



Grace Notes

A Publication of *Metropolitan Music Ministries, Inc.* ✕ SEPTEMBER 2016

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK, Diann Back

The older I get, the faster the days and months seem to fly by. This fact inspired a New Year's resolution for 2016. I vowed to try to make every day worthwhile in some special way. Have I succeeded?

To some degree I've been successful in filling each day with worthwhile experiences. One of the ways I found to make a day worthwhile is to help someone by actually providing assistance on the spot. Many days



I'm able to do exactly that by sensing that someone needs directions or a question answered. Simply showing thoughtfulness and consideration for the needs of others makes a day worthwhile. Making a day worth living also means appreciating my family and our unique talents and skills. We all have something to contribute to our world to make it a better place, and my intention is not to laugh at someone or belittle an idea but to encourage creativity. And, I want to appreciate the people with whom I work in the public and not-for-profit sectors. This means making a concerted effort to thank them for their time, energy, and passion. There are so many other ways to make an ordinary day worthwhile.

On Sunday, September 25, 2016, you and I have the opportunity to create a worthwhile day. On that Sunday evening, we can join together in scripture, song, and praise at the MMM Annual Service. We can express our gratitude to the wonderful musicians and vocalists who make the notes on the pages and the written words come to life. This lovely service unites MMM scholarship winners, local church choirs, talented musicians, dramatic readers, and dedicated choir directors in a worship program that can be described as absolutely worthwhile. Join me as I make sure that Sunday doesn't get classified as "ordinary." Time is going too fast, and I want to have more worthwhile days than ordinary ones.

FROM THE PAST CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, Martha Iley

A warm memory from the past: the voice of a six year old granddaughter Sharon, as she came in the back door, "Grandmother! I came to help you. I brang my apron!" (We had just

moved into our present home and needed lots of help.) How delightful it was to hear such a message.

Passages from Proverbs call



attention to the willing and diligent worker, the cheerful spirit, the helpful child or friend. Over the years Metropolitan Music Ministries has needed lots of help. The ministry came into being after I experienced a Call to take my music and my faith out to the "desolate places" of Charlotte. When Rebecca Echerd, Catherine Stout, and I started MMM in 1984, we welcomed help. We could not have imagined the help that would come. There is no doubt that the One Who Called went before us, preparing the way, finding wonderful people to join us, bringing eternal significance to our modest efforts. After 32 years, we look at the Participant List with reverence and astonishment: 1,073

musicians, 173 clergy, 618 lay people, and 243 musical groups. This could not have happened without divine help. THANKS BE TO GOD!

Thank you, Sweet Sharon, for coming that day, and for bringing your apron. Thoughts of your earnest efforts still shine through the years.

And THANK YOU, most sincerely, to the many helpers to MMM. You brought more than aprons...voices, instruments, prayers, and devotionals.

To God be the Glory!
Grace and Peace,
Martha Iley

Meet the Directors for the 31st Annual Celebration of Music in Worship

D. J. Boyd brings together the voices of three choirs for our annual service: Statesville Avenue Presbyterian Church Chancel



Choir, Queen City Singers, and the Charlotte Contemporary Ensemble. Cecil Meekins will accompany the choirs. DeVona

Jaworski Boyd, affectionately known as D.J., is a native of Whitmire, SC and a graduate of Winthrop University. He has served at Boyd Hill Baptist Church, Friendship Missionary Baptist Church, and at St. Luke Missionary Baptist Church. Currently he is Director of Music at Statesville Avenue Presbyterian Church while he is finishing up his graduate degree at Liberty University with a concentration in Music and Worship. MMM welcomes the return of D. J. Boyd to our service of sacred music.

MMM welcomes **R. Colin Burns** and the St. Alban's Episcopal Church to our service. Burns is the new Director of Music. A native of Charlotte, he was



formerly Associate Director of Music at First Presbyterian Church in Greensboro. He holds a B.M. in Church Music from Furman University and an M.S.M. in Choral Conducting from Boston University. When asked who influenced his musical career the most, he replied that the Choir School at St. Peter's in Charlotte was a major influence. Ralph Vaughan Williams is his favorite sacred music composer.

Kevin Gray has served as Minister for Worship and Music at St.

John's Baptist Church for the last two years.

Previously he served at St. Luke's United Methodist Church (Lancaster, SC), Trinity United Methodist Church



(York, SC), and River Hills Community Church (Lake Wylie, SC). A native Carolinian, Gray is a graduate of Winthrop University. He has been a chorus teacher at all school levels as well as Director of Winthrop's Jazz Voices. He is a published composer and in 2013 was named director of the Charlotte Chorale, one of the most highly valued auditioned vocal ensembles in Charlotte. We are honored to have James Kevin Gray as guest conductor for the Choir of Directors at our service this year.

Donna Hill is now in her thirteenth year as director of Carolina Voices' Festival Singers. She is a native of Atlanta and

received her B.A. in Music Education in Choral Conducting from Wingate University and Winthrop University.



Currently she is Choir Director at Central Methodist Church in Concord. A familiar face in the Charlotte music community, she served as the Associate Conductor and singer for the Oratorio Singers and directed the Good Friends Choir during their annual holiday luncheon. The Festival Singers is

comprised of 26-32 auditioned singers. The ensemble specializes in presenting programs that have connections to spiritual and social topics of relevance and meaning. MMM is so pleased to have Donna Hill and Carolina Voices' Festival Singers with us this evening.

Rev. Timothy Hill is no stranger to the MMM Annual Service. He is Minister of Music at Providence Baptist Church.

Formerly he was Minister of Music at Boulevard Baptist Church in Anderson, SC and for seven years he served Central Presbyterian Church in Anderson.



A native of Greenville, SC, Hill received his Bachelor of Music Education at Anderson University and plans to complete his Master of Worship Studies next June. During his public school career he was twice named Teacher of the Year. The Providence Men's Quartet originally started as a musical offering for a Providence member's funeral. Members are Lowell Dotson, Timothy Hill, Jeff Hinson, and David Price. MMM welcomes this outstanding quartet.

Dr. Adam Ward returns to the

MMM service this year with the Encore Choir of Providence United Methodist Church. Prior to coming to Providence, Ward served as Director of Music and Organist at First United Methodist Church in Salisbury. He has also



(Dr. Ward, continued)

served as Staff Accompanist at Catawba College, Director of the Concert Choir of Salisbury, and Director of the Rowan Salisbury Choral Society. He holds degrees (BM, MM and DMA) from UNC-Greensboro in organ performance. The Encore Choir is the "seasoned adult" choir, a group of around 45 committed singers who gather on Thursday mornings to have fun and sing in a "low-pressure" setting. Encore leads worship three or four times each year, and they take their "show" on the road to area retirement and skilled-care facilities once each semester. Welcome to our service.



Debra Wallace is Children's Choir Coordinator and handbell director at Providence Baptist Church in Charlotte. She is a National Board

Certified teacher and recently retired from Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools where she taught music and handbells at

Waddell Language Academy. Wallace is a past teacher of the year for Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools and is active with the American Orff Schulwerk Association. In 2012 she was on staff for the Montreat Music and Worship Conference directing Children's Bells. This summer she was guest clinician for Cantus, an ecumenical residential choir camp at Caswell Conference Center on Oak Island, NC. MMM is so pleased to have her return for our service.



"Look, I didn't say I could sing. I just said I could 'carry a tune.'"

Service Report

(Cumulative October 7, 1984 - August 2016)

Number of Programs, Services, Meetings and Projects	12,034
Number of Times an Individual Participated in the Ministry Work	36,349
Total Known Audience	488,464

Need Your Email

If you haven't checked out our new updated website, please go to www.metromusicministries.org and give us your email address by clicking on Contact Us. In the future we hope to offer an electronic version of the newsletter to those who prefer it.

SAVE THE DATE: February 11, 2017

For the return of Dolce, our annual musical variety show and dessert fundraiser benefiting our scholarship program.

MMM 2016 Board of Directors

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Contributors:

Diann Back, Martha Iley
Addresses: Wilna Eury
Website: Carol Clem

METROPOLITAN MUSIC MINISTRIES, INC.

cordially invites you to the
Thirty-first Annual Celebration of Music in Worship

A Service of Sacred Music

Sunday, September 25, 2016 – 6:00 pm

Providence Baptist Church
4921 Randolph Road
Charlotte, North Carolina

Dr. Martha S. Iley and Ginger G. Wyrick, *directors*

Diann Clark, *organist*

Dr. Luther I. Wade, *reader*

Sylvia Willett, *flute*

Kirk Grosch, *guitar*

Providence United Methodist Handbells

Brass Quartet: Richard Spangler, Eric Knight, D. Mac Willet, Patti Lutz

Kent E. Love, *timpani*

Choirs and Directors

Festival Singers
Providence Baptist Church Children's Choir
Providence Baptist Church Men's Quartet
Providence United Methodist Church Encore Choir
St. Alban's Episcopal Choir
Statesville Avenue Presbyterian Chancel Choir and friends
Choir of Choral Directors, with guest Conductor

Donna Hill
Debra Wallace
Rev. Timothy Hill
Dr. Adam Ward
R. Colin Burns
D. J. Boyd
James Kevin Gray

Accompanists

Diann Clark, Cedric Meekins, Ginger Wyrick

Clergy and Lay Participants

Dr. Diann P. Back
The Rev. Dr. David Jordan
The Rev. Judah L. Jones
The Rev. Joshua D. Bowron

President, Metropolitan Music Ministries
Teaching Pastor, Providence Baptist Church
Chaplain, Metropolitan Music Ministries
Rector, St. Martin's Episcopal Church

Participating 2016 MMM Church Music Scholarship Winners

Madison Blake, *pianist*, Cheryl Iley Lindstrom Scholarship
Mengfei Xu, *organist*, Richard VanSciver Scholarship
Baker Lawrimore, *vocalist*, Martha Strawn Iley Scholarship

Reception following the service – All are welcome

For more information, visit MMM's website at www.metromusicministries.org
Or call 704-529-1616, MMM Office

Board News

Welcome New Board Members



Nancy Lucas is a native of Greenville SC. She graduated from Limestone and Converse colleges with degrees in piano performance. She is also an organist, recently completing an interim position at Hawthorne Lane United Methodist Church. Her husband John is deceased and she has one son and one granddaughter in Austin Texas.

Sharon Stricklin has a BA of Music and a MA of Music from Michigan State University where her major instruments were piano and French horn. She has

over 40 years of private piano teaching experience, and she also has taught in public and private schools and community college. She left Charlotte over eight years ago to marry her college sweetheart. Since then they have lived in Washington State and in Colorado where she taught piano, played in a wind quintet (WA), a community band (CO), adjudicated and also held positions in both states in the local MTNA organizations. Sharon and John moved back to North Carolina last fall to be near her daughter, son-in-law, and 3 beautiful granddaughters.



Spotlight on

Dr. Gregory Thompson

How does a country boy from Sumter, SC wind up each summer in Salzburg, Austria? For Dr. Gregory Thompson it seems like a natural journey. His mother was a cook at the local elementary school and would often take young Gregory with her to work. For amusement he "banged on" the piano until one of the teachers asked if she could give him lessons. He was five years old and he has never stopped playing.



Gregory holds the B.A. degree in Piano Performance from Limestone College, the M.M. degree in Piano Performance from Peabody Conservatory of Johns Hopkins University, and the D.M.A. degree in Piano Performance from the University of South Carolina.

Over a long professional career, he has taught music at several South Carolina colleges including Morris College, Benedict College, and Claflin University. He chaired the Department of Music and Fine Arts at Johnson C. Smith University,

a position he held for a decade. After a short tenure as Associate Professor of Piano at Central State University in Wilberforce, Ohio, he returned to Charlotte as his headquarters, but he is usually on the move.

Currently Dr. Thompson is Associate Professor of Music at Winston Salem State University, but come Sundays you will find him at the organ at First Presbyterian Church in Mooresville.

About twenty years ago, Gregory studied at the University of Miami Frost School of Music summer program, held in Salzburg, Austria. The program is scheduled to coincide with the famous Salzburg Festival, a prominent festival of music and drama established in 1920. It is held each summer within the Austrian town of Salzburg, the birthplace of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. For about six weeks the Festival features some 180 different events, including operas, concerts, evenings of theatre and literary readings. "The whole city of Salzburg becomes a stage." Students of the Frost School of Music are able to take advantage of

the Festival events, and many outstanding artists teach master classes for the students.

After his summer experience in Salzburg, Gregory told his teacher that he would like to return to Salzburg and to his surprise and delight he was invited to come back, not as a student but as a faculty member. So, every summer from the end of June until mid-August, Gregory Thompson is Head of Staff Pianists for students who come from all over the world to study. Singers come to focus primarily on a German repertoire, studying the language and the music. Students must audition to be accepted into the program which accepts about forty students.

Gregory has served as organist for Calvary Church and First Presbyterian Church in Charlotte. He has performed in many venues in the United States and abroad including solo recitals, orchestral performances, chamber recitals, and vocal and instrumental accompanying.

MMM is honored to have such a talented musician on its Board of Directors.

Your contribution to Metropolitan Music Ministries will place you in one of the following levels of support. Contributions are cumulative within each calendar year.

Friend	\$ 1-24	Sustainer	\$ 50-99
Supporter	\$ 24-49	Benefactor	\$ 100-499
	Patron	\$500 and above	

General Fund \$ _____ Scholarship \$ _____

Thank you!

May we list your name in our Annual Report? Yes No
I am interested in volunteer opportunities

Any gift to Metropolitan Ministries, Inc., may be made in Honor or Memory of Family or Friends.

ENCLOSED IS MY GIFT FOR \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

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State _____ Zip _____

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My Email _____

Mail to:

Metropolitan Music Ministries
PO Box 12736 ✪ Charlotte, NC ✪ 28220-2736

New Scholarship

The MMM Board has established a one-time scholarship in music therapy in memory of Joshua McLean, grandson of Martha Iley. The scholarship will be awarded in 2017. Funding for the scholarship will come from board member donations and outside scholarship donations designated in Joshua's memory. Donations can still be accepted for this scholarship.



“The man who disparages music as a luxury and non-essential is doing the nation an injury. Music now, more than ever before, is a national need. There is no better way to express patriotism than through music.” *Woodrow Wilson*

“Music comes before religion, as emotion comes before thought, and sound before sense. What is the first thing you hear when you go into a church? The organ playing.” *Alfred North Whitehead*