

MUSIC DEPARTMENT REPORT
1996 Charge Conference
Duke Memorial United Methodist Church
Durham, North Carolina

When music is viewed from a non-technical vantage point, it will reveal itself to be an integral part of life, a form of expression similar to speech. Our instrumental music, choral anthems, and responses aid worship, and music becomes a means of worship when the congregation sings hymns, doxologies, and responses.

Without the wonderful people in our music department who tirelessly give of themselves, this church would not be able to experience the varied offerings in our worship services each week. These people desire to give their best, yet maintain a critical balance between musical excellence, liturgical and theological meaning, and ministry to one another and to the larger community. I am very proud to be associated with them, and it is indeed an honor to serve in their midst.

Music is an expressive form which flourishes best in a group of people whose spirits crave a means of expression. Together we undertake to sing a new song to the Lord... that in all things we do, God may be glorified.

The primary direction in which our music department moves is that of worship leadership. We must never be satisfied simply being an organization with a busy program. We must strive to become a living organism where worship challenges each person to recognize and act upon their individual call from God. It must be centered on the whole person doing the will of God in every aspect of their life. It is to this end that we work together in our ministry of music. It is a two-fold ministry... our groups ministering to the larger congregation, yet also ministering one to another within the smaller groups.

We have a graded choir program which includes the Carol Choir (K-1st), the Wesley Singers (2nd-5th), and the Youth Ringers and Singers (6th-12th). Our bell ministry consists of the youth just mentioned (who are just beginning to explore the possibilities of handbell ringing), and the Bethany Bells (adult) who not only provide worship leadership in our own congregation, but travel into the community to offer additional musical programs (This year we will be going to the Ronald McDonald House on December 18). Our adult choral program has two facets: Celebration Singers meet monthly and sing music in worship which is less formal and frequently includes our Liturgical Dancers who combine music and the visual art of movement. The Sanctuary Choir gives weekly leadership to worship and also provides special musical programs which this year included a special Holy Week service based on the last words from the cross. We will also present a Festival of English Carols on December 15.

We ask for this congregation's support with their prayers as we continue to seek a deepened awareness of God's presence and the Spirit's guidance for our music program. We also encourage them to life their own voices in a new song to the Lord, never to be satisfied with an passive worship role, but to make worship and liturgy what it is meant to be... the work of the people.

In Christ's service,

Robert J. Irvine

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
1900-1901
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The University of Chicago is a private research university in Chicago, Illinois. It was founded in 1837 as the first American university to be organized on the German model of a research university. The university is known for its commitment to academic excellence and its role in the development of modern higher education in the United States. It has a long history of producing world-class scholars and leaders in various fields of study. The university's research output is highly influential, and it has a strong reputation for its contributions to the advancement of knowledge. The University of Chicago is a member of the Association of American Universities and is ranked among the top universities in the world. It is a leading institution in the field of research and scholarship, and it continues to play a vital role in the education and research community.

John Doe