

SMALL CHOIR REHEARSAL TECHNIQUES

by Tom Eggleston

I recently attended the Choral Festival at First Baptist, Spartanburg, sponsored by the Christian Supply Bookstore. They do a great job of providing the best conference leaders and artists around.

I attended the Small Choir Rehearsal Techniques (since I am a director of a small choir). Ed Hogan who leads a small choir himself had some good tips that I wanted to pass along.

1. Zechariah 4:10 - "Who despises the day of small things?"
2. Speak out rhythms. It will build confidence.
3. Do "spot" work...you don't have to rehearse the entire piece.
4. Remember that choirs tend to sing flat on the 3rd and 7th scale degrees.
5. Sing a cappella.
6. Emulate the shape of the vowel sound...strive for unified sound.
7. Let the lyrics minister to the members. Point them out.
8. Choir leaders - be careful about singing with your choir. If you are singing, then it's more difficult to hear what they are singing.

Ed had a number of other suggestions, but the one that was most valuable to me was this: Have ALL choir members learn ALL parts. It will reinforce the part and let choir members "hear" what others are singing. It will also make them better "sight-readers." And finally, it will keep ALL choir members sing the "whole" time and keeps them engaged.

I'm anxious to try some of these with my choir. Give them a try and let me know how they work. I'll pass it along to Ed.