

SINGING VECTOR SITUATION REVIEW

COMPILATION OF PUBLIC REPORTING

THIS REVIEW WAS DRAWN FROM PUBLICLY AVAILABLE INFORMATION SOURCES. THIS REVIEW IS NOT INTENDED TO CONCLUDE THAT SINGING OR ANY OTHER ACTIVITY IN THE MIDST OF A COVID-19 PANDEMIC IS SAFE BUT MERELY TO INCREASE GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING EACH OF THESE OUTBREAKS.

REVIEW OF GLOBAL SINGING INCIDENT VECTOR OUTBREAKS:

The following is an overview of the six prominent Covid-19 Outbreaks associated with singing/choirs around the world. Most public commentary and concerns expressed regarding singing invoke one or multiple of these outbreaks.

These scenarios exhibit these common characteristics:

- No masking of participants;
- Lack of social distancing;
- No health or temperature checks;
- Long-term exposure in crowded and many cases, poorly ventilated rooms;
- Continued social interaction and contact outside of formal rehearsal work without benefit of masks or SSD;
- Generally older populations.

SKAGIT VALLEY CHORALE, MOUNT VERNON, WASHINGTON:

One person at the March 10 practice had cold-like symptoms beginning March 7. This person, who had also attended the March 3 practice. In total, 78 members attended the March 3 practice, and 61 attended the March 10 practice. The March 10 choir rehearsal lasted from 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Several members arrived early to set up chairs in a large multipurpose room. Chairs were arranged in six rows of 20 chairs each, spaced 6–10 inches apart with a center aisle dividing left and right stages. The median age was 69 years (range = 31–83 years);

There were no masks, no social distancing, no health checks, no temperature checks.

AMSTERDAM MIXED CHOIR:

A 130 person choir met weekly and after the March 8 session saw an outbreak. A single member aged 78 died. The choir met in a small, poorly ventilated room, and were together for almost three hours in their regular seating with no space between them. There were no masks, no social distancing, no health checks, no temperature checks.

BERLIN CATHEDRAL CHOIR:

An 80-person choir met weekly and after the March 9 session saw an outbreak. The group met for almost three hours in a rehearsal room, singing the entire period. The individuals sat in their regular seating, inches away from one another.

There were no masks, no social distancing, no health checks, no temperature checks.

LIVING SPIRIT UNITED CHURCH, CHURCH CHOIR, CALGARY, ALBERTA CANADA:

50 in a church choir, had a worship service and then gathered together for a celebratory social event. There were only 41 people present, and they were careful to observe two meter distancing and good hand hygiene. This was a church service and not actually a “choral event”. There were no masks, no health checks, no temperature checks.

CHOIR SEMINAR LOSENSTEIN, AUSTRIA:

44 people from all across the country came together for this seminar. This was a Saturday event and there were no restrictions or checks.

There were no masks, no social distancing, no health checks, no temperature checks.

SHINCHEONJI CHURCH OF JESUS THE TEMPLE OF THE TABERNACLE OF THE TESTIMONY, SOUTH KOREA:

Religious sect that has the characteristics of many people sitting close together in a very confined space and holding service for more than an hour" Shincheonji Church of Jesus the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony, They also see sickness as a weakness.

There were no masks, no social distancing, no health checks, no temperature checks.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, DALLAS, TEXAS:

The 140-member church choir and 40-member orchestra prepared through June in separate rehearsals for a glorious and impressive “Freedom Sunday” event on June 28, 2020 with special guest speaker Vice-President Mike Pence. See video at <https://www.firstdallas.org/watch-cfs>

Six members contracted Covid-19. While these were confirmed cases through the month of June, the group continued to practice and perform together without quarantine. It is notable that the CDC reports the current “test positive rate” for the general public is 7.6%. The rate of known infections for this choir/orchestral group with 6 infections is 3.3%. (It should be noted that there may be other members of this performance group that “test positive” for Covid-19, so it is early to make a final determination.)

During rehearsals, generally over 100 people gathered in the choir rehearsal room through June for multi-hour rehearsals and were specifically advised not to wear masks while singing. Orchestral members of course could not wear masks. Masks were encouraged on the church campus but only required in a common hallways. Temperature checks were taken before performances.

Unfortunately live photos are only available of the Dallas event.



