



MORMON  
TABERNACLE  
CHOIR

*July 2018*

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# Mormon Tabernacle Choir Application Guide

## SERVICE AS A MUSICAL MISSIONARY

Members of the Choir are set apart as musical missionaries to be ambassadors for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This special privilege of singing in the Choir requires the enthusiasm of a volunteer and the discipline and responsibility of a professional. Although an all-volunteer ensemble, the Choir performs on a regular basis in the professional arenas of broadcasting, recording, and concertizing. It is also heard by a worldwide audience that has come to expect a consistently excellent performance.

To perform at such a high level with a limited amount of rehearsal time requires intense effort. Consequently, each member of the Choir is asked to commit a significant amount of time to Choir membership. This will be your principal Church calling and will often take you away from your family and home ward. The decision to apply for membership in the Choir should be a thoughtful and a prayerful one. It is essential that you have the cooperation and support of family members regarding this decision. Be sure you have considered this critical aspect of Choir service before embarking on the audition process.

## MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Candidates must satisfactorily meet the following requirements as determined by the Choir:

1. Is a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in good standing and able to qualify for a temple recommend.
2. Is between 25 and 55 years of age on or before April 30, 2019, when Choir service would begin. Mandatory retirement occurs at age 60 or after 20 years of service.
3. Is currently residing within 100 miles of Temple Square. **Applications will not be accepted from anyone not currently residing within the required area, regardless of current or future plans to move to the area.** We strongly discourage applicants from moving to the area for the sole purpose of auditioning for the Choir.
4. Is able to commit to maintaining the required levels of attendance while still being able to take care of all family and work responsibilities. Choir membership will mean 10 to 20 hours of participation per week depending on projects and schedules. Please consider current as well as future family and employment needs.
5. Is in good health to permit consistent participation in long rehearsals, demanding travel, and other performance-related requirements. Please be realistic about any chronic health conditions currently experienced such as heart or lung health, joint health, or weight-related issues that would impact your ability to walk long distances, stand for extended periods, be accommodated in available performance attire, or travel in standard seating.

6. Has auditioned not more than two times in the past. Applicants are limited to a total of three applications over their years of age eligibility.

## MEMBERSHIP EVALUATION CRITERIA

Applicants will be evaluated on several criteria including:

1. Spiritual fitness as demonstrated by your qualification for a temple recommend
2. Vocal and musical ability as demonstrated in auditions and examinations
3. Commitment to attendance and participation in rehearsals, concerts, recording sessions, and other regular assignments given to the Choir as demonstrated during the training period
4. Social/emotional/physical fitness to serve as a part of a demanding performance ensemble and to contribute positively to the overall morale of the group as demonstrated during the training period

## AUDITION PROCESS AND THE TEMPLE SQUARE CHORALE/CHOIR SCHOOL

The audition process has four parts:

Phase I: Application, Bishop's Recommendation, and Recorded Audition

Phase II: Musical Skills Assessment

(currently scheduled for **Saturday, September 29, 2018**, but subject to change)

Phase III: In-Person Audition

(currently scheduled for **Tuesday, October 23; Wednesday, October 24;**  
or **Tuesday, October 30, 2018**, but subject to change) *Keep all three dates open.*  
*You will be assigned a date and time.*

Phase IV: Temple Square Chorale and Choir School

(January through April 2019 with a commitment to a second session of  
Temple Square Chorale January through April 2020)

All applicants, including former members and those who have previously passed any phase of the audition, are required to complete all four phases of the current audition, including the Musical Skills Assessment.

Recorded auditions and applications are reviewed by the music director and the associate music director. Those moving to the next phase will be invited to take the skills assessment. Those scoring 80 percent or better on the assessment will be invited to participate in the in-person vocal audition. Those who successfully complete the first three phases move to Phase IV, the Temple Square Chorale and Choir School. If you successfully complete the Choir School, with its final exam, as well as the final Chorale performances, you will become a member of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. New Choir members are required to also participate in the Temple Square Chorale the following year.

Additional information about each phase of the audition process is included below. You will receive more details following successful completion of each phase. For those who do not advance to the next phase of auditions, information may be included about areas to improve for a possible future audition. In many instances, this will include recommendations for additional vocal training, community choir participation, or study in music theory.

## PHASE I: APPLICATION, BISHOP'S RECOMMENDATION, AND RECORDED AUDITION

Phase I requires you to complete a written application, obtain a confidential recommendation from your bishop (letter and form included with this information), and prepare a recorded audition.

### 1. Written Application

Provide all information asked for on the Choir application form. Missing information could delay or impede the evaluation of your application. (The application can be filled out electronically and printed for submission with your application materials or printed and filled out by hand. There is no electronic submission.) Be sure to attach a recent picture (head and shoulders shot) cropped to fit in the area provided on the second page of the application. Please attach the photo electronically or with tape or glue. Do not use staples or paper clips.

The application asks you to identify the voice part you sing. (Soprano 1, Soprano 2, Alto 1, Alto 2, Tenor 1, Tenor 2, Bass 1, or Bass 2.) Please use the following information to guide your decision about the part you indicate. **Do not list more than one voice part.** If vocal ranges overlap, light voices are likely to be first voices and heavier voices are likely to be second voices. It is also important for you to consider the range in which your voice operates most freely and efficiently with the richest tone. A final determination of voice part will be made following the in-person audition and evaluation by the vocal coach.

If you have applied in the past, you are asked to indicate what steps you have taken musically to improve since your last audition in the Returning Applicant Information section of the application. Please do not disregard the importance of your response because it will be considered by the music directors. You are limited to a total of three applications during your years of age eligibility, so consider carefully whether sufficient improvement has been made to apply again at this time.

Adult Voices

1st Soprano      2nd Soprano      1st Alto      2nd Alto

Female

Adult Voices

1st Tenor      2nd Tenor      Baritone      Bass

Male

Please sign and date the application.

### 2. Confidential Bishop's Recommendation

Your current bishop must complete the Confidential Bishop's Recommendation. Please fill in your name on the "Applicant Name" line on both the first and third pages of the recommendation. Ask your bishop to place the completed recommendation in an envelope, seal it, sign it across the back flap, and return it to you for inclusion with your application

materials. Please give your bishop sufficient time to complete the recommendation and return it to you well before the application deadline. **Your application will not be considered without your bishop's recommendation.**

Your bishop is asked to determine if you:

- Observe the principles of the gospel.
- Are an active member of your ward.
- Have any conflict between family responsibilities and Choir membership.
- Are a temple-worthy representative of the Church.
- Currently reside within 100 miles of Temple Square.
- Can accept what the First Presidency considers a missionary calling.

It is the bishop's prerogative to interview you and your spouse, if you are married, before submitting the recommendation.

### 3. Recorded Vocal Audition

As you prepare for your recorded vocal audition, please follow the Instructions for Recorded Audition. Effort should be made to ensure that a technically good recording is presented to the music directors. However, we do not encourage you to go to great expense in preparing the recorded audition. This recording will not be returned to you.

It is very important that your recorded audition is submitted on a CD that can be played on a regular sound system. Allow yourself sufficient time to make the recording, and check it by playing it back on more than one sound system (car, portable CD player, etc.) Do not submit a CD that can be played only on a computer.

When you have completed all three required elements (the written application, the confidential bishop's recommendation, and your recorded audition), package them together and mail them to the address indicated. The application package must be postmarked by August 15, 2018.

**Please do not attempt to deliver your application packet to the Choir office in person or via a Choir organization member or Church employee. Church security procedures require that all mail be received through the postal system.**

## PHASE II: MUSICAL SKILLS ASSESSMENT

### 1. Preparation for the Assessment

The Musical Skills Assessment is designed to measure your aptitude in music theory and related concepts that are essential to choral singing. Advanced study in music theory is not required to obtain the scores necessary to advance to the in-person auditions. However, a thorough understanding of music fundamentals measured on the assessment includes:

- Notation of pitch
- Time division
- Note and rest values
- Time signatures
- Intervals
- Basic scales
- Major scales
- Minor scales
- Key signatures
- Triads

Preparation for the assessment may be accomplished by private instruction, school classes, or self-study from a text of your choice. Any general music theory text or online resource will help you prepare. We have a text available for loan that can be checked out from the Choir offices by calling 801-240-3221. Since the assessment date is just a short time after Phase I evaluations, we encourage you to begin your study as soon as possible to maximize your preparation time.

## **2. Areas Covered on the Musical Skills Assessment**

The Musical Skills Assessment includes the following tests, some of which are written and others that require you to listen and select the best answer.

### **Music Fundamentals (written)**

#### **Tonal Memory (aural)**

- Listen to a solid chord and an arpeggiated chord.
- Decide if the first, second, third, or fourth note of the arpeggiated chord is changed from the notes in the solid chord.

#### **Melody Recognition (aural)**

- Listen to a melody played alone, then harmonized.
- In the harmonized version, decide if the melody is in the highest, middle, or lowest part.

#### **Pitch Recognition (aural)**

- Listen to the key tone (first note shown) and determine the pitch of the second note.
- Decide if the first, second, third, or none of the pitches following the key tone is the pitch shown.

#### **Major-Minor Mode Discrimination (aural)**

- Listen to the two chords in question. Decide if they are major or minor.
- Listen to a phrase. Decide if it is in major or minor or if it changes mode.

#### **Feeling for Tonal Center (key tone, key center) (aural)**

- Listen to four chords of the key. Then listen to three tones played separately and decide which is the key tone.
- Listen to a phrase. Decide which of the notes is the key tone.

#### **Auditory-Visual Discrimination (aural and visual)**

- Listen to four measures. Identify which measures are played differently in pitch from the notation.
- Listen to four measures. Identify which measures are played differently in rhythm from the notation.

#### **Musical Aptitude (aural)**

- Your natural aptitude for musical activity is tested by a series of short musical statements followed by musical answers. You are asked to determine whether they are alike or different either tonally or rhythmically.

The Musical Skills Assessment helps us predict your probable success as a member of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. Although some aspects may be challenging, the assessment has proven to be a useful tool in identifying singers who can meet the demands of performance in the Choir.

### PHASE III: IN-PERSON VOCAL AUDITION

For the in-person audition, you will be asked to prepare and sing the melody line of a hymn of your choice in the vocal range of the part for which you are auditioning (see page 3 of the Application Guide) and in the key of your choice. An accompanist will be provided. In addition, there will be a general survey of vocal and musical abilities, which will cover the following areas:

1. Musical memory (the ability to hear, retain, and reproduce musical examples)
2. Rhythmic proficiency
3. Sight singing
  - Singing while three of the four parts are played in the accompaniment
  - Singing a single line without accompaniment
4. Determination of voice part
5. General survey of musical abilities for which there is no special preparation necessary

### PHASE IV: TEMPLE SQUARE CHORALE AND CHOIR SCHOOL

If you have successfully completed the first three phases, you will be accepted into the Temple Square Chorale and Choir School, which functions concurrently as a choral training ensemble and choral music training school. In addition to a published schedule of every Tuesday and Thursday evening for sixteen weeks from January 3, 2019, through April 2019, you will have obligations on the following dates:

- Sunday, January 6, 2019
- Saturday, February 23, 2019
- Saturday, March 23, 2019
- Wednesday, March 27, 2019
- Friday, March 29, 2019
- Saturday, March 30, 2019
- Sunday, March 31, 2019
- Tuesday, April 2, 2019
- Thursday, April 4, 2019
- Saturday, April 6, 2019
- Sunday, April 7, 2019

Because these dates are subject to change, in anticipation of acceptance, please keep your schedule open from January through April 2019. This includes vacations, business travel, and any obligation that would prevent your full availability. At the in-person audition and interview you will be asked to commit to 100 percent attendance.

**If you know of something that may prevent your 100 percent participation during this period, please consider applying at a future date.**

Those accepted into the Mormon Tabernacle Choir in 2019 will also participate in the 2020 Temple Square Chorale—January through February 2020—because all new members are required to serve a second year of Temple Square Chorale service.