



The Heritage of the Church's Song

Musical Saints *For all the Saints, Who from their labors rest...*

Imagine yourself in a crowd singing a great hymn of faith, just you and your closest 5,000 friends singing at the top of your voice of the majesty and power and glory of God.

I've been in a crowd of over 2,000 singing musicians and it is an awesome experience. In the course of church music history many hymns have been written that millions of people have sung through the ages. When we add our voice to that song

not only do we connect with those around us, we also connect with those that have gone before us.

If you think about when we perform a piece by a great composer, take J.S. Bach for example, we are singing and playing something that came out of his creative imagination, written down and performed and re-performed over and over throughout its musical history. The saints of the past, those we know and those we don't know have shared in much of the music we share today.

When we sing the hymn "For all the Saints" on November 6 [All Saint's Sunday] imagine yourself connecting with the millions of people who are singing this hymn on the same day and the millions of past souls who have sung this hymn through the ages. 🎵



Click on the picture to hear 5,000 people singing at the Royal Albert Hall in London this hymn of all saints.

Praise in Time of Sorrow

Thankful Saints *In all things give thanks to the Lord, for the Lord is good.*

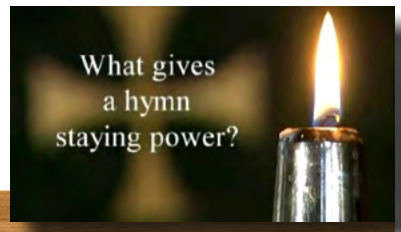
The story of the great Thanksgiving Hymn - *Now Thank We All Our God* is a powerful testament to the power of giving thanks.

The author, **Martin Rinkart**, a Lutheran minister, was in Eilenburg, Saxony, during the Thirty Years' War. The walled city of Eilenburg saw a steady stream of refugees pour through its gates. The Swedish army surrounded the city, and famine and plague were rampant. Eight hundred homes were destroyed, and the people began to perish. There was a tremendous strain on the pastors who had to conduct dozens of funerals daily.

Finally, the pastors, too, succumbed, and Rinkart was the only one left—doing 50 funerals a day.

When the Swedes demanded a huge ransom, Rinkart left the safety of the walls to plead for mercy. The Swedish commander, impressed by his faith and courage, lowered his demands. Soon afterward the Thirty Years' War ended, and Rinkart wrote this hymn for a grand celebration service. It is a testament to his faith that, after such misery, he was able to write a hymn of abiding trust and gratitude toward God. 🎵

Click on the candle to watch a video about the great hymn of thanks.



Music and the Brain

Musicians are Probably Smarter than the Rest

Reason to Make Music

Want to keep your mind healthy and sharp throughout your life? Pick up an instrument. A new study found that musicians might have brains that function better than their peers well into old age. Bet you wish you stuck with those piano lessons after all.

Researchers tested the mental abilities of senior citizens and discovered that musicians performed better at a number of tests. In particular, musicians excelled at visual memory tasks. While musicians had similar verbal capabilities to non-musicians, the musicians' ability to memorize new words was markedly better, too. Perhaps most importantly, the musicians' IQ scores were higher overall than those who spent their lives listening to music rather than performing it.



The experience of musicians also played a role in how sharp their minds were. The younger the musicians began to play their instruments, the better their minds performed at the mental tasks. Additionally, the total number of years musicians played instruments throughout their life corresponded with how strong their brains remained years later.

The study also found that musicians who took the time to exercise between symphonies had even higher-functioning brain capabilities.

This finding supports another recent study that

...musicians' IQ scores were higher overall ...

reported people who walk regularly maintain

healthier brains. With that in mind, perhaps joining a marching band now will make you the smartest person at the retirement home in the future. 🎵

Singers Know Thy Voice

Seven Ways to be a Better Singer

In our American Idol culture, we've been led to believe that the ability to sing well is a talent you're born with—not a skill you can develop. But that's simply not the case: Most everyone can improve their vocal abilities and musicianship skills. Here are seven tips for the journey:

1. Know Thy Voice

Spend quality time with your voice. Find out the answers to these questions:

Is my singing voice big or small? Do I have a vibrato? What range am I most comfortable singing in? How long can I sing without taking a breath?

There are no right or wrong answers to these questions—everybody's voice is different. The more informed you are about your own voice, the better you will be able to care for it and improve it.

2. Take care of yourself.

Your body is your instrument and you only get one. So, stay hydrated. Get enough sleep.

3. Support your breath.

You've probably heard this before by every choral director and voice teacher you've ever had. **Proper breath support is imperative** if you want your tone to sound the best it can.

4. Keep your jaw loose.

A tense jaw will cause your tone to sound constricted and may even cause you to sing out of tune. So, reduce your jaw movement to only what is necessary. Keep your jaw as stationary and as loose as possible, and think of making the shape of the vowel inside your mouth rather than with the muscles in your lips.

5. Read ahead of the beat.

When reading music, **always have your eye at least one or two beats ahead**—that way you can anticipate what's coming next and you'll be less likely to be caught off guard.

6. Listen louder than you sing.

Aural multitasking—the ability to listen to yourself while simultaneously listening to other musicians in your ensemble—is a challenge that every choral singer faces. Please: Do not plug up one earlobe to be able to hear yourself better. Why? If you have to do that to hear yourself, then you aren't training yourself to listen holistically.

7. Get over your mental blocks.

We all have at least one. Maybe you had a Simon Cowell-esque choral director in high school who told you had a dreadful voice and ever since you've had low self-esteem. A good voice teacher will help you to sound the best that you can using the voice that you've got. So, be proud of your unique voice. 🎵



About the Author: Jan-Marie Petersen is editor of Singer Network and communications manager at Chorus America.

Choir Schedules



PRAISE KIDS!

4/5 YEAR OLD &
GRADES 1-2

Praise Kids is singing
away this Fall Season.
Come join in the fun!

November

11/3	4:00 Rehearsal
11/10	4:00 Rehearsal
11/17	4:00 Rehearsal
11/20	8:30/11:00 Services
11/24	No Rehearsal
12/1	4:00 Rehearsal

NEW CREATION CHOIR

GRADES 3-6

New Creation is working
hard on Chrstmas
Music. All are welcome
to join!

November

11/2	7:00 Rehearsal
11/6	11:00 Service
11/9	7:00 Rehearsal
11/16	7:00 Rehearsal
11/20	8:30/11:00 Services
11/23	7:00 Service
11/30	7:00 Rehearsal

NEW GENERATION CHOIR

GRADES 7-12

New Generation is having
way too much fun. All
are welcome!

November

11/2	6:00 Rehearsal
11/9	6:00 Rehearsal
11/13	11:00 Service
11/16	6:00 Rehearsal
11/23	7:00 Service
11/30	6:00 Rehearsal
12/4	11:00 Service
12/7	6:00 Rehearsal



SENIOR CHOIR

ALL AGES

The Senior Choir welcomes
new members to join on
Thursdays at 7:30 to 9:00.

November

11/3	7:30 Rehearsal
11/6	8:30 Singing
11/10	7:30 Rehearsal
11/13	8:30 Service
11/17	7:30 Rehearsal
11/20	8:30/11:00 Services
11/23	7:00 Service
11/24	No Rehearsal
11/27	11:00 Service



GODSBELLS & RIGHTEOUS RINGERS

Grades 4-6 and 7-12

November

11/1	6:00 GB 7:00 RR
11/6	11:00 Service GB
11/8	6:00 GB 7:00 RR
11/13	11:00 Service-RR
11/15	6:00 GB 7:00 RR
11/22	6:00 GB 7:00 RR
11/29	6:00 GB 7:00 RR
12/4	11:00 Service-RR

THE EMBELLISHMENTS

This group is always
looking for new ringers!
Talk to John if you are
interested.

November

11/1	9:30 Rehearsal
11/8	9:30 Rehearsal
11/15	9:30 Rehearsal
11/22	9:30 Rehearsal
11/27	8:30 Service?
11/29	9:30 Rehearsal

BELLS ANGELS

Bells Angels is hard at
work for the Fall Season.

November

10/30	8:30/11:00 Services
11/3	6:15 Rehearsal
11/10	6:15 Rehearsal
11/17	6:15 Rehearsal
11/20	8:30/11:00 Services
11/24	No Rehearsal
12/1	6:15 Rehearsal
12/8	6:15 Rehearsal
11/15	6:15 Rehearsal

FALLEN ANGELS — WOMEN'S QUINTET

Rehearsals have resume
and they will share a
song in worship soon.

A CABELLA RINGERS

This handbell ensemble is
Hard at work learning
Advent and Christmas
Music.



Breathing and Singing

Inhaling to sing.

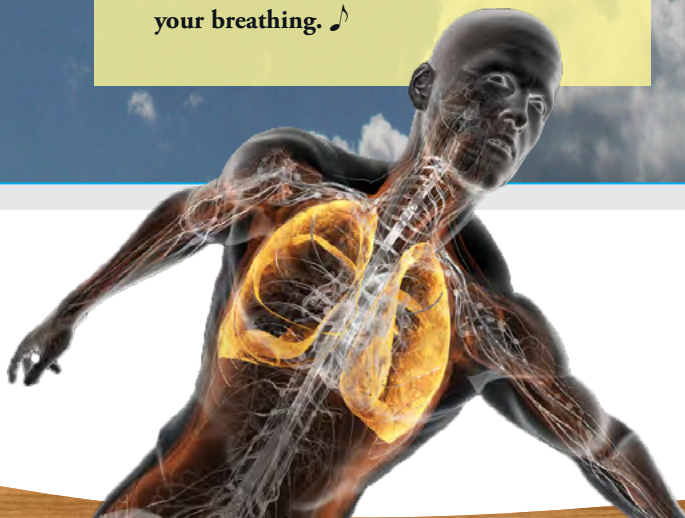
Singing songs requires getting a full breath quickly — because the rest of the choir can't wait five minutes for you to find the air. So knowing how your body feels when you inhale helps you to get air in your body quickly to sing the next phrase. Use the following exercise to explore your own inhalation. Get a feel for how your body should move when you inhale and exhale.



1. Pretend that air is really heavy as you inhale. Visualize it weighing 50 pounds and let it fall low into your body.
2. Let it fall lower than your belly button. Explore this sensation.
3. Then let the breath fall in faster. Still visualize it being heavy but let it fall quickly into your body.
4. You can also fill your lungs as if you were going to blow up a balloon. You will feel your abdomen and lower back expand.

This sensation of quickly filling your lungs with air is how you properly inhale for singing.

Yawning happens all the time when working on breath control. The body gets confused with the different amount of air coming in, and you yawn. Voice students yawn plenty during lessons as well as choir members but for other reasons. Don't worry — it's okay to yawn, just say you're working on your breathing. 🎵



Handbell Choir as a Ring Team

R. I. N. G. A True Team Activity

Group Effort

How many of us participate in anything so intensely interdependent as ringing in a handbell choir? There is no such thing as a “heroic effort” by one ringer in a bell choir (as there might be on, say, a basketball team). Everyone's contribution has equal value. There is no such a thing as an “individual record” as in baseball or on a bowling team.



Individual for the Whole

Handbell ringing is so interdependent that the only thing that matters is the musical achievement of the group as a whole. Like synchronized swimming, individual best-effort is not the goal. Handbell ringing is selfless. The musical spirit melds from the individual into a group presence. That's why we feel so devastated when we goof-up. We feel that we've let the group down. The emphasis on our self-contribution becomes focused on the negative. 🎵

Remember what a positive contribution you can be;
Include the entire group in success, not in failure;
Negative focus is selfish; maintain positive focus;
God's gift of music is in you; let it out; share!