but do not replace a Thursday rehearsal. Warm-ups begin at the following times:

**8:40** a.m. in the choir loft for those singing the 9:30 a.m. or both services

**10:30** a.m. in the FAC for those singing the 11:00 a.m. service ONLY

Be sure to check the calendar for warm up times for special services or events.

### **Other Important Information**

#### **Soundings**

*Soundings*, the choir's weekly newsletter, will be distributed electronically every Monday. There will be paper copies available on top of the piano for those who do not have email or cannot open the electronic file. The current issue of *Soundings* will also be accessible through the fine arts website at <http://www.bmpcfinearts.org/news.html>. If you would like to submit information to be included in *Soundings*, please email submissions to Stephanie at [StephanieSpeakman@bmpc.org](mailto:StephanieSpeakman@bmpc.org). The deadline for submissions is Thursday by noon.

#### **Emergency Cancellation Procedure**

If a rehearsal must be cancelled due to inclement weather, or for some other reason, the Fine Arts Administrator will send out an e-mail to everyone on the e-mail list and call each Section Captain. Check your e-mail both at home and at work. A message will also be posted on the fine arts website ([www.bmpcfinearts.org](http://www.bmpcfinearts.org)). Singers without access to e-mail will be called by their Section Captains. If in doubt, feel free to call the Fine Arts Office (610-525-2821 x. 8836) or your Section Captain. If the church switchboard is closed, you will hear a recorded announcement of cancellations.

#### **Sunday Service**

Parking for Sunday BMPC activities is available at Harcum College and the Baldwin School. The Harcum lot, located behind the building that is directly across Montgomery Avenue from BMPC, is accessible from Pennswood Road (near the railroad bridge) or Montgomery Avenue; both entrances are marked by a purple Harcum sign. The Baldwin lot, which is located behind the main Baldwin building, can be accessed from Radnor Street (the road behind BMPC). If you are physically able to walk the distance from either the Harcum lot or the Baldwin lot, please use one of these parking areas on Sunday mornings so that those who are less mobile can park closer to the church. Be careful crossing Montgomery Avenue when the crossing guard is not present!

While in the choir loft please maintain a sense of reverence. Refrain from shuffling papers, talking (including whispering), as the sound carries to those who are entering the Sanctuary, especially now that the acoustics have been improved. If you leave the choir loft after warm-up, you must be back in your seat 5 minutes before the prelude begins.

The service begins with the prelude. Out of respect for fellow worshipers, both in the congregation and in the choir loft, refrain from talking during the service. This includes the time

during the prelude and the postlude, as it can be very distracting to whoever is playing. If you leave or enter the choir loft during the service you should create as little disturbance as possible.

Unless a hymn is set in unison or unless requested to sing all verses in unison by the Director, the choir should sing the first and last verses in unison and the remaining verses in parts.

Between services, coffee, tea, and donuts are available in the FAC Kitchen until about 10:50 a.m. Please DO NOT take cups to the choir loft. Kindly leave the requested small payment for coffee and donuts in the tin provided to defray expenses.

Neither drinks nor food are allowed in the choir loft.

### **Perfumes and scents**

In consideration of other choir members, especially those with allergies, do not use any perfume or perfumed cosmetics, cologne, scented hair spray, shaving lotions, or other scented products when you are rehearsing or singing with the choir.

### **Publicity and Ticket Sales for Concerts**

We have found that one of the most successful forms of publicity for our concerts is word of mouth publicity coming from the performers themselves. You are encouraged to tell your families, friends, and neighbors about the musical offerings at BMPC, and your reward is a full and responsive audience of people coming to hear the music that you will work hard to prepare throughout the year. You may also be asked to sell tickets to any ticketed event planned for the year.

### **Sunshine Fund/Social Events**

The choir maintains an account, called The Sunshine Fund, which is used to reach out to choir members who are ill, recuperating, or to express sympathy at the loss of a family member. If you become aware of a member in need of a caring gesture, contact the member care coordinator, Ellen Anderson or the Fine Arts Administrator, Stephanie Speakman, who will relay the information. The Sunshine Fund is also used to defray the costs of special Choir social events. Traditionally there is a formal party around Twelfth Night, usually held on the first Friday in January, and a Choir Picnic, normally scheduled for the afternoon of the last two-service Sunday in June.

And as the words of the hymn in the Fine Arts Window say:

*When in our Music God is Glorified  
And adoration leaves no room for pride  
It is as though the whole creation cried  
Alleluia*

## Important Numbers/Addresses

Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church

625 Montgomery Avenue, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010

Phone: 610-525-2821

Fax: 610-525-9476

Church Website: [www.bmpc.org](http://www.bmpc.org)

Fine Arts Website: [www.bmpcfinearts.org](http://www.bmpcfinearts.org)

Fine Arts E-mail: [StephanieSpeakman@bmpc.org](mailto:StephanieSpeakman@bmpc.org)

### Choir Staff

Jeffrey Brillhart, Director of Music and Fine Arts

610-525-2821 x. 8834

[Jeffrey398@aol.com](mailto:Jeffrey398@aol.com)

James Batt, Associate Director of Fine Arts Ministries

610-525-2821 x. 8835

[JamesBatt@bmpc.org](mailto:JamesBatt@bmpc.org)

Stephanie Speakman, Program Assistant for Fine Arts Administration

610-525-2821 x. 8836

[StephanieSpeakman@bmpc.org](mailto:StephanieSpeakman@bmpc.org)

### 2009-2010 Choir Officers

President	Brenda Oliphant
Vice President	Tom East
Secretary	Joyce Shumaker
Treasurer	Jane Allison
Member Care Coordinator	Ellen Anderson
Librarian	Sue Gibbons
Assistant Librarian	Carolyn Gerrish
Robe Keeper	Marian McMullan
Asst. Robe Keeper	Kathy Shields
Attendance	Craig Meyer
Choir Care	Jan Lange and Jean Taylor
Photographer	Bill Kemmerer
Historian	Lois Powell
Coffee and Donuts	Al Willoughby
Asst. Coffee and Donuts	Barbara Cobb
Social Coordinators	Ginny Smith and Carol Boslet

### Section Captains

Soprano I	Jennifer Riley
Soprano II	Carol Dahl
Alto I	Lauren Meyer
Alto II	Paula Adelhelm
Tenor	Craig Meyer
Bass I	Dave Lander
Bass II	John Calder