

ST STEPHEN'S CHOIR ACADEMY

A choir school for boys

WHO WE ARE

The St Stephen's Choir Academy exists to foster the artistic and intellectual development of boys, and to continue the time-honoured tradition of English choral music. Our present choir is comprised of boys aged 8 through 18 and an ensemble of professional adult male vocalists.

WHAT WE DO

We offer a unique opportunity through which a highly select team of talented male vocalists receives a formal classical music education under the tutelage of an accomplished Peabody Conservatory graduate. The more experienced boys comprise the boy soprano section of the Choir of Men & Boys which sings each Sunday at St Stephen's Anglican Church in Mays Chapel. We also sing a monthly Choral Evensong, two annual Carols Services for Advent and Epiphany, and occasional concerts throughout the community. The boys are taught to read and write musical notation, and they quickly become proficient singing in several languages, including Latin, English, German and French. Our musical repertory spans several centuries, from mediæval plainsong chant to Palestrina, Bach, Mozart, Bernstein, right through to music composed this year. In addition to singing, we always find time for fun outings to amusement parks, ballgames, cinema, LaserTag, and a Summer Choir Camp in the beautiful mountains of West Virginia.

WHY WE DO IT

In a modern culture which focuses attention and resources on boys' athletic development, the Choir offers an outlet for artistic expression and intellectual growth in addition to sports, or as an alternative for boys for whom sports are not an option. Beyond achieving a high level of musicianship, our choirboys develop discipline, social skills, and self-confidence, and they benefit greatly from the unparalleled experience of regularly performing alongside professional adult musicians as peers. The boys earn credentials which score high on high school and college applications and lead to scholarships.

COST

Unlike similar music educational organisations, our \$1500 tuition is subsidised by several full-scholarships and half-scholarships; many boys in the St Stephen's Choral Academy receive an extensive classical music education at no cost to their families. Additionally, each chorister is paid a stipend, indicating his professional status, remunerating him for his time and efforts, and promoting a commitment to rehearsals and performances. The stipend is incremented as he progresses to each new level of musical proficiency.

WHEN

New boys rehearse twice weekly after school, while the older, more experienced boys practise up to three days per week and perform on Sunday mornings. The rehearsals are generally 90 minutes long with a short break in the middle. As transportation is a serious concern for many parents, carpools are arranged to help facilitate rehearsal attendance, and when needed, a quiet study environment is provided for homework before and after rehearsals, giving parents that extra half-hour to negotiate traffic. We've even got a microwave and free WiFi.

HOW TO JOIN

Any boy who enjoys singing and wishes to receive a classical music education is encouraged to apply for an interview. **Membership is open to boys of all faiths.** Prospective choristers, ages 8 to 12, are welcomed at any time of the year. Consideration is also given to older boys whose voices have not yet broken, particularly those with some singing experience. The interview is a very simple, stress-free process requiring no preparation or prior singing experience. Your child will be asked to sing along with notes played on a piano to determine his vocal range (how high and low he can sing) and his ability to hear pitches accurately. To schedule an interview, please contact our Admissions Director, Mrs Cheryl Nickol, at admissions@choiracademy.org or on (410) 329-6399.

For more information, please visit us online: ChoirAcademy.org