



Summer Festival | 2026

But you must continue in the things which you have learned - II Timothy 3:14



Theatre Guidelines

Theatre Festival (2026)

Age Group

Participants can be from Grades 1-6, 7-12 and Youth - Open Age “Adults 30+” (English and/or Arabic) combined, or separate plays for each age group.

Deadlines

Registration Open by	01-Mar-2026
Regular Registration Close by	04-Apr-2026
Extended Registration Close by (significant fees applies)	11-Apr-2026
All performances to pay regular registration fees by	04-Apr-2026
All performances to pay extended registration fees by (significant fees applies)	11-Apr-2026
Cancellation with no penalty (penalties applies afterwards)	04-Apr-2026
Cancellation with 25% penalty of the full fees (applies on both regular and extended registration)	05-Apr-2026 to 11-Apr-2026
Cancellation with 50% penalty of the full fees (applies on both regular and extended registration)	12-Apr-2026 to 02-May-2026
Cancellation with 75% penalty of the full fees (applies on both regular and extended registration)	03-May-2026 to 16-May-2026
Cancellation with 100% penalty of the full fees (applies on both regular and extended registration)	17-May-2026 to 24-May-2026
Scripts to be submitted by	02-May-2026
Scripts feedback to churches by	16-May-2026
Final revised scripts to be submitted by	23-May-2026

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Rehearsal & Performance Dates

The following dates **may be subject to change** depending on number of plays registration and venue availability, so please plan your team based on the below:

Rehearsal:

East region	28-Jun-2026
West region	14-Jun-2026

Performance:

East region	28-Jun-2026
West region	14-Jun-2026

Interstate Submission Date

Submission of recorded performances	27-Jun-2026
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Fees & Payments

Regular Registration Fees (till 4-Apr-2026):

Melbourne Churches*

One-Time Bond	\$300.00
Short Play	\$375.00
Other Type of Play	\$575.00

Interstate Churches**

All Types of Plays	\$150.00
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Extended Registration Fees (5-11 Apr 2026):

Melbourne Churches

One-Time Bond	\$300.00
Short Play	\$650.00
Other Type of Play	\$1000.00

Interstate Churches

All Types of Plays	\$300.00
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* This is a discounted fees and it will go towards the hire of the venue, sound & lights equipment and theatre awards

** This is a reduced fees and will be used to support the service and theatre awards

Important Note:

Please refer to the churches' fees payment procedure document on how to pay the fees.

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Fees Coverage

Local Melbourne churches will be offered the following as part of the theatre performance fees for this year in the summer festival

- Rehearsal Time for each participated play
- Performance will be on Professional Stage
- The Stage will have control basic lights
- The Stage will have professional sound system
- Waiting Area for each to prepare
- Backstage Area for changing clothes, make-up & preparation
- Backdrops for Multi background(s) & Projector
- **FREE 150 TICKETS** (Performance Day)

Additional Tickets Packages

Melbourne Churches*

25 Tickets	\$30.00
60 Tickets	\$70.00
100 Tickets	\$120.00

Donations

You may choose to donate for summer festival using details below:

Account Name: Coptic Orthodox Church Diocese of Melbourne – Community Festival

BSB : 063-159

ACC : 10729454

Theatre Terms and Conditions (T&Cs)

All participating churches **MUST** read the Theatre Festival T&Cs (from SF website theatre page), get it signed electronically as per the instruction given in the T&Cs document. **Your submission is not valid** till the SF Theatre Sub-Committee receives the Theatre T&Cs signed.

Theatre Committee Contacts

You can contact the committee on email: theatre@sfmelb.org.au

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Guidelines

1. Scripts **Must** be reviewed and approved by one of the Church’s Priests and Superintendent online on the website.
2. It must be taken into consideration that the performance represents great values and traditions that are drawn from our Coptic Orthodox Church spirit
3. The performance should be suitable for the intended age group that will be presented to.
4. The production is **Preferably** to be associated with the theme of the summer festival. **There will be extra 5 Marks up for grabs for the production that will address the summer festival theme.**
5. Scripts should be written using appropriate language, wordings and no violence or hate
6. The storyline should **NOT** be in the form of a sermon or a lesson, the script should have a clear message and if it is telling a true story there should be no altering in the events being told
7. The use of flammable materials or heavy smoke is prohibited during the performance
8. Please make sure to follow the timing guidelines to avoid losing points
9. Scripts must be submitted to the theatre committee online to the website by the submission date specified for review and feedback:
 - a. Script Must be signed and approved by one of the Church’s Priests and Superintendent
 - b. **Script should have a cover page showing** church name, play name, targeted audience age group, responsible servant name and contact number, script author name and director and a brief of the spiritual story and message.
 - c. Script will be reviewed by the Theatre Committee, and If there is feedback by the reviewing servants, the feedback will be submitted on the website to the church coordinator, and will be asked to resubmit the script by the mentioned deadline
 - d. **Any change in script must be done before the final revision date. Any further changes that may happen after that date will result in a deduction in the overall score of the play**
10. Participants' names to be submitted online on the website a week before the actual performance day, with consent forms
11. All participants shall be registered with SF online system

Interstate Productions

- Recorded play/project shall be sent as a raw record without any editing or montage. The play should be performed on a stage, and to be recorded as a play (not a movie). No editing, sound effects or visual effects/backgrounds are allowed, as this will not meet the guidelines of a theatre performance.

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Competition Format

- **Format Diversity:** Productions can take various forms, including Traditional plays, short plays, sketches, black theatre, shadow theatre, Musical Theatre, Physical silent theatre, puppet show, individual monologue, etc.
- **Production Technical requirements and evaluation criteria:** Each production type will have different technical requirements. The Traditional Theatre production will be evaluated as its own category, while the rest of the production formats will be evaluated under a different category with different evaluation criteria to suit each production type. This will be detailed in the next version of the guidelines for the different submitted production types.
- Any production that will use extensive media content (e.g. Visual content, long video content, interactive content, etc.) that could otherwise be done using theatre components will be classified as a Media Project and will not be evaluated as part of the Theatre category. Scripts might include hymns and soundtracks.
- There is NO limit for the number of actors/participants, We encourage as many kids as possible to participate in the production. This includes acting, helping with the music, lighting, decor, backstage, etc. Please note that the mark for technology setup and backstage work will be given according to the kids' performance and work within the time of the play.
- ***The performance timing will be as following:***
 - Every church will be allocated 65mins in total including: Setup, performance and packing up.***
 - Setting up and preparation
 - Performance time (up to 45mins)
 - Packing up and clearing the stage

Recommended combined time for setting up and packing up is up to 20min.

If the overall church time exceeded the allocated 65mins, deduction of marks will be applied.

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Evaluation Criteria (Traditional Play Performance ONLY) :

- Technical support and backstage work to be rewarded as follows:
 - The relevance of the props to the scenes.
 - The importance of the light and sounds being used in servicing the story.
 - The quality of the murals/screen (according to the age group) and how they are all connected to the play.
 - **Blocking and Staging (10):**
 - Actors and setting are always clearly visible; stage space is fully used; movement is purposeful and well-rehearsed.
 - **Storyline (15):**
 - A story is presented with a clear beginning, middle and end, and with a positive message.
 - The performance has to mainly be using acting elements with limited narrations where possible.
 - The story should take into consideration the dramatic plot, so that the events and conflicts unfold to allow for audience engagement.
 - **Commitment (10):**
 - Energy, focus, memorization, listening and reacting, engaging and teamwork.
 - **Voice (10):**
 - projection, clarity, emotional range, and expressiveness.
 - **Characterization (20):**
 - Expressive, engaging and believable characters are created through movement, facial expression and gestures.
 - **Production Elements & Technical Support (25):**
 - Thoughtful use of costume, props, set, lighting (if available) and sound; production elements are well chosen and suited to the performance.
 - **Preparedness & Overall Production Value (10):**
 - evidence of preparation; performance is polished and professional; smooth execution; does not exceed the time limit.
 - As per Guideline Item 4, there will be extra **(5) Marks** up for grabs for the production that will address the summer festival theme.
 - **If the overall church time exceeded the allocated 65mins, deduction of marks will be applied.**

Please note that the Evaluation Criteria for the other production types (other than traditional Theatre Production) will be determined and issued 2 weeks after the submission of the revised scripts.

Anthem 2026

(Our doctrine, from the start,
established by God himself,
preached by the apostles,
and our fathers kept it safe.) **2x**

a strong tree of faith,
its roots trace back to history,
pure and watered by God's words
(Rites and also liturgy) **2x**

firm,
firm in my faith and doctrine
Our church is fatherly
Orthodox as my forefathers
Heroes of the Coptic church.

Mark, Athanasious, Dioscoros,
heroes and pillars of faith,
though heresies arise,
still we're steadfast in our faith.

Rooted in your church,
be firm in what you've learned.

Contact us on:

Website: www.sfmelb.org.au

Email: info@sfmelb.org.au

Facebook: SummerFestivalMelbourne

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