



2017-2018 Sonlight Handbook

Alice Wallis, Director

Andrew Mankin, Assistant Director

Steve Bingham, Band Director

About Sonlight

Sonlight leads the congregation in worship through music for the 9:40am service. This group is composed of 7th-12th graders who contribute their time and talents to the church - musically as singers and instrumentalists, and technically by helping run the multimedia, lights, and sound.

In leading worship, Sonlight includes contemporary music you might hear on any radio station. Young people are bombarded by messages from their everyday world. Through the medium of music, we help them interpret those messages in the context of Christian faith. The challenge is to take the everyday and find the "God message." For more than 30 years now at the end of every school year, the group has taken its message and ministry on the road for a tour!

Membership FAQ

- **Does our family need to be members of Trinity to join Sonlight?** So glad you asked! Students and their families do not have to be members of Trinity to participate in Sonlight. Having said that, Trinity is a great church to call home. Should your youth decide to participate, we think you'll find it to be a great community of faith for the whole family.
- **Can students invite friends?** Absolutely! Not only is it OK, we encourage it. If you ask some of the current Sonlight Youth Choir and Band members, that's how they got involved - coming with a friend.
- **If my youth decides mid-year to participate in Sonlight, is it too late to join?** It's never too late. Sonlight is constantly working on new music for worship services, and we are open to students any time of year. The only thing that may be impacted by joining later in the year is the ability to go on tour (and this will be at the director's discretion).
- **How much time do we need to set aside for Sonlight?** The commitment on Sunday mornings will generally be from 9am-10:45am. Sunday afternoon rehearsals run from 4pm-5:30pm (unless otherwise noted). Sonlight does not meet during weeknights except for special occasions, such as fun nights and boot camp.
- **Is there a dress code?** No, but we do expect students to dress appropriately for Sunday mornings. Sunday afternoons are casual, but students should keep in mind that they are at a church function. All students will be given a Sonlight shirt for Sonlight events.

Membership Expectations

- Ready to worship and lead our congregation on Sunday mornings!
- Be mature, positive, open minded and flexible. Behavior should always be faith-filled, mature, and responsible.
- Demonstrate respect to self and all other individuals in Sonlight.
- Be in seat with music and ready to rehearse on time. Band members should always have their instruments in good repair with proper accessories.
- Be on task throughout entire rehearsals and worship services.
- No chewing gum, candy, or any food or drink (except water) in the choir room and/or Worship Center choir loft.
- Follow communication and social media guidelines. Profanity and bullying will not be tolerated in any form.

Sonlight Policies and Procedures

Sunday Mornings

Sonlight offers music for the 9:40am Sunday morning worship service. We will gather each Sunday morning at 9am in the choir room and walk to the Worship Center at 9:15am. All current Sonlight members are always welcome whether or not they were at the previous rehearsal.

Sunday Afternoons

Rehearsals for Sonlight take place on Sunday afternoons. Rehearsals will run from 4-5:30pm in both the choir room and worship center, depending on your section (band/choir). We will always end in the worship center unless otherwise stated.

Regular attendance for rehearsals is essential, as it allow us time to prepare our musical offerings for upcoming worship services and special events. Equally important, it affords us time for fun and fellowship with one another. Sonlight will make every attempt to follow school calendars and observe major holidays. Band members and soloists will always be held to a higher level of expectation, as explained in the next section.

Sonlight Guests

Guests are always welcome to rehearsals. In fact, we encourage youth to invite friends to come and check out a rehearsal to see if they want to join us. Guests are also always welcome to attend the 9:40am Sunday worship service, during which they can experience Sonlight offering music and leadership.

Attendance Policy

If you know of an upcoming absence from a Sunday morning, a rehearsal, or a special event, please email the director. It helps to know how many students to expect, especially on Sunday mornings! Attendance will always be taken, and written communication is the best way to contact about anticipated tardiness, early leaving, or absences.

Scheduling conflicts are a normal part of participating in any extracurricular activity, so Sonlight observes the performance rule – a performance or game will always trump a rehearsal/practice.

Opportunities for solos, participation in the band, and going on tour can be affected by multiple absences - all decisions will be at the director's discretion and will be final.

All Members - Sunday morning worship services

All current Sonlight members are always welcome to attend whether or not they were at the previous rehearsal. Sonlight meets in the choir room at 9am on Sunday mornings for warm-ups and devotions before walking together to the Worship Center at 9:15am. We will always perform a sound-check at 9:30am.

Choir Members (no prior experience necessary)

Typical Rehearsals

4:00-4:45 - All choir members in vocal rehearsals in the choir room

4:45-5:30 - All Sonlight members (choir and band) in the worship center

Assigning Vocal Parts (i.e. Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Baritone, Bass)

We will also strive for a balanced choir with healthy voices! Students can expect to be moved throughout the year to help balance and blend voices within the group.

Choir and Band Attendance FAQ

- **What happens if you have a solo and you miss rehearsal?** As long as it's not the final rehearsal before a worship service, you should be ok! But always make sure you communicate in writing with the director.
- **What do we do when sports games, tournaments, and other outside activities conflict with Sonlight?** This is why we have the performance rule - a performance or game for which your coach or director is counting on you will always trump a rehearsal/practice. Our only rehearsal is on Sunday afternoons and this will not change. Conflicts will happen - always stay in communication with the director. Learning to manage time effectively, communicate with each other, and prioritize time is a wonderful byproduct of being a part of a musical ensemble!
- **What if you know you will be missing a concentrated number of rehearsals (i.e. more than two weeks of Sunday worship services and rehearsals)?** Please communicate in writing with the director so appropriate decisions can be made. Students will never be forced to drop-out or be "fired" from Sonlight, but the director also reserves the right to reassign solos and/or instrument parts as necessary.

Solo Auditions

Students can receive up to 3 solos and 3 alternates per year (not including feature music for tour), with an unlimited number of try-outs. Students with the highest score will receive the solo, with the second highest score receiving alternate. For songs going on tour, both the soloist and alternate will have opportunities to sing (and any student with more than 3 solos/alternates will be asked to pick three songs).

Rubric

Rubrics are created by the Sonlight student leadership team. Students' audition for solos will be graded criteria including (but not limited to) tone quality, pitch, diction, phrasing, expression and style, attitude, and attendance. Students are always allowed to receive their rubrics back and to discuss them with the director(s) at a later time (and immediately after the rehearsal usually isn't the best time). These are meant to be tools to help students improve their musical ability- never as a penalty or punishment!

Judges

Judges will always include the directors, and the possibility of other Trinity/Sonlight staff members. Family members will never judge students auditioning. The director will always have final say on all solo assignments.

Song Submission

Sonlight has a suggestion form for songs on the Sonlight website. Anyone is allowed to submit songs, but only current Sonlight members will participate in the selection process for the final song list. Songs from a variety of genres are encouraged!

Fundraisers

In order to take our message and ministry beyond the walls of the church, fundraisers are a necessary part of the Sonlight experience. Every year, there will be several opportunities for Sonlight participants and their families to help support the general funding of Sonlight while also earning credit toward each individual's cost for Sonlight travel opportunities. More detailed information about fundraisers is available from the director.

Communication and Social Media Policies

Cell phones and accompanying technology are an ubiquitous part of life for teenagers, and Sonlight recognizes this fact. Sonlight's role is to help students embrace valuable tools and resources that will ultimately lead to a positive Sonlight experience. With that being said, students will be expected to relinquish their phones on Sunday mornings (or leave them with family members), and at rehearsals, phones need to be put away or put in the charging station.

As worship leaders for our church community, our Sonlight members are held to higher standards. All members are expected to keep it appropriate and polite on any online interaction. There are a few actions that will not be tolerated, and they include profanity, nudity or sexually suggestive content, harassment, bullying, and gossip, pretending to be someone else, and threatening harm to yourself or others.

Every student must have a picture release form on file with Sonlight. This can be completed online at our website.

Email

The director and/or assistant director will send weekly emails with important information - upcoming music, practice tracks, fundraiser information, and more. These are archived in My Trinity. Any forms sent out will also be posted to the Sonlight website.

Texting and Other Phone Apps

The director uses Remind for short reminders via text/email. This is a free and safe messaging app to keep everyone up-to-date. If you would like to receive text announcements, text @amanki to the number 81010. If you prefer email, send an email to amanki@mail.remind.com. You can also join on the remind website here:

<https://www.remind.com/join/amanki>. This will be our easiest way to communicate with you all quickly so I encourage you to join.

There are also a few free apps recommended to help students be successful in Sonlight - Spotify (for listening to the Sonlight playlist), DropBox (for listening to practice tracks), and Vocal Record Pro (for recording/sending audio clips).

Church Community Builder (aka CCB)

This site is accessed through My Trinity (go to the Trinity main site) and allows the director to complete needs requests, attendance, email the whole group, and other tasks. All members of Sonlight should have an active profile in My Trinity.

<https://trinitygnv.ccbchurch.com/>

Sonlight Website and Facebook

Our website is updated constantly, and contains lots of important information, including (but not limited to): the handbook, calendars, tour info, fundraiser info, our YouTube page, and auditions. <http://trinitygnv.org/sonlight>

We also have a Facebook account - Facebook is primarily used for shout outs, announcements, questions, and to post pictures and videos.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/sonlighttunc/>

Other Social Media (Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.)

Sonlight does not have official accounts for these programs. If you use a Sonlight hashtag, please keep the official social media policy in mind.

Leadership Opportunities

Leadership Team

High school students are welcome to apply for positions of leadership, responsibility, and service in the Sonlight Choir and Band. They represent their fellow musicians and assist the Sonlight directors. They are expected to be at most functions, including: worship services, rehearsals, fundraisers, and officer meetings.

All members of the Leadership Team are to be helpful to the directors and fellow officers and members. They should exhibit leadership during worship and rehearsals, and any time Sonlight is representing Trinity. They should be informed and enforce and exhibit all rules concerning Sonlight, and they will act as a liaison between other members and the directors.

- **Team Leader:** Must have strong leadership and respect of choir. Must have strong musicianship. Assist director in rehearsing choir and leading small group rehearsals. Assists the director as needed.
- **Secretaries:** Must be punctual to take roll at every rehearsal. Collects forms for the director. Creates/maintains Sonlight bulletin board. Helps with birthdays, announcements, etc. at rehearsals. Writes invitations and/or thank-you notes (as necessary). Takes notes during officer meetings.
- **Librarians:** Responsible for the Sonlight library which includes: sorting, filing, and maintaining music. Responsible for issuing and collecting all music and folders on Sundays. Responsible for keeping the music library in order.
- **Equipment Managers:** Responsible for Sonlight's equipment. Helping the band set-up/break-down on Sunday's (i.e stands, black sheets and cable management on stage, etc). Responsible for telling director of any equipment or instrument problems.

- **Historian:** Takes pictures at all functions. Responsible for scrapbook and year-end video. Help secretaries with birthday calendar. Helps with shout-outs and announcements on Facebook. Include any and all newspaper articles, programs, pictures, etc. and present it to the choir in the form of a scrapbook by the end of the school year.

Sonlight Tech Crew

Open to any high school student interested in the technical aspect of a worship service. These students will learn how to make and display projections, mix sound, run the light board, and set-up/break-down/troubleshoot sound equipment. Students will have the same responsibilities/privileges as regular Sonlight members in regards to Sunday morning worship and Sunday afternoon rehearsals, Sonlight special events, and tour.

Special Events

Sonlight Lock-In

Time Commitment: 1 Overnight – Friday-Saturday, February 9-10, 2018 - highly encouraged
The Sonlight Lock-In is a time to rehearse music, spend time in devotion, fellowship over meals, and have fun together! All Sonlight students are encouraged to attend this event!

Youth Sunday

Time Commitment: 1 Day – Sunday, February 11 - required
This is a BIG DAY! This is the Sunday where the youth (including Sonlight) are in charge of all three worship services at Trinity. All students, regardless if they are going on tour or not, are expected to participate in all three services. There will not be a regular Sonlight rehearsal on this day.

Sonlight de Mayo

Time Commitment: 1 evening - May 2, 2018 - highly encouraged
Our annual Wednesday night dinner fundraiser. Families and students can contribute by donating various supplies for the dinner, and by setting-up, serving, and cleaning-up at the event.

Outreach Concerts

Time Commitment: varies
Sometimes Sonlight is invited to perform at church functions or in various venues throughout the city, and we like to accept invitations if possible to share our ministry. If these arise, the director will communicate details asap.

Sonlight Boot Camp and Tour

The Sonlight Youth Choir and Band Tour is a life-changing experience where we hit the road to spread God's love to others. The Sonlight Tour 2017 took us on our first ever international trip-- to Jamaica! We met some amazing people and hopefully were instrumental in bringing them closer to God through our music. God has an amazing way of working through the lives of the people we visit to change us forever. This year, students will participate

All deadlines will be communicated as soon as possible. The directors will try to be as accommodating as possible because we want EVERYONE to experience Sonlight tour, however, we do have financial responsibilities and contracts we must honor, so we ask everyone to be respectful of the deadlines.

Dates

June 3: Leadership Team and Tour Crew noon-3pm (with lunch in room 222)

- Move all equipment from choir loft
- Set-up touring equipment and set

June 3: Parent and Student Tour Meeting at 3pm in the choir room

- All payments and paperwork due

June 4-7: Boot camp

- Monday-Wednesday 5-9pm, Thursday 5-9:30pm (dinner will be served)
- Boot camp is a required part of tour. Students are expected to be at every rehearsal for the entire time except in cases where the director has pre-approved an absence and tardiness (for example, graduation and required band camps are excused absences/tardiness, while work or parties are not excused). Unexcused absences/tardiness consequences will be determined by the director.

June 10: Send-Off Sunday

June 11-18: Tour

Cost and Payment

- Approximately \$400-\$500 per student
- All payments and paperwork must be in by their due dates, with no exceptions.
- If you had any money put aside in your student's youth account (i.e. pumpkin patch or qualified Sonlight fundraising events), please email the director to accomplish a transfer.

Feature Music Audition Process

Sonlight has "feature" music as a part of the tour set list. These are songs that students select, arrange, practice, and present on their own.

- Feature music is an optional aspect of tour. There are no guarantees on the number of feature songs or guarantees that if they audition that they will perform.
- All final choices will be at the director's discretion.
- There is no instrumentation, age, or grade restriction, however, students cannot do a feature two years in a row.
- Auditions will take place after the designated rehearsal, starting at 5:30pm. The pianist must have the music two-weeks prior to play for auditions.

Auditions and solo protocol for tour

- If any songs are missing an alternate, the director will announce future audition dates.
- Any student singing solos will have no more than 3 songs to perform (which means they may have to pick if they received more than 3 solos and 3 alternates throughout the school year).
- Student soloists/alternates will not switch solos on tour without confirming first with the director. If there ever is any conflict over a specific date/location, the schedule originally set by the director will be the final decision.

Chaperones for Tour

Email the director if you are interested in being considered to chaperone Sonlight Tour. Chaperones will be responsible for the cost of the trip. Each chaperone has a specific job for which he/she is responsible throughout the planning of the tour, during boot camp week, and while on tour. You must be able to commit time during the Sonlight Lock-In, Youth Sunday, and/or other various Sonlight events (i.e. boot camps, Sonlight de Mayo, etc.) to be considered as a tour chaperone. If you want to be considered, it is important for the youth to know you and look to you as a leader. The only way to assure that is to BE INVOLVED throughout the year. It is an amazingly unforgettable experience!

Sonlight Reference Sheet

Alice Wallis, Director of Sonlight Youth Choir and Band

(352) 416-3016 - direct office line

(352) 214-8578 - cell

awallis@trinitygnv.org

Andrew Mankin, Assistant Director of Sonlight Youth Choir and Band

(352) 514-0921 – cell

(352)416-3052- direct office line

amankin@trinitygnv.org

Dr. Steve Bingham, Band Director of Sonlight Youth Choir and Band

(352) 281-4035 - cell

slbingham@bellsouth.net

Website: <http://trinitygnv.org/sonlight>

Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/sonlighttumc/>

Church Community Builder (aka CCB): <https://trinitygnv.ccbchurch.com/>

Spotify:

<https://open.spotify.com/user/tumcsonlight/playlist/6cVlxPmxc7nRsG4bPlmc9p?si=f7BHa1QF>

Youtube playlist:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8V6fclrUqSgQA_OzuZ2eB0WlrOpusTkx

Sonlight Handbook Agreement

Please sign and return only this page as acknowledgement that you have read and understand the policies and procedures outlined in the Sonlight Handbook.

We have marked the following as REQUIRED events if students are going on tour:

- Parent and Student Tour Meeting at 3pm in the choir room - June 3
- Boot camp - June 4-7
- Send-Off Sunday - June 10
- Tour - June 11-18

We understand the social media and communication guidelines. We have saved this handbook for future reference. We understand that our student's membership standing and ability to go on tour and other special events is affected by adherence to the policies in the handbook.

Member Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Welcome to the Sonlight Youth Choir and Band! This is going to be an incredible year!

Signed,

Alice Wallis, Sonlight Director

Steve Bingham, Sonlight Band Director

Andrew Mankin, Sonlight Assistant Director

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