

MUSIC DEPARTMENT REPORT
1997 Charge Conference
Duke Memorial United Methodist Church
Durham, North Carolina

Music is 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 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 group.

We have a graded choir program which includes the Carol Choir (K-2nd), the Wesley Singers (3rd-8th), the Celebration Singers (9th - adult) 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 (adult) gives weekly leadership to our worship and also provides special musical programs which this year will include a special Festival of Lessons and Carols, with strings, organ, handbells and percussion on December 14 as well as an American Jazz Mass performed within the context of the Eucharist Service with full New Orleans Jazz Combo on Feb. 24. Our bell ministry consists of the Bethany Bells (adult) who not only provide worship leadership in our own congregation, but travel into the community to offer additional musical programs. We also have several individuals who ring solo and small ensemble works for our worship as well as outside the congregation. 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,



