

Virginia ACDA All-Virginia Middle School Honor Choir 2019-2020 Application Packet



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General Information and Deadlines

Directors must be members in good standing with the American Choral Directors Association in order to submit auditions for the All-Virginia Middle School Honor Choir.

There are TWO choirs:

The Treble Choir (TC) is for 6th and 7th grade sopranos and altos

The Mixed Choir (MC) is for 8th sopranos and altos and 6th-8th grade tenors and basses

Deadlines and Schedules:

February 11, 2020 All applicants must be registered online by 11:59pm. You will **not** mail the individual application forms as there will be a checkbox online to certify that the parent and chaperone have signed. The only item you will mail is a **single sponsoring organization check made payable to VA-ACDA** to cover each applicant's \$10 non-refundable application fee, postmarked February 11. Send to:
Philip Keirstead
Marsteller Middle School
14000 Sudley Manor Dr.
Bristow, VA 20136

Snow Dates If any part of Virginia has one or two snow days from Feb. 4-11, the new deadline for submissions will be **Feb. 13**. If three or more snow days occur in that same time frame, the new deadline will be **Feb. 19**. No other extensions will be made.

February 28, 2020 Notification letters of acceptance into the 2018 Virginia ACDA Middle School Honor Choir mailed to directors for distribution.

March 16, 2020 Registration fee of \$100.00 per accepted participant (directors should send **one sponsoring organization check** made payable to **VA-ACDA** to cover all of their participants) mailed to
Annabelle Mills
Stone Hill Middle School
23415 Evergreen Ridge Dr.
Ashburn, VA 20148

April 23, 2020 Participants travel to First Baptist Church in Richmond, VA for registration and first evening of rehearsal under the guest conductors.

April 25, 2020 Performance time anticipated for noon (may change).

Director's Expectations for Students:

Directors should only nominate students who are strong in all of the following categories: 1) music reading skills, 2) tone quality, 3) social skills, 4) willingness to work with peers and adults, and 5) ability to maintain focus in long rehearsals.

2020 Virginia ACDA Middle School Honor Choir Application Form

Photocopy this form as needed. You will NOT mail this application. When registering each applicant, you will complete the online form with this information and certify that the student, parent, and chaperone have signed the form.

Singer Information: Please print legibly! Applicants must currently be enrolled in grades 6, 7, or 8.

 First Name (to be printed in program) Last name Name people call you (for name-tag and t-shirt)

Choir and Voice Part

Treble Choir (TC)

6th and 7th grade

- __ TC Soprano 1
- __ TC Soprano 2
- __ TC Alto 1
- __ TC Alto 2

Mixed Choir (MC)

8th grade

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| __ MC Soprano 1 | __ MC Tenor 1 |
| __ MC Soprano 2 | __ MC Tenor 2 |
| __ MC Alto 1 | __ MC Bass 1 |
| __ MC Alto 2 | __ MC Bass 2 |

Grade: 6 7 8 **Height in inches:** _____ **Gender:** M F **T-shirt size**

- __ Youth Medium
- __ Youth Large
- __ Adult Small
- __ Adult Medium
- __ Adult Large
- __ Adult XL
- __ Adult 2XL

 Parent/Guardian Name Home/Cell Phone (whichever is best)

 Chaperone Name (must be 21 years of age) Chaperone CELL Phone

Chaperone Statement of Obligation:

If selected, I will chaperone this applicant to Richmond April 23-25, 2020. I understand that ACDA is not responsible for the costs of my transportation, lodging, or meals, and that I am responsible for the student(s) at all times, including rehearsals and meals. I certify that I am at least 21 years of age as of April 23, 2020.

Chaperone's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent and Applicant Statement of Obligation:

We have read the entire application form and understand that selection for the 2020 Virginia ACDA Middle School Honor Choir brings with it significant musical and financial obligation. We understand that as a member of the Honor Choir, the applicant must pay a \$100 participation fee, and that ACDA is not responsible for the costs of the applicant's transportation, lodging, or meals. We understand that the applicant must arrive in Richmond for registration and first evening rehearsal on Thursday, April 23, 2020, and that the applicant must attend ALL Honor Choir rehearsals and the performance on Saturday, April 25, 2020. Failure to participate in rehearsals will result in dismissal from the choir. The applicant will be committed to having the music fully prepared according to the instructions provided and may be spot-tested at rehearsal.

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Director's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Directors, because you are not mailing this application, you do not need to include your contact info here. However, when you register your students online, you'll need your ACDA number and organization's address.

**STOP! Directors, do not mail this form. Register your students at
www.formdesk.com/VirginiaACDA/MSauditions**

All-Virginia Middle School Honor Choir Parent and Singer FAQs

What is the All-Virginia Middle School Honor Choir?

The All-Virginia Middle School Honor Choir is a gathering of the best singers from grades 6-8 from the entire Commonwealth of Virginia.

How do I apply?

You have to be sponsored by a member of the American Choral Directors Association. This could be your school's chorus director, church's music minister, or community choir director. He or she will record you singing three things: a major scale, the first verse of *America*, and a minute of an approved song. Professional judges will then score that audition and the highest scores will be selected for the event.

Does it cost?

Yes. There is a \$10 audition fee. This goes towards paying the judges and the software that hosts all the audition files. If you make it, there is also a \$100 registration fee. Your director will instruct you on how to pay.

How competitive is the audition process?

There are two choirs this year. The Treble Choir is for 6th and 7th grade sopranos and altos. The SATB Choir is for 8th grade sopranos and altos and 6th-8th grade tenors and basses. Over 1000 auditions will be submitted and approximately 280 will be chosen.

When is the event?

April 23-25, 2020. Rehearsal starts approximately at 1:00pm on April 23. The final concert will be noon on April 25.

How do I find out if I made it?

Your sponsor will receive a package on or around February 28 with a letter addressed to each of his/her participants informing you of whether you were accepted. Some singers will be named alternates and will go in the place of an individual who cannot attend for whatever reason.

Where is the event?

Rehearsals will be in Richmond, VA. The performance will be at the First Baptist Church. More details will be sent to participants.

What do we do there?

About a month prior to the event you'll receive a packet of music. Your director will help you learn the notes for these songs but you will also have access to practice tracks you can download to an mp3 player or listen to online. When you arrive for the first rehearsal, you'll meet your guest conductor. It's their job to get you concert ready with approximately 12 hours of rehearsal!

What if I live far away?

If you're accepted, you'll receive a list of local hotels with which we've negotiated group rates. The overnight trip is part of the fun of this event!

Do I go alone?

No. Every singer must have a chaperone. Usually, that's a parent. That generally means s/he will need to take two full days off of work. Sometimes, schools that have multiple students accepted can double up students with chaperones. That's up to your director.

Recording Your Applicant

Read and follow instructions exactly!!!

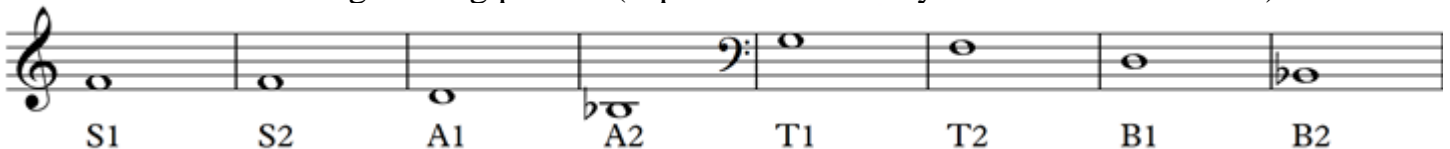
All recordings must be completed in mp3 format and uploaded to FormDesk following the instructions on pages 7-9. CD's or other recording media will not be accepted. Each section of the audition (scale, *America*, and song) must be on a **separate .mp3 file**. Any audition recording that has been electronically enhanced in any way (reverb, auto-tune, etc.) will be disqualified. If you record in GarageBand, please note the vocal default is to **add** reverb. You must change this setting.

General Recording Tips

- Use the best equipment available to you.
- Audacity is a free software program that allows you to use your computer with built-in microphone to make recordings. You can get it at <http://audacity.sourceforge.net>.
- Make sure your recording device, whatever it is, has the following settings
 - .mp3 recording, NOT .wav
 - Sample rate of at least 44.1 kHz
 - 192 kbps (or CD quality)
 - Any quality setting lower than these will negatively affect the recording quality
 - Ask your IT person or any of your students to help you with this
- Place the microphone closer to the singer than the piano
- Record as many takes as necessary to get the best performance possible. In the past, auditions have been submitted with sneezes, PA interruptions, ringing phones, etc.

One Octave Major Scale – 40 points

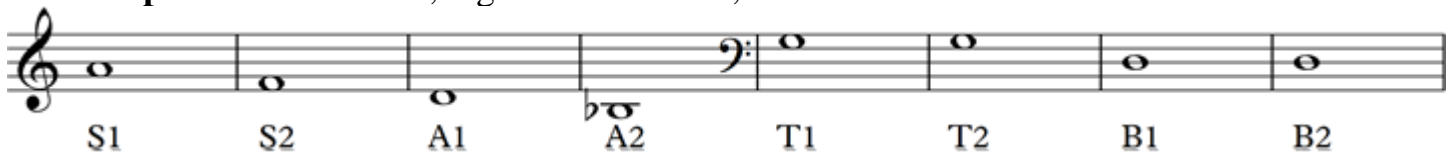
- Must be sung a cappella ascending and descending.
- **Accompanied singers will receive zero points** for this section.
- The judges will assess Tone and Intonation (20 points each).
- Singer must use solfege.
- Use a tempo between 60 and 90 bpm and sing quarter notes.
- The starting pitch should be played *after* pushing the record button so the judge can hear the given pitch.
- Use the following starting pitches (soprano and alto keys same for both choirs):



- **Singing in a key other than those assigned may result in an Intonation score of Zero.**

America – 60 points

- Must be sung a cappella.
- **Accompanied singers will receive zero points** for this section.
- The judges will assess Tone, Intonation, Diction, and Phrasing (15 points each).
- Sing only the first verse (the one everyone knows) beginning with “My Country ‘tis of Thee” starting on the pitches listed below.
- Caution your singers to use an appropriate choral sound rather than “pop.”
- The starting pitch should be played *after* pushing the record button so the judge can hear the given pitch.
- Use the following starting pitches, paying careful attention to the **different keys in the Sopranos**. All tenors, regardless of divisi, start on G. All basses start on D.



- **Singing in a key other than those assigned may result in an Intonation score of Zero.**

Song – 100 points

- The judges will assess Tone, Intonation (30 pts each), Phrasing, and Diction (20 pts each).
- Guide your singers into selecting an appropriate solo. Do not let them choose on their own.
- The song section must be at least 45 seconds but the judges will stop listening after 1 minute 15 seconds.
- The singer should sing the portion of music that best exemplifies his or her voice.
- The tessitura of the song should be relative to the voice part for which s/he is auditioning. Sopranos should not be “belting.”
- Past judges **strongly** recommend using an accompanied song (limit introduction to 5-6 seconds) but a cappella is acceptable. **You may use a recorded accompaniment.**
- If accompanied, it is more important for the judge to hear the voice than an equal balance of voice and accompaniment. Keep the microphone close to the singer.

IMPORTANT

When finished recording...

- Name each file following these guidelines:
 - choir abbreviation, **hyphen**, voice part abbreviation, **hyphen**, Lastname, **hyphen**, Firstname, **hyphen**, and the audition component: "scale" "america" or "song"
 - MC-S1-Doe-Jane-scale
 - TC-A2-Johnson-Sam-america
 - MC-B2-Smith-Mark-song

Registering Your Applicant
Read and follow instructions exactly!!!

1) You may register your students as you complete their auditions or you may wait until they are all complete and register all at once.

2) Go to www.formdesk.com/VirginiaACDA/MSauditions

3) The first time you visit, you'll have to register. You'll see this screen. Click on the "Register" button at the bottom. If you remember last year's login, use it.

Step 4

Step 3

4) Enter your first and last name and e-mail address. Create a User name (I suggest you use your e-mail address minus the "@school.edu" portion). Create a password. There are no restrictions on the password. Click "Next."

Write your User name and password here for safe keeping:

User name: _____ Password: _____

5) You'll see the following screen. It is your audition submission summary. Right now it is empty because you've not submitted any yet. Click "Fill out a new form."

Step 5

All-Virginia Middle School Chorus Applicant Registration

Deadline is 11:59pm, Tuesday, February 11, 2020.

If any part of Virginia has one or two snow days from Feb. 4-11, the new deadline will be Feb. 13.

If there are three snow days, the new deadline will be Feb. 19.

Enter singer information here

First Name (to be printed in program) *	<input type="text"/>	Last Name *	<input type="text"/>	Nickname (Mike instead of Michael, NOT "Cupcake" or "Flash") *	<input type="text"/>
Preferred Voice Part TC=Treble Choir MC=Mixed Choir Do not mix this up *	Select One ▾	Grade Level *	<input type="radio"/> 6 <input type="radio"/> 7 <input type="radio"/> 8	Height (in inches) *	<input type="text"/> Gender * <input type="radio"/> M <input type="radio"/> F
Parent/Guardian Name *	<input type="text"/>	Home/Cell Phone *	<input type="text"/>	T-Shirt Size *	Select ▾
Chaperone Name *	<input type="text"/>	Chaperone CELL # *	<input type="text"/>	Signatures on form *	<input type="checkbox"/>

Step 6

Step 7

BEFORE UPLOADING - PLEASE READ!!! In order to upload singers' audition mp3's (.wav or .wmv files will not be accepted) files MUST be separated by the three audition components and named with the choir abbreviation, **hyphen**, voice part abbreviation, **hyphen**, Lastname, **hyphen**, Firstname, **hyphen**, and the audition component: "scale" "america" or "song"

For example: MC-S1-Doe-Jane-scale, TC-A2-Johnson-Sam-america, or MC-B2-Smith-Mark-song

Upload scale *	<input type="text"/>
Upload "America" *	<input type="text"/>
Upload song *	<input type="text"/>

Step 8

After uploading your files, FormDesk adds a 6 or 7 digit index number to keep track of the files. The numbers are deleted after I download the files.

Add Director Information here

(If cookies are enabled in your browser, director information will be saved and entered automatically into all your subsequent entries)

Director First Name *	<input type="text"/>	Director Last Name *	<input type="text"/>	ACDA Membership # *	<input type="text"/>
E-mail Address *	<input type="text"/>	Mobile Phone # *	<input type="text"/>	Name of Organization *	<input type="text"/>
Choir Affiliation *	<input type="radio"/> School <input type="radio"/> Church <input type="radio"/> Community	Organization Address *	<input type="text"/>	City *	<input type="text"/>
Organization Address *	<input type="text"/>	City *	<input type="text"/>	Zip Code *	<input type="text"/>

Step 9

* = Input is required

6) Enter information directly from the student's application page. If any part is left blank, FormDesk will not let you submit. "Nickname" is the name by which the student is usually called. Do not type "none" in "Nickname." Do not type "n/a." **Retype the student's first name if it is blank.**

7) By checking here, you certify that the student, parent, and chaperone have all signed the application. This eliminates the need to mail the applications to me.

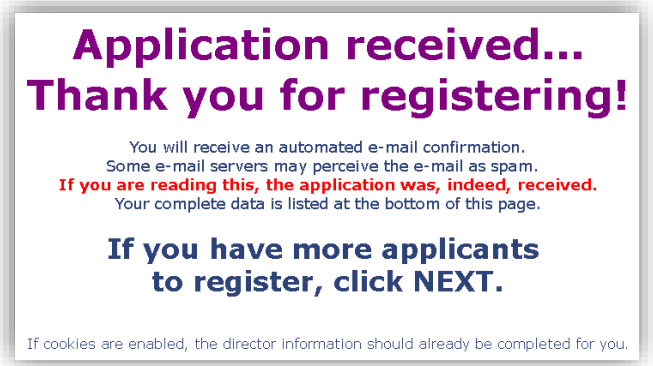
8) Upload the three mp3 files, one at a time, here. **BE SURE THE FILES ARE NAMED ACCORDING TO INSTRUCTIONS** at the bottom of page 6.

9) Enter your information at the bottom of the screen. If "Cookies" are enabled in your browser, you should only have to do this once and the rest of your submissions will be pre-filled. For "Name of Organization," please put the full school or church name, not a choir name unless it is a community choir.

10) Click “Send.” Processing the form may take a few moments. When finished, you’ll see this message along with the entire completed form below it. An automated e-mail will also be sent to you. It contains all the information you just input *including* the mp3 files you attached.

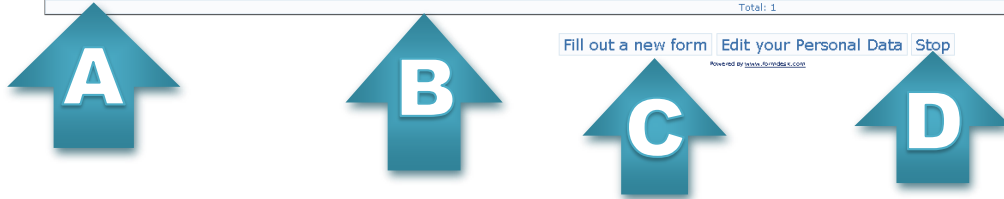
11) Click “Next” at the bottom of the screen and you’ll be returned to your submission summary page. It will list the first and last name, choir/voice part, and all three files you submitted. FormDesk adds a 7-digit index number to the front of each file automatically; disregard it. From this screen you have several options:

- A) Click the edit icon to edit a submission (you may do this up to 11:59pm, February 11).
- B) Click the mp3 links to make sure you uploaded the correct files and that they work.
- C) Click “Fill out a new form” button to continue registering your students.
- D) Click “Stop” to end your session. You may come back later to upload more.



**All-Virginia Middle School Chorus
Applicant Registration**

First Name (to be prin	Last Name	Preferred Voice Part	Upload scale	Upload "America"	Upload song	Created	Last modified
Susanna	Singer	TC solo voice 2	1186103_TC,S2,singer,susanna.scale.MP3 (434.53 KB)	1186104_TC,S2,singer,susanna.scale.MP3 (434.53 KB)	1186105_TC,S2,singer,susanna.song.MP3 (434.53 KB)	11/10/2011	11/10/2011
Total: 1							



12) This summary page will be the first page that opens when you login each time.

13) If you have any tech questions, please ask your IT specialist to help. DO NOT wait until February 11 to begin this process. Applications will not be accepted after February 11 (except in the case of snow dates). You may send general questions to philip.keirstead@gmail.com.

14) ONE organization check for all of your students’ auditions fees (\$10 each) should be mailed to the address on page 2. The postmark deadline is also February 11. Do NOT mail the paper applications.

Common Errors

Follow instructions to avoid these...

When directors follow instructions on how to record and register students precisely, the audition chairperson's job is very simple. All mp3 files are alphabetized automatically and everything is standardized for the judges. When mistakes are made, the chairperson has to first figure out what the mistake is and then fix it, and that takes time.

Common Errors that take the chairperson's time...

- **Misspelled names**
 - The last and first name submitted to FormDesk must match *exactly* the last and first name used in naming the audition files.
- **Flipped names**
 - When naming the audition files, last name goes first.
- **Audition file name does not include choir**
 - This is new this year. TC or MC goes first in the file name.
- **Voice part doesn't match**
 - The voice part you selected on FormDesk does not match the voice part in the audition file.
 - You labeled a Treble Choir audition as a Mixed Choir voice part.
- **Roman numerals instead of Arabic**
 - Use S1 and A2, not SI or AII
- **Soprano 1 sang the wrong key for *America***
 - If they sing in F, they will be switched to Soprano 2.
- **Keys don't match selected voice part**
 - If a labeled Alto 1 sings the Soprano 2 key, s/he will be switched.
- **Missing a file**
 - You uploaded John's song on Jane's form.
 - You uploaded John's song twice instead of *America*.

Common Errors that cannot be fixed by the chairperson and might ruin your student's chance...

- **Keys don't match selected voice part**
 - If the key on the recording matches none of the voice parts (C major, for example), the student may receive a score of zero for intonation for that section.
- **Scale or *America* are accompanied**
 - Play the starting pitch at the beginning then remove your hands from the keyboard.
 - Accompanied singers will receive a zero for that entire section.
- **Singer's name on mp3 does not match the singer**
 - You named John's song with Jane's name.
 - You didn't listen to the files before uploading.
 - This does not get caught until adjudication day when it's too late to fix.
- **Recording is blank**
 - You didn't listen to the files before uploading.
 - Also does not get caught until adjudication day.


Scales

60-90 bpm

All-Virginia middle School Honor Choir Audition


Singers must be unaccompanied

Mixed and Treble Choir - All Sopranos



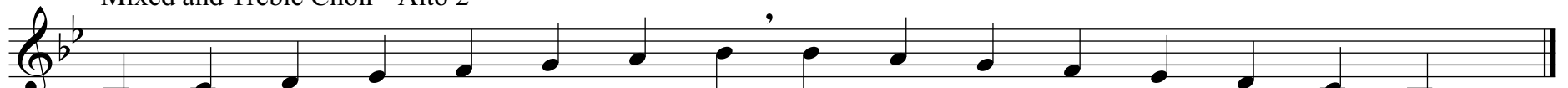
do re mi fa sol la ti do do ti la sol fa mi re do

Mixed and Treble Choir - Alto 1




do re mi fa sol la ti do do ti la sol fa mi re do

Mixed and Treble Choir - Alto 2



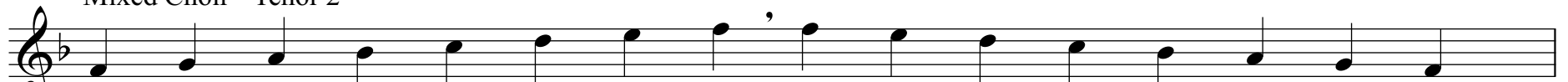
do re mi fa sol la ti do do ti la sol fa mi re do

Mixed Choir - Tenor 1



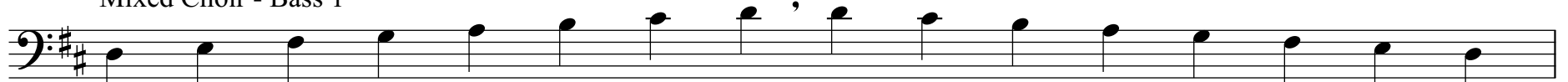
do re mi fa sol la ti do do ti la sol fa mi re do

Mixed Choir - Tenor 2




do re mi fa sol la ti do do ti la sol fa mi re do

Mixed Choir - Bass 1



do re mi fa sol la ti do do ti la sol fa mi re do

Mixed Choir - Bass 2



do re mi fa sol la ti do do ti la sol fa mi re do

60-90 bpm

America

All-Virginia Middle School Honor Choir Audition

Singers must be unaccompanied

Mixed and Treble Choir - Soprano 1

My coun - try, 'tis of thee, sweet land of li - ber - ty, of thee I sing. Land where my
fath - ers died, land of the Pil - grims' pride, from ev - 'ry__ moun - tain - side, let__ free - dom ring!

Mixed and Treble Choir - Soprano 2

My coun - try, 'tis of thee, sweet land of li - ber - ty, of thee I sing. Land where my
fath - ers died, land of the Pil - grims' pride, from ev - 'ry__ moun - tain - side, let__ free - dom ring!

Mixed and Treble Choir - Alto 1

My coun - try, 'tis of thee, sweet land of li - ber - ty, of thee I sing. Land where my
fath - ers died, land of the Pil - grims' pride, from ev - 'ry__ moun - tain - side, let__ free - dom ring!

Mixed and Treble Choir - Alto 2

My coun - try, 'tis of thee, sweet land of li - ber - ty, of thee I sing. Land where my
fath - ers died, land of the Pil - grims' pride, from ev - 'ry__ moun - tain - side, let__ free - dom ring!

Mixed Choir - All Tenors

My coun - try, 'tis of thee, sweet land of li - ber - ty, of thee I sing. Land where my
fath - ers died, land of the Pil - grims' pride, from ev - 'ry__ moun - tain - side, let__ free - dom ring!

Mixed Choir - All Basses

My coun - try, 'tis of thee, sweet land of li - ber - ty, of thee I sing. Land where my
fath - ers died, land of the Pil - grims' pride, from ev - 'ry__ moun - tain - side, let__ free - dom ring!