

REPORT TO THE CHARGE CONFERENCE, NOVEMBER 17, 1991  
MINISTRY OF MUSIC, John W. Semingson, Director of Music/Organist

Music is the handmaid to the Word of God and should embrace the total ministry of the church. We believe music to be one of the best teachers of Christian education and theology for our children, youth, and adults. Through music one's faith and commitment to the church may grow. The music ministry of Duke Memorial UMC strives to bring the congregation to a deeper sense of true worship and communion with God through a rich variety of musical styles and forms both past and present.

Through the practice of this philosophy, the ministry of music has increased in it's enrollment, participation, and outreach to the community. Below you will find data which makes clear the significant impact music has made in the total ministry of Duke Memorial Church over the past year.

The children's choir program has grown from an enrollment of 32 last fall, to a present enrollment of 45. 50% of these children missed fewer than 4 rehearsals during the entire choir season. The CAROL CHOIR(K-2) rehearses 45 minutes each week, sings in church 4 times during the year and also participates in the "White Christmas" benefit. The WESLEY SINGERS(3-7) also rehearse 45 minutes each week, sing in worship monthly, and participate in the "Hymn-of-the-Month" hymn memorization program. The two choirs lead worship in "Children's Choir Sunday", and "Choir Dedication Day". MUSIC AND DRAMA CAMP was held with Epworth Church, August 12-16. 59 children participated in the week-long event and it's Friday night performance, as well as performances on Sept. 8 and 15. 30 of the children were from Duke Memorial and 29 from Epworth.

JOYBELLS(6-12) were begun this year as part of our UMYF program. There are presently 15 youth enrolled in this bell choir that will lead in worship for the first time on Dec. 8.

CELEBRATION SINGERS(8-adult) is an alternative music group which sings many styles of contemporary Christian music including folk, gospel and rock. This group rehearses once each month (yes, even summer) and sing for worship the following week. The group has grown from an enrollment of 12 last fall to a present enrollment of 21.

The SANCTUARY CHOIR(adults) presently has 34 members who rehearse two hours each week and sing for worship every Sunday, eleven months of the year. The choir has exhibited much growth in their singing, sense of community, and commitment to the program. 28 choir members spent a weekend on retreat at the Avila Retreat Center, Sept. 28-29. The choir has presented two joint Choral Evensong services with the Epworth Church choir. These programs featured the 70-voice choir, organ and string orchestra. A congregation of 400 attended each of the services. The programs proved to be great spiritual nurture for both congregations.

BETHANY BELLS remain with the fixed 10-ringer requirement. This group has celebrated tremendous musical growth. Bethany Bells lead in worship monthly. This fall we hosted the DURHAM BELLFEST with 65 participants from 6 Durham parishes. Ed Tompkins

of Richmond, Virginia was our guest clinician for this day-long festival.

In general, music has increased congregational participation in worship, and been a vital ministry in many areas: Advent/Lenten lunches, UMW, UMYF, Sunday School, etc.

Goals for the future include developing a Jr./Sr. High singing choir as the developing children's program ages upward, a European tour with a Festival Choir comprised of members from Duke Memorial, Epworth, and Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church/Asheville, a professionally made recording of our Sanctuary Choir and organ for purchase by members and friends, continued growth and attraction of new members through our developing program. May God bless us in this ministry!

John W. Seryson