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BASIC CHORAL CONDUCTING

DAVID CHI-BENG YAP



HANDBOOK FOR CHURCH CHOIR CONDUCTOR

葉志明
柳青華
1983

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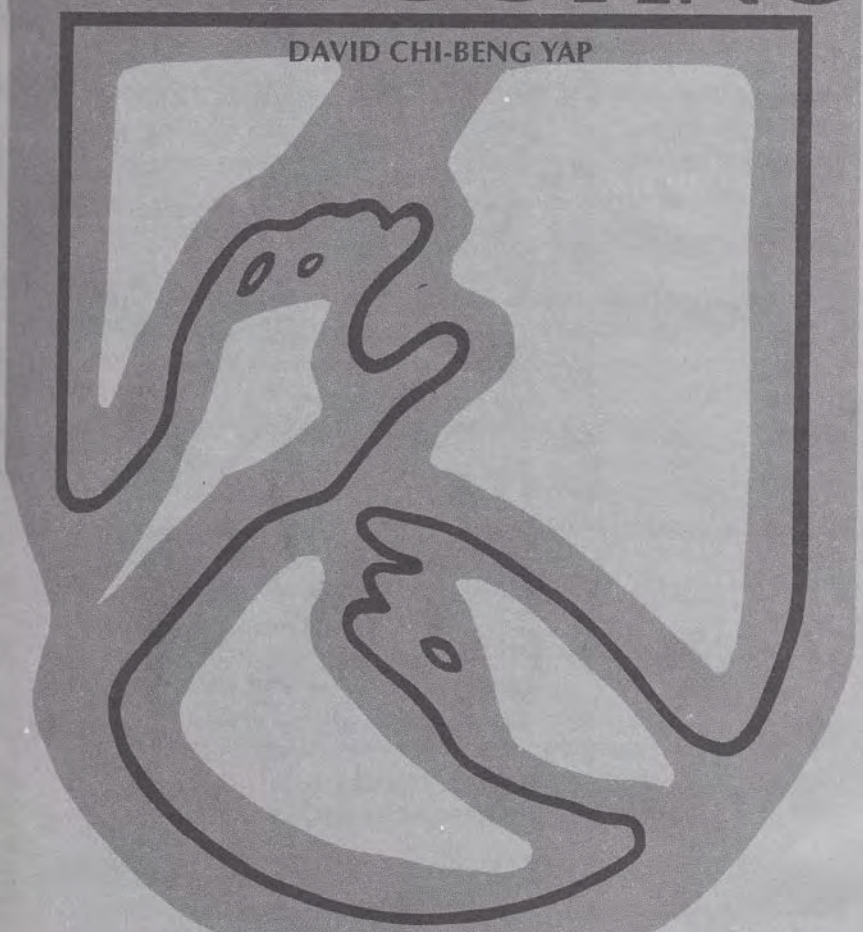


HANDBOOK FOR CHURCH CHOIR CONDUCTOR

Cover design: INTERGRAPHIXCORE

Dedicated to
Dr. John F. Williamson

INTRODUCTION

In each church organization, we find the following ministries: Christian education, youth, visitation, missions, and music. Among all these, the music department binds and coordinates these departments towards the common goal of propagating the Gospel.

The choir is the most important body in the music department. A church that has a choir is a church that gives music an important place in its activities. The choir is the agency responsible for the upliftment of the musical standard of the church. The benefits it gives its members are as follows:

1. Develops their musical talents and provides innumerable opportunities for them to serve the Lord.

2. Enriches their experiences in Christian fellowship.

3. It helps in their spiritual growth and contributes to a deeper understanding of their faith.

4. Lays the groundwork for future church leaders.

5. Encourages them to dedicate their lives for full-time service.

6. Provides a place and many opportunities for young men and women to meet, get acquainted and later on to find their life partners.

On the average, in a one-and-a-half hour Sunday Worship Service, the time alloted for music is around 30 minutes. This includes three to four congregational hymns, the Introit, the Anthem, the Response, the Offertory and also the Prelude, Interludes and Postlude. All of these are closely related to the minister's message, giving a spiritual atmosphere and preparing the congretion to receive God's Word.

Aside from the Worship Service, there are different groups where music is an important part in their activities. They are the youth fellowship, the men's fellowship, women's auxilliary, and evangelistic teams among others.

After seeing the scope of the music ministry, we realize that the responsibilities of the choir conductor and the pianist are truly great. The church must not appoint just anybody to take charge of the musical program. He/She must be a BORN-AGAIN CHRISTIAN living a consecrated Christian life. He/She must have good musical training and sufficient knowledge of different musical techniques. Lastly, both choir conductor and pianist must realize that this is not an ordinary job, but one that is sacred and holy and the responsibility must be taken seriously and with conviction.

Churches in Western and European countries have what is called a Minister of Music. He takes charge of the musical program of the whole church. He is a full-time worker of the church, highly trained in music. He organizes and plans for the activities of the various choirs — the adult, the youth and the children's choir. He trains special groups and supervises musical teams among the young people, and assists other departments in their musical programs. The church normally has an annual budget for the Minister of Music. Because of its effectiveness this practice is worth looking into.

In recent years, Chinese churches have shown tremendous increase in membership. This is due to the fact that these churches are very active in evangelism. They have evangelistic teams, tract distribution, house-to-house evangelism and radio broadcasts. Unfortunately, there seems to be no concern for the church musical program or for the training of personnel. Some churches don't even mind if they don't have a choir. Of course there are different factors that lead to such a situation and we cannot oversimplify things by saying that they are not concerned. Inspite of all these, I hope and pray that we who are called to the ministry of music will not be discouraged, but will work together to meet the challenge set before us.

Following are some of my observations of the musical activities among the Chinese churches:

1. Ordinarily, a big church has various choirs for different age levels. Aside from the choirs, they also have broadcasting teams, youth evangelistic teams, even instrumentalists such as handbell ringers. The medium-sized churches as well as the small churches also have choirs but which are smaller in size. (The membership of the big, medium and small churches would approximately be 500, 250, and 100 respectively).

2. The average membership of the choir is around 30 persons. The average age is 22 years old.

3. There seems to be no restrictions in joining the choir. Choirs lower their standards just to accommodate new members. As a result, more experienced members lose interest and later on leave the choir. A solution to that problem is the organizing of a special male or female chorus, adult choirs and many others that will render numbers on special occasions. You can also have the special extended mixed choir which will sing once or twice a year.

4. Choir rehearsals are often scheduled on Friday or Saturday evenings. These two days seem to be the most convenient days for practice. Rehearsals often start late and end late. Some choir members even enter the church late during the Sunday Worship service, thus disrupting the service. One of the responsibilities of the choir is to lead the congregation in the singing of hymns, but with this habitual lateness, this purpose is defeated.

5. In most Chinese church choirs, spiritual growth is emphasized. Devotional talks are given during rehearsal time. They also have sharing time — when they relate incidents showing God's goodness

and a time when they share problems. They also conduct yearly retreats and outings. Members of the choir understand that singing in the choir is one way of serving the Lord.

6. Majority of conductors and pianists are serving on a voluntary basis. Some churches give honorariums, or at the end of the year they give special gifts of appreciation. They also give them scholarships to further their studies.

7. There are several types of conductors:

   a. those whose knowledge of conducting is gained through self-study and through experience. Though talented, they haven't had formal training, so the standard of the choir remains the same, incapable of rising above a certain level, because they depend on their raw talent. Unless something is done, the choir cannot progress.

   b. those who are consistently studying and learning, who are responsible and have set a good example of themselves.

   c. those who have had a chance to study and have returned to their local churches.

   d. those who are satisfied and contented with the little knowledge they have. There's a saying that goes like this — "the more you learn, the more you know you don't know."

8. Most women want to sing the soprano part thinking that it is the best among ladies' parts. This misconception needs to be corrected.

9. Most of the pianists have their degrees in music, so accompanying is no problem to them. The only problem is the lack of suitable materials for preludes, postludes and interludes.

10. The congregational hymns are often sung in a somewhat slow tempo, thus giving problems to the accompanist.

11. Though there are music seminars being offered in churches, they are very short and so the participants don't learn much, or if they do, they don't put what they have learned into practice. Some suggested solutions to this are long-range training programs and summer music camps.

12. Every Sunday the choir is supposed to sing an anthem, the Introit, Responses like "Gloria Patri," "Doxology," "Amen," or one for the Offertory. But what usually happens is, the choir sings only the Anthem.

13. Very few churches have a yearly budget for the music ministry.

14. Many churches do not give much importance to the development of the talents of their members. That is why many talented members leave for "greener pastures," causing "talent-drain."

15. There is a shortage of music materials especially anthems. Conductors resort to using unsuitable materials or let the choir sing from the hymnbook.

16. Big churches are equipped with pianos and electronic organs. Some even have pipe organs. And many have been using the Yamaha Electronic Organ, which the author feels is not appropriate for church setting. Oftentimes, pianos are even out of tune. They have to have it tuned twice a year or even more often, if it is used constanly.

17. Few churches have adequate facilities for the choir such as a choir room with piano, closets for choir gowns, cabinets for music materials, conductor's music stand, and choir risers.

Because of the above-mentioned observations, I have decided to write this book. This book is primarily for amateur choir conductors and is not a textbook for advance studies. It aims to teach the basic techniques in choral conducting. Through self-study of the different chapters, the reader will be able to learn a few techniques. However, there are still many aspects of choral conducting that one can learn later on, through more reading, attending seminars, going to concerts, and through experience.

Before I proceed, I'd like to share with you some verses which helped in my growth as a church choir conductor.

1. ". . . teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." (Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19)

2. ". . . I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also." (I Cor. 14:15)

3. ". . . that in all things he might have the pre-eminence." (Col. 1:18; John 12:32)

4. "For we are his workmanship (originally "his music") created in Christ Jesus unto good works." (Eph. 2:10)

5. ". . . in lowliness of mind . . . let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 2:3, 5; Rom. 12:3-5)

6. "But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts." (I Thes. 2:4)

7. "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men." (Col. 3:23)

8. "For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel in committed unto me." (I Cor. 9:17)

9. ". . . that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain." (Phil. 2:16)

10. "Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." (I Cor. 15:58)

11. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit saith the Lord." (Zech. 4:6)

12. "When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom." (Prov. 11:2)

This book is dedicated to my beloved teacher, Dr. John Finley Williamson for his unselfish dedication and inspiration as a musician.

To Ms. Judy Tan and Mrs. Frances Siodora-Tiburcio for their assistance in writing the English version of this book.

David Chi-Beng Yap
August, 1983

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 7

CHAPTER I 14

THE CHOIR CONDUCTOR

A. Basic Requirements of a Church Choir Conductor
B. His Musicianship
C. Conclusion

CHAPTER II 19

THE CONDUCTING POSTURE

A. Conducting Posture
B. Head Position and Facial Expression
C. Basic Position of the Hands
D. Conclusion

CHAPTER III 32

BEAT PATTERNS

A. Common Conducting Patterns
B. Preparatory Beat and Cueing
C. Release Beat
D. Conclusion

CHAPTER IV 38

THE USE OF THE LEFT HAND

CHAPTER V 39

ATTACK

A. What is an "Attack"?
B. How is an "Attack" Used?

CHAPTER VI 40

BREATHING

A. The Respiratory System

B. The Breathing Technique During Conducting
C. How to Teach the Choir Members the Correct Way of Breathing
D. Kinds of Breathing

CHAPTER VII 43

VOICE PRODUCTION

A. The Basic Principle of Voice Production
B. Common Musical Terms in Singing
C. Vocal Ranges
D. Voice Lift
E. Resonance and Voice Projection
F. The Balancing and Blending of Voices

CHAPTER VIII 51

ARTICULATION

CHAPTER IX 54

HOW TO SELECT MUSIC MATERIALS

A. Self-Observation and Evaluation
B. Objectives and Functions
C. Knowledge About the Music
D. Conclusion

CHAPTER X 57

CHOIR REHEARSALS

CHAPTER XI 62

CHOIR ORGANIZATION

CHAPTER XII 65

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

CONCLUSION 77

GLOSSARY 78

Chapter 1

THE CHOIR CONDUCTOR

BRIEF SUMMARY

A. BASIC REQUIREMENTS OF A CHURCH CHOIR CONDUCTOR

1. Spirituality
2. A Pleasing Personality
3. Background and Experience in Church Music
4. Personal Commitment

B. HIS MUSICIANSHIP MUST INCLUDE:

1. Musical Activities
2. Basic Musical Knowledge
   a. Knowledge of Musical Terms
   b. Knowledge of Sacred Music Composers
   c. Knowledge of Church Music Compositions
   d. Ability to Handle and Perform at Least One Instrument
3. Knowledge of Choral Conducting Techniques

C. CONCLUSION

A. BASIC REQUIREMENTS OF A CHURCH CHOIR CONDUCTOR

To become a choir conductor, musicianship and musical achievements are of primary importance. A choir conductor is also called the "music minister" and his task is similar to that of a pastor. His every movement in front of the choir and the congregation must be aimed towards the ultimate

goal of preaching the message of the Lord Jesus Christ through music. The conductor must possess the following characteristics:

1. Spirituality — He must be a born-again Christian with a deep conviction for the Christian faith. He must have an understanding of the basic Christian doctrines and live a life that is a testimony to others.

2. A pleasing personality — He must have imagination, creativity, self-control, self-discipline, a sense of humor and humility. He should be able to lead and work with all age groups. He should have the grace to accept praise and the maturity to accept criticism. Finally, he must maintain a good relationship with the pastor.

3. Background and experience in Church music — He must have a knowledge and experience of church traditions and liturgy. It would be most ideal if he has had some years of experience singing in the choir.

4. Personal commitment — He must be committed to serve the Lord through music, to serve in the church even with little or no compensation at all, knowing that this task helps and contributes to his spiritual growth.

B. HIS MUSICIANSHIP MUST INCLUDE:

1. Musical activities — Involvement in musical activities may include playing an instrument, singing, listening to classical music, attending concerts, ability to criticize a musical performance, analyze the way a piece of music is written, its artistic interpretation, etc. The choir conductor must read books on music history, musical forms and styles, and he must always be up-to-date on musical events.

2. Basic musical knowledge — This includes rudiments of music, elementary harmony, counterpoint, solfeggio, dictation, ear training, transposition, keyboard harmony, improvisation, composition, advance harmony, advance counterpoint, choral arrangement, musical forms, music history, orchestration and music appreciation. These subjects are taught in music schools.

a. Knowledge of musical terms — A choral conductor is expected to have a broad knowledge of musical terms for him to understand the vocal scores. The terms in general are:

1) DYNAMICS

p	piano
f	forte
pp	pianissimo
ff	fortissimo
mp	mezzo piano
mf	mezzo forte
ppp	piano pianissimo
fff	forte fortisissimo
	meno piano
	Piu forte
ac $\wedge$. $>$.	accent
sf.	sforzando
fp	fortepiano
cresc. $<$	crescendo
rf. rinf.	rinforzando
decresc. $>$	decrescendo
dim.	diminuendo
	mezzo voce

2) TEMPO

Grave
Largo
Larghetto
Lento
Adagio
Andante
Andantino
Moderato
Allegretto
Allegro
Animato
Vivace
Poco a poco
Presto
Prestissimo
Allargando
Ritardando (rit.)
Rallentando (Rall.)
Meno mosso
Accelerando (accel.)
Stringendo (string.)
A tempo
Tempo primo
Tempo I

3) MOOD

Animato
Brillante
Brio, Conbrio
Cantabile
Delicato
Deciso
Dolce
Elegiaco
Espressivo (Espr.)
Furioso
Grave
Vigoroso
Leggiero
Maestoso
Marcato
Religioso
Recitativo
Semplice
Sostenuto
Staccato
Vivo

4) OTHERS

Da Capo
Dal Segno (D.S.) 𝄋
Divisi (Div.)
Tutti
Coda
Fine
Finale
Fermata 𝄐
Phrasing

b. Knowledge of Some Sacred Music Composers — It is important that the choir conductor has knowledge of choral composers. Their lives and their works. Composers who are known in the field of church music are:

G. P. Da Palestrina (1525-1594)
T. L. de Victoria (1548-1611)
Heinrich Schutz (1588-1672)
Giacomo Carissimi (1605-1674)
Jean B. Lully (1632-1687)
Marc Antoine Charpentier (1634-1704)
Henry Purcell (1659-1695)
Alessandro Scarlatti (1660-1725)
Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)
Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767)
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
George Fredirich Handel (1685-1759)
G. B. Pergolesi (1710-1736)
Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)
W. A. Mozart (1756-1791)
Luigi Cherubini (1760-1842)
Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)
Giacomo Meyerbeer (1791-1864)
Franz Schubert (1797-1828)
Hector Berlioz (1803-1869)
Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)
Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)
Jacques Offenbach (1819-1880)
Anton Bruckner (1824-1896)
Camille Saint-Saens (1835-1921)
Antonin Dvorak (1844-1904)
Gustav Mahler (1860-1911)
G. Faure (1845-1924)
Arnold Schonberg (1874-1951)
Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)
R. Vaughan-Williams (1872-1958)
Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)
Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)
Zoltan Kodaly (1882-1967)
Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971)
Darius Milhaud (1892)
Oliver Messiaen (1901)
Paul Hindemith (1895-1963)
Arnold Schonberg (1874-1951)
Arthur Honeggen (1892-1955)
Sir William Walton (1902)
Aaron Copland (1900)
Gian Carlo Menotti (1911)

c. Knowledge of compositions belonging to the field of church music.

(1) Hymn
(2) Gospel Hymn/Song
(3) Anthem
(4) Cantata
(5) Oratorio
(6) Others like Missa Requiem, Te Deum, Magnificate, Symphony of Psalm, Gloria, Stabat Mater, Passione, Motet ,Madrigal, Seven Last Words of Christ.

d. Ability to Perform Any Instruments — Knowing some instruments and how to play or to perform fairly.

3. Choral Conducting Techniques — The performance of a group choral depends largely on the conductor — his control of the choir, his conducting techniques, his understanding and interpretation of music pieces and his breathing.

C. CONCLUSION

1. Musicianship includes a very wide scope of musical knowledge.

2. One's ability to analyze, criticize, and one's aesthetic sense as a whole determine the conductor's musicianship.

3. The more one knows, the more humble he should be and must be eager to learn more.

4. The conductor's musicianship is shown by his choice of music, his techniques and style in the way he handles the choir.

5. It takes a lifetime to learn about music. Choral conducting is just a part of it.

Chapter 11

THE CONDUCTING POSTURE

BRIEF SUMMARY

A. CONDUCTING POSTURE

B. HEAD POSITION AND FACIAL EXPRESSION

C. BASIC POSITION OF THE HANDS

D. CONCLUSION

A. CONDUCTING POSTURE

1. The head should be erect and the conductor should look at the singers. Refrain from making unnecessary movements. (Fig. 1)

2. The right hand should be higher than the left, the distance from the body at least a foot away. This will be the reverse if the conductor is lefthanded. (Fig. 1 and Fig. 2)

3. The shoulders should be relaxed and held down.

4. Chin in.

5. The feet should be firmly planted on the ground. Shifting of body weight should be from front to back or back to front (vice-versa). (Fig. 3) To insure balance, avoid bending the knees, toe-tapping and swinging the body in all directions. Stand with feet flat on the floor.

B. HEAD POSITION AND FACIAL EXPRESSION

1. The head should be held up straight. Up and down and sideways movements should be avoided.

2. The facial expression should be relaxed. Smile slightly especially when the singers are singing high notes.

3. The conductor must mouth the words to indicate vowels and consonant sounds.

4. The conductor must look at each member of the choir. Mood must be that of excitement.

5. When conducting, the conductor must appear as if he is singing, but is actually not. He must not sing with the choir to be able to listen to each parts.

6. The throat and neck must be relaxed.



Fig. 1 — Front-View



Fig. 2
Side-View



Fig. 3

C. BASIC POSITION OF THE HANDS

1. The right hand should be relaxed. These are the four fundamental movements of the wrist. (Figs. 4a, 4b, 4c, 4d)

Fig. 4a — down position

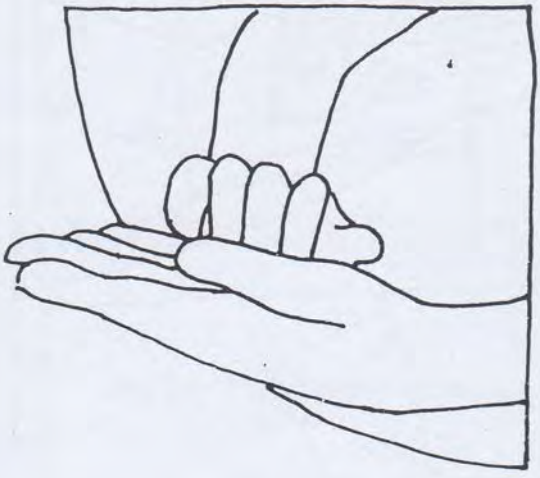


Fig. 4b — left position

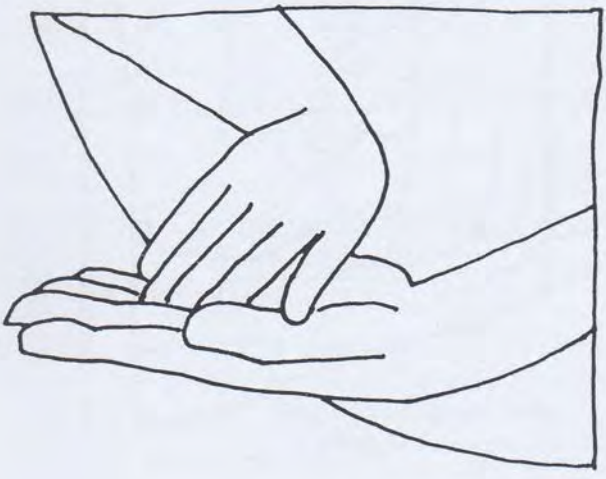


Fig. 4c — right position

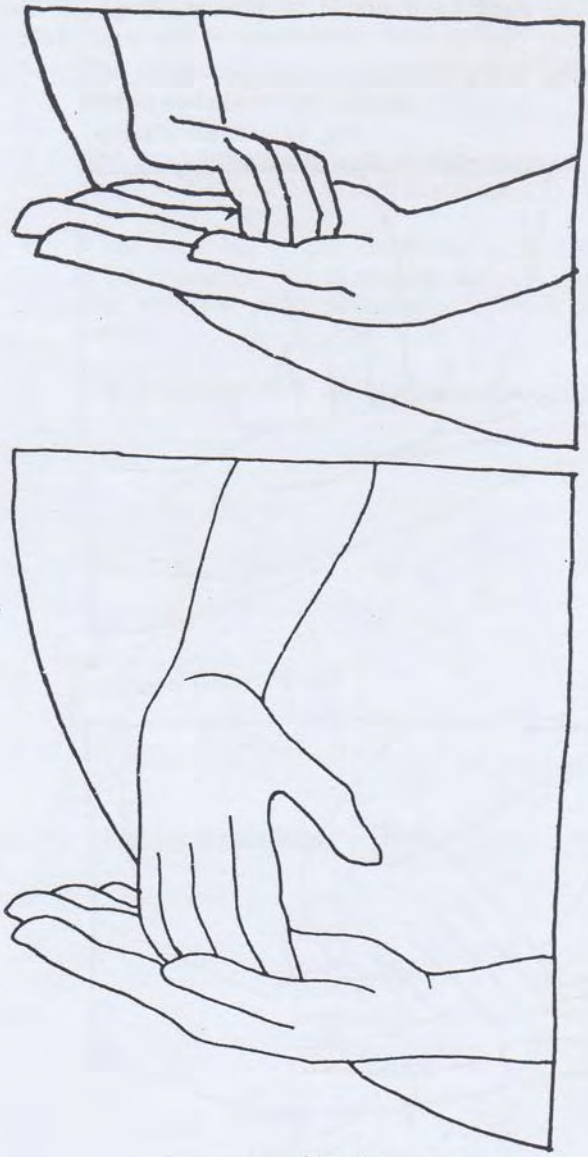


Fig. 4d — up position

2. These are the four fundamental positions for the right hand and arm in up and down position. (Figs. 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d)

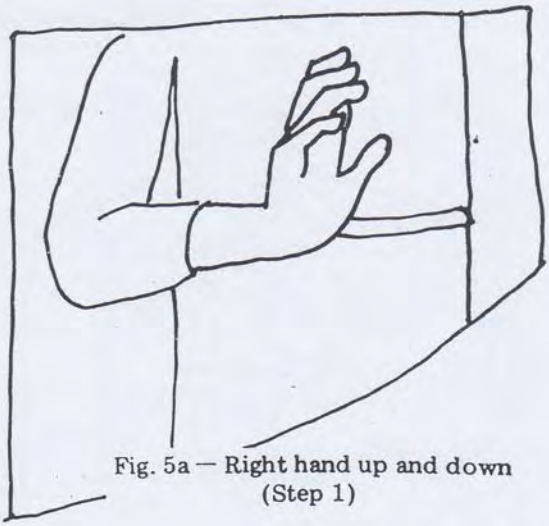


Fig. 5a — Right hand up and down
(Step 1)

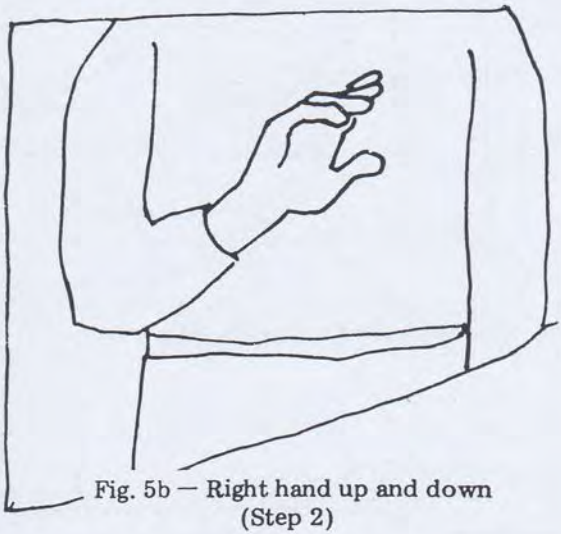


Fig. 5b — Right hand up and down
(Step 2)



Fig. 5c — Right hand up and down
(Step 3)

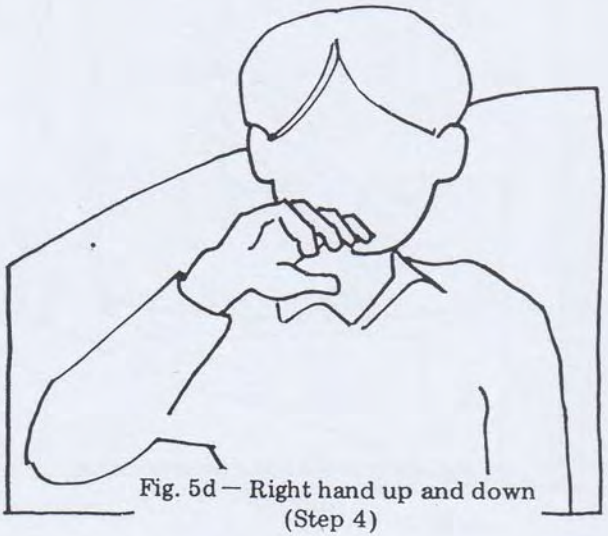


Fig. 5d — Right hand up and down
(Step 4)

3. Arm in up and down position and also in three directions. (Fig. 6) This is the combination of Figs. 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d. Hands must be about 10" to 16" from the body.

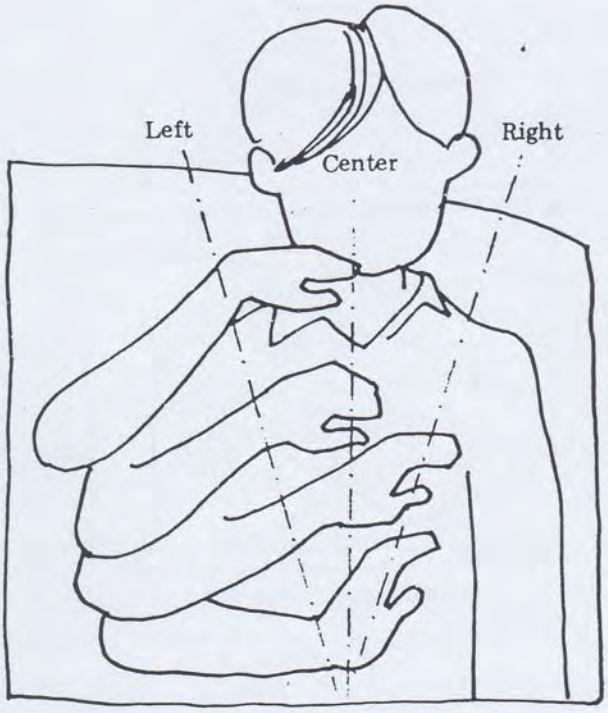


Fig. 6 — Right hand up-and-down in three directions

4. Central horizontal movements (Figs. 7a, 7b, 7c).

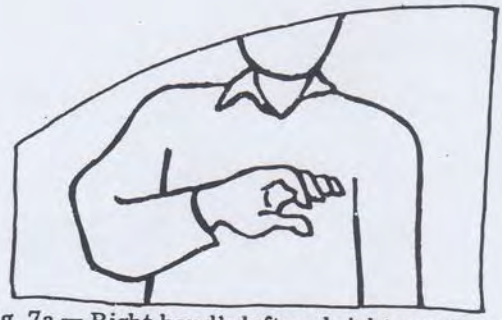


Fig. 7a — Right hand's left and right movement (Step 1)



Fig. 7b — Right hand's left and right movement (Step 2)



Fig. 7c — Right hand's left and right movement (Step 3)

5. Fig. 8 is the combination of Figs. 7a, 7b, 7c, in three levels; horizontally from the upper chest, lower chest and the waist level. Don't swing or move your body when you move your arms.

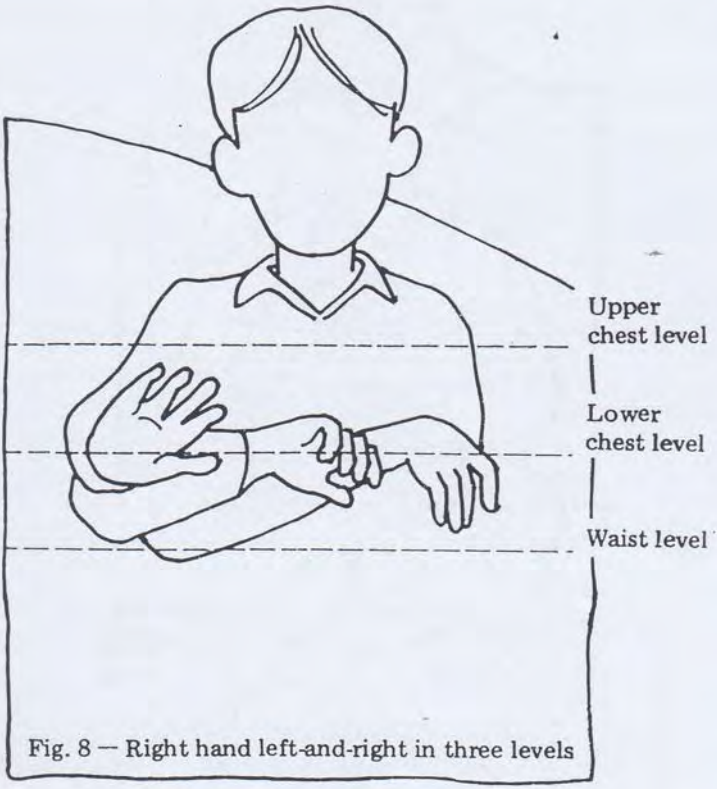


Fig. 8 — Right hand left-and-right in three levels

6. The basic position of the left hand is seen in Fig. 9. The hand must be at least 10" away from the body and always lower than the right hand.

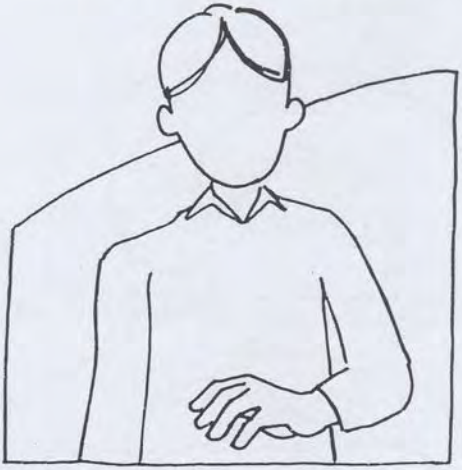


Fig. 9 Left-hand position

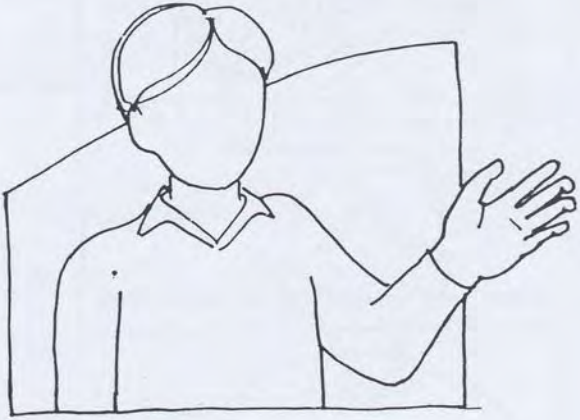


Fig. 10

7. To indicate a special entrance, use the left hand. The distance from the body is about 20". The left hand should not go above the level of the eye, and not lower than the hips. (Fig. 10)

8. Both hands conducting.

   a. Figs. 11a, 11b, 11c, 11d — fundamental position of both hands — usually going in opposite direction.

   b. Avoid exaggerated hand movements.



Fig. 11a — Basic position of both hands (1st beat)

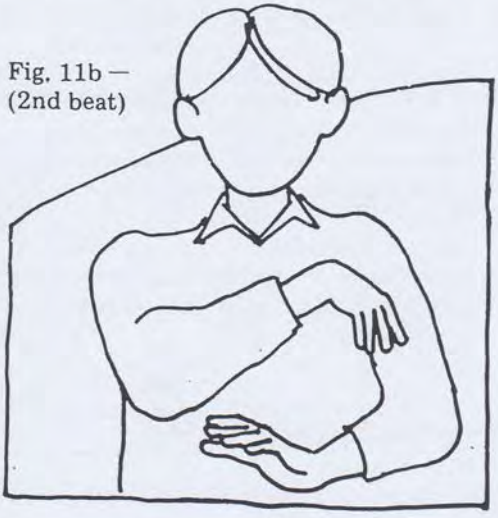


Fig. 11b —
(2nd beat)

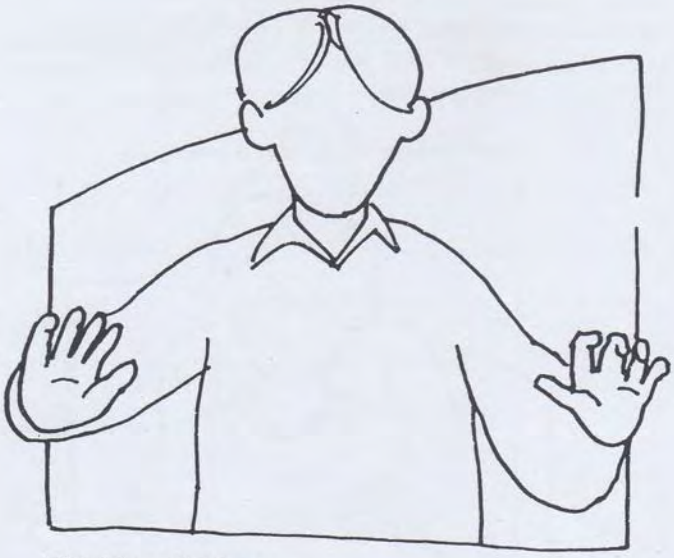


Fig. 11c — 3rd beat



Fig. 11d — 4th beat

D. CONCLUSION

1. The conducting posture mentioned in this chapter is basic. For beginners, it is suggested that they learn it by heart. It is possible that later on, one may develop another conducting style, but for the meantime, do not overdo it.

2. The church choir conductor must be reminded that it is his duty to present the message of Christ through music and that conducting in front of a congregation is not a performance.

3. Generally speaking, the right hand gives the cue for tempo, rhythm, dynamics, expression, phrasing, interpretation, pattern, attack and release. The left hand only assists the right hand. The reverse is true if the conductor is left handed.

4. Conducting posture which was discussed in this chapter should be followed. For those who have been conducting for a long time and have already formed habits or have established their own way of conducting it might be difficult to correct their habits unless they are willing to start from the beginning.

5. The traditional style of conducting is both formal and controlled.

6. Avoid swinging movements of the hands. Should it be necessary that movements be added in certain interpretations, the conductor must use his body movements wisely and meaningfully.

7. There are other techniques to learn in advance conducting. However, it is advisable for the beginners to first learn the fundamentals well.

Chapter III

BEAT PATTERNS

BRIEF SUMMARY

A. COMMON CONDUCTING PATTERNS

B. PREPARATORY BEAT AND CUEING

C. RELEASE BEAT

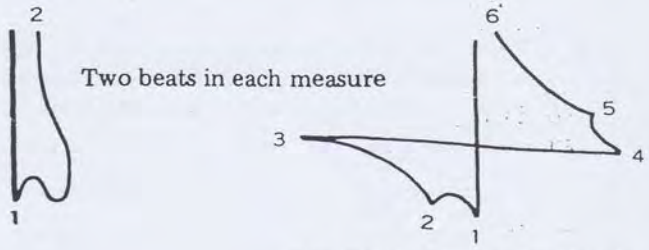
D. CONCLUSION

A. COMMON CONDUCTING PATTERNS (Fig. 12)

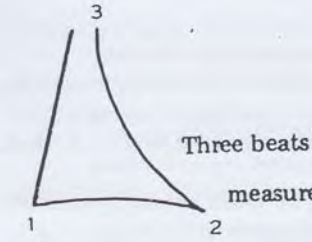
The functions of conducting patterns are:

1. To indicate the number of beats in every measure.
2. To indicate the tempo.
3. To indicate the dynamics.
4. To indicate the phrasing.
5. To show the accent in each measure, for example, in a 4/4 measure, the first and the third beats are always heavier than the second and fourth.

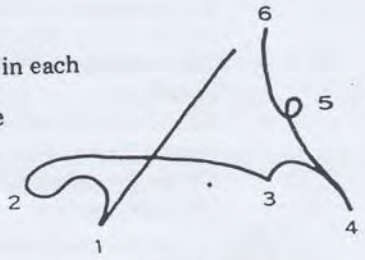
Fig. 12



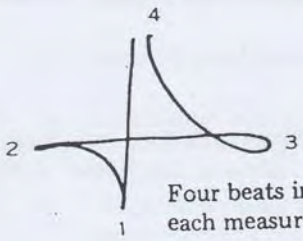
Six beats in each measure (3 x 2)



Three beats in each measure



Six beats in each measure (2 x 3)



Four beats in each measure

B. PREPARATORY BEAT AND CUEING

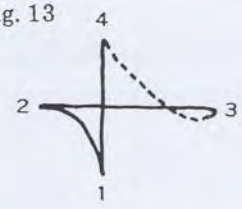
1. Preparatory beats are used in the following ways:

   a. for the first note of a piece.
   b. for the first note of a new phrase.
   c. for the first note of new tempo.
   d. for the entrance of a voice part.
   e. for any emphasized note.
   f. for the note following a fermata (hold).

2. Cueing:

   a. It is one full beat ahead of the first beat of a piece. (Fig. 13)

Fig. 13



b. Use eye contact to catch the choir's attention especially before and during entrances.
c. For accurate entrances, count aloud the number of beats. Do this during rehearsals only.
d. The conductor must breathe one full beat ahead.
e. All of the above rules must coincide with the tempo, mood and dynamics of a piece.
f. Other expressions should be related to the preparatory beat.

C. RELEASE BEAT

1. The basic hand position (Figs. 14a, 14b, 14c, 14d) with the wrist as pivot. Make a 180° turn with the hand.

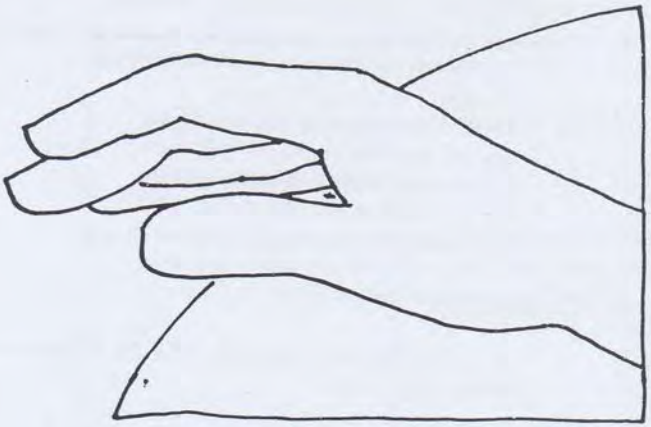


Fig. 14a — in starting position

2. Follow the tempo when cueing the release beat.

3. The dynamics and expression must be incorporated into the release beat.

4. Eye contact with each member of the choir is important when cueing.

5. Movement of both hands must indicate and prepare the release one full beat ahead. .

6. Breathing must be simultaneous with release.

7. Ordinarily, when cueing the release beat, the right hand should be at chest level.

8. Amplitude is related to dynamics, expression and tempo, depending on the music.

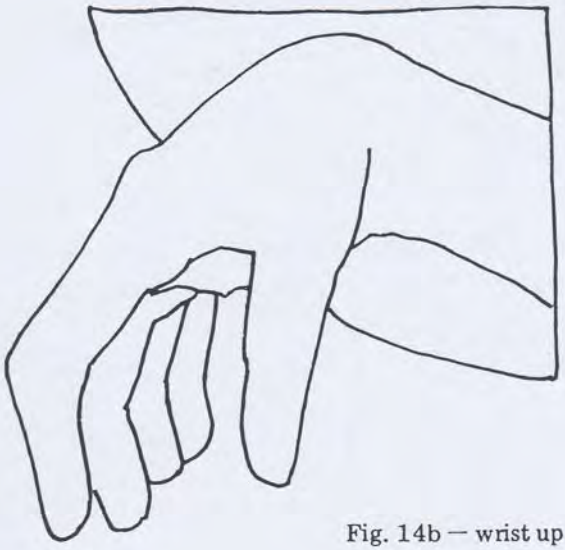


Fig. 14b — wrist up

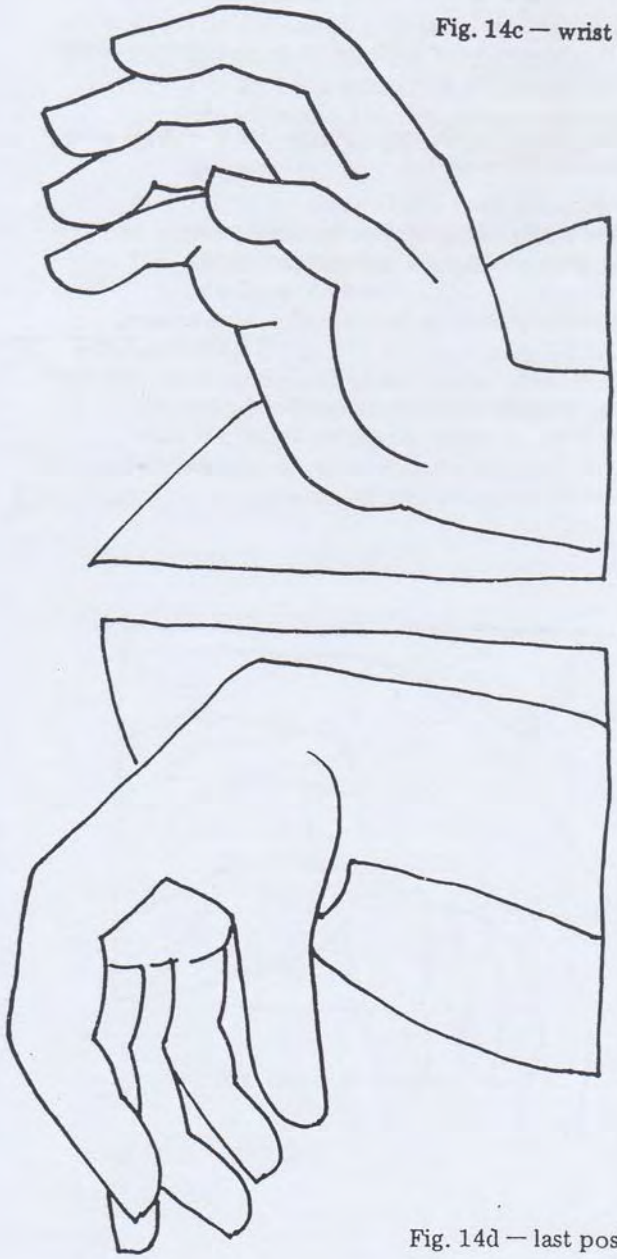


Fig. 14c — wrist down

Fig. 14d — last position

D. CONCLUSION

1. Beating, breathing and attack are closely related.

2. The use of the left hand for releases is permissible for left-handed persons.

3. The conductor must have strong back muscles, which can be had if one lifts weights or heavy objects.

4. In conducting, the shoulders, the arms and the vocal organs must be relaxed. Elbows must be free to move.

5. Though beating is a mechanical movement, the conductor can give life to a piece of music by adding feelings or expressions to his conducting.

Chapter IV

THE USE OF THE LEFT HAND

(Refer to Figs. 9 and 10)

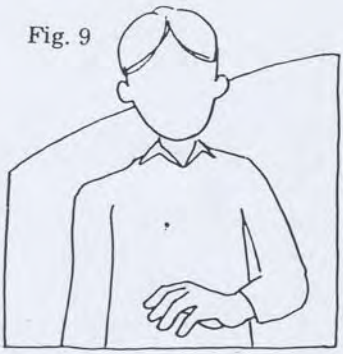
1. The left hand is used only when needed. It should be at hip level and must go in opposite direction to the right hand.

2. To indicate changes in expressions or in the loudness or softness of a piece, the left hand should be used.

3. It is also the left hand that is used for cueing and entrances.

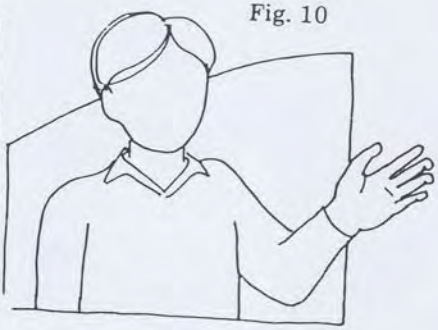
4. The left hand can also be used to assist the right hand in beating syncopated rhythms.

Fig. 9



Left-hand position

Fig. 10



Lef-hand indicating entrance

Chapter v

ATTACK

In choral conducting, "ATTACK" is the most important technique. If the conductor expects the choir to sing with a clear and uniform entrance, he must master the "attack" technique.

A. WHAT IS AN "ATTACK"?

B. HOW IS AN "ATTACK" USED?

A. WHAT IS THE MEANING OF "ATTACK? "

This occurs when the conductor uses his diaphragm to make a sudden exhaling motion then releases his breath. During this time, the air is let out through the mouth as throat is open. When the choir member imitates the same diaphragm movements, the result is a uniform start for the choir. (Figs. 15a and 15b)

B. WHEN AND HOW IS AN "ATTACK" USED?

1. Attack, aside from being used at the start of a piece of music is also used during the entry of a new phrase and during the release.

2. Attack and breathing are closely related.

3. Attack, aside from being used at the start of a piece of music, is also used during the entry of a new phrase during the release.

4. In the attack, diaphragm movements are the most important. For better results, use lesser hand movements and more in the diaphragm.

Chapter VI

BREATHING

BRIEF SUMMARY

A. THE RESPIRATORY SYSTEM

B. THE BREATHING TECHNIQUE DURING CONDUCTING

C. HOW TO TEACH THE CHOIR MEMBERS THE CORRECT WAY OF BREATHING

D. KINDS OF BREATHING

A. THE RESPIRATORY SYSTEM

The respiratory system is made up mainly of the lungs. It is supported by muscles. While inhaling, the lungs and the chest expands and the diaphragm pushes downward, then the air enters the body. In exhalation, as the diaphragm contracts, the air comes out of the mouth and nostrils.

The two types of breathing are the upper chest breathing and the lower chest breathing. Upper chest breathing takes in only 1/2 quart of air while upper and lower chest breathing put together takes 4-5 quarts of air.

B. THE BREATHING TECHNIQUE DURING CONDUCTING

1. When inhaling, air flows in through the mouth and the nose. Together with the movement made by the diaphragm and the ribs, the upper and lower chest open and contract. At this time, the vocal cords must be relaxed and the throat open to allow the air to pass through. To avoid too much noise during inhalation, air must be drawn in and not sucked in.

2. When exhaling, the vocal cord must also be relaxed. The air should pass through without making the vocal cord vibrate.

3. The speed of breathing and the amount of air needed depends on the tempo of the music, so it is important that the conductor breathe with the singers.

4. Using the lower chest (ribs open) in breathing will allow more air to be drawn in. This action is similar to an accordion which draws in air when it is pulled wide open.

5. The diaphragm controls the whole breathing system. During conducting, the abdominal muscles must contrict and the diaphragm must always move up and down.

6. Inhaling and exhaling must be properly done during the preparatory beat, cueing and releases.

C. HOW TO TEACH CHOIR MEMBERS THE CORRECT WAY OF BREATHING

1. Inhalation — The throat must be wide open while the air is drawn into the lungs. To facilitate inhalation let the members raise their hands and let the air flow in.

2. When the lungs are already filled with air, let the choir members hold their breath and put their hands down. At this point, the lungs expand and the rib cage is also open. This can be felt by the hands.

3. During exhalation, relax the vocal cord. Let all the air out by producing a zzz sound. Then start again from inhalation. This is one cycle. This exercise must be done during every rehearsal until the choir members master it.

D. KINDS OF BREATHING

1. Fast inhalation — Open the mouth wide and the throat, too. The vocal cord should be laid flat and at the same time the ribs should be opened wide to allow the air to flow in immediately.

2. Slow inhalation — The procedure is the same as in fast inhalation, except in this case the ribs open slowly andd the air enters the lungs slowly.

3. Fast exhalation — Use the diaphragm to push up the air through the throat.

4. Slow exhalation — This technique is the most difficult to do. To master this, constant practice is needed. With the diaphragm as a controlling unit, slowly release the air. (The lesser air released, the better). Slow exhalation is used in singing long phrases.

5. Staggered breathing — This technique is often used when a group of singers have to sing long phrases. Here, the singers take turns breathing.

Fig. 15a

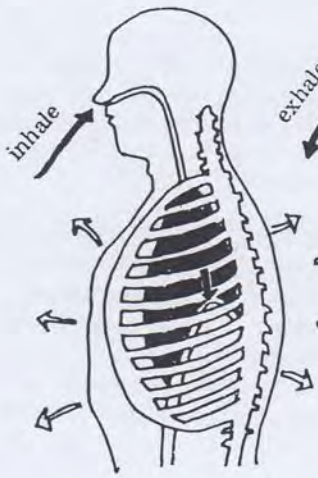
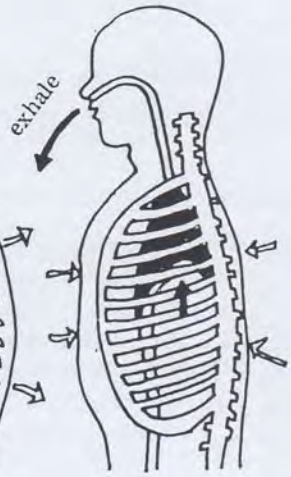


Fig. 15b



Chapter VII

VOICE PRODUCTION

The conductor, whether he sings well or not, must know the correct way of singing and the theory behind it. In conducting any kind of choir, the conductor must act as if he is singing, including the interpretations of the piece.

BRIEF SUMMARY

A. THE BASIC PRINCIPLE OF VOICE PRODUCTION

B. COMMON MUSICAL TERMS IN SINGING

C. VOCAL RANGES

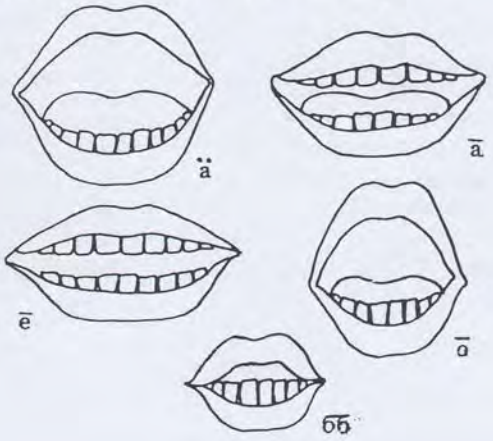
D. VOICE LIFT

E. RESONANCE AND VOICE PROJECTION

F. THE BALANCING AND BLENDING OF VOICES

A. THE BASIC PRINCIPLE OF VOICE PRODUCTION

Fig. 16 Five Basic Vowels and Mouth Shapes



The larynx is the organ which produces sounds. The lungs are filled with air, the diaphragm controls and pushes the air through the vocal cord which in turn produces the sound. The size and thickness of the vocal cords determine the tonal quality of a voice. On the other hand, the mouth and head cavity, the chest, the nose, even the body build, determine voice resonance. The teeth, tongue, upper and lower jaw, and the lips are concerned with diction.

B. COMMON MUSICAL TERMS IN SINGING

1. About the Voice

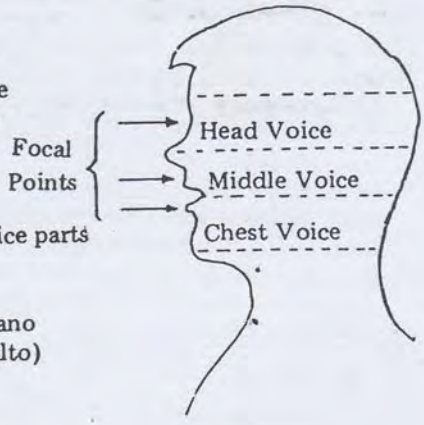
Amplitude
Common pitch
Consonance
Dissonance
Falsetto
Glissando
Interval
Intonation
Lift of voice
Monotone
Nasal Voice
Staccato
Overtone
Pitch
Range
Resonance
Throaty voice
Timbre
Tremolo
Tone color
Vibration
Volume
Voice blending
Voice balancing
Voice modification
Voice placement
Voice projection
Absolute pitch

2. About Voice Production

Chest cavity
Throat cavity
Nasal cavity
Head cavity
Voice box
Larynx
Vocal cord
Mouth
Lips
Chin
Jaw
Teeth
Tongue
Glutteral
Hard palate
Soft palate
Cheek
Throat

3. Resonance

Head voice resonance
Middle voice resonance
Chest voice resonance



4. Voice Parts

a. Singing group voice parts

soprano
mezzo soprano
contralto (alto)
1st tenor
2nd tenor
baritone
bass
boy soprano
cambiata

b. Other voice parts

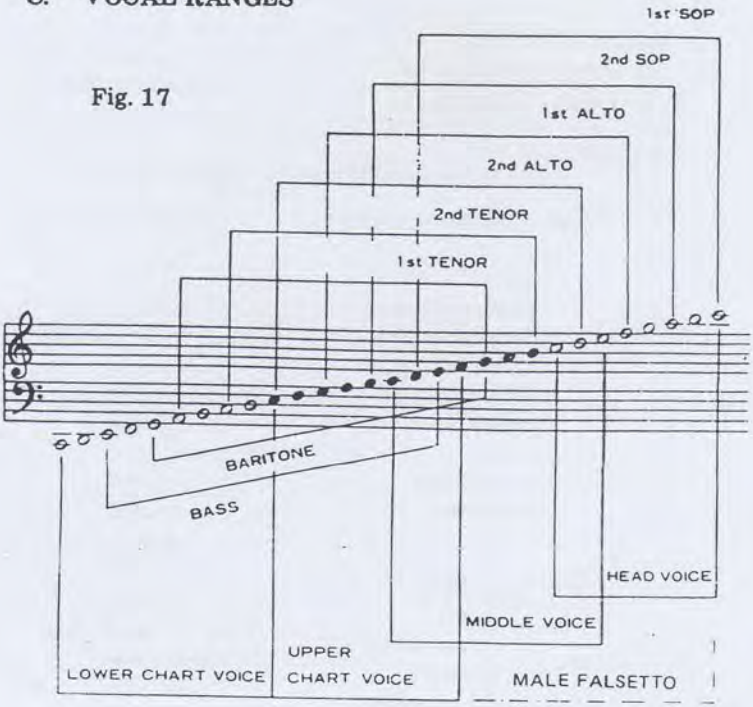
coloratura soprano
lyric soprano
dramatic soprano
dramatic tenor
bel canto
basso profundo

5. Composition

Cantata
Motet
Oratorio
Hymn
Gospel Hymn/Song
Anthem
Missa
Requiem
Te Deum
Magnificate
Symphony of Psalm
Stabat Mater
Passione
Madrigal
Seven Last Words of Christ

C. VOCAL RANGES

Fig. 17



1. The vocal ranges shown in the chart are the usual ranges for each voice parts. One who has received vocal training has a wider range. (Fig. 17)

2. Using the piano as the basis for comparison of the different voice parts will show that the male voice belongs to the area below middle C. The female voice on the other hand belongs to the area above middle C. This is a proof that the male voice is one octave lower than the female voice.

3. Note that e_1, to b is the common range for the male and female voices. This range can be sung by both male and female voices, but with a difference in volume.

4. The range of the human voice is from low e_2 to high e^2 a total of four octaves. The combination of four parts with different tone colors result in a beautiful sound.

5. Resonance which is also known as voice placement is composed mainly of an overlapping of head voice, middle voice, upper chest and lower chest voice. Each area's resonance differs depending on the singing technique and the singer's body build.

D. VOICE LIFT

Voice lift is an important factor in voice production.

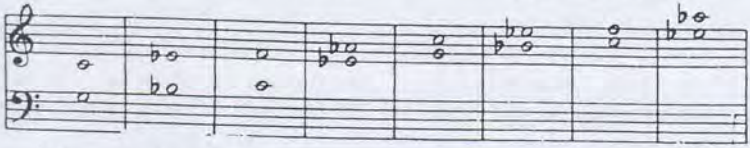
1. What is a voice lift?

   This occurs when the singer, upon reaching a certain note has to adjust his voice — that is to say that the placement in which he uses to project his voice has to be shifted to another placement for him to continue singing. Voice lift is inborn, hence once the voice lift is found, this will determine one's voice part.

2. Voice lift differs for different voice parts. Normally there are 1st and 2nd lifts after every perfect 4th interval. To be able to sing the 2nd lift correctly, one must place one's voice in a higher area and modify the vowel into a closer vowel.

3. Fig. 18 shows the table of the different voice lifts.

Fig. 18 Lower note 1st lift Upper note 2nd lift



Bass Baritone 2nd Tenor 1st Tenor 2nd Alto or Contrato 1st Alto Mezz. Sop. 1st Sop.

4. Voice lift and singing of vowel sounds are closely related. In singing, when the singers comes to the second lift, there is a tendency toward the "uh" sound. (Vowel modification).

5. The most accurate way of classifying a voice is to find the voice lift.

6. Voice lift is inborn, therefore it can't be changed.

7. It is difficult to find the voice lift of children and during the adolescent period.

E. RESONANCE AND VOICE PROJECTION

When the vocal cord vibrates, sound is produced. High or low pitches depend on the tightness or looseness of the vocal cord. Resonance occurs when the pitch in the voice box is magnified into a large sound. If a singer uses the resonance technique correctly, he can easily project the sound.

Voice placement differs between male and female. Adult voices are also different from children's voices. The male voice uses chest resonance while the female voice uses the chest, middle and head resonance.

Children use the chest, middle and head voice resonance.

In choir conducting, voice placement must be taught accordingly:

1. If you are a lady conductor teaching a male chorus, you must learn to sing using the chest voice. At the beginning, your voice may be too soft, but this is better than singing one octave higher.

2. If you are a male conductor handling a female choir, you must learn to sing the falsetto way. Though your voice may be soft at the start, it is better than singing one octave lower. If it is difficult, one suggestion would be to use a model voice.

3. The same principle is used when teaching a children's choir.

F. BALANCING AND BLENDING OF VOICES

Take note of the following points:

1. To balance the voices in a four part choir, the number of sopranos and tenos must be less than the altos and basses. The ideal numbers are:

Soprano	—	10 persons
Alto	—	15 persons
Tenor	—	8 persons
Bass	—	15 to 18 persons

2. The bass part is the foundation and the most important part in the entire choir. It is advisable to have more people in this section.

3. Generally speaking, there are more baritones than basses found among Orientals. Usually, there is a lack of tenor voices but the conductor must keep on looking. In the event that the tenor section lacks members, the conductor may ask some from the alto section to sing the tenor part since they have the same voice range. On the other hand, the tenors can also sing the alto part when needed.

4. Most ladies prefer to sing the soprano part. They have this misconception that being a soprano is more superior than being an alto. The conductor should convince the singer to sing her assigned voice part. Another solution is for the conductor to encourage the mezzo sopranos and those who can read notes to sing the alto part.

5. Conductors sometimes have female members especially among the sopranos, who want to sing louder than the rest. This is a problem conductors can't avoid.

6. To avoid the sticking out of voices among the singers, the conductor must remind the members to sing with their throats open.

7. "Tuning" is the most important technique in choir singing. Each member must learn to listen to each other during performance. Only "tuning" can make voices blend well. The best way to learn "tuning" is to sing a cappella.

8. While conducting, the conductor must learn to listen to every part. Before he could be successful in this respect, he must learn the song by heart. Incidentally, ear training is a subject included in the music school curriculum and one is encouraged to take this course.

9. It is advisable to audition each member of the choir, in order to classify his/her voice. This is also one way of knowing his/her musical reading ability.

10. Choral tone refers to the tone color of a group as they sing together. The adult choir has three kinds of choral tone, namely:

    a. Open tone — when most singers sing with throaty voices.

    b. Bright tone — here, the singers have bright and finely-controlled voices.

    c. Rich tone — rounded sound, most suitable for church singing.

    The author recommends for the choir the use of both the bright and rich tones.

Chapter VIII

ARTICULATION

1. Basic Vowels

ä	car, bar
ā	lay, say
ē	see, fee
ō	so, oh
o͞o	zoo, do

2. Diphthongs

ä – ē	my, light
ä – o͞o	how, cow, house
ē – o͞o	view, few, cue
ē – ä	yard, yarn
ē – ō	yoyo, leo

3. Consonants with pitch

z, l, m, n, th, ng, r, w, b

4. Explosive consonants

b, c, d, k, ch, p, q, t, f, v, g

5. Sibilants

s, sh, ch, th, ks, x

6. Glutteral consonants

   g, q, x, k

7. Aspirated consonant

   h

8. Voiced consonants

   God, land, rob, love

9. "r" in three different functions

a.	silent "r"	Lord
b.	Rolled "r"	Right
c.	Vanishing "r"	Father

SUMMARY

Based on singing and the above facts, the author would like to make the following observations:

1. In singing there is *not* much difference between long vowels and short vowels nor in the rise and fall of tones.
2. Normally, in singing of vowels, one must open his mouth wider than when speaking. *Diction* is exaggerated when singing. The five basic vowels (refer to Fig. 16) call for five different mouth shapes.
3. In singing, consonants should be emphasized.
4. It has been mentioned earlier that voice production and tone color are closely related. And that it is preferable to use bright, round and rich tones when singing. When the choir is using the bright tone, articulation is clear; when the round, rich

tone is applied, the song becomes more expressive, this kind of singing fits well into a church atmosphere. The only problem in using the round, rich tone is that the words are not clearly understood by the listeners. So, if a conductor wants to use this kind of tone color, he must have a firm grasp of the vocal technique. Choir members must be encouraged to enunciate the words clearly. This is especially true when singing the consonants S, K and T.

5. Children have the advantage when it comes to diction, followed by the ladies choir, the mixed choir and lastly the male choir. The reason for this is that the children's voice aside from being pure in tone belongs to the high register compared to the male voice which is low and has more overtones. These overtones greatly affect the diction, so for the male choir, much time should be spent in producing clear diction.

6. When singing diphthongs, observe both vowels and see which one is the sustained vowel and the vanishing vowel. Time allocation of these two vowels depend on the tempo, the accented beats, dynamics, the expressions, and the phrasings.

7. To sing the end sound "d," "s," and "t" together one has to look at the conductor, and depend on the tempo of the song, the dynamics, the phrasings, the beats and the "rest" mark.

Chapter IX

HOW TO SELECT MUSIC MATERIALS

BRIEF SUMMARY

A. SELF-OBSERVATION AND EVALUATION

B. OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONS

C. KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE MUSIC

D. CONCLUSION

A. SELF-OBSERVATION AND EVALUATION

The following points must be taken into consideration when choosing music materials for the choir:

1. The average age, number of choir members, equal distribution of voice parts, musical standard, attitude and experience of the choir members.

2. The conductor's teaching experience, his musical ability, musicianship and even his efficiency.

3. The accoustics of the church.

4. The singing location and seating arrangement of the choir in the church.

5. The location of the piano or organ in relation to the choir.

6. The choir room facilities (piano, choir gown, etc.).

7. The music material itself — Is the music well printed? Is the music material sufficient for the choir members? How are they kept?

B. OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONS

1. Church music expresses reverence, praise, exultation, joy, counsel, devotion, even lamentation.

2. Does the song have any spiritual value? Does it carry a Biblical message?

3. Is the message overshadowed by the music?

4. Does it fit the occasion such as Lent, Advent, Christmas, or general use ?

5. Does it fit the kind of church group for which this will be used such as the Sunday School, the youth group, the women's or the men's group?

C. KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE MUSIC

1. Who is the composer? To what period does he belong? What is his style? Does his song carry a spiritual message?

2. Is it an original composition or is it arranged? If it is an arrangement, how was it done?

3. How is the accompaniment? The harmony? The form and the structure? Does it fit the text? And is it clearly presented?

4. Does it fit your choir's standard? Is it too easy or too difficult for your members? Is it too long or too short for the occasion?

5. Do the ranges fit the different vocal parts?

6. If it was translated, the following points must be checked: the text, do the endings rhyme? Does the accent fall on the right syllable?

D. CONCLUSION

1. Church music is based on Bible truths and is written through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Many church music have passed years of trial. They have been tested and have proven their worth. Unlike today when many of the materials cater to the popular demand. There is no depth in its message and the structure is simple. This kind of music lasts only for a short period of time. Therefore, conductors must carefully evaluate the materials they will use for their choirs.

2. It is not always true that a difficult song is a good choice, or an easy song is poor in quality. There are many songs and anthems which are written in simple style and are of good quality.

3. In some cases, the music can be altered or arranged to suit the need of the choir. For example, if the choir lacks tenors, the conductor may arrange it for SAB (soprano, alto, baritone). On the other hand, if the song is in four parts (SATB) and there is no tenor available, some altos can be assigned to sing that part.

4. The choir should not always sing youth hymns or gospel songs during the Sunday Worship service. There are many good materials such as anthems, cantatas, oratorios from which to choose from.

5. The choice of music depends on the musicianship of the conductor. Because of this great responsibility, the conductor must keep on studying.

Chapter x

CHOIR REHEARSALS

1. Schedule one hour a week for practice. Additional rehearsals or longer hours may be set when there is a special occasion or concert.

2. The choir should sing one anthem every Sunday. If there are several choir groups in church, they should take turns in singing.

3. Rehearsals are usually held on Friday evening, Saturday evening or Sunday after Morning Worship.

4. The conductor must always be there before the choir members arrive to prepare for the rehearsals. Rehearsals must start and end on time.

5. The conductor must plan out a three-month schedule of activities. The choir should start learning the anthem four to six weeks before it is sung.

6. It is a good practice to have a sharing time before or during rehearsals. This practice, coupled with prayer time, will greatly enrich the spiritual life of each member.

7. The conductor must make full use of every minute of rehearsal. One good advice for conductors is to avoid much talking.

8. Aside from learning new songs and reviewing old ones, the choir must also do some vocalizations, solfeggio, and given lessons in music theory.

9. The choir members must always observe the correct singing posture both while sitting and standing. (Figs. 19a, 19b) While sitting there is always the tendency to cross the legs and to keep the eyes on the music. (Figs. 20a, 20b)

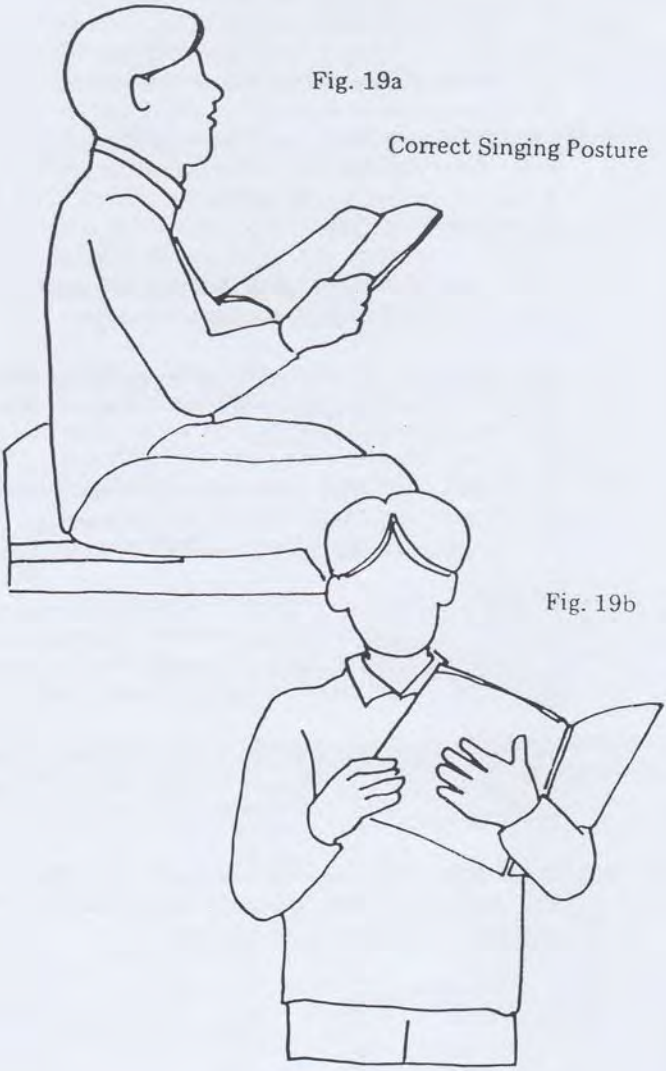


Fig. 19a

Correct Singing Posture

Fig. 19b

10. At the very beginning, every member of the choir including the accompanist must realize that the conductor is the leader during the entire rehearsal. He must be given due respect and his instructions should be followed.

Fig. 20a

Wrong singing posture



Fig. 20b



61

11. The usual arrangement of the choir is to have the men stand behind the ladies. (See example below)

TENOR	BASS
ALTO	SOPRANO

or

TENOR	BASS
SOPRANO	ALTO

It is up to the conductor to choose what arrangement best suits his choir. Just make sure that the conductor and the accompanying instrument is not far from the choir.

12. During rehearsals, the members must learn to listen to the other parts (mentioned in Chapter 9). This is voice blending.

13. While the conductor is teaching one voice part, the other members must be trained to learn their parts quietly. Talking or doing other things which might distract attention must be avoided.

14. Start the rehearsals with familiar songs.

15. If the conductor asks the members to repeat a portion of the song, he must explain the reason for doing so, and he must indicate the necessary corrections.

16. Correct mistakes right away, before they form into habits. It would be very difficult to do so later on.

17. In learning a new song, you can use a slower tempo, but not for text, expression and dynamics. It is advisable to sing and follow the indicated marks. Teaching a new song by the rote method is not advisable. The author recommends that choir members study solfeggio.

18. The conductor must know the song by heart before teaching it to the choir. He must analyze the song and teach each section separately, until the choir masters it.

19. Injecting some humor while rehearsing will keep the rehearsal spirit uplifted.

20. For special presentations, rehearsals must start at least three to four months ahead. Adult choir members will be greatly encouraged if they are asked to join these presentations.

21. The common mistake of many conductors is cramming or rushing. This can be attributed to lack of planning.

22. While singing, both the conductor and choir members must avoid tapping their feet.

23. It is advisable to assign a permanent seat to each member in the choir room. Risers are important for the conductor to see each member clearly.

24. Before the Sunday morning worship, the choir needs at least thirty minutes to practice before entering the church. The choir must be on time for the service. To be able to do this, all activities during Sunday morning must be well coordinated.

25. The conductor must teach his members music theory and note reading.

26. The choir must have a well-equipped room with piano, cabinets for music and gowns, conductor's chair, music stand, lighting, air-condition, etc.

27. It is advisable for each member to have a voice record card, where his vocal part, his attendance and serving period recorded.

Chapter XI

CHOIR ORGANIZATION

In the church organization, the choir falls under the Worship Committee together with ushering, liturgy, spiritual and the church bulletin. The Worship Committee has for its members the pastor, the elders, the choir conductor, the council members and the elected church members. This committee takes charge of planning the program for the whole church. Included in the planning are the musical programs, the choir activities, the annual music budget and the Sunday Worship Service, among others.

A church can have different choirs according to the age levels. The adult chancel choir, the youth, the children's choir, and some singing groups. Each group must be independent and should select their own officers like the president, vice-president, treasurer, librarian, section leaders, the person who will be in-charge of choir gowns, the one who will be in-charge of membership, the conductor and the accompanist. The number of officers depend on the size as well as the needs of the choir. Officers must have regular meetings to plan and discuss choir activities. But whatever they decide must be subject to the approval of the Worship Committee.

The church must have an annual budget for the Music Committee, no matter how small the amount. The choir members can also help by having a regular offering or a thanksgiving offering. They can also have fund-raising concerts.

Below are two examples of a yearly budget of the Music Committee.

I. Big Church (500 members more or less)

Honorarium (for part-time conductor and accompanist	US$1,000
Music Books (for choir use)	200
Choir Gowns	100

Hymnbooks	100
Communion Service	250
Miscellaneous	150
TOTAL	US$1,800

II. Medium or Small Church (200 members more or less)

Honorarium (for part-time conductor and accompanist	US$300
Music Books (for choir use)	50
Choir Gowns	50
Hymn Books	50
Communion Service	50
Miscellaneous	50
TOTAL	US$500

For a more fruitful ministry, the church administration must encourage as well as back-up 100% the Music Committee — both in finances and prayer.

Some people may ask why the conductor and accompanist should receive compensation, when most of the time they render their services free of charge. The author wishes to give some reasons why the church must do so.

1. The music department is one of the most important departments of the church. It needs someone with special training in this field to take up the responsibilities. As a person in charge of the entire music program, he/she must be considered a staff member.

2. It is quite expensive to take up a music course. Therefore, as professionals, their work must be compensated.

3. For the conductor and accompanist who have music degrees, the church must give them honorarium. For those who don't have degrees in this field, it is suggested that they be given transportation allowance, scholarships, or a bonus or gift at the end of the year to show that their services are appreciated.

As the Chinese saying goes, "Although the gift is just a simple matter of courtesy, but to the bearer, there lies an even deeper feeling of being respected and appreciated." So, to the churches, the author suggests to emphasize this practice to encourage and show gifted people how we appreciate their musical talents as a service to the Lord.

Chapter XII

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

This chapter contains questions about the choir which were asked during seminars and workshops conducted by the author.

Q. 1. *What should be done when a female member of the choir who should be singing the alto part wants to sing the soprano part?*

Ans. Many people have the wrong concept that the soprano part is the best among women's voices. Actually, both soprano and alto parts have beautiful tonal sounds. One must realize that the construction of our vocal organs greatly affect our voices and one cannot just change it. If one is an alto, but forces herself to sing high notes, this can be harmful to her voice. To determine to what part she belongs, the conductor must use the "lift" method (Chap. 7).

Q. 2. *Can continuous singing of low notes destroy one's vocal quality?*

Ans. No. On the other hand, when one knows the correct technique of singing low notes, he can be able to sing high notes without problem.

Q. 3. *How can we improve an alto voice that is hoarse?*

Ans. A hoarse voice is due to much use of the troaty voice. The alto singer must learn to use the middle and chest voice while singing.

Q. 4. *What can be done when the choir lacks tenors?*

Ans. a) Let the altos sing the tenor part, though the result will be rather weak.

b) Choose SAB (Soprano, Alto, Baritone) compositions or arrangements so that all the men can sing baritone.

c) Let the baritones sing the tenor part using a soft and light tone.

d) Do not sing the tenor part of the song.

Q. 5. *What should be done when a choir member does not know how to read music?*

Ans. It is advisable to do solfeggio during every rehearsal. And while singing, the choir members should beat the time signature.

Q. 6. *Do you teach the movable "do" system in singing?*

Ans. Yes. This is the most suitable method in teaching a choir, though using the fixed "do" is also good because this method is commonly used in music schools and in instrumental teaching.

Q. 7. *Our choir uses the 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 (do, re, mi . . .) (Cheve's system) notation method without any difficulty. The choir members do not read staff music, but we sing Handel's Messiah and other advanced songs using this method. Do you think this is correct?*

Ans. This practice is abnormal, because the staff music notation is a universal standard. Choir members must start to read notation as early as possible by using the solfeggio book. It is even suggested to teach note reading to members of the children's choir.

Q. 8. *How can a singer sing high notes without difficulty?*

Ans. Use the method of "vowel modification." (See Chap. 7D and review the whole chapter).

Q. 9. *What can be done when there is shortness of breath while singing?*

Ans. a) Use mental control. Take a deep breath and always think of the phrasing. Have sufficient breath to start and to end.

b) Use the diaphragm to control exhalation.

c) Use resonance — minimum air to produce maximum sound. Make use of the resonant box.

d) Practice deep breathing. (See Chap. 6C)

Q. 10. *Whenever the choir sings a cappella, there is a tendency to go flat. Why is this so?*

Ans. There are various reasons, some of which are the following:

a) Lack of members in the low voice sections (alto, bass). The low voice parts produce more overtones which support the high voice parts.

b) The sopranos use the wrong voice placement in singing the high notes.

c) The altos sing with throaty voices.

d) The choir members don't listen to each other. In other words, lack of blending.

e) The conductor does not know the correct vocal technique.

f) The singers have wrong singing posture.

g) The conductor does not conduct correctly.

h) This may be due to excitement or nervousness.

One solution is to use the movable "do" system to improve intonation.

Q. 11. The choir does not start and end at the same time. What can be done?

Ans. The conductor must use the "cue" and "attack" method. He must also be sure of the tempo. He should also teach the members correct breathing. (See Chap. 5)

Q. 12. Our choir is not balanced due to lack of male members. How can this be remedied?

Ans. There are usually more female voices than male voices. To encourage more males to join the choir, organize a male singing group and let them sing during the morning Worship Service.

Q. 13. How are you going to let the choir sing soft then loud? How do you control their singing?

Ans. Singing soft then loud does not depend on the use of the hands, but on breathing control. The conductor, without singing out loud, can show through his breathing and facial expressions when to sing loud or soft. The choir members will imitate him. (See Chaps. 6 and 7)

Q. 14. How do you sing crescendo?

Ans. a) Start from soft then gradually grow louder — p, mp, mf, f, ff.

b) Use diaphragm control.

c) Use resonance.

Q. 15. How can you produce clear diction when singing soft?

Ans. The softer the song, the more the singers must articulate each syllable.

Q. 16. *Many times, people don't understand the words of the song we sing. What can we do about it?*

Ans. Before I answer that question, I'd like to give you the reasons why it is hard to understand the words of a song being sung. Speaking differs from singing in the following ways:

a) In pronunciation. For example, in speaking, the long OO (as in soon) is different from the short oo (as in book). This is not so in singing.

b) In the rise and fall of tones when speaking, which is not applied in singing.

c) In singing, there may be more than one tone sung to a syllable. This is often used in oratorio singing.

So to solve this, I recommend that the words of the song which will be sung by the choir be printed or be included in the church bulletin.

Q. 17. *What is the difference between tonal color and tonal quality?*

Ans. Tonal quality is inborn and this cannot be changed. Tonal color on the other hand can be changed by applying different techniques in singing. Tonal color can be dull, bright, dark, round, sharp, etc.

Q. 18. *Can we use the left hand in conducting?*

Ans. Yes. If you are left-handed, it is the left that will do the work while the right will just assist.

Q. 19. *Is the conductor permitted to use a baton while conducting a choir?*

Ans. Ordinarily no, but during a performance of a major choral work with the orchestra, most conductors use a baton.

Q. 20. *Can the conductor sing while conducting?*

Ans. Normally, the conductor should not sing while conducting the choir, so he could listen to the parts. He should only mouth the words of the song. But in cases where there are say, a few basses, then he can sing with them.

Q. 21. *Can the conductor look at the score while conducting the choir during a performance?*

Ans. It is better not to look at the music. He should memorize it during the rehearsals. By studying the form of the music, he can easily memorize it.

Q. 22. *What should the conductor do if the pianist, who is a music graduate, does not follow his instructions?*

Ans. We have mentioned in Chap. 10 that the choir conductor is the leader of the group, and should be treated as an authority. If situations like this arise, the conductor must talk with the pianist or accompanist in private. If the conductor is not a music graduate, he must take the initiative to learn more about music.

Q. 23. *Should pianists serve the church free? Does it mean that they are no longer faithful to the Lord if they expect compensation from the church?*

Ans. This is definitely a wrong concept. (See Chap. 11)

Q. 24. *What if the conductor and the pianist refuse to receive compensation?*

Ans. Advise them to receive the honorarium as a token of gratitude from the church. If they still refuse, tell them to donate it to other Christian organizations.

Q 25. *Many of the small churches are in financial diffi-*

culty. Their conductors are just beginners. Should they receive compensation from the church?

Ans. It is not necessary to give compensation, instead the church may offer them a scholarship for music studies or send them to a music training seminar.

Q. 26. *What is the seating arrangement of the four voice parts?*

Ans. See Chapter 10.

Q. 27. *Is it alright if the choir members don't wear choir gowns?*

Ans. Traditionally, most choir wear gowns. It is a uniform that will make them look more neater. The choir gown should be simple and the choir members must avoid using fancy jewelries that will attract attention.

Q. 28. *What should be done if the choir members do not come on time?*

Ans. Start and end on time. Awards can be given out as incentives. You can also have a membership committee who will check the attendance and section leaders who will remind members of rehearsal time and other choir activities.

Q. 29. *What can be done to choir members who don't attend choir rehearsals but join during the Worship Service?*

Ans. This is a common "sickness" of some choir members. I suggest that you don't let him stop singing. Maybe this person knows the songs you are singing very well, or the songs you choose are too easy for him so he can sightread. If that is not the case, you can talk to him in private. The most important thing is to sing and to glority God.

Q. 30. *Some people join the choir to make new friends. Is this motive right?*

Ans. I don't think this is a wrong-motive. But just the same, during his stay with the choir, the conductor can take the opportunity to make him realize that singing in the choir is a ministry wherein our talents are used to the glory of God.

Q. 31. *Is it possible to organize a combined adult-children's choir in a small church?*

Ans. This can be done if the conductor has sufficient knowledge of all the voice levels and the vocal technique. To do it, let the children sing with the sopranos and the teen-agers to join the altos.

Q. 32. *Is it necessary to organize a children's choir in a small church?*

Ans. Yes, it is necessary even if the church is small. The church needs graded choirs. But let a conductor who has the musical abilities and skill to train them.

Q. 33. *How would you classify the members of the different choirs?*

Ans. I suggest that it be based on the academic level, namely the elementary, the high school and the college (adults included in this level). When a child graduates from the elementary level, encourage him to join the youth choir. In the same manner, let a high school graduate join the chancel choir.

Q. 34. *What can we do with a child who is a monotone?*

Ans. This question is a complicated one. According to theory, God has given us a perfect instrument for singing. Unless there is something wrong with the sense of hearing or with the voice box, every child should be able to sing. So, I don't believe that someone can be a real monotone. If there is, it may be due to lack of training after birth. For example,

a teacher laughs at a child's mistake or he lacks patience to teach the child, or even uses the wrong method of teaching — all these makes the child feel inferior and further makes him nervous and discouraged. One way of handling him is to let him play an instrument.

Q. 35. *How does a boy's voice change during adolescence?*

Ans. Changes in a boy's voice take place between the ages of 12-16. His vocal cords lengthen and his voice becomes one octave lower. There are many opinions as to whether or not to let him sing during this time. After years of observation, I recommend that he should be allowed to sing but subject to the following limitations:

a) Do not let him sing too much.

b) Let him sing in the middle range, not too high or too low.

c) Don't let him shout while singing.

d) Let him sing either the alto or tenor part.

Q. 36. *Can the pastor join the choir?*

Ans. Yes. He may even conduct the choir.

Q. 37. *Is it advisable for the choir to sing songs from the song book (hymn book)?*

Ans. Do not be limited by songs from the hymn book. The choir should learn to sing anthems or other songs which will be a challenge to them. This will make more advanced choir members stay on in the choir.

Q. 38. *Is contemporary Christian music suitable for Sunday Worship Service?*

Ans. It may be acceptable in Western churches, but not in Chinese churches. The style, structure and the message of the contemporary Christian music is not suitable to the solemn atmosphere of the church. There are many good church music available. Why should we use songs which sound like popular music? The message of the song is often overshadowed by the rhythm and syncopated beats.

I bought a sizeable number of these contemporary Christian music and found out that most of them do not mention about Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, about salvation, about the blood of Christ, etc. This type of music is not worth singing. As for folk music, these should be chosen with care.

The Chinese youth is easily influenced by the idea that anything new is good. If the conductor can introduce high quality music, the young people will see the difference. Good music will stand the test of time. Many European churches have realized this and are going back to the classical church music.

Q. 39. Most of the choir members are young people. They prefer the contemporary Christian music. If I try to teach classical church music, they will not come. What should I do?

Ans. Let them sing both types of music. They will see the difference and learn to love quality music.

Q. 40. Can we use guitars during young people's meetings?

Ans. The guitar is a good instrument when used properly. It can be used during young people's meetings but not during the Sunday Worship Service.

Q. 41. What do you think of the choir processional at the start of the Worship Service?

Ans. It should be done every week. It encourages the church members to sing louder. It also encourages

the choir members to come on time. Processionals should be practiced often,

Q. 42. *I am a church accompanist. How can I correct the church members' slow tempo during congregational singing?*

Ans. a) Ask the choir to lead in congregational singing. Start with the processional.

b) The accompanist should play the hymn in the correct tempo, from beginning to end, as introduction.

c) If a new hymn will be sung, it should be taught before the service starts. Some churches go through all the hymns that will be sung during the service.

d) The tempo of the hymn should not be too fast or too slow — just enough to be followed by the average person singing at ease.

e) If a piano is used, each note should be clearly played.

f) If the notes are too high, the whole hymn should be transposed.

g) The "Amen" at the end should be sung in the same tempo as the rest of the hymn.

h) A songleader can be assigned to lead in the congreational singing.

Q. 43. *Should the "Amen" be sung at the end of all hymns?*

Ans. It is good to sing the "Amen," but it depends on the church's practices and denominational background.

Q. 44. *Some churches have different versions of the hymnal. What do you think of this?*

Ans. It is better to have a uniform version — the standard musical notations with the lyrics in between the staves. Hymnals should be revised every 30 years.

Q. 45. *What can we do if the pastor, elders and deacons are not interested at all in the choir?*

Ans. This is a two-sided problem. If the choir does well and is spiritually strong, the pastor and church officers will respect the choir and will support all their activities.

Q. 46. *How should the church music department be organized?*

Ans. The pastor, a few elders and deacons, the conductor, accompanist, and choir president should compose the Worship Committee. They should plan the church's musical activities. (See Chap. 11)

CONCLUSION

1. I have noticed many churches starting to put emphasis on sacred music. I have written this book because many talented young people are willing to dedicate themselves to serve God through choral conducting. I hope that the churches who are trying to improve their music ministry will benefit from this book.

2. Conducting is a specialized field. It includes the study of vocal technique, conducting technique, philosophy of conducting, and instrumental conducting, among others.

3. Organizations concerned with promoting sacred music such as the Chinese Church Music Association should strive more to accomplish their goals.

4. Music personnel is not limited to the conductor and the accompanist only. The pastor and musically-inclined church members can be a part of it.

5. Aside from the lack of dedicated church musicians there is also a great need for quality music materials. I hope that music publishing houses and recording companies will be established to fill in this need.

6. A problem that faces churches today is the emergence of contemporary church music. I hope that the people responsible for the musical program of the church will be prepared to tackle this problem.

I sincerely hope and pray that the Lord will call more dedicated musicians who will open the eyes of church people to the power of music in the proclamation of the Gospel. Amen!

GLOSSARY

A cappella — Vocal chorus without instrumental accompaniment

Accelerando — Accelerating, growing faster

Accent — Strong mark

Adagio — Slow, leisurely; a slow movement

Advance counterpoint

Advance Harmony

Allargando — Growing slower

Allegretto — Quite lively; moderately fast

Allegro — Lively, brisk, rapid

Alto — The deeper of the two main divisions of women's voices, the Soprano being the higher. Ordinary compass from g to e^2. (Also called Contralto)

Amplitude — Loudness

Andante — Going, moving; a tempo-mark indicating a moderately slow, easily flowing movement between adagio and allegretto

Andantino — With spirit, spiritedly, vivaciously

Anthem — A piece of sacred vocal music usually founded on biblical words or biblical messages, with or without instrumental accompaniment, and of moderate length

Aspirated consonant — h

A tempo — In time; at the preceding rate of speed

Attack — The act (or style) of beginning a phrase, passage or piece

Autistic training — Ear training

Baritone — The male voice between bass and tenor, and more or less similar in quality to both. Compass from G to f^1.

Bass — The lowest male voice; ordinary compass from E to c^1 (or d^1)

Basso profundo — Bass with big volume.

Beat — 1) A movement of the hand in marking time. 2) A division of a measure marked by a beat.

Bel canto — The art of beautiful song, as exemplified by the finest Italian singers of the 18th and 19th centuries, and their pupils and imitators

Boy Soprano — Boy's voice before his changing voice
Bright tone — Produced when singers have bright and finely-controlled voices
Brillante — Brilliant, showy, sparkling
Brio, con brio — With fire and dash; spiritedly

Cantabile — Singable; in a singing or vocal style
Cantata — A vocal work with instrumental accompaniment, consisting of choruses and solos, recitatives, duets, etc., shorter than an oratorio. A sacred cantata has biblical words or messages; a secular cantata may have any non-biblical subject
Canto — A melody, song, chant; the soprano (highest vocal or instrumental part)
Cantor — Singer
Cheek
Chest cavity
Chest resonant
Chest voice resonance
Chin
Choral arrangement — A piece of music arranged for the choir
Choral tone
Coda — A 'tail'; a passage ending a movement
Coloratura Soprano — Highest female voice
Common pitch — A pitch where male and female voice meet.
Composition
Consonance — A combination of two or more tones, harmonious and pleasing in itself, and requiring no further progression to make it satisfactory
Consonants — Z, L, m, n, th, ng, r, w, b
Contralto — See Alto
Counterpoint — 1) The art of polyphonic composition. 2) The art of adding one or more parts (melodies) to a given part (melody)
Crescendo — Swelling, increasing in loudness
Cue — A phrase, from a vocal or instrumental part, occuring near the end of a long pause in another part, and inserted in small notes in the latter to serve as guide in timing a reentrance

Da Capo — From the beginning.

Dal Segno (D.S.) 𝄋 — From the sign 𝄋

Deciso — Decided, energetic

Decrescendo — Decreasing in loudness

Delicato — Delicately; in a delicate, refined style

Detection and Ear training — Two vowels, such as "how"

Diaphragm

Diminuendo — Diminishing in loudness

Diphthong — (a-e) (a-e) (a-oo); (a-oo) (o-e) (e-oo)

Dissonance — A combination of 2 or more tones requiring resolution

Divisi (Div.) — Divided. Signifies that 2 parts written on one staff are not to be played as double — stops, but by the division into 2 bodies of the instrument playing from that staff

Dolce — Sweet, soft, suave

Doxology — "The old hundred" choral response

Dramatic Soprano — A soprano of dramatic power

Dramatic Tenor — A tenor whose voice has a full and powerful quality

Dull Tone

Dynamics — The varying and contrasting degrees of intensity or loudness in musical tones

Electronic organ

Elegiaco — A sad mood

Elementary Harmony

Espressivo (Espr.) — With expression, expressively

Explosive consonants — b, c, d, k, ch, p, q, t, f, v, g

Expression-mark — A written direction (either a sign, word, or phrase) for the performance of a piece

Falsetto — The highest of the vocal registers

Fermata — A hold 𝄐 a pause or interruption

Finale — The last movement in a sonata or a symphony; the closing number(s) of an act (opera) or part (oratorio)

Fine — End; close; indicates either the end of a "repeat" (after Da Capo or Dal Segno) or the end of a piece

Fixed "do" system — A note reading system

Folk music — Music of the people, tinged by musical peculiarities of the nation, and usually in simple, unaffected ballad-form

Forte — Loud, strong; usually written f

Fortissimo — Extremely loud (usually written ff, or fff)
Fortepiano — (fp) accent strongly, instantly diminishing to piano
Fuga — A fugue
Furioso — Furiously, wildly

Glissando — 1) On bow-instruments, demands a flowing, unaccented execution of a passage. 2) On the piano, a rapid scale — effect obtained by sliding the thumb, or thumb and one finger, over the keys
Gloria Patri — A choral response
Gospel Songs
Grave — 1) Grave or low in pitch. 2) Heavy, slow, ponderous in movement. 3) Serious
Guttural — Throaty sound
Glutteral consonants — g, q, x, k

Hammond Organ
Hard Palate
Harmony
Head Cavity — The nasal cavities (upper position)
Head Voice — The vocal tones of the head-register
Head Voice Resonance
Hymn

Improvisation — Off-hand musical performance; extemporizing.
Interlude — 1) An instrumental strain or passage connecting the lines or stanzas of a hymn, etc. 2) An instrumental piece played between certain portions of the church service
Interpretation
Interval — The difference in pitch between two tones. Intervals are regularly measured from the lower tone to the higher
Intonation — The production of tone, either vocal or instrumental
Introit — An anthem or psalm sung as the minister approaches the Communion table

Keyboard Harmony — Harmony played at the piano

Largamente — Largely, broadly; in a manner characterized

by a vigorous and sustained tone and general breadth of style, without change of tempo.

Larghetto — The diminutive of 'Largo', and demands a somewhat more rapid tempo, nearly Andantino

Largo — Large, broad; the slowest tempo-mark, calling for a slow and stately movement with ample breadth of style.

Larynx — The vocal organ which produces sounds.

Leggiero — Light, airy.

Lento — Slow; calls for a tempo between 'Andante' and 'Largo'

Lift — This occurs when the singer, upon reaching a certain note has to adjust his voice, for him to continue singing.

Lips

Lower chest breathing

Lyric Soprano — A soprano with light and sweeter voice.

Maestoso — Majestic, dignified; in a style characterized by lofty breadth.

Madrigal — A style of music in the Rennaissance period.

Magnificate — A form of music composition.

Marcato — Marked with distinctness and emphasis.

Meno mosso — Slowing down

Meno Piano — Not so soft.

Mezzo Soprano — The female voice between soprano and alto, partaking of the quality of both, and usually of small compass ($a - f^2$ or $a - g^2$) but very full-toned in the medium register.

Mezzo forte — Half loud.

Mezzo piano — Half soft (less loud than mezzo forte).

Mezzo Voce — With half the power of the voice.

Middle Voice Resonance — Resonance through the mouth

Minister of Music — Church music director.

Missa — Mass

Moderato — Moderate, that is, at a moderate tempo or rate of speed.

Monotone — A single unaccompanied and unvaried tone.

Mood

Mottete (Motet) — A composition based on biblical words.

Mouth

Movable "do" System — A note reading system.

Movie Music — Movie background music or music in the style of Broadway.

Music Appreciation — A study to appreciate music
Music History
Music Style — As in Baroque or Contemporary style
Musical Form — A subject to study forms of music

Nasal Cavity — Head cavity
Nasal Voice — Voice produced through the nose
Offertory — The song sung by the choir while the offerings of the congregation are collected
Open tone — Produced when singers sing with throaty voices
Opus — Work; often written Op. or op.
Oratorio — An extended, more or less dramatic composition for vocal solos and chorus, with accompaniment by orchestra or organ (or both) sung without stage-play or scenery
Orchestration — The art of writing music for performance by an orchestra; the science of combining, in an effective manner, the instruments constituting the orchestra
Octave — 1) A series of 8 consecutive diatonic tones 2) The interval between the 1st and 8th tones of such a series
Overtone — Harmonic tone

Passione — A form of musical composition
Phrasing — The bringing-out into proper relief of the phrases (whether motives, figures, subjects, or passages)
Pianissimo — (pp) Very soft
Piano — (p) Soft, softly
Pipe organ — In flue-pipes the tone is produced by the vibration of a column of air within a tube or body; they are open or covered (stopped, plugged), a stopped pipe yielding a tone an octave lower than an open pipe of like length. In Reed-pipes, the tone is produced by a reed
Pitch — The position of a tone in the musical scale

Piu Forte — Louder
Poco a Poco — Little by little.
Poco Forte — A little louder, rather loud.
Poco Piano — Rather soft.
Pop Music — Music in fashion.

Postlude — A closing voluntary on the organ

Prelude — 1) A musical introduction to a composition or drama. 2) Music played at the beginning of the service

Preparatory Beat — The beat preceding the first beat of a piece of music

Prestissimo — Very rapidly

Presto — Fast, rapid; faster than allegro

Rudiments of Music — Fundamental or basic music theory

Rallentando (Rall.) — Growing slower and slower

Range — Voice range from low to high

Recitativo — Declamatory singing, free in tempo and rhythm

Release — To end a sound

Religioso — In a devotional style

Requiem — A form of musical composition

Resonance — Voice placement which includes overlapping of head voice, middle voice, upper chest and lower chest voice

Response — The musical reply by the choir or congregation to what is said by the Minister

Rhythm — 1) The effect produced by the systematic grouping of tones with reference to regularity both in their accentuation and in their succession as equal or unequal in time-value. 2) A tone-group serving as a pattern for succeeding identical groups

Rinforzando — With special emphasis; indicates a sudden increase in loudness, either for a tone or chord, or throughout a phrase or short passage

Ritardando (Rit.) — Growing slower and slower

Round and dark tone — Rich or full tone color

Sforzando — (sfg, sf, V, f) a direction to perform the tone or chord with special stress, or marked and sudden emphasis

Sibilant Consonants — S, sh, ch, th, ks, x

Semplice — Simply

Soft palate

Solfeggio — A vocal exercise, either on one vowel, or on the solmisation-syllables, or to words

Soprano — The highest classification of the human voice. The normal range is c^1 to a^2

Sostenuto — Sustained, prolonged
Sotto Voce — In an undertone, aside, under the breath.
Stabat Mater — A form of musical composition.
Staccato — Detached, separated; a style in which the notes played or sung are more or less abruptly disconnected.
Staggered breathing — The technique often used when long phrases are to be sung. Singers take turns in breathing.
Stringendo (String.) — Hastening, accelerating the movement, usually suddenly and rapidly, with crescendo.
Sustained Vowel- Longer vowel of the diphthong
Syncopation — The shifting of accent of a tone or chord falling on a naturally strong beat; by tying it over from the preceding weak beat, the latter then takes the accent
Teeth
Tempo — Rate of speed, movement
Tempo Primo — At the original pace
Tenor — The high natural male voice
Throat Cavity — The cavity that produce throaty voice
Throaty Voice — Guttural
Timbre — Quality of tone
Tone Color — Quality of tone. It can be dull, bright, dark, round or sharp
Tongue
Transposition — Performing or writing out a composition in a different key
Tremolo — A quivering, fluttering. In singing, a tremolous, unsteady tone
Tuning — The process of bringing an instrument into tune
Tutti — In scores, it indicates the entrance of the whole body of instrumentalists or vocalists after a Solo

Unison — All vocal parts singing one melody but in higher or lower octave
Upper chest breathing

Vanishing Vowel — Short vowel of the diphtong
Vibration — Effect caused by very rapid partial interruptions of the tone
Vigoroso — With vigor, energy
Vivace — Lively, animated, brisk
Vivo — Lively, spiritedly, briskly
Vocal cord — The structure that produce the voice

Voice Balancing — Equalization of voices
Voice Blending — When members of the choir listen to the other members and blend their voices while singing
Voice Box
Voice Classification — As in Sop. alto, tenor or baritone
Voice Placement — See Resonance
Voice Projection
Voice Range — See range
Voice Resonance — See resonance
Voiced Consonant — d (God) d (land) b (rob) v (love)
Volume — Loudness of voice
Vowel — Ah, A, E, Aw, Oh, Oo
Vowel Modification — Modifying the vowel in high pitch

Worship Committee — A committee which includes the pastor, the elders, choir conductor, council members and the elected church members. This committee takes charge of planning the program for the whole church



David Chi-Beng Yap is one of Manila's eminent conductors and music educators. He graduated with a Master of Music degree in choral conducting and voice, 1957, from Westmenster Choir College, Princeton, New Jersey, U.S.A.

Yap is the Secretary General of the Chinese Church Music Association (CCMA) and the Secretary General of the Cultural Center of the Philippines National Music Competitions for Young Artists (CCP-NAMCYA), a project of the First Lady. Mrs. Imelda R. Marcos. He is also the Choir Director Emeritus of the Union Church of Manila. He is the founder and counductor of Chorale Philippines, performing major *Messiah*, Verdi's *Requiem*, Brahm's *Requiem*, Kasilag's *De Profundis*, and many others.

He has conducted many workshops and seminars sponsored by the Cultural Center of the Philippines, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports, and CCMA Hongkong, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Canada as well as in the Philippines and United States.

Yap is the author of the *New Theory and Composition of Chinese Music* and *27 Lessons on Solfeggio.* One of his latest composition is the sacred cantata, *Seven Last Words of Christ.* All his compositions are geared towards the pentatonic idiom.

Yap was the only Asian invited as member of the jury in the International Béla Bartok Choral Competition in Debrecen, Hungary, 1982, in celebration of Zoltan Kodály Centenary.

BASIC CHORAL CONDUCTING

DAVID C. B. YAP