

## 2006-2007 Grades 5-8 Choir Handbook

Dear Parent or Guardian, and Student,

It is very important that you both read the Choral Handbook together. The grading system, procedures, and policies have been prepared so that there is minimal confusion.

### Instructor

Ms. Lyuba McSwain      School office: 808- 488-0000      e-mail: [lmcswain@osls-hawaii.org](mailto:lmcswain@osls-hawaii.org)

### Class Description

Grade 5-8 students may choose to take the Middle School Choir course. The 45-minute class meets 3 times per week. The students receive a vocal part (alto or soprano) to sing and will learn about melody, harmony, rhythm, timbre, texture, form, and expressive devices as they relate to the music being sung. Textual understanding, spiritual application of the text, and vocal/choral technique will be emphasized as well.

Students will learn the terms and meanings of “pianississimo”, “pianissimo”, “piano”, “mezzo piano”, “mezzo forte”, “forte”, fortissimo”, “fortississimo”, “crescendo”, “decrescendo”, and “subito.”

We will work on diction (making the words that they sing understandable) and phrasing (when to breathe and when not to breathe).

Using various teaching techniques, sight, sound, reading, and imitating demonstrations, we’ll learn all the music. We need to rehearse songs daily to memorize the necessary lyrics, styles and pitches for positive presentations.

We always warm up, which helps ensure vocal quality and endurance.

Choir will train the student to become a better musician, to learn good vocal technique foundations, and to perform. Students do NOT have to have musical talent to be successful in this class!

### Required Supplies:

Pencil, in case students need to mark music with in class;  
Choral folder with music.

### Textbooks:

Every student will be provided with the miscellaneous scores of choral music. Students are responsible for their own music. Absolutely ALL music scores need to be returned upon instructor’s request. Lost or damaged scores must be paid for by the students.

### Homework Policy:

Students who work on the choral literature individually will find their skills improving rapidly. Practice outside of class is strongly encouraged. Student can be given an audiotape with recorded song part for home practice upon request. In such a case a blank audiotape needs to be provided by a student.

### Required Testing

Every student will be tested on different songs at least once a month. The following aspects will be graded during this testing: Tone quality, breath management, dynamics, pitch, rhythm, diction, and lyrics and vocal part memorization.

## **Discipline**

The foundation of any superior team is superior discipline. All singers must engage in self-discipline, respect others, and understand his or her responsibility to the group as a whole. If a singer chooses to be uncooperative or disruptive, he or she will be sent to a principal's office. If a parent conference is desired, please make an appointment by calling the school office at 488-0000.

Students will follow these rehearsal room guidelines:

- Have only required rehearsal material at seat.
- Obtain folder and immediately go to assigned seat.
- No food, drink, gum, or candy allowed in rehearsal area.
- Actively participate in productive rehearsal.

Students are expected to follow these rules while participating in a field trip:

- Students must follow directions given by the director or the chaperones at all times.
- No student will leave with persons of another group, family members, and/or friends while on a trip without prior written arrangements between the director and student's parent/guardian.
- Students will quickly, pleasantly and without question cooperate with any reasonable chaperone request while on a field trip.
- Students are always to behave in a manner which brings honor to themselves and Our Savior.

## **Performances**

By August 20, students will receive a tentative schedule indicating the year's performances. There will be from 6 to 8 Church performances, Lutheran Schools Festival, Christmas and Spring Band/Choir Concerts, Graduation program, and a few performances outside the school during the holiday season. Attendance at all performances is required. Failure to do so will affect student's grade. Each performance is counted as a test, without a chance for a "make up". Illness or a serious emergency in the family, wherein the Director receives prior warning, are the only legitimate excuses for missing. Occasionally, solos are performed, which are necessary even though competitive egos may suffer damage. The damage will be another learning experience and opportunity.

## **Grading System**

Each student will be graded according to participation in class, presence at all performances, discipline, and general musicianship (how you sing your music).

## **Honor Choir**

Honor choir is a selected ensemble open only by audition and teacher permission for a limited number of students. Honor Choir is offered purely at the prerogative and discretion of the Director. These students learn the vocal works of more difficult levels. Therefore, Honor Choir members meet additionally every Monday during the 12:00 noon recess. Consistent tardiness, absence, or lack of practice will result in expulsion from Honor Choir or cancelling the entire program.

## **Choir Uniforms**

Every choir student receives the OSLS choir uniform: Aloha mu'umu'us and shirts. These uniforms will be worn to most of the performances and then returned to OSLS. Students' parents pay for damages and/or replacement costs.

Girls: choir uniform is to be worn with white shoes or sandals. NO SLIPPERS.

Boys: Shirt needs to be complete with black or dark blue pants and black shoes. Students are NOT allowed to wear denim pants or tennis shoes on our performances.

## Our Savior Lutheran School Choir Schedule

July 16, 2006

Dear Parents,

We are anticipating a wonderful year for our children's musical growth. For planning purposes, you may expect the choir to perform on the following dates. Occasionally, these dates may change or be eliminated (if, for example, the choir is not ready, but the fourth grade choir is ready). Also some dates, such as a chapel performance or field trip performance, may be added.

The boys will wear the choir uniform shirts, complete with the correct shoes, and pants will be worn to these performances. The girls will wear their uniform dresses with the correct shoes.

<b>Date</b>		<b>Rehearsal Time</b>	<b>Performance Time</b>
<b>2006</b>			
<b>September 17</b>	Our Savior Lutheran Church	10:15 a.m.	10:43 a.m.
<b>November 19</b>	Our Savior Lutheran Church	10:15 a.m.	10:45 a.m.
<b>December TBA*</b>	Choir Sings at Arcadia Retirement Center		
<b>December TBA*</b>	Choir sings at Pearlridge Mall		
<b>December 10</b>	Choir & Band Concert at Our Savior Lutheran Church	1:30 p.m.	2:00 p.m.
<b>2007</b>			
<b>January 21</b>	Our Savior Lutheran Church	10:15 a.m.	10:45 a.m.
<b>February 11</b>	Our Savior Lutheran Church	7:50 a.m.	8:15 a.m.
<b>March 2 (Fri.)</b>	Choir practice at St. Mark's	7: 50 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (we take a bus)	
<b>March 4</b>	Lutheran Schools Band and Choir Concert at Pearl City Community Center.	2:15 p.m.	3:30 p.m.
<b>April 29</b>	Our Savior Lutheran Church	7:50 a.m.	8:15 a.m.
<b>May 20</b>	Combined Choir & Band Concert	3:00 p.m.	3:30 p.m.

\* to be announced

If you have any questions of concerns, please feel free to call me at 485-0248 or e-mail me at: [lyumac@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:lyumac@hawaii.rr.com) .

Sincerely,  
*Lyuba McSwain*