

August 6, 2009

Dear Singers,

As I unveil the exciting plans for this year, I begin by expressing a deep and sincere appreciation for your participation. With all the demands on your time, choosing to sing at LOPC is a wonderful affirmation of the power of choral music. What beauty and mystery choirs can embody, guided by the Holy Spirit, helping the singer and the listener to ponder that which is beyond words – the unchanging love of God; grace that surpasses all we know.

The year ahead includes many activities featuring inspiring classic and innovative choral repertoire spanning the centuries. All activities are posted online at our LOPC Choral Blog, with details updated daily (<http://lopccchoralprograms.blogspot.com/>). Also online you can go to our main LOPC website to find complete schedules and program overviews for Festival, Chancel, and Gospel Choirs – particularly helpful for new singers (<http://www.lopc.org/getinvolved2.asp>).

If you are new to the program, please know that you need not be a church member to participate, and that we have several choirs that are ideal entry-points. **Festival Choir** (~65 singers) rehearses on Thursdays, from 7-8:30 or 9pm, and is designed for experienced singers. It is organized into three independent 5-8 week Sessions throughout the year, each culminating in a performance of a major work, and childcare is available by request. This fall, Festival Choir **begins Oct. 1** to prepare for our Christmas Concert, “Magnify Joy,” December 12 and 13, at 4:00 p.m., which will feature exuberant and ethereal masterworks, including: J. S. Bach’s choral-orchestral *Magnificat*.

**Chancel Choir**, another wonderful entry point into our ministry, is smaller in size than Festival (~35 singers), meets every Thursday **beginning September 3, 7-9pm**, to rehearse and prepare music for worship two Sundays each month. Chancel is the foundation for Festival Choir, and provides a particularly warm and musically invigorating environment for those seeking more community, and a more regular means to hone, and keep in shape, one’s musical-vocal skills. This fall, Chancel participates in the **Santa Cruz Church Choir Festival, October 17, 9am-3pm**: choirs will sing 2-3 pieces for each other and receive a clinic from a special guest conductor.

Finally, I highlight **Gospel Choir** (ideal for new and experienced singers) which participates in several special projects throughout the year. The director, Michelle Hawkins, organizes 2-3 rehearsals in advance of a performance, accompanied by some of the bay area’s finest musicians. Music reading skills are not required. Due to the intermittent nature of this choir, it is vital that all interested parties email the director at [michelle@lopc.org](mailto:michelle@lopc.org) to get on the email list to receive updated and ongoing information.

I look forward to another year enriched by dedicated singers and wonderful repertoire. Questions? Please contact me ([Julie@lopc.org](mailto:Julie@lopc.org) or 925-283-8722 ext. 224) for more information or discussion about how you might get involved.

Blessings,

Dr. Julie A. Ford  
Director of Music and Worship