

GRACE CHURCH IN NEW YORK
802 BROADWAY
NEW YORK 10003

212.254.2000/110
fax 212.673.4938

Patrick Allen
Organist &
Master of Choristers

"I will sing with the spirit and with the understanding also"
I Corinthians 14:15

Winter/Spring 2003

May this greeting finds you all well, safe and looking forward to an exciting Spring as the Winter season nears its very cold and snowy end. Next year will be a very exciting one in the life of the Choir of Men and Boys as it begins its 109th Season. In 2004 the Choir of Men and Boys along with Grace Church School will celebrate their 110th anniversary! Equally exciting is the 10th anniversary of the founding of our Girls Choir called the Saint Cecilia Choir. We would like you to consider membership in the Choir for your son and/or daughter as he/she enters the new academic year in the Fall. Being a chorister in this very unique and dynamic community which has grown so beautifully around the oldest choir school tradition in New York is a very special one. Membership is open to all who are willing to make the commitment to the standards upheld by the choir. While many choristers come from the population of Grace Church School, we have several boys and girls who attend school elsewhere in the city. It is a pleasure to work with their parents and schools to enable their participation in the choir.

Besides the apparent musical education and social outlet, it is a chance for choristers to be exposed to over a thousand years of history and culture through the music written for this special type of choir. It is a chance to work in multiple languages, and to learn the type of strong self esteem and teamwork which can support them throughout the many responsibilities they will take on as they grows up. The Choristers of Grace Church become part of a tradition which binds them with some of the great figures of history who also began their education as choristers in a choir.

The interview process is open to everyone. The training necessary is provided in the choir so that all is needed is a sharp ear, good reading skills and the desire to work hard and learn. If you would like to explore this opportunity further, please call Patrick Allen to schedule an interview with your child. The architecture of the church regulates the size of the choir so that it cannot take more than twenty-two senior boys and twenty-two senior girls. As we begin this special year there will be five openings for choristers in each choir. The choristers receive a token honorarium for their regular service and at the conclusion of the year a \$500.00 scholarship is given by the church toward their school tuition.

The motto printed above is that of the Royal School of Church Music with which the choir is an affiliate. Our style of training is based on their model which evolved in England over a thousand year tradition. Since the founding of the Choir in 1894, it has been made up of boys and now girls from many faith traditions without the requirement of affiliation with the Episcopal Church. Currently the membership includes those practicing Christian, Jewish and other beliefs. While there is never any pressure for a chorister or their family to actively participate in the life of Grace Church outside the Choir, we do work to communicate the text we offer in song respectfully remembering that the church is a house of prayer for all people. This is an exciting time in the life of the Church, Choir and School. We both hope that you will consider this opportunity seriously for your child.

There will be an open house for old, new and prospective parents and choristers in the apartment of Patrick Allen at the Church/School on Thursday 22 May between 5:30 and 7:30 p.m.. It is an informal time for us to meet together, ask questions, share concerns and learn about the life of the choir. Mostly it is a time for parents to get together to enjoy one another, so if you are having a busy evening please don't hesitate to drop in for a minute to say hello and move on to your next appointment.

If you can attend, have any questions or would like to set up an interview, please call 254.2000/110. Please let us know by 21 May if you would like to attend the open house. The Entrance is 100 Fourth Avenue, ring the bell and follow the signs. You can also get there from the Pre-K roof top playground.

For further information about life in the Choirs of Grace Church, please take a look through our Choir Handbook 2002-2003 which can give parents an idea of how the choir is organized and at the conclusion gives our weekly practices and singing schedule for the current season.

With warmest regards,
Patrick Allen
Organist and Master of Choristers