

TRINITY BOYS CHOIR DINNER ROUTINES

Here is information that will help parents plan and carry out Friday dinners for the Boys. The families scheduled will appear on the choirs' online calendar (http://plus.calendars.net/trinity_choirs), prepared by semester.

About three times each month, a team of three choir families is scheduled to plan, prepare and serve dinner on Friday night in the church Undercroft. Food amounts need to be planned to serve the Boys plus 10-15 extra guests (choir staff, helping parents and siblings, etc.) The total is usually around 30-35 people.

The **first family** on the schedule is the coordinator of the groups for that particular week, and provides the **main course** (i.e. pasta, or chicken, or hot dogs, or tacos, etc.) **and** lets the other two families know what the main course is. No later than early in the week of the dinner, this family contacts the other two families (by email or phone), to check on special needs, arrival time on Friday, etc. At that time, the second and third families also need to be sure to let the coordinator for that week know if there are any special needs. It's also important to note that **the first family is ALSO the Duty Parent for that evening**. They need to be there for the beginning of the rehearsal, and be sure to check out the Boys to their rides at the end of the Friday evening.

The **second family** brings **salad/veggies and bread/muffins**, etc.

The **third family** brings **drinks** (usually sodas, or juices, or lemonade) **and dessert**.

NOTE: It's important that the **second and third families** arrive no later than **6:15 pm** in time to prepare for the dinner AND that they stay to help serve. It's too much for the "main" family to be expected to serve alone, be Duty Parent, etc. Besides, it's important social time for the parents, as well.

Here's how an actual Friday evening usually goes:

Dinner is usually served from 6:45-7:30 pm (exceptions are noted by choir staff well in advance). Cooking and setting up the tables should happen before 6:45 pm, as the boys arrive with their appetites, very eager to eat (as is everyone else, by that time.)

The church kitchen is well stocked with pots/pans, cooking and serving utensils, paper products, plates and tableware, etc. If you can't find something you need, check with a member of the choir staff. Parents bring all the food and condiments. You can use the ovens and stoves to re-heat, or cook from scratch there. There are usually bottles of salad dressing in the refrigerator left over from previous dinners, and occasionally ketchup, etc. but you should check this out in advance, to be sure.

As to what to make - it is best to keep the meals simple, wholesome, and within your budget/time restraints. Just ask your sons what they like and take it from there. You might ask your sons what they have had in previous meals, as this will give you ideas for your own contributions. Where necessary, we take special needs into account-eg. food allergies, vegetarian families, etc. It's important, at the beginning of the choir season, that parents let the music staff know, in writing, if their son has any special dietary needs, so this information can be shared with other parents. While we may not be able to provide a full vegetarian alternative entrée each time, we can always make

sure there are plenty of appropriate accompanying dishes so that no one goes home hungry.

The assigned parents help set up, serve and clear away. The boys and the parents work on clean-up together - a few of the boys are assigned to help with washing dishes (which includes running the two high-powered dishwashers), while other boys help clean up the tables, sweep, vacuum and take out the trash. Please note that you will probably be finished by no later than 7:45 pm - if you're a car pool parent when you're on the dinner team, remember to let the parents of the boys in your carpool know that you'll be returning your precious cargo home a little bit later than usual.

N.B. Given its location on the Green, the church doesn't have full trash service and therefore is not able to recycle, so it's best if one family can take recyclable trash (drink bottles, plastic containers, etc.) home to add to its weekly curbside recycling pile. This may seem a bit inconvenient, yet it's all for the health of the world we ultimately leave to our current and future treble boys.

Substitutions: If you cannot participate on your assigned night, it is your responsibility to find a substitute. Please let the overall dinner coordinator know of all switches as soon as possible, as well as the coordinator of that particular week. The overall coordinator will also email the music staff so that the change can be noted in the online calendar. If you have trouble finding a substitute on your own, contact the overall coordinator. Scheduling changes and dinner cancellations do occur (due to special events, bad weather, etc.); if this happens, the coordinator may ask the team to fill in at another time.

The dinner coordinator tries to accommodate everyone's scheduling needs. Prior to the publication of a semester schedule, the choir families should let the coordinator know dates that won't work, due to vacations, family commitments, etc. Yet, even the most gifted of coordinators goes astray. So, make sure to call as soon as you spot glaring errors, sins of omission, typos, and any other completely inexcusable faux pas.

All that you do and bring and share is deeply appreciated. The Friday dinners help meld the boys together, as well as giving parents a chance to chat. The whole thing may look sort of chaotic by the end of each evening, but what the heck-someone has to put the fun back into dysfunctional!

OH, and one final thing-please, please remember to relax and laugh. It's just food, after all, and the boys are not allowed to complain (at least not in front of the staff and lead boys).