



*Written by
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“The Body of Christ” *A Choral Reading of Ephesians 4*

Scripture: Ephesians 4: 4-7, 11-16

Dramatic Category: Choral Reading

What is “Choral Reading”?

Choral Reading is “literature in vocal dimension,” which means that multiple voices interpret literature, thus giving it dimension that a single voice-oral interpretation cannot give.

NOTE:

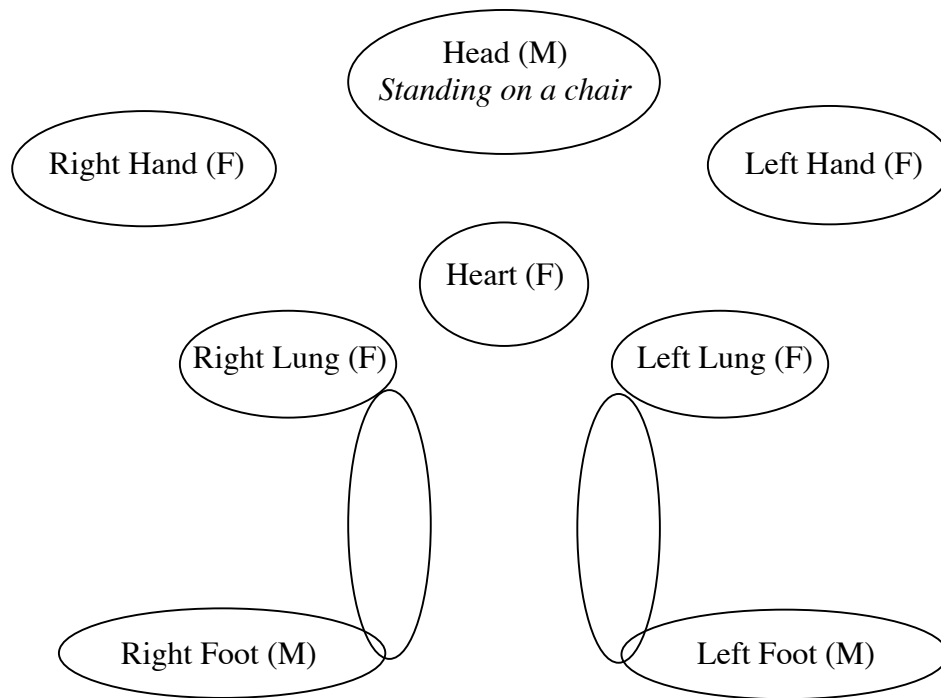
Please consult the “Choral Reading Guidelines” that follow this reading. There, you will find helpful hints to maximize this beautiful art form that uses the syncopated reading of scripture to communicate the truth of God’s Word.

Topic: “The Body of Christ” working together

Performance Time: 5 minutes

Number of Readers: 8 readers (*3 men (M), 5 women (F)*)

Suggested Configuration: (*Ovals indicate “body part” cutouts. See below.*)



Sound Needs:

Eight standing microphones.

The readers must have their hands free to hold onto the cutouts of body parts.

Lighting Notes: Even light across the group

Props/Costumes:

Make cutouts of the body parts using huge pieces of artist’s matte-board. Cut a hole in the center so the face of the performer can be seen through it. Make handholds out of duct tape so the performer can hold onto the cutout of the body part from behind it. The body parts are:

- Head**
- Right and left hands**
- Right and left lungs**
- Heart**
- Right and left feet**

The Script:

NOTE:

With younger performers, it may be necessary to put the scripts on music stands so they can see their parts. Older performers can memorize the lines.

All: *(in unison like a beating heart)* **ba bup, ba bup, ba bup,**
All: **There is one body and one spirit,**
Head: **Just as also you were called in one hope of your calling.**
Heart: **One Lord**
L. Lung: **One faith**
L. Hand: **One baptism**
R. Hand: **One God**
L. Lung: **and one father**
Feet: **of all**
L. Hand: *(Breaking syncopation)* **Wait, wait, wait, wait! Start over!**
Head: **What's the matter?**
L. Hand: **The lungs blew it again.**
Lungs: **What?**
R. Hand: **They came in late.**
L. Hand **Again!**
Lungs: **We did not!**
Hands: **You did too!**
Lungs: **Did not!**
Hands: **Did Too!**
(The lungs and hands argue back and forth)
Head: *(Shaking itself)* **Stop it!**
Heart: **Don't pick on the lungs!**
Head: **Tell them you're sorry!**
L. Foot: **Yeah!**
R. Foot: **Are you sorry?**
R. Lung: **At least we keep the beat; You never get it right!**
L. Lung: **Yeah! If I were a hand...I'd have more rhythm!**
Hands: **Oh yeah?**
Lungs: **Yeah!**
R. Hand: **If I were a lung, I'd breath on time!**
L. Hand: **And not miss my cue and mess everyone up!**

L. Lung: You think you can breath better than we can?

Hands: Yes!

R. Lung: Then go right ahead!
(The lungs hold their breath and the body begins to choke.)

Hands: *(Choking:)* I'm sorry!

Head: That was mean!

Heart: Don't you care about the rest of us?

Lungs: No!
(The body continues to argue fiercely.)

Heart: *(Begins crying....softly at first, then louder and louder until it is sobbing wildly.)*

Head: Stop it! Listen to me. Stop it!
(They quiet down, but the Heart continues whimpering softly.)

Head: You've broken my heart, that's what you've done.
 I hope you're satisfied!
(The Heart goes on sobbing and the body parts look guilty.)

Head: We've got to work together! We who are many form one
 body, and each member belongs to all the others. We all
 have different functions according to the grace given to us by our maker.
 Now, do you want this thing to work?
(All nod)

Head: There's only one way!

Parts: How?

Head: Pray!
(They all close their eyes tightly)

Head: Dear Lord, we are all different, but you've put us in this body because you have
 a plan for us. We can work together better than we can separately. Please help
 us to do that through the power of your Holy Spirit. In Jesus Name, Amen.

All: *(Breathing a sigh of relief)* Amen!

Head: Now, let's try it again!

All: There is one body and one spirit.

Head: Just as also you were called in one hope of your calling.

Heart: One Lord

L. Lung: One faith

L. Hand: One baptism

R. Hand: One God

L. Lung: and one father

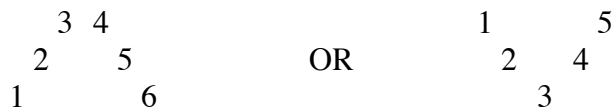
Feet: of all
Head: Who is over all
Heart: and through all
All: and in all!
Head: But to each one of us grace was given;
Feet: according to the measure of Christ's gift
R. Hand: and he gave some as apostles
L. Hand: and some as prophets
R. Lung: and some as evangelists
L. Lung: and some as pastors
Heart: and teachers
R. Foot: for the equipping of the saints
L. Foot: for the work of service,
Heart: to the building up of the body of Christ
All: until all attain to the unity of faith
Head: and the knowledge of the Son of God
All: Unto Him
Head: Who is the Head, even Christ
All: from whom the whole body
R. Hand, L. Lung: being fitted and held together
L. Hand, R. Lung: by that which every joint supplies
Head: According to
L. Hand: the
L. Lung: proper
L. Foot: working
R. Foot: of
R. Hand: each
R. Lung: individual
Heart: part
Hands: causes the growth of the body
Lungs: for the building up of itself
All: in love!

(The Body parts walk off stage congratulating one another on a job well done.)

The End

Choral Reading Guidelines

1. Select literature that is **lyrical** such as: songs, poems, stories with repetitious dialogue, odes, or ballads.
2. Analyze the literature to determine the **theme**. Divide it into phrases that deserve more emphatic treatment, such as a single voice for effect or all voices for effect.
3. Assign each member of the choral reading team a **number**.
4. **Divide the literature up by phrases** and decide which number or numbers will read which lines.
5. Create **“phonal”** (dominant/deeper voices) and **“anti-phonal”** (softer/higher voices) effects by assigning lines to voices that come from opposite places on the team. These voices will create the same relationship as “melody” has with “harmony” in music. This keeps the audience entertained.
6. **Choreograph** the arrangement of the readers, for example:



7. Assign **gestures** to various members of the team to emphasize the lines they will read.
8. **Costume** the readers for effect if it is appropriate. Generally, readers wear black and white. It is very effective to dress the ladies in floor-length black skirts and white blouses, and the men in black slacks, white shirts, and a colored tie. Sometimes, the addition of one other color is appropriate as long as all readers use the same additional color. This uniform effect helps tie the visual image together to create the illusion of this being “one” reading with multiple voices.
9. **Props** are used sparingly if it would add to the effect of the reading. The only constant prop used is the small black notebook in which each reader keeps his/her script. It is held at waist-height in the left hand, leaving the right hand free for gestures.
10. **Rehearse** the reading over and over so that the readers are **syncopated** and there is no interruption or hesitation in the **vocal unison**.