

The Report of the Music Ministry

Sing a new song to the Lord; praise him in the assembly of his faithful people! Be glad because of your Creator; rejoice, people of Zion, because of your King. Praise his name with dancing; play drums and harps in praise of him. Psalm 149: 1-3

Our ministry teams are comprised of both adults and youth. We lead worship services on a rotational basis. The sanctuary choir traditionally leads on the first Sunday- which is usually communion Sunday. The second Sunday is led by the gospel choir under the spirit lead inspiration of Frieda Jones. On the third Sunday, Suzanne Conklin shares her talents and directs the advanced handbell choir – the Jubilee Ringers. In the second service on that Sunday, the sanctuary choir joins them. The congregation is always invited to join in on the fourth Sunday when Messiah's Quest (our praise team) leads worship.

Throughout the year the youth groups are a vibrant part of our worship services. Those worship teams include our youngest children in the music and drama program – Faith Weaver Friends. As the children enter fifth grade, they are then part of the Music, Arts, and Drama (MAD) team. These youth music ministries are under the direction of Elsa Mortensen, Sally Trainor and Susan Visscher.

Our liturgical dance team, Faith in Motion – under the direction of Janelle Ash and with the assistance of Karen Griffith – honors the Lord as they interpret songs or scriptures with their ministry.

We continue to be blessed with intergenerational music ministries. Our less experienced bell ringers – the Bellaires – have provided us with wonderful musical selections as their skills are continually enhanced under the direction of Suzanne Conklin. This group of ringers is becoming more polished as musicians each time they present a new song. It is wonderful to see the combination of youth and adults in this ministry. Another intergenerational ministry is that which presents the holiday Cantatas. The mostly adult Festival Choir works with the accompanying orchestra – which is comprised of middle, high school and college students. We work together to present a work that gives honor to our Lord.

An integral part of our music ministry is our organist. Dennis Dell continues to support this ministry with his consistency in his hymn support, choir accompaniment on the organ and piano and special music for weekly and special services. Our worship services are enhanced by the sharing of his talent.

We are grateful for the continued support of the audiovisual ministry. We thank those that have been inspired to be a part of this ministry. This is under the leadership of Jonathan Ramteke with continued training and tweaking by Fred and CJ Hopkins.

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Our Christmas Cantata was *Lead Me Back to Bethlehem- Rediscovering the Joy, Peace and Love at Christmas* by Pepper Choplin. The vocal presentation was by the Festival Choir with the support of the orchestra, our narrator Mak Edwards, our pianist Liz Harrington, Dennis Dell and our audiovisual artist Denise Arnone. We truly hope that the congregation was as blessed as the participants in this presentation.

Susan Visscher was the soloist for our Service of Hope and sang *He's Always Been Faithful*. These were wonderful words were so appropriate for a service such as this.

Christmas Eve was a celebration of the birth of our Lord!
The 7 pm service was lead by the youth. There were various instrumentalists that shared their talents during service. Julia Walker presented the solo *Watcha' Gonna Call That Baby?* Faith Weaver Friends presented *The Drowsy Shepherd* while the MAD team presented *Faces Around the Manger*. We ended the evening with our traditional candle lighting singing of Silent Night, Holy Night.

The 11 pm service was introduced by a musical medley of songs on the organ by Dennis Dell. This was a service of Lessons and Carols. Faith in Motion Danced to *O Thou That Tellest Good Tidings of Zion*; Adam Latham sang *Joseph's Lullaby*; the Festival Choir sang *All is Well*; and Ashleii Hazell sang *A Baby Changes Everything*. As we all sang Christmas Carols during communion, we ended the evening with our traditional candle lighting singing of Silent Night, Holy Night.

On Epiphany Sunday we were blessed with Elreta Blackman's traditional rendition of *Sweet L'il Jesus Boy*.

For the Ash Wednesday evening service Elsa Mortensen blessed us with a rendition of *Beauty for Ashes*. We continued with our Wednesday afternoon Lenten services with various musical guests. The weekly Lenten noon day services soloists were Rebecca Scott Phillips, Lana Evers, Eileen Silverstein, Anna Mantell, Elsa Mortenson, Suzanne Conklin and Peter Mantell.

On Palm Sunday the Festival Choir along with the orchestra, narrators Anna Mantell and Steve Latus, Liz Harrington and Dennis Dell presented the Advent Cantata – *The Power of the Cross – Christ's Redemption, Our Passion*. Mark Hayes's inspired cantata dramatically conveyed this awesome transformational power of the cross.

The Maundy Thursday service was led by the youth. Along with the worship leaders of Visha and Sasha Paul and solo by Ashleii Hazell of *Redeemed*, the youth presented a play called *The Upper Room* and then led communion.

Good Friday service was blessed with the dance of Faith in Motion as well as a tenebrae service with the song *Were you There?*, sung by Catherine Jordan.

Sunrise Easter Service was blessed by a solo entitled *Victor's Crown* by Anna Mantell. In the 8 and 10:30 services we were led in worship the Jubilee Ringers, Faith Weaver Friends, and the Sanctuary Choir.

Other special events in the year were the Mother's Day and Father's Day presentations by Faith Weaver Friends as well as various instrumental accompaniments to choirs throughout the year. We also had fun sending Don Tabler off with a custom made edition of *Carolina in the Morning*.

One highlight of the season was our first MusicFest Praise. on May 18, 2012. We had 7 praise bands from across New Jersey – including our own Messiah's Quest – perform in a free benefit concert to fight hunger. This we located on the great lawn of the church. Praise music lovers were encouraged to come to the event with lawn chair, blankets and non-perishable food items that were collected and donated to local food shelters. It was a great success – despite the continual rain. We look forward to doing it again this year!

Music Appreciation Sunday was a grand way to close the choir season. The service was opened by a piano, organ, bells and choral introit of *Majesty with How Great Thou Art*. Faith in Motion led us in the prayer and the Praise Team led us in the Lord's Prayer. The message was presented by Lynne Stallworth. There were anthems by Messiah's Quest, the Gospel Choir and the Sanctuary Choir. The combined adult choirs as well as Faith Weaver Friends, MAD, and Faith in Motion joined together on the rendition of *Living Water*.

I want to thank all of you that enriched our services over the summer with your musical renditions. That includes Cindy Jackson, Suzanne Conklin, Eileen Silverstein, Lenny Semenski, Susan Visscher, Rey Ebrado, Irene Spangler and Christine James, Anna and Peter Mantell, Susan Ndaiye, Julia Walker, Rebecca and Jerry Phillips, and Catherine Jordan and Adam Latham

We had wonderful Music, Arts, and Drama Camp this summer. With young people that are both in as well as outside of our church we presented *Life is Good*. And we did it in a week!!! Thanks to help from Susan Visscher, the support of our parents, and our awesome kids!

I would also like to thank the church for their support in my attending the biannual Fellowship of United Methodist Music and Worship Arts meeting in Pittsburgh this year. It was entitled *Inspiration 2013 – Bridging our Hearts to the World*. It was a time to meet, learn and share with my colleagues in the field. I gathered many ideas that I am sharing with the congregation.

The music ministry would like to thank our retired pastor, Don Tabler, for his continuing support of this ministry as well as the congregation for your receptiveness to our music and musical arts presentations. We are excited to have Pastor Francie with us. Her appreciation for the musical arts is inspiring. We pray that we continue to meet the needs of those in the ministry and those affected by the ministry. Second Corinthians tells us that God has prepared us and He has given us His Spirit to guarantee all that he has in store for us. With our continued faithfulness and willingness to serve Him we know that we will continue our mission of making disciples for Jesus Christ.

Submitted in His Name,
Lynne Stallworth
Director of Music Ministry