



Holy Trinity Music Ministries

ENGAGING worshipers in
ENCOUNTERING Christ for
EVANGELIZING ourselves and others
THROUGH MUSIC

HANDBOOK FOR MUSIC MINISTERS

Organists and Pianists

Cantors/Psalmists

Choirs/Ensembles

(Chorale, Folk Choir, Bells of Joy)

Other Instrumentalists

Holy Trinity Catholic Church

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WHY A “HANDBOOK”?

Even within the largest, most well developed music ministries, our service to the liturgy can become routine—more of a habitual task than a continually reflective, informed, and intentional self-offering. This handbook is not meant to be a comprehensive guide for all music ministries, but rather an occasion to review ministry highlights and raise awareness regarding some of our current practices here at Holy Trinity.

Two recently published and very readable resources are available to supplement this material, and are highly recommended:

Guide for Music Ministers [GFMM], second edition, Jennifer Kerr Breedlove and Paul Turner. Archdiocese of Chicago, IL: Liturgy Training Publications, 2010, *The Liturgical Ministry Series*, \$6.95

Guide for Cantors [GFC], second edition, Jennifer Kerr Breedlove and Paul Turner. Archdiocese of Chicago, IL: Liturgy Training Publications, 2014, *The Liturgical Ministry Series*, \$6.95.

These books can be ordered online at:

<http://www.ltp.org/s-13-the-liturgical-ministry-series.aspx>

Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship, the U.S. bishops’ most recent document on liturgical music, is available online (left sidebar) at:

<http://www.htlenexa.org/holytrinity-music>

MUSIC MINISTRIES—ENGAGING/ENCOUNTERING/EVANGELIZING

What is it, besides (of course) attention to the words we sing, that makes the music we hear and do at Mass different from the music we hear and do elsewhere in our lives? Even before we consider the *what*, it is well to consider the *why*. Only after some reflection on the nature, purpose, and role of music within the liturgy do the *when*, the *where*, the *who*, and the *how* become clearer.

Paul Turner, priest of the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, MO writes, “ Music is not just something *in* the liturgy; it is *of* the liturgy.” (GFMM, 7, see above) “Within the liturgy . . . when words are to be sung, music enhances the text. . . . Music involves people. . . . Music sets a mood. . . . Music creates beauty. . . . Whenever we encounter beauty, we encounter an attribute of God. . . . Music is a sign of civilization, an endowment for society, and a doorway into the presence of God.” (GFMM, 6-7) Music *belongs* in the liturgy.

Music belongs in the liturgy because it arises from within the public and communal nature of the liturgy itself—words, actions, calendar, lectionary—the *what*, here listed in the order of “Progressive Solemnity” (prioritized) as outlined in paragraphs 110-155 of the U.S. bishops’ music document *Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship* (hereafter abbreviated STL; see above for websites):

- 1) The priest-celebrant and the assembly sing actual liturgical dialogues (e.g., “The Lord be with you” “And with your spirit”).
- 2) Acclamations arise from the whole gathered assembly as assents to God’s Word and action (*Gospel Acclamation, Holy, Memorial Acclamation, Amen*).
- 3) Psalms and antiphons proclaim scripture (responsorial psalms) and may also accompany the two most important liturgical processions— at the entrance and at communion.
- 4) Other refrains and responses (“Lord, Have Mercy,” “Lamb of God,” response to Prayers of the Faithful) may be sung as appropriate.
- 5) In addition to the “Glory to God” and other hymns or spiritual songs, choral anthems or reflective instrumentals can musically reinforce calendar- and lectionary-based biblical themes at appropriate times in the liturgy.

Music elevates the “stuff” of liturgy to a higher level (at the *when* and the *where*), and becomes a window through which we are able not only to glimpse, but to come into actual contact with, the triune God. When best practices are employed, liturgical music can become *sacramental*.



If this is the nature and possibility of liturgical music, then the role of liturgical music ministers (the *who*) clearly assumes a place of great importance to our faith. If music is organic to liturgy, and if the Eucharistic liturgy is the “source and summit” of the Christian life, then *musical liturgy*, in which music is seamlessly and artfully wed to liturgical texts and actions, has the potential to draw actively participating clergy, liturgical ministers and assembly into a most profound experience of the mysteries we celebrate—a depth of experience that already exists within the liturgy itself and to which we are already invited. Music can do this only if liturgical musicians understand their role as one of “servant leadership,” using our God-given talents and gifts to point to the God beyond ourselves (the *how*), and not to give in to the temptation to showcase our own talents or the music itself. Although musicians may serve in various roles within the liturgy, “The first and most obvious role of music ministry is *to assist the assembly with finding its own voice*—to empower the people with whom you worship how to express their faith with the music they carry within. ... Every time you stand up to sing or play, your primary goal and function is *to support the song of the assembly.*” (GFMM, 25-26, emphasis added)

This represents both an art and a difficulty. Liturgical musicians are not only called to servant leadership, we are called to excellence (defined as our personal best) and beauty as well. Balancing these sometimes divergent goals requires humility and continuous musical and spiritual practice. All liturgical music ministry decisions (the *what, when, where, who, and how*) flow from the nature of our baptismal call to nurture others into mature faith in Christ through appropriately chosen, placed, and executed liturgical music (the *why*). By both striving for our personal best in musical skill and being humble in service, music ministers are truly formers of faith—we are participants in God’s ongoing creation and models of the Gospel who announce God’s good news through music.

ORGANISTS AND PIANISTS: LEADERS OF THE ASSEMBLY'S SONG

Musical leadership (N.B.: not “accompaniment”) at almost every liturgy is provided by either an organist or a pianist, whether partnered with a cantor or with other instrumentalists and vocalists in an ensemble. Because keyboard instruments, especially the (pipe) organ (STL, ¶87-88), are particularly suited for leading congregational song, liturgical organists and pianists have a great responsibility. Their primary liturgical role—and that of *any* instrumentalists/ensembles—is to lead and support singing without dominating or overpowering it. (STL, ¶41) Keyboardists, not cantors, set and sustain congregational tempos and breathe life into the words that congregations sing. They may offer preludes and postludes. They may improvise (e.g. after the song at the Preparation of the Altar or during Communion) if the congregation’s song ends before the liturgical action that it supports is completed. “Ultimately, it is the person at the keyboard who has the ability to shape the music within a liturgy and make it ‘work.’” (GFMM, 33-34)

Rhythm

Perhaps the most important technical requirement needed for keyboardists to be effective leaders of congregational song is to maintain rhythmic consistency. The tempo of introduction should be the SAME as the tempo of the hymn/psalm refrain/mass part being introduced. If the keyboardist holds the last chord of the introduction or verse beyond the written note values, this time should be metered and predictable.

Otherwise, the beat is simply lost in the *ad libitum* extension, and no one—cantor, assembly, bell choir, etc.—really knows when the singing will begin or what the tempo will be. This issue is compounded if the keyboardist slows down the last phrase of the



introduction or takes a *ritardando* at the end of every verse. Such tempo stretching is best saved for the final phrase just before the song ends. If you’re not sure whether you are a source of renegade tempo stretching—try recording your practice session for later listening, or practice a few times with the metronome (sometimes affectionately called “Mr. Beat”) that is kept on the organ console. The playback is an objective (and private) source of feedback.

Once the assembly begins singing, try to maintain the tempo of the introduction. While it’s tempting to slow down, the assembly actually expects to sing at the same tempo they have just heard. If keyboardists (and/or cantors) listen only to the delayed sound coming through the speakers, chances are the tempo will begin to drag.

Intending the beat and tempo mentally *before* notes are played, rather than reacting to the sound *after* notes are played, effectively reduces the likelihood of tempo drag, and better supports congregational singing. It’s also best to communicate and rehearse any final-measure extensions or between-verse interludes with the cantor or ensemble beforehand, so that all breathe together, and there are no surprises in the middle of Mass.

Volume

Because liturgical pianists are leaders, your hymn and service music sound should be full and confident. Do not depend on the piano microphones to amplify your sound for you. The piano may sound really loud from your vantage point, but you are seated directly in front of the sound source. The Holy Trinity sanctuary is quite large, with many acoustical challenges. Play out, pianists! Exceptions are when the cantor/psalmist is singing solo, as on the verses of the responsorial psalm, the verse between the Gospel alleluias, or on the cantor verses of some Communion songs/psalms. The best practice (and the best aural cue for the congregation) would be for the pianist to play more softly when the cantor is singing alone, and increase the volume when it's time for the congregation to sing. This can be accomplished by a decrescendo before the cantor parts, and a crescendo between the cantor's part and the congregation's entrance. Organists may accomplish this same goal by setting softer stops (e.g. Flutes 8' and 4' on the Choir manual, uncoupled) for the cantor parts, and a fuller registration (e.g. Principals 8', 4', 2', and perhaps Mixtures on Swell and Great manuals, coupled with Swell to Great 8') for the assembly's song.

Melody

Most assemblies also feel more supported in singing when they hear their melody stand out above the harmonic accompaniment. Remember, the keyboardist is the primary leader of congregational song. In much of the current Catholic hymnal repertoire, the congregation's part is not doubled (sometimes it's nowhere to be found) within the accompaniment. The pastoral keyboardist should find a way to incorporate that tune into the keyboard part, and (if a pianist) to put more arm weight into the melodic notes or (if an organist) to "solo out the melody" on a louder manual or solo stop on some verses, so that the congregation's notes stand out over and above the rest of the accompaniment notes. Hymn accompaniments written primarily for the piano can be modified for playing on the organ, and vice versa. With a bit of thought and practice, and taking advantage of available local resources (hymn playing workshops, diocesan scholarships for organ lessons, or your local music director☺), developing these skills really is within the realm of possibility.

Some congregational songs have multiple verses (e.g. "I Am the Bread of Life" or "I Danced in the Morning"), with each verse setting a different number of syllables to the same melodic contour. With hymns such as these, the challenge for the keyboardist is not only to project the melodic notes, but also to play the notes that exactly match the syllables of each verse. If it's likely that all verses will be sung, keyboardists need to take the time to practice all the verses, even talking or singing through each one while playing, in order to have a clear sense of how best to capture the syllabic rhythm accurately on each verse.

Movement, Preparation, Cues

Keyboardists who move back and forth between the piano and organ by timing their movements to coincide with the movement of other liturgical ministers create less visual distraction, e.g. by moving from the organ to the piano for the psalm at the same

time that the lector approaches the ambo for the first reading. In our sanctuary, it is also probably less distracting for keyboardists to remain seated on the bench during the Eucharistic Prayer (than to try to kneel), and to turn slightly if necessary, so that you face the altar during the spoken portions of that prayer.

Please at least communicate with, and rehearse as needed with your assigned cantor during the week prior to your scheduled Mass. Plan to meet with the cantor in the Social Room (not in the church) one half hour before Mass to discuss and practice all musical cues, and to alleviate the need for verbal communication between the keyboardist and cantor/ensemble during Mass. (Discreet eye contact can serve as a reminder cue.) Because our instruments and choir “loft” are in full view at the front of the church, please be mindful of the need to model for the assembly your attentiveness to and respect for the liturgical action at all times.

If you play a Prelude, please time the music to stop at/a few seconds before the time Mass is scheduled to begin, and be aware when the liturgical ministers are ready at the back of the church and the lector is approaching the ambo for pulpit announcements.

Organists, please remember to 1) press the CANCEL button before you turn the organ off, 2) leave Great/Choir/Swell expression pedals OPEN (Crescendo pedal on far right CLOSED), and 3) close the console cover before you leave.

SUMMARY - ORGANISTS AND PIANISTS

A) rhythmic consistency

- 1) steady tempo for introductions and hymns/mass parts**
- 2) *intend* the tempo before and as you play; avoid reacting to delayed sound bouncing back from speakers**
- 3) metered pauses between verses—no guessing**
- 4) breathe with text; breathe with cantor**
- 5) rhythmic self-check: recording or metronome (or recording with metronome)**

B) appropriate volume—varied

- 1) less for cantor only**
- 2) more for full assembly**

C) assembly’s melody

- 1) incorporate assembly’s part into accompaniment**
- 2) “voice” assembly’s melody louder than other notes**
- 3) assembly’s melody should “speak” the syllables of the text**

D) movement, preparation, and cues

- 1) communicate w/assigned cantor prior to weekend**
- 2) meet cantor thirty (30) minutes before Mass in Social Room**
- 3) reduce/eliminate verbal cues with cantor during Mass**
- 4) prelude music ends at scheduled Mass time**
- 5) movement between keyboards coincides with liturgical action**
- 6) demeanor models liturgical attentiveness**
- 7) CANCEL; leave Gt/Ch/Sw pedals OPEN; close console cover**

CANTORS, PSALMISTS AND CHOIRS/VOCAL ENSEMBLES: ANIMATORS OF THE ASSEMBLY'S SONG

Cantors and vocal ensembles serve a multifaceted role within the liturgy. As Song Leaders or Animators, they invite, support, and enliven the song of the assembly. As Assembly Members, they model what the assembly is asked to do throughout the liturgy. As Psalmists, they proclaim the sung Word. It's no secret that skilled musicians are confronted with a number of paradoxes in liturgical service—the paradox of encouraging the singing of the assembly without overpowering them with their own voices; the paradox of proclaiming the Responsorial Psalm as the sung word of God with beauty and skill without drawing attention to themselves; the paradox of leaving listeners remembering the beauty of the word of God rather than the beauty of the sounds *they* make; the paradox of remaining transparent, pointing toward God, and letting the music serve, rather than dominate, the liturgy. “At leadership moments, we want people to remember *what* we sang, so that they can sing it again. So that the music they sing is a rhythm of prayer. . . . At moments when the people are secure enough in their own singing not to need us, we don't want them to remember that we were there at all.” (GFC, 25) The God who gave us musical gifts will also give us the grace to use these gifts in the most appropriate manner. Helpful information regarding the spiritual formation of liturgical leaders of song may be found in both of the printed resources mentioned at the beginning of this Handbook. What follows here are some technical considerations that parallel the remarks in the “Organists and Pianists” section above.

Rhythm

Keyboardists and cantors work both separately and together to maintain rhythmic consistency in leading and supporting congregational song. Cantors, too, need to hear internally and intend the tempo of congregational song, and not react to the sound reflected back through the sanctuary speakers. Best practice is for the cantor's ear to already “be in the tempo” of the music during the introduction, so that the cantor's (modest) arm gesture in cueing the congregation is an extension of, and not an event separate from, the keyboardist's introduction. From the assembly's point of view, it's disconcerting to see the cantor's arm go up at the very instant the singing is to begin. Rather, the cantor's gesture should help the assembly to breathe in the tempo of the music, and to see as well as hear the exact starting point of the singing. This presumes that the keyboardist maintains a steady tempo in the introduction, and does not stretch the beat or hold the last chord indeterminately just before the assembly begins to sing. These cues should be discussed and practiced before Mass. As



congregational participation at Holy Trinity is still a work in progress, all congregational acclamations and recurring refrains, plus first verses of all hymns should be cued with an arm gesture, or minimally with cantor-assembly eye contact that connects the cantor to the assembly and invites participation. Once the singing/response begins, the arm may be brought down.

Thoughtful attention to grammatical phrasing, whether or not it coincides with musical phrasing, helps to unify the voices of the assembly into one voice and to express the full intent of the words. Punctuation marks in the verses are the best clues for breathing and phrasing. Cantors and keyboardists should agree on breathing and phrasing in advance.

Volume



Nothing impacts the “servant leader” role of cantors and vocal ensembles quite as much as the volume of amplified voice(s). Currently, the main soundboard/mixer settings are fixed for ease of use. There is a difference, however, between the two main types of microphones that cantors may encounter in our sanctuary. Typically, both the lectern and ambo are fitted with condenser microphones—the long skinny black goosenecks and small black microphones. These mics are very live/“hot”, and have wide pickup patterns. An appropriate mic-to-mouth distance is at least two hand widths, fingers extended for solo cantor singing (intoning refrains, singing solo verses of responsorial psalms and other similar songs, e.g. at communion) and spoken announcements. Vocal solo mics require a shorter mic-to-mouth distance (approximately one hand width, fingers extended), i.e., cantors need to stand closer to this type of microphone for intoning and solo verses, and for speaking. Differences in individual voices may require either more or less mic-to-mouth distance, depending on individual cantors’ natural volume and inflection. Please make a point of doing a volume check at both the lectern and ambo microphones each time you serve.



Current church documents and other pastoral music resources recommend that cantors step back from the microphone during congregational singing, so that the amplified voice of the cantor does not overshadow or dominate the unamplified voice of the assembly, which is primary. (STL, ¶38) By extension, this principle also applies to choirs or other vocal or combination ensembles. (STL, ¶28-32) Individual cantors and ensembles will need to work with keyboardists and ensemble directors in order to determine how best to become more faithful to this Catholic liturgical principle. STL also calls for clergy microphones to be turned off during congregational singing, so the priest’s voice does not dominate the singing or compete with the cantor’s role. (STL, ¶21)

Movement and Cues

Sometimes we focus so much on the musical aspects of our ministry that we forget about other components. Because our music ministry area is in full view of the assembly, it is especially important that we understand another responsibility—that of modeling for the assembly what “full, conscious, and active participation” not only sounds like, but looks like. Paying attention to the whole liturgical action, from the beginning of the prelude through the end of the postlude, and participating actively, whether outwardly or inwardly, helps the assembly to understand what *they* are to be doing. Every movement and action communicates something; we want to communicate our connectedness to the liturgy and not our preoccupation with equipment or printed materials, our disorganization, or our impatience with any other liturgical minister/s.

The lectern is a place of liturgical leadership and action. Cantors should stand at the lectern only when it's time to make an announcement or facilitate singing. Music books/binders should be placed on the lectern and in order well before the prelude music begins, underscoring the importance of arriving thirty minutes before Mass to rehearse with the keyboardist (most often in the Social Room). Be seated after you have placed your music. The clergy, sacristans, and lectors (for pre-Mass pulpit announcements) have been asked to respect the prelude music as prayer, and not to interrupt. Please do likewise. Most keyboardists, and certainly our ensembles, spend precious time preparing and practicing music that has been chosen precisely because of its connection to the liturgy of the day. The cantor's quiet, attentive listening (not rustling papers, marking hymnals, or staring at the back of the church) can be a positive visual model for the congregation during this time of liturgical leadership by the keyboardist or ensemble. Trust that those who are engaged in the prelude music have timed it to stop by the scheduled beginning of Mass. Likewise, respect the postlude if one is being played. The music requires the keyboardist's full attention. Cantors, please either leave quietly without speaking to the keyboardist, or wait until the postlude ends before saying goodbye. Chorale and Bells of Joy, please be seated and wait for the postlude to end before beginning to put chairs and equipment away. And, although our organists know you appreciate their Postlude playing, applauding can be misinterpreted by the Assembly as our musicians being self-congratulatory - it's probably best to express your verbal thanks personally as you leave.

Even if there is no prelude, please be seated behind the lectern in a spot from where you can see the church entrance, rather than be standing at the lectern waiting. Your moving to the lectern should communicate that something is about to happen *at that moment*.

After any prelude/new music teaching, a lector will approach the ambo, greet the assembly, read the pulpit announcements, then step away from the ambo. Immediately after the lector steps down, the cantor approaches the lectern and reads the cantor's introduction, without the greeting. (If there are no announcements, the cantor should begin with a greeting, upon receiving a cue from the church entrance.) Eye contact with the assembly is received as a hospitable gesture, and is encouraged. Please read from the cantor script provided, with no added words or phrases.

As soon as the assembly's song is finished, step away from the lectern. Model your attentiveness to the liturgical action by your posture (facing the liturgical action) and your spoken participation. For example, when you come back from the ambo after the responsorial psalm, keep your music with you and go directly to your seat to listen to the second reading, rather than stopping at the lectern to rearrange notebooks while the second reading is beginning.

Preparation, Hymn Boards

All needed communication between cantor and keyboardist should happen in the pre-Mass rehearsal thirty minutes before Mass, and out of direct sight of the congregation (usually in the Social Room), reducing or eliminating any need to communicate verbally back and forth during Mass. Remember, the entire assembly can see you and may be distracted from its worship by your actions.



According to the oral tradition received by the music director, the placing and removal of hymn numbers on the two hymn boards (choir loft and baptismal font) are the cantor's responsibility. Practically speaking, this means that the Saturday evening cantor puts number up, and the 11:30am Sunday cantor puts them away. Those responsible for hymn numbers at school Masses are also asked to put those numbers away afterward. Consistency in the way the numbers are posted would be helpful for the assembly. The recommended arrangement is:

Scripture Reference Number

Entrance Hymn Psalm
Preparation Hymn
Communion Hymn Second Communion Hymn
Closing Hymn

A WORD ABOUT BOWING OR GENUFLECTION

When the liturgical procession approaches the altar at the entrance procession and when it departs at the dismissal all but the Cross and Candle Bearers genuflect to the tabernacle (if present in the sanctuary). During the celebration of Mass genuflection is not done (unless there is a need for the reserved hosts). During the Mass all reverence is made by a bow to the **altar**. Practically speaking this means that unless you pass across the sanctuary in front of or behind the altar there is no reverence, either by genuflection or bow, made to the altar, tabernacle, ambo, lectionary, or priest. This applies to cantors approaching or leaving the ambo (responsorial psalm) and to cantors and instrumentalists entering the altar area to receive communion alongside the communion ministers.

A WORD ABOUT APPAREL

Music ministers are servants at the Lord's banquet table. Part of being attentive to the liturgy is wearing clothing that is appropriate for liturgical leadership. Since Holy Trinity musicians do not wear liturgical vestments such as albs or choir robes, care should be taken that what we do wear communicates respect for the dignity of the occasion and the privilege of our leadership role. (STL, ¶ 33, 40) Just as with the music, our attire should not be distracting or call attention to itself or to us. Mass is not a sports event or a picnic; neither is it a fashion show.

"Sunday best" is a term that could serve as a guide for music ministers. "Business casual" (in contrast to "street casual") is another term that might suggest a minimum standard for cantor, choir, or ensemble attire. Because cantors use their arms for cueing and gesturing, blouses with more discreet necklines are more appropriate than spaghetti straps, tank or halter or tube tops, or form hugging knits. Shirts tucked inside waistbands and full length trousers or slacks are more dignified and less distracting than loosely hanging shirttails, jeans, or shorts. Closed or open toe shoes or dress sandals are preferred over sneakers or flip flops. Let our focus be on Christ, and let our liturgical attire point toward him, not toward ourselves.

A WORD ABOUT SCHEDULING

The music director maintains contact lists for all keyboardists, cantors, choirs, ensembles, and instrumentalists who are available for scheduling at the Saturday 4pm and Sunday 7:30, 9:30, and 11:30am Masses. Keyboardists and cantors who are only available for, or who prefer, particular Mass times are welcome to communicate those to the music director.

Our scheduling goals are: 1) to publish a long term schedule (at least seasonally, if not longer term), and 2) to encourage keyboardists and cantors to take responsibility for obtaining their own substitutes when scheduling conflicts arise. Experience has demonstrated that predictability in music scheduling encourages more people to participate in music ministry. Expectations are clear from the beginning of the rehearsal season, and people are much better able to incorporate music ministry into their other activities and commitments. Keyboardist and cantor contact information is shared, so potential substitutes may be contacted directly. Keyboardists and cantors are asked to copy the parish music director on any scheduling changes, so the director can maintain an accurate online master schedule. The current ensemble rotation is:



Chorale: 1st and 3rd Sundays @ 9:30am; 2nd Saturdays @ 4:00pm

Folk Choir: 2nd Sundays @ 9:30am; 4th Saturdays @ 4:00pm

Bells of Joy: 2nd OR 4th weekends as available, within above rotation framework

Music ministry support is expected at all four Saturday evening and Sunday morning Masses, not just at our “preferred” times. There is a difference between truly being “unavailable” versus merely not wanting to serve at a particular time slot. Every effort is made to respect Mass time preferences. However, it is expected that, unless (especially keyboardists and cantors) are *truly* unavailable, you may occasionally be scheduled to serve at a lesser preferred time because you are needed for that liturgy.

Not every music minister will be satisfied with every scheduling detail. This is the nature of living in community. Every scheduling decision impacts every other scheduling decision. Hopefully, when we understand that our preferences may either inconvenience or even eliminate someone else on/from the ministry schedule, it becomes easier to practice charity on behalf of the common good.

Practicing in the Church or Chapel

The instruments in the church and chapel are available for personal practice. Rather than assuming that the space you want will be open when you want it, it’s best to contact the music director or administrative secretary to reserve a specific day and time on the campus computer calendar (Facility Scheduler).



The church is especially busy during the school year, and parish and school staff are working on ways to be more mutually conscientious of everyone’s needs for program space.

While we are working toward that goal, please plan, and call, ahead if you would like some practice time in the church or chapel.

SUMMARY: CANTORS, PSALMISTS AND CHOIRS/VOCAL ENSEMBLES

- A) rhythmic consistency**
 - 1) **steady tempo**
 - a) **work with keyboardist**
 - b) ***intend* the tempo before and as you sing; avoid reacting to delayed sound bouncing back from speakers**
 - 2) **metered pauses between verses—no guessing**
 - 3) **begin breathing with the tempo during the introduction**
 - 4) **breathe with text; breathe with keyboardist**
- B) appropriate volume—distance from microphones**
 - 1) **check distance at both lectern and ambo mics**
 - a) **vocal solo (fat) mic—stand closer (1 hand width, fingers extended)**
 - b) **condenser (skinny) mic—stand back (at least 2 hand widths, fingers extended)**
 - 2) **discern volume needs according to STL principles**
 - a) **mic distances in #1 appropriate for spoken announcements and solo cantor singing**
 - b) **stand farther away during congregational singing**
 - c) **responsorial psalm, gospel acclamation, some communion refrain-verse songs require moving toward and away from mic, according to who is singing**
- C) movement, cues, preparation, hymn boards, appearance**
 - a. **may rehearse with music director during the week prior**
 - b. **communicate w/assigned keyboardist prior to weekend**
 - c. **meet keyboardist 30 minutes before Mass in the Social Room**
 - d. **reduce/eliminate verbal cues with keyboardist during Mass**
 - e. **be at lectern/ambo ONLY when announcing/leading music**
 - f. **no bowing before or after responsorial psalm, or sanctuary communion**
 - g. **model attentiveness to liturgical action**
 - h. **eye contact with assembly when speaking and cueing**
 - i. **read scripted announcements without added words**
 - j. **modest arm gestures/cues should be breathing or readiness gestures in tempo, as a conductor's upbeat**
 - k. **cue all congregational acclamations, recurring refrains, and first verses of all hymns;**
 - l. **cantors responsible for hymn board numbers**
 - m. **"Sunday best" or "business casual" attire**
- D) scheduling**
 - 1) **Saturday 4pm, Sunday 7:30, 9:30, and 11:30am**
 - 2) **Mass time preferences respected when possible**
 - 3) **Longer term scheduling is the goal when possible**
 - 4) **Keyboardists and Cantors obtain their own substitutes, copying information to music director**
 - 5) **Reserve church/chapel practice time through music director or administrative secretary**

APPENDIX A
HOLY TRINITY MUSIC MINISTRY ENSEMBLE COVENANTS

PREREQUISITES

- High school age & above
- Vocal ability to match pitch; Instrumental proficiency appropriate to the repertoire
- Availability for weekly rehearsals & scheduled Masses
- Music reading ability is helpful but not required
- Meet with ensemble director before attending first-time rehearsal

EXPECTATIONS

In participating in an ensemble, each musician agrees to abide by the following covenants:

- Respecting the Ministry
 - a) Engaging worshipers in Encountering Christ for Evangelizing the world Through Music
 - b) Excellence and beauty are biblical values (Christ at the center of creation)
 - c) Read, know, and apply the information contained in this Handbook
- Respecting Rehearsals and Masses
 - a) Prioritize rehearsals and Masses in personal calendars as soon as the schedule is given
 - b) Arrive on time (weekly & pre-Mass practices)
 - c) Once rehearsal begins, pay attention and avoid chatter
 - d) Personally communicate any absences to the ensemble director in advance if possible
- Respecting Fellow Choir/Ensemble Members
 - a) Sick? Stay home
 - b) Avoid wearing personal fragrances in choir (allergens for some)
 - c) Avoid engaging section-mates in conversation during rehearsal/Mass
 - d) Know your part (individual part practices are available - just ask)
- Respecting the Director's Position
 - a) Attendance =^{Def} willingness to accept the musical leadership of the appointed director
 - b) Avoid commenting contrarily re: the director's instructions
 - c) Address any disagreements with the ensemble director or parish music director personally, outside of rehearsal time
- Respecting the Music Library
 - a) Remember your folder/anthem number
 - b) Keep track of anthem calendar
 - c) (Chorale) Turn in each anthem when finished singing (after Mass/at next rehearsal)

QUESTIONS?

- Ask the ensemble director/parish music director
- Visit <http://www.htlenexa.org/holytrinity-music>

APPENDIX B
HOLY TRINITY ORDER OF MASS – MUSIC CUES

4:00pm Saturday cantors are responsible for putting up numbers on both hymn boards.
11:30am Sunday cantors are responsible for removing **all** numbers from both hymn boards.

**PRELUDE (3-5 min. max., ENDING WITHIN 1 MINUTE OF MASS START TIME)/
NEW MUSIC PRACTICE**

I have asked that the prelude music not be interrupted by any announcements.

When we teach new music, this practice time replaces the prelude, and precedes any lector announcements.

CANTOR ANNOUNCEMENT

After the prelude ends, a lector approaches the ambo and reads any parish announcements, including last minute requests for more Eucharistic ministers. When the lector steps down from the ambo, the cantor approaches the cantor podium and reads the cantor announcements. (If there are no parish announcements, the cantor will be given a signal [a wave] from the entrance that it is time to begin. In these cases, the cantor should add a simple greeting at the beginning.)

ENTRANCE HYMN

Verse numbers will be printed on the music list/s. If no verses are printed, assume that we will sing all verses.

GLORY TO GOD

Most often sung. Pay attention to the form of the Penitential Act. **If it's the Confiteor, the Glory to God begins after the Kyrie**, which follows the Absolution prayer. (Occasionally a priest will forget to include the Kyrie - so please listen.) **If it's Form C**, the Kyrie is included in the invocations, and the **Glory to God begins after the Absolution prayer**.

(9:30am ONLY) CHILDREN'S DISMISSAL ACCLAMATION

The lector invites children forward. The priest/deacon blesses them. As they turn to leave, begin the music. There is no Children's dismissal on Easter Sunday or on First Communion Sundays.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

The cantor moves to the ambo, and may or may not announce the psalm (yes if it's in the hymnal; no if there is no printed resource).

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The cantor should move to the ambo when the lector has returned to the pew. The keyboard introduction then begins.

(9:30 am ONLY) RCIA DISMISSAL ACCLAMATION

Holy Trinity has a year around catechumenate process. Potentially, we sing this acclamation weekly, but watch to see if anyone comes up to be dismissed. There is a brief spoken dismissal, then the music begins.

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS

Congregational hymn, ensemble anthem, or keyboard instrumental

EUCCHARISTIC ACCLAMATIONS (Holy, MemAcc, Amen)

The usual cues, typically spoken by the priest, only occasionally chanted.

LAMB OF GOD

Begin the introduction when the priest returns to the altar to break the host.

COMMUNION

General Instruction of the Roman Missal #86: "While the Priest is receiving the sacrament, the Communion Chant is begun . . . The singing is prolonged for as long as the Sacrament is being administered to the faithful . . . Care should be taken that singers, too, can receive Communion with ease."

Our practice at Holy Trinity: Cantors and keyboardists who plan to receive Communion move to the foot of the altar steps right after the Lamb of God, or no later than the ending of the priest's prayer "Behold the Lamb of God. . ." After the priest has communed from the chalice, musicians ascend to the top step (as do Communion Ministers from the opposite side). When there is a deacon who immediately follows the priest with the chalice, musicians stay to receive the precious Blood. When there is no deacon, musicians return to their places after receiving the consecrated Host, and the cantor announces the Communion music as soon as his/her throat is clear from swallowing.

If the keyboardist is not receiving Communion or can wait to receive toward the end of the distribution, s/he begins playing "while the Priest is receiving the sacrament," improvising until the cantor returns to the lectern.

Choir Communion anthems normally replace the "second Communion song." Choir members line up in the aisle in front of the piano after the "Behold the Lamb of God . . ." prayer, taking their seats in the loft after receiving Communion. All should be in place before the choir joins in congregational singing.

If the (second) Communion song/anthem ends before the distribution ends, the keyboardist may continue to play until the sacrament is reposed in the tabernacle. Silence is also appropriate.

CLOSING HYMN

Announced by the cantor. Selected verses will be listed; if not listed, then do them all.

POSTLUDE

Choirs have been asked to be seated while the postlude is played, waiting until the music ends before stacking chairs and moving about.