

HISTORY

The Parish of Christ's Church is currently observing its 319th year of worship and witness in the County of Westchester, the State of New York. We are one of the most ancient churches in the USA, founded in 1695 and granted a Royal Charter by King George III shortly before the Revolution of 1776. Parish records indicate that choirs were present in some form from the beginning, but it was not until the latter half of the nineteenth century that an organized choir began to be a permanent feature at Divine Worship.

Until the 1980's, the Christ's Church Choir was made up of a large group of boys (at times numbering over fifty). This choir gained national recognition in the 1950's when services from Christ's Church were broadcast on NBC. There was also a girl's choir, and one of adults. In the waning years of last century, this rich musical fabric sadly and slowly faded. Since the Millennium however, our choirs have enjoyed new growth and excellence, with a new chorister program established and a thriving adult section, drawing singers from three states. The choir has since toured the US and England, recorded three CD's, all whilst aiming to offer sacred music to the highest professional standards each week.

WHO WE ARE

The Christ's Church Choir is established on the principals of musical excellence, professionalism, self discipline, and social development, and seeks to offer a first-class

musical education to boys and girls in grade 2 to 8 so that they can render sacred choral music to the highest professional standards in Divine Worship. The choir sings the music of the greatest classical composers of the past 500 years, such as Palestrina, Byrd, Tallis, Mendelssohn, and Stanford. Choir membership also offers the chance for a thorough grounding in musical theory and history, as well as church history and vocal training.

REQUIREMENTS

Open Houses are held in May and September, although auditions may be held throughout the year and require no preparation. No prior musical experience is necessary, though older applicants (fifth grade or beyond) should have some prior musical training (piano, school choir, etc).

The most important requirement is an unwavering commitment of time, and steadfast attendance at rehearsals and services.

OUR PROGRAM

Choristers are divided into four skill levels: Novice, Probationer, Junior, and Senior. To progress, certain skill levels, both musical and otherwise, must be achieved. Choristers are awarded medals according to their current standing in the choir.

At the Sunday choral service the choristers sing with the adult members of the Christ's Church Choir. A deep and abiding love for music, vocal proficiency, and strong, supportive friendships remain with the children. A willingness to work hard and concentrate is rewarded by a great sense of accomplishment.

We are indeed fortunate to be supported by one of the world's leading choral directors, Katherine Dienes-Williams, Director of Music at Guildford Cathedral (UK), who leads an annual workshop with the choristers.

COST

There is no cost to join the Christ's Church Choir. In fact, choristers receive a monthly attendance allowance which increases as children progress through the choir. Similar quantity and quality of musical tuition is worth in excess of \$5,000. The chorister program is available to any boy or girl willing to make the commitment of time and steadfast excellence.

SUCSESSES

Graduates of our program have had notable successes in recent years. Mr Justin Giallorenzo was accepted into the choir of Lincoln Cathedral (UK), the first American undergraduate ever to do so, and Mr Simon Riker has recently returned as a professional bass singer in the choir.

TRIPS

For choristers of appropriate age, a week-long Choir Camp is held at Christ's Church. The Choristers prepare music for the coming year and have the opportunity to take part in daily trips and activities. Several times each year, the choir undertakes trips to visit and sing in other churches or cathedrals. We toured the United Kingdom in 2008 and our next tour to the UK is scheduled for the summer of 2018.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Are rehearsals and services optional?

A: No. It is understood that every chorister will attend rehearsals each week, however, once in a while, a chorister may be excused from rehearsals for exceptional circumstances and with adequate notice.

Q: Do the choristers sing every Sunday?

A: Nearly. The choristers sing approximately two Sundays a month. If there is a school holiday (like Columbus Day, for example) the choristers have the Sunday off. The Sundays after Easter and Christmas are days off as well.

The Junior and Senior choristers also sing the evening Office of Evensong following rehearsal on certain Wednesdays.

Q: Is being a chorister any fun?

A: Of course! While it is expected that each chorister will work hard and concentrate

during rehearsals and services, the hard work pays off with the satisfaction of a job well done, choir camps, festivals and trips. There is a 10 minute play break during rehearsals where the choristers play on the green in front of church!

Q: I'm not a member of Christ's Church. Is that a problem?

A: We welcome people of all faiths, or none at all. While choristers lead the worship through music, & church history and liturgy are part of the program, choristers and their families are not required to become members of the church.

ANOTHER BENEFIT

The **ONLY** activity where children take part equally with adults

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Mr. Ruaraidh Sutherland (*Director of Music*) moved to Rye and Christ's Church in September 2011 from the UK, where he has held church posts at St Mary's Collegiate Church, Warwick and Edinburgh's Episcopal Cathedral. He is an honors graduate of the University of Edinburgh and a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists (UK)

Mr. Nathan Repasz (*Music Assistant*) is a music graduate of Wesleyan University and a staff-singer in the Christ's Church Choir.



The Boy and Girl Choristers of the Christ's Church Choir

Recruitment 2016-17 academic year

Christ's Church, Rye Rectory Street
Rye, NY 10580

Organist & Director of Music
Ruaraidh Sutherland, FRCO

914-967-1749 x229 or music@ccrye.org