

# **General Audition Information for the Boys Choir and the Girls Choir**

## ***Trinity Episcopal Church on the Green, New Haven***

### **Are the Boys and Girls Choirs actually one group, or two?**

The Trinity Boys and Girls Choirs rehearse and sing as distinct groups. The Trinity Choir of Men and Boys was founded in 1885 and has sung continuously at services at Trinity and in the wider community – it is the seventh oldest choir of Men and Boys of its kind in the nation. The Trinity Men and Girls Choir is singing its first year of services and other appearances in the 2003-2004 season (academic year). The Boys sing (along with the Alto Tenor and Bass Men) most Sundays of the academic year, generally at the 11 am Sunday service and, occasionally, at 5 pm Evensongs. The Girls (along with their Alto, Tenor and Bass adults) sing at either the 9 or 11 am services, or at 5 pm Evensongs, and, like the Boys, sing most Sundays of the academic year. On some Sundays, there is more than one choir per service!

On Sundays, and at many other choir appearances, the Boys Choir and the Girls Choir function as the soprano part of a full SATB group, that is, there will be adults singing alto, tenor and bass with them to allow for a wider variety of music, and for a positive musical influence on the younger singers. This has been the case with the (Men and) Boys Choir since its beginning, and has proved to be an invaluable part of the experience.

Both the Boys and Girls choirs also function as groups that sing alone (that is, without the adult singers). This is especially true if the choirs are “on the road” (at events outside of the Sunday morning or afternoon church services).

### **Who is eligible for an audition?**

Boys and girls do not have to be members of Trinity, nor of any particular faith, to audition for the choirs. We are looking for young people who have a natural voice and a musical “ear”, that is, those who can clearly sort differences in notes that they hear. Previous musical training or singing experience is NOT required for audition or membership.

We must also look for families that will strongly support the membership of their child, by assuring the child’s regular attendance at choir rehearsals, services and concerts, and by being active members of the parents organization that supports the choir of which their child is a member, just like the organizations that support scouts, sports, etc.

We generally audition boys who will be entering grade 4 as of the following Fall (or grade 3 for those more mature for their age) and girls who will be entering grades 4 through 8 as of the following Fall. Exceptions for children older and younger are indeed made on a case-by-case basis.

### **How are auditions arranged?**

Auditions are arranged when the parent or school music teacher contacts the Director of Music to arrange an initial audition. The student’s school music teacher may recommend that the parent make this call. Many members of the Trinity Boys Choir and Girls Choir have become involved after their school music teacher urged their parent(s) to have them audition – at the outset, many parents have expressed surprise that their child was known to the teacher as a singer! It is possible to do this initial audition in the student’s school, but school auditions are held only if the schoolteacher, school administration, and parents of children being heard are informed in advance that the choirmaster is coming to hear their child, and after they have given their permission for this to happen. There are several advantages to a school audition, and we do ask for these when possible - the parents do not

have to find a time to bring the singer to Trinity after school, and the choirmaster can actually hear more students in a single visit.

If the school audition process is not possible for some reason, then parents can call the Choirmaster to set up an appointment at Trinity. For auditions at Trinity, the parent(s) bring the singer to Trinity at a mutually agreeable time, and are most welcome to observe the actual audition and ask questions at that time. The Director of Music can also obtain (from schoolteachers or other interested parties) the name and email/number of the parents of potentially eligible boys and girls, and contact them to make an appointment for an audition at Trinity. Many parents of the Trinity Boys and Girls first hear of the choirs in this manner.

### **What preparation is required for an audition?**

No prepared music is necessary for the audition, which consists of singing voice patterns chosen by the choirmaster, and tests of the ear such as matching given pitches, and finding pitches in a chord. No music reading is required, but often a short word reading sample is given to test reading ability, self-assuredness, and general reading perception. At the audition, every effort is made to communicate this clearly with each child, to prevent undue disappointment or misunderstanding.

### **How is auditioning done?**

The child is asked to sing a few simple note patterns or scales, and is asked to sing *Happy Birthday*, a song known to all. The whole process only takes a few minutes, with time for questions from singer and parent afterward. If the Director of Music feels that the child might be a good match for the choir, he will be honest with the children and/or parents at that time. It is important that the parent also talk with a current choirparent to find their perspective on the life and schedule of the choir. After consideration on both sides, an informed decision can be made.

### **What happens if the singer is offered a spot in the choir?**

Many auditions are done for membership effective the following academic season, and others are done during the course of the year, having the child join as a Novice right away. The Director of Music and parent will work together on getting the child assimilated into the schedule.

If the child will begin at the beginning of the academic year, we ask that they attend the choir camp provided for the choirs. We do understand that sometimes summer plans are already made before the audition, and that the child may not be available for camp that summer. That does not keep the child from beginning with the choir in September. The Girls Choir generally attends camp during the first week of August, and the Boys Choir the second week of August, allowing the singers and staff almost six days together, with a picnic for all families on Saturday. Novices, however, generally do not attend the entire week, but join on Wednesday afternoon through Saturday. Both choirs attend camp at the Incarnation Center in Ivoryton, CT, an American Camping Association accredited camp, using both choir and camp staff.

### **What is the general schedule of the choirs?**

The Boys Choir rehearses on Wednesdays from 5:00-7:00 pm (with an hour overlap with their adults at 6:00 pm), and on Fridays from 4:30-7:30 pm (including dinner at the church on an average of three out of four Fridays). The Girls Choir rehearses on Tuesdays from 4:45-6:30 pm and on Thursday from 4:45-7:00 pm (with an hour overlap with their adult singers at 6:00 pm). The Girls have

occasional meals together on Tuesday nights, scheduled in advance, with a simultaneous social time for the parents.

**As a parent or teacher, how do I arrange an audition for my child/student?**

Please email the Director of Music, Walden Moore, in the Trinity Music Office ([wmoore@trinitynewhaven.org](mailto:wmoore@trinitynewhaven.org)) or call the Music Office at 203-776-2616. Please do not call the Trinity Parish Office, as the Choirmaster's office is in a separate building, and doesn't share a phone exchange with the Parish Office. Email is the preferred method of communication, as it gives us a written record of information exchanged. If you schedule an audition at Trinity, you will find directions to the church at the end of this information.

We hope that this information helps – please let us know if we can help you in other ways. If you'd like a little more information on the music program and the church, please visit our website at [www.trinitynewhaven.org](http://www.trinitynewhaven.org).

R. Walden Moore  
Director of Music  
Trinity Church, New Haven

mailing address:  
Trinity Parish Office  
950 Chapel Street – 2<sup>nd</sup> floor  
New Haven, CT 06510  
email <[wmoore@trinitynewhaven.org](mailto:wmoore@trinitynewhaven.org)>  
(203) 776-2616 (office voice, 24 hours)  
(203) 777-9499 (fax)

## **DIRECTIONS TO TRINITY CHURCH ON THE GREEN - NEW HAVEN**

**for use by choir auditionees and their families**

**FROM I-91 SOUTH (coming from Hartford), take Exit 3 (Trumbull Street). \* At the end of the ramp, go straight to your third traffic light (including the one at the end of the ramp). Turn left onto Temple Street. Continue straight on Temple Street through two traffic lights (corner of Temple & Elm Streets), at which point you will see the New Haven Green with three churches on your right. Drive down Temple Street past the two brick-and-white churches; Trinity Church is the dark brown stone church, the last church on your right, just before the corner of Temple and Chapel Streets.**

**FROM I-95 NORTH (coming from New York), at New Haven follow the signs to I-91 North (Hartford) and get off at Exit 3 (Trumbull Street). Continue from \* above.**

**Parking is generally available on the “apron” area directly in front of the church. Please enter the church via the center set of doors on Temple Street, unless there is a sign that indicates otherwise. When you are thru the first set of interior doors, turn right, right again, and go down the stairs to the area beneath the main church known as the “Undercroft”. The Choirmaster will greet you there at the appointed time.**

**Should you need to call prior to your audition (in the days leading up to it, or even just before), please call the Music Office number (203) 776-2616.**