

Director of Music Ministries' Report, Andrew Carter

2019 is best described as a year of transition for the music ministries at St. John's. The largest change was that I was hired as the new Director of Music Ministries in February. This change was not merely a change in leadership. It brought about a significant change in approach to the musical style of the church. Traditionally, St. John's has employed an organist as the musical director and the musical style has been based on organ-driven music. Mother Tracy's choice to hire me, a vocalist and choral expert with expertise in traditional and contemporary styles, brought about a significant change in both instrumentation and musical style. As with all major changes, the effects were met with mixed enthusiasm. However, as the year has progressed, the music ministries seem to be on sure footing and well prepared to move into the future.

St. John's Choir. The choir has seen moderate growth this year. New members have joined and some guests have been invited to sing on special occasions. I have been focusing on tone, blend, and diction in my work with the choir. The choir has adopted a schedule of singing twice per month, on the first and third Sundays. The choir is now a participant in the Intergenerational services when they fall on choir weeks. The choir still meets Thursday nights from 7-8:30, and adheres to a schedule of nine months on and three off. I also introduced a summer choir this year. The summer choir is a volunteer group that meets at 9:30 Sunday mornings and prepares the anthem to be offered that same morning. The choir seems to be gaining momentum and is hopeful for the future.

Organ. The new (antique) organ saw its first full year of use in 2019. While I am not an organist, I continue to work on my skills and am regularly playing the organ for hymns during service. Many guest organists have been brought in to augment the service and provide a traditional flavor to services from time to time. An organ recital was given for the first time and there seems to be good momentum to continue this practice to utilize the instrument to its fullest capability. Given its age and relocation, the organ does require a significant amount of maintenance and the budget for such may have to be addressed. Perhaps a fund could be created for such maintenance.

Piano. St. John's has also been breaking in a new and high-end piano in 2019. The Kawai is a 7.5ft grand piano that is a concert-level instrument. The piano has become the primary instrument used in leading services under my leadership. The initial breaking-in period of the piano progressed in 2019. As is usual with an instrument of this caliber, the piano has required many tunings. It has also gone through a significant voicing process in which the piano has been altered in many small ways to achieve the overall sound that has been desired. The Aptos Keyboard Series continues to promote and produce a significant number of concerts and is helping to pay for the additional tuning required. Due to its quality, a new protocol has been implemented for the use of the piano by the general public in which a fee will be asked for its use by outside parties.

Taizé. Taizé (pronounced Teh-Zeh) is a French style of worship that consists of simple and repeating musical prayers. The use of the Taizé music has been implemented in several ways in 2019. Primarily, the chants or prayers have been sung during communion. Designed to be easily memorized, the "sung prayers" are ideal when singing in the large circle that is created during the St. John's Eucharist. The use of Taizé was also the primary force in the introspective and

meditative services that St. John's introduced in 2019. The services consisting of prayer, readings, music, and silence have been used for special services such as Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday as well as Wednesday night Lenten services.

Future Plans. In 2020, the music ministries are committed to continuing what is already in place. New endeavors that are in the works are a bell choir, children's participation, and a ukulele ensemble. We are hopeful that the choir will continue to grow. Guest artists will continue to be brought in to add to our musical worship. While the music ministries are in an overall strong place, continued growth is achievable and we look forward to 2020 and beyond.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Carter