

## Registration for Choir Accompaniment

### Questions to ask yourself:

How big is the choir? What voices are singing? Will there be additional people joining for the performance? What is the style or mood of the piece? What is the conductor's vision of the music?

### Changes of dynamics can be achieved in 4 ways:

- Use of expression pedals
- Use of crescendo pedal
- Changing manuals
- Adding or subtracting stops

### 3 Approaches:

Swell oriented, Sw/Gt and Sw/Pd on

Choose swell stops that produce the tone color desired.

Use 8' and possibly 4' foundations on the Great

Use the Sw/Pd or the Gt/Pd depending on which manual the hands are playing on OR balance the pedal using 16' and 8' foundations that are loud enough for the Great but don't overpower the Swell.

Play on the Swell for softer sounds or when the choir is singing in a thin texture.

Play on the Great for louder sounds, intros/interludes, unison singing, or when the choir is singing in thick textures.

To create seamless changes, match the registration and keep the left hand playing on the original manual while the right hand moves to the next. After several beats, move the left hand to the new manual as well.

Crescendo based, Sw/Gt and Sw/Pd on (standard, orchestral, or crescendo pedal)

Use of general and local pistons

Adding/Remove stops (pistons)

Setting crescendos in the pistons (Give Don's example of chorus registration crescendo)

Crescendo pedal (Caution!)

Solo & Accompaniment, no Sw/Gt and Sw/Pd

Often the introduction and interludes include a melodic idea that can be played using a solo sound (usually on the Swell). Balance the Great and Pedal to each other. Both hands will play on the Great when the choir is singing.

You may need to use a combination of these approaches or even all of them on a single piece.

### Final thoughts

Goal is to support but not overpower.

Always check the balance from where the congregation sits. Have the conductor or someone you trust (musically) listen. Another option is to use a recording device.

Be flexible. Your registration plan will likely need to be adjusted.

## Sample registrations

Swell oriented (Rodgers organ):

Swell: Viole 8', Bourdon 8', Flute 4'

Great: Gemshorn 8', Spitzflöte 4, Sw/Gt

Pedal: Bourdon Doux 16' (SW), Gedeckt 8', Sw/Pd

Crescendo based (Johannes organ):

Swell Divisionals (4 steps)

\* Viola di Gamba 8', Voix Celeste 8'

\* + Gedeckt 8'

\* + Chimney Flute 4'

\* + Diapason 8'

Great Divisionals (4 steps)

\* Gemshorn 8', Gemshorn Celeste 8'

\* + Stopped Flute 8'

\* + Harmonic Flute 4'

\* + Open Diapason 8'

Pedal

Balance as needed with 16' and 8' foundations and using couplers

Solo and Accompaniment (Allen organ):

Swell: Oboe 8', Nachthorn 4', Nasard 2-2/3', Piccolo 2', Tierce 1-3/5'

Great: Gemshorn 8' Harmonic Flute 8', (possibly Spitzflöte 4')

Pedal: Bourdon 16', Gt/Pd