

# **Charter of Memorial Players**

## **Memorial Episcopal Church - Baltimore, Maryland**

### **1. Purpose:**

- a. The Memorial Players, a ministry of Memorial Episcopal Church, exists to provide quality intergenerational community productions of well-known plays and musicals.
- b. Production casts, crews, musicians, and technicians are drawn from the Memorial congregation and the surrounding community and are intended to span a broad range of ages.
- c. Memorial Players will produce at least one musical per year and may mount other theatrical presentations, subject to Vestry approval.
- d. Outreach is an important goal of each production.
- e. Theatrical productions are selected for presentation based on the following criteria:
  - i. Consistency with the values of Memorial Episcopal Church, including themes such as redemption, inclusiveness, charity and hope;
  - ii. Suitability of the production for a family audience;
  - iii. For musicals only, availability of significant roles for children, youth, adults, and older adults;
  - iv. Availability of the financial and physical resources required to produce the show;
  - v. Thematic or dramatic treatment of social or moral issues or values; and,
  - vi. Ability of the Church facility to support the technical requirements of the show.

### **2. Rationale:**

- a. One of the missions of the Church is to help people find and use their talents and gifts to glorify God and achieve individual growth for the benefit of the whole community.
- b. The interaction of children, youth, adults, and seniors to achieve a common goal has proven to be a valuable growth experience for all involved.
- c. The process of rehearsing and presenting plays and musicals brings together many different people from diverse backgrounds and creates a sense of community. At the conclusion of production, although the community disperses, many of the relationships remain and benefit the larger church community.
- d. The production of quality theatre gives yet another dimension to Memorial

Church's identity in the community and using well-known, quality theatrical vehicles broadens the appeal of the production to both potential cast and audience.

### **3. Casting for Shows:**

- a. For musicals, to the extent possible, everyone who is age 8 or older and who auditions for a role in a production will be assigned a part. The purpose of auditions is to determine where a performer fits into the production best, not to determine whether he or she is good enough to have some role in the production.
- b. All cast members will be expected to sign a participation agreement, which represents a commitment to attend scheduled rehearsals and performances, and to participate in production and fundraising activities.
- c. For each cast member who is age 12 or younger, a parent/guardian will be required to provide on-site supervision at each rehearsal and performance throughout the production.
- d. Final casting decisions are the responsibility of the Director after considering input from the Production Casting Committee.
- e. The Production Casting Committee consists of the Director, Producer, the Music Director (if applicable), Choreographer(s) and Rector. At the Director's discretion, other members may be added to the Casting Committee.
- f. Cast members and their parents new to Memorial Players will receive an orientation on the values of Memorial Players and expectations regarding volunteering and participation.

### **4. Relationship With the Memorial Church Vestry:**

- a. Memorial Players will work cooperatively with the Church staff, Building and Grounds Committee, and other Memorial performing arts groups.
- b. Vestry will be notified of the title, plot synopsis, production team, and proposed play dates prior to the public announcement.
- c. Performance dates and full cast rehearsals will be reserved on the Memorial Church master calendar and agreed to by the Rector and/or Building and Grounds Committee.
- d. Plans for fundraising activities will be coordinated with the Stewardship Committee and presented to the Vestry.
- e. A production budget will be submitted to the Vestry for approval.
- f. A Vestry member will serve on the Memorial Theatre Arts Committee.

## **5. Organization:**

### **a. Memorial Theater Arts Committee**

- i. A guidance committee (the Memorial Theater Arts Committee) drawn primarily from the Memorial congregation will govern the Memorial Players. The Committee will nominate a Chair, a Vice-Chair, a Secretary and a Treasurer.
- ii. The Theater Arts Committee will include the Rector, Memorial Choir Director, one (1) Vestry liaison, one (1) member representing the Memorial Worship Committee, three (3) members of Memorial Church who have significant experience with Memorial Players productions, two (2) community members, and one (1) member to serve as the Memorial Players Community Outreach Coordinator.
- iii. Nominations will be accepted on an annual basis from the community-at-large. Individuals are encouraged to self-nominate. The Theater Arts Committee will submit a slate to the Vestry for approval.
- iv. Beginning in 2013 members of the Theater Arts Committee will serve on a two-year rotating slate.
- v. The Theater Arts Committee selects theatrical vehicles to be produced, production teams, proposed production dates, and ways-and-means.
- vi. Subcommittees (i.e. Stage and Set, Fundraising, Outreach, etc.) shall be created, and renewed on an annual, as needed basis, by the Theater Arts Committee. Subcommittee members may be drawn from the Memorial Players community-at-large. Theater Arts Committee to designate subcommittee chair who shall be a member of the Theater Arts Committee.
- vii. The Theater Arts Committee will facilitate an annual meeting of the Memorial Players.

### **b. Production Teams**

- i. Production Teams for each production will be drawn from the Memorial Church congregation and the surrounding community and will be selected by the Theatre Arts Committee.
- ii. Production Teams may consist of Director, Producer, Music Director (for musicals only), Stage Manager, and Set Director. The Director and Producer will recruit additional production staff as necessary.
- iii. The Director, or the Producer, must be a voting member of the Memorial Episcopal Church congregation.

### **c. Decision-Making**

- i. Decisions within the Theater Arts Committee are reached by group consensus. When consensus is not possible, decisions will be reached by majority vote. When decisions cannot be reached amicably, they will be referred to the Vestry for resolution.

## **6. Funding and Finances:**

- a. As an important ministry of Memorial Church, funding for productions will be provided by Memorial Church as a line item in its annual budget.
- b. All expenses for productions will be paid by Memorial Church. In the event that income exceeds expenses, a minimum of \$2000 and a maximum of \$5000 will be set aside to fund the next production and the remainder will be available to other church ministries.
- c. The Theater Arts Committee will approve a production budget prior to embarking on any production. The Committee will submit the proposed budget to the Memorial Vestry for approval, prior to the beginning of the program year.
- d. Each production will be planned to make maximum use of existing resources and to minimize the cost of production.
- e. Income and donations from productions will be provided to the Memorial Church. Temporarily Restricted Gifts\* may be made to the Memorial Players. Such gifts will be credited to Memorial Players in the Memorial Church budget.
- f. The Committee will provide financial reports to the Memorial Vestry to ensure complete and appropriate accounting of income and expenses. Sufficient data will be maintained by the Committee, Treasurer and Production Team to verify income and expenses.
- g. The Theater Arts Committee Treasurer, working with the Memorial bookkeeper, will process all expenses and income through the Memorial Church accounting system. Any budget increases will need Vestry approval.

## **h. Payment Approval**

- i. Primary authority to approve the payment of bills resides with the Producer.
- ii. The Producer will approve requests for payment of bills incurred by Memorial Players. Reimbursements and payments for production-related costs received from cast and crewmembers will require approval of the Director or the Producer and require a receipt. All receipts must be submitted within 30 days of the final performance.
- iii. The Committee will provide the Memorial financial office with a list of individuals who are authorized to approve payments.

## **7. Facilities:**

- a. The Theatre Arts Committee will oversee the set design and construction of a set and stage in the Memorial Church for pre-production and production activities. The Theater Arts Committee must approve the set design and budget, as agreed upon by the Director, Producer and Set Director in advance.
- b. The stage will not be used during Advent, Lent, or Holy Week.

- c. Scheduled use of the church facilities for auditions, rehearsals, and performances will be provided by the church at no cost to Memorial Players in the same manner as they are provided to other official Memorial organizations and committees.
- d. Facility use will be scheduled through the church office as early as possible to ensure that there are no conflicts with other events and programs.
- e. Memorial Players will be granted primary use of the facility for the last two weeks (14 days) prior to the first public presentation of any production being held in that space and during the run of productions in that space. Use of the Sanctuary for rehearsals and productions is allowed and will be coordinated and scheduled through the Memorial office. Worship events critical to the life of the parish, including but not limited to Sunday worship and funerals, take priority over any other event in the church.
- f. Reasonable storage space for scenery, props, costumes, etc. will be provided on the Memorial campus as available.

### **8. Staff Support:**

- a. The services of the Memorial office, professional, and maintenance staffs will be requested as needed by Memorial Players to provide support services for productions.
- b. These services may include but are not limited to: publication support and other office services for publicity, audition materials, production programs, and, physical arrangement of the presentation area (seating, cleaning, etc.) for productions.
- c. All requests for office and maintenance staff support of production activities will be processed through the Memorial office.
- d. All requests for Memorial professional staff support of Memorial Players activities will be made to the Rector.

### **9. Communications:**

- a. The Theatre Arts Committee will maintain, oversee, and approve communications with members of the Memorial Players. The committee will maintain a list of Memorial Players members.
- b. The committee will maintain, oversee, and approve communication with the Memorial congregation.
- c. The Director and the Producer will maintain, oversee and approve communications with the Memorial Players production cast.

## **10. Authority:**

This Charter will become effective upon its approval by the Memorial Church Vestry. This Charter may be modified or withdrawn at any time by the Vestry or by the request of the Memorial Theater Arts Committee.

*\*“Temporarily Restricted Gift:” In addition to pledges, gifts are made to congregations by a member or non-member of the congregation. There are several categories of restriction that the giver may place upon the gift. They are: unrestricted - funds which can be used for any purpose; designated - funds which must be used for a specific purpose; temporarily restricted - such as funds that are given for a particular purpose for a specific length of time, then allowed to be used for other purposes; permanently restricted - funds which are designated for a particular use in perpetuity. The Vestry has the fiduciary responsibility to use any gift for the purpose for which they were given. From the Warden's Handbook, page 15, found on the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland website [www.ang-md.org](http://www.ang-md.org)*

The Memorial Players Charter

Approved by Theater Arts Committee in 2011 / Approved by Memorial Vestry 2011

Most recent revision: December 1, 2012