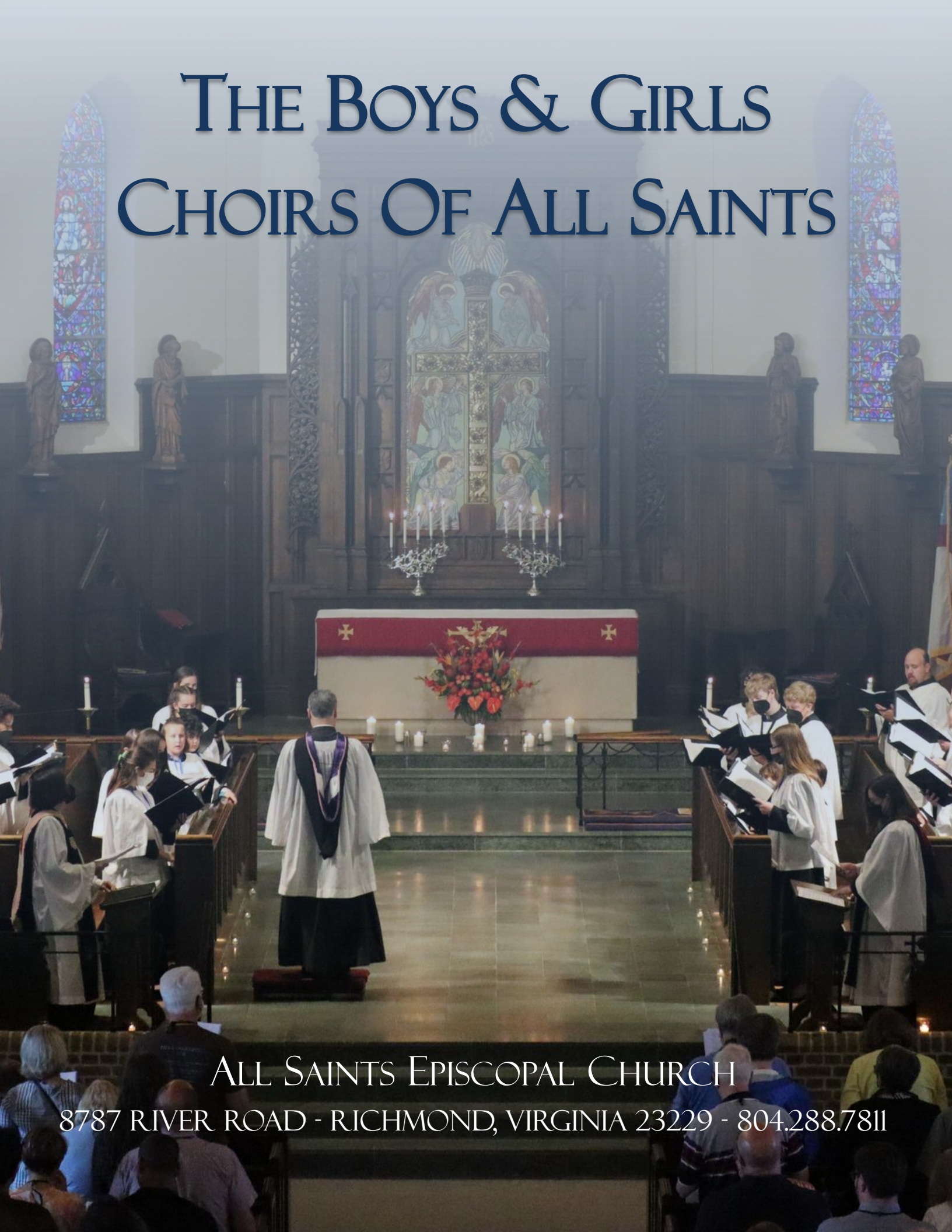


THE BOYS & GIRLS CHOIRS OF ALL SAINTS



ALL SAINTS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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ABOUT THE CHOIRS

Founded in 1899, the All Saints Choir of Men and Boys is one of only a few parish-based choirs of its type in the Episcopal Church in the United States. The choir continues not only a great tradition of choral singing, but also the distinctive sound of the great English and European boy choirs—a sound dating back centuries. Boys enter at a young age—some with no musical experience—and can stay involved through their entire elementary, middle and high school careers!



After the church relocated to River Road in the late 1950s, All Saints Girls Choir was founded in 1960 to provide young women an active singing experience. In the decades since, the choir has taken its place musically along side the Choir of Men & Boys, and now provides a parallel experience for girls and young women.

Currently, the Boys & Girls Choirs are singing together to ensure high quality music making for all concerned, due to a pause in bringing in new members because of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Our hope is to return to separate choirs for Boys & Girls in the coming years, as the number of choristers and musical experience increases.

The Boys & Girls Choirs currently rehearse on Friday evenings, 5:30—7:30 PM, and most Sunday afternoons from 4:00—5:00 PM. These choirs sing in Sunday morning worship about once a month, and usually one other event each month - whether it be a service of Evensong (sung Evening Prayer) or another concert or service.

A new training choir will rehearse on Thursdays, 5:00—6:00 PM, beginning in October 2022. The choir will join the Boys & Girls Choirs in worship about quarterly, as they become confident in the music they will sing in worship.

BENEFITS OF THE CHOIR

Boys & Girls who sing in the choir benefit in many ways, and the skills developed are life-long. Here are a few:

- **Teamwork**

Any choir is a team - as each singer brings their strengths to the group. Learning notes, breathing, creating sound, and even things like sitting & standing are done as a group. Older boys & girls mentor the younger children, helping to get them excited about the choir—and offering a friendly face when new to the choir!

- **Musicianship**

What would a choir be without music? At All Saints, we train choristers to use their voices, learn about music, different composers and musical genres. Our Training Choir teaches the rudiments of music theory and sight-singing.



- **Unforgettable Experiences**

Singing at All Saints Church is pretty special in itself, but we look forward to touring regionally which happen about once a year. Every four years or so, the Choirs take an international trip - our next is tentatively planned for summer 2024 to Scotland and Northern England. Our trips also include some fun events - such a singing the National Anthem to begin a University of Richmond basketball game!



- **Life Long Friendships**

Many in the choir begin in 2nd or 3rd grade, and we hope they'll sing through their high school years. The Choir can become their family - and many stay in touch with each other throughout their lives. As the choir was founded so long ago, it's not uncommon to find parishioners who remember their time with the choir fondly. Some even have children in the choir today!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Is the choir fun? It sounds like a lot of work?

We think the choir is fun! Much like scouting or any team sport, there is work involved, but there is also a lot of fun! They take regular trips to play laser tag, bowl, see a movie, or another fun activity. Rehearsals are not usually boring, and you get out of it what you put in.



Q: Do children and their families have to be members of All Saints to participate in the choir?

No. The choir is open to all, regardless of their religious affiliation.

Q: Do the Boys & Girls Choirs sing alone, or is it supported by another choir?

Most Sundays, the Boys & Girls will sing with the Choral Scholars or with the Men's Choir as the soprano/treble section, though it maintains some "trebles only" repertoire—singing as a independent alone provides many valuable leadership opportunities.

Q: Is there a formal audition for the choir?

Not really. Our hope is that most will come to the choir one of our open houses, through our summer "Choir Camp", or through the Training Choir. At these events, prospective singers can sing as a member of the choir, and this is a good indicator of how they will do in the choir. Focus & attention to detail, willingness to try the occasional "silly" idea, matching pitch, are all indications that a child will do well in the program. If unable to attend one of these events, then we'll schedule a short "musical interview", where she can demonstrate her voice by singing a well-known song (such as the National Anthem) and talk with the director.

Q: How much does the choir cost?

The Choir does not charge for participation. Families are encouraged to make a donation to All Saints Music Education Fund, if they are able and so inclined, as the choirs do cost the church significantly to operate.

What curriculum does the program use?

We've found that there is no "one size fits all" approach to music education. As such, we draw from a variety of resources. Primarily, for music theory and sight-singing, we use a publication called "A Young Singer's Journey", which allows students to build skills at their own pace. For more church/community related instruction - such as the role of the choir in a community, or the church liturgical calendar, we draw from the Royal School of Church Music's "Voice for Life" resource.



Q: When are rehearsals?

The Boys & Girls are rehearsing together currently, and our goal is for each chorister to attend at least 2 hours of rehearsal each week. Right now, our rehearsal schedule is generally Friday, 5:30—7:30 PM, and Sunday, 4:00—5:00 PM. Whether the two hours comes all at once or is divided, is up to individual families.

Our new Training Choir is set to rehearse 5:00—6:00 PM on Thursdays, though there enough interest, another section may be added as needed.

Q: When do they sing in church services?

The choirs sing most often on the 1st or 3rd Sunday of each month. Other events, such as concerts and Evensongs are announced as far in advance as possible (usually at least two months).



Q: Are Choristers paid for singing?

A: Yes, the Girls & Boys are paid for their singing, as is the custom in many choirs of the Episcopal Church. It signals to children, adult, and church leaders the significance of the contribution that the choristers make to our common life. Stipends are determined by the girl's "rank" in the RSCM Voice for Life program.

Q: How many are in the choir?

A: A "full" choir would be at least 20 girls and boys. However, we are currently in a season of rebuilding at All Saints, so we currently have about 6 boys, and 8 girls. Our plan for rebuilding is to be slow and steady, and bring up a few boys and girls through the program each year. Once we reach a critical mass of 10 boys and 10 girls, we'll consider dividing the choirs back into separate Boys & Girls sections from time to time.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information, contact Scott G. Hayes, Director of Music at All Saints Church to schedule and appointment or ask any questions you may have about the choir. He may be reached at 804-288-7811, ext. 108, or at shayes@allsaintsrichmond.org.