“Implementing Growing in Grace Children’s Choir Curriculum in the Combined Choir Setting”

Presented by Teresa Granger, M.M.Ed.

I. What criteria do I need to consider when planning for a combined children’s choir?

- Age breakdown of children in the group
- Readers vs. Non-readers
- Maturity level of the children
- Are there children with special needs in your choir?
- Number of choir workers you will have to help you

II. Should I purchase the Younger Children’s Growing in Grace Curriculum or Older Children’s Curriculum for my choir?

- Younger Children curriculum has descants, instrument parts, and songs that have canon parts which will engage and challenge the older children.
- Younger Children if the choir is mostly made up of 1st-3rd grade.
- Older children if the choir is mostly made up of 3rd-6th grade.
- Number of choir workers you have will allow you to work in small groups to teach more difficult instrument parts or vocal parts.
- Student Scores in the Younger Children’s materials are easy to read with less musical terms introduced.
- Student Scores in the Older Children’s materials have more musical terms and signs introduced.
III. How should I adapt specific activities and session plans for a combined choir?

- Let the older kids in the group play the more difficult instrument parts.
- Some of the songs are written with a special ending which can allow the children to sing a harmony part. Let the older kids in the group sing that part.
- If the group is mostly younger children sing melody only.
- Each session plan has some suggestions in it for simplifying an activity or a way to challenge the children.
- Teaching Tips and Performance options are included in the curriculum to assist with rehearsal adaptations.
- Have a child sing the verse part as a solo and the choir join in on the refrain of the song.
- Use a rebus to teach the text of the anthem.
- Ask a youth choir member, or teenager to play instrumental parts especially if you cannot spare singers to play instruments for an anthem.

IV. Sample Activities from the fall *Be Strong in the Lord Fall 2016 Curriculum* for Combined Choirs.

Younger Children

**Song - “Be Strong in the Lord”**

- Younger kids sing the A section
- B section could be sung as a solo or small group of older children
- C section – have everyone sing melody or have a soloist
- Divided melody at the end can be sung by the older kids or you can keep everyone on the melody

**Song - “Christ is Born”**

- A - section sung by all
- B - section sung by small group or solo
- C - section solo
- Harmonize the ending with a few of the older kids singing the “b” while the younger children stay on the “g.”
**Song - “I Am Never Alone”**

- The song is written in imitation style
- Divide the choir into two equal groups with strong and dependent singers in each group
- B-section sung as a solo or by a small group
- Harmonize the ending

**Song: “Put On the Armor of God”**

- Explain the text
- Use a rebus to teach the words
- Use motions to assist with the learning of the text

**Older Children**

**Song: “Praise You”**

- Sing part 1 throughout the entire piece.
- If you add part 2 make sure you have enough kids to sing it securely.
- If you decide you want the two parts, divide the entire choir in half making sure the parts are balanced with strong singers in each group.
- You could sing only part 1 throughout and add the second part on the ending at measures 54-57.

**Song: “The Wise and Foolish Builders”**

- Older child could read the narration.
- Select some children to sing the “oo” section who sing in a clear head voice, begin at measure 29-44.
- All children in choir sing on verse three.
- Optional two part ending.