

# Music Department News at St John's Episcopal Church

Fall, 2009



A Message from the  
Organist-Choirmaster  
& Director of Music

Dear Members of the  
St John's Community:

Let me begin by expressing my thanks to all of you for giving me such a warm welcome as your new Organist-Choirmaster & Director of Music.

I am thoroughly enjoying getting to know you and look forward to nurturing talents, formulating approaches, and finding the resources to embark on developing musical life at St John's in a way that will glorify God and nourish the soul. Thank you for giving me this wonderful opportunity.

In this month's *Eagle's Notes*, on our website's new page for the Music Department, and in this printable (and sendable) PDF document, you will find a range of new projects going this fall. If you have questions or want to participate, feel free to talk to me or send me an email at [stjohns.atl.musicians@gmail.com](mailto:stjohns.atl.musicians@gmail.com)

Please know that my door is always open to hear your thoughts and desires for enriching our musical life and to channel your interests and energy in helping to make it happen. In just a short time, I have learned that St John's is a place where music and the arts matter; I hope that together we can work toward success.

Tom Elston

## West African Music School Slated To Open

Negotiations with the African Performing Arts Association, a confederation of West African musicians and dancers, has led to the possibility of opening a branch of APAA's music school at St John's. The school, which will teach students the rich history and traditions of west-african music and dance, will offer lessons to members of St John's and the larger College Park community.

Several full and partial scholarships will be made available; all that is needed is a strong level of interest from the St John's community to successfully launch this program.

For further information on how you or someone you know can participate in this program, contact the Music Department.

## World Music Concerts Planned

Negotiations are underway with Atlanta-area music groups to bring a series of "world music" concert events to St John's, which will include performances from the Indonesian Gamelan, Native American, West African, Chinese, North/South Indian, Russian Balalaika, Sacred Harp/Shape Note, and Mexican Folklorico traditions.

Volunteers and supporters are needed to make these proposed events possible. Contact the Music Department for further information.

## Friends of Music at St John's Forming

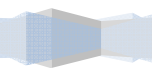
A strong parish music program relies on the talents of many: musicians, non-musicians, singers, players, organizers, volunteers, supporters, and donors all contribute to making the whole larger than the sum of its parts. The Friends of Music at St John's is a new "umbrella" organization being formed to help pull together the many different talents and resources present in our parish so that together we may work to enrich the musical life of St John's and the community.

To explore how you can become a Friend of Music at St John's contact the Music Department for further details.

## Monthly Travelers Group to the Cathedral

Because the cathedral is a wonderful resource for music and worship, efforts will be made to enable members of the St John's community to regularly participate in cathedral offerings:

- *Choral Evensong*: Held on Sunday afternoons at 4:00pm, the evening prayer service is a delightful combination of meditations on scripture and fine music-making by the ca-



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thedral's most elite group of choral musicians.

- *Contemporary Worship*: Held on Sunday evenings at 7:00pm, the evening eucharist service celebrates the use of contemporary music within the Anglican liturgical tradition.

A carpool departure time of 3:15pm on the third Sunday of the month has been arranged for those at St John's with an interest in attending these services. (Dinner will occur between services at a local restaurant; alternatively, MARTA rail drop-off and pick-up can be offered for those wishing to leave early or arrive late.) As the group develops, carpool departure times may change to accommodate group interests.

Our first trip to the cathedral is scheduled to depart on Sunday, September 13<sup>th</sup> at 3:15pm.

## Open Invitation to Join the Choir

The Adult Choir is a non-auditioned choral group dedicated to leading the congregation in song and providing choral music at the parish's Rite II service at 10:30am and at other special services throughout the year. All are welcome to join!

The Adult Choir meets regularly on Thursday evenings from 7:00pm until 8:30pm. No prior experience or audition is necessary. Feel free to come to rehearsal anytime or contact the Music Department for further information.

## Fall Choir Project: Gounod's *Messe Breve*

Most people know the nineteenth-century composer Charles Gounod as a master of French Grand Opera, but he also wrote a significant number of sacred works. One of these, *Messe Breve*, is an accessible, tuneful setting of the main parts of the Eucharistic service (Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus, Agnus Dei) for SATB choir, organ, and instruments. The Adult Choir's main special musical project this fall will be to offer *Messe Breve* at the 10:30am Rite II service on October 25th.

## Taizé Service Being Relunched

St John's monthly Taizé service is slated for relaunch. As a way to improve the visibility of Taizé at St John's, plans are underway to strengthen ties with other Taizé communities in the Atlanta area, to obtain a permanent listing on the Atlanta Taizé website, and to cultivate the local media, and cultural and religious institutions.

Opportunities exist for Taizé volunteers, participants, and attendees. Contact the Music Department for further details.

## St John's Song Book Being Revised

The blue song book used to provide additional musical resources for worship at St John's is slated for revision. Further information on the revision process can be obtained by contacting the Music Department.

## New Musical Settings for Psalms

A new and diverse array of musical settings for the psalms will be added this fall to the Rite II service:

- Anglican chant (choral)
- Simplified Anglican chant (congr.)
- Gregorian chant
- Cantor/Refrain chant
- Choir settings
- Hymn settings
- Hybrid settings

Some settings will occasionally feature simple percussion instruments, such as chimes, handbells, gongs, or drums.

Volunteers interested in playing instruments are welcome to participate. Contact the Music Department for further details.

