



## CHORISTER TRAINING PROGRAM

### **I. APPRENTICE SINGER**

Young singers in the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> grade may enter the Chorister Training Program as an APPRENTICE SINGER. Apprentice Singers attend the Thursday evening choir rehearsal from 6:00-6:45 p.m. They concentrate on learning how to produce a good sound and developing their “musical ear.”

### **II. JUNIOR SINGER** (Blue Cassock)

When the singer is ready to begin participating in the Sunday service on a very limited basis (usually 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> grade), they are promoted to JUNIOR SINGER. Depending on their age and level of musical development, they may be invited to attend church as an observer at first, and then later as a participant for portions of the service. Junior Choristers attend Thursday rehearsals from 6:00-7:00 p.m.

### **III. JUNIOR CHORISTER** (White Surplice)

Once a singer is ready to participate in the entire service, they become a JUNIOR CHORISTER (usually 4<sup>th</sup> grade or above). Junior Choristers are able to follow their part and instructions (dynamics, ritards, etc.) in the musical score. They sing in church approximately once a month, processing with the full choir and participating in hymns and service music. Depending on the difficulty of the music, they may be invited to participate in some anthems and psalm settings. Junior Choristers attend Thursday rehearsals from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. and begin receiving a small stipend based on the system of merit points explained at the end of this document.

### **IV. CHORISTER** (Light Blue Ribbon)

CHORISTERS receive their RSCM medallion and blue ribbon once they have mastered the basics of reading music and have a strong ear that allows them to learn music quickly. Choristers sing in church approximately twice per month and participate in the full liturgy including anthems and psalm settings. Rehearsals are Thursdays from 6:30-8:30 p.m. and Choristers are expected to attend additional private or small group training sessions. Their stipend amount is increased and they are given additional opportunities to earn merit points.

### **V. ADVANCED CHORISTER** (Dark Blue Ribbon)

The ADVANCED CHORISTER has developed a higher level of ability in reading music at sight and has greater skill with their voice. They are expected to have a strong knowledge of solfeggio, intervals, and be able to sing simple vocal solos. They rehearse on Thursdays 6:30-8:30 p.m., have private vocal coaching, and sing in church approximately twice per month.

### **VI. SENIOR CHORISTER** (Red Ribbon)

SENIOR CHORISTERS have not only become excellent choir members with strong musical and vocal skills, but they have developed strong leadership skills as well, both in worship, and in mentoring the younger choristers. Rehearsals are on Thursdays from 6:30-8:30 p.m.

## VII. CHORAL SCHOLAR (Yellow Ribbon)

It is rare for singers to reach the level of CHORAL SCHOLAR. Those who do have developed a profession level of musical and vocal skills, a strong understanding of music theory, strong confidence as a soloist, and are able to conduct the choir, both in rehearsal and in performances in church. Choristers who reach the level of Choral Scholar are ideal candidates to enter a music school or conservatory should they choose music as a career path.

### CHORISTER STIPENDS

In the Royal School of Music tradition, a small stipend, based on leadership and performance, is paid each chorister in levels III and above, underscoring the seriousness of the commitment to the choir. The amount of the singer's stipend is based on the MERIT POINT system indicated below. The amount they receive for each merit point depends on their level of achievement. Additional honor points may be awarded by the Director.

### MERIT POINTS

Choristers in levels III and above receive "STANDARD" MERIT POINTS for the following:

- 1 point for each rehearsal
- 1 point for each service
- 1 point for each additional individual or small group training session
- 1 point for each time they serve as a leader in a younger children's choir rehearsal or Children's Chapel
- 1 or more point for assisting with choir setup and music library

The Director can also award additional discretionary "HONOR" POINTS for the following:

- Punctuality and consistent attendance
- Outstanding performance and leadership
- Advancement to the next chorister level
- Singers may receive honor points for other special activities agreed upon in advance with the Director.

Singers may also have points REMOVED for unexcused absences, tardiness and poor behavior

### BECOMING A CHORISTER

Children (or their parents) who are interested in participating in the SsAM Chorister Training Program are encouraged to contact Director David Christopher at the church office (302-367-6550) or at [Dchristopher@ssam.org](mailto:Dchristopher@ssam.org) to arrange a meeting and a time to visit a rehearsal.



### ROYAL SCHOOL OF CHURCH MUSIC

RSCM America is the branch of the Royal School of Church Music in the United States. Our goal is to uplift the spiritual life of our communities through high quality choral music. We provide musical education to singers through a structured choral music program and summer music courses. We provide support to music directors through an organizational forum which facilitates the exchange of knowledge and ideas.