

Annual Report – Music Ministries – July 2008 to June 2009
Submitted by John Payne, Director

Christ is our cornerstone,
On Him alone we build;
With His true saints alone
The courts of heav'n are filled.
On His great love
Our hopes we place
Of present grace And joys above.

Oh, then, with hymns of praise
These hallowed courts shall ring;
Our voices we will raise
The Three in One to sing
And thus proclaim
In joyful song,
Both loud and long,
That glorious name!

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This hymn reflects our joyful, loving response to God inspired by our guiding theme of '08-'09, "The LORD is my Rock," and expressed through the song, worship, and lives of God's people here at St. Michael.

Things of note this year: We successfully formed one new adult choir by melding our Voices of Praise and Chancel Choir, and we enjoyed lifting our voices to God! We are looking to increase the number of singers in '09-'10. Men in particular! We have a couple of new events planned this year, including an Advent Choral Vespers-Cantata, Christmas Caroling, and a Hymn Festival in the spring for Ascension. Your seat is waiting – don't be shy! Not sure? Come check us out in a rehearsal. Choir starts the first week of September.

Our bell choir gained four new members and accomplished some beautiful music this year! We have bigger plans for next year, including playing more often in worship, participating in the Florida Holiday Ring in November and Florida State Handbell Festival in March with other bell choirs from around Florida. Lots of fun! But we need more ringers. How about you?! Join us for an Introduction to Handbells Workshop on August 29. I can't over-emphasize how fulfilling it is to be in a church music group!

St. Michael hosted the Lutheran Schools Music Festival this year for the FL-GA district.

More opportunities were created for our school children to sing and play in weekend and midweek worship and school chapels, adding an unmatched element of beauty in our liturgies, and providing more opportunities to reach out with Christ to their families. Speaking of worship opportunities, I would encourage you to consider increasing your

time in worship. Consider midweek school chapels and midweek services in Advent and Lent, as well as making your attendance at weekend worship more regular if it is not. God feeds us with the Bread of Life when we come to His table. Nothing is more important.

This year we heard from some new musicians in worship as they develop and share their skills. Do you have a musical skill that could be fanned into flame (2 Timothy 1:6-7) and used to bless God's people? We hope to hear more in '09-'10.

Our church children were given weekly musical opportunities in Way Station *Wake-up!* and blessed us in worship on Christmas Eve and Palm Sunday. If you have children, I encourage you take every opportunity for them to grow in their faith. They need it.

We said goodbye to our dear sister in Christ and church musician, Ethel Schram, gone to be with the Lord, with a joyful and musical celebration in gratitude to her Savior for the riches of His Salvation and the gifts He bestowed on us through Ethel.

Thank you to the volunteers among us who took leadership in all aspects of our worship, and to those who found joy in musically proclaiming Christ: to all Altar Guild servants, all ushers, all lectors, those who clean the sanctuary weekly, those who stuff bulletins and count offerings, those who decorate for the Church seasons, all communion assistants, all elders, deacons, and Steven Ministers, all acolytes and crucifers, all greeters, and those who have helped with visual and aural mechanics; to all choir members, bell ringers, soloists, song leaders, accompanists, instrumentalists, and those who sing heartily from the pews, who adorn God's Word and Sacraments with song, adults, youth, and children, thankfully too many to name, THANK YOU! It is truly remarkable when you see God's people working together to exalt Christ! Collectively our lives say, "My soul magnifies the LORD, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior!"

Thanks also to our amazing office, maintenance, and sound support staff, Martha Hoffmann, Toni Martin, Jeanie Free, Joani Halstenson, Sue Hampel, Steve Eggen, Lars Marell, and Colin Henderson who each faithfully attends to all the multiple details that undergird the worship life of our congregation, among their many other concerns. Thanks also to Dorothy Smith who has so effectively assisted and supported me in the music office and regularly offers her skills in musically guiding our Saturday services; to Pam Thompson our school band instructor who devotedly and creatively designed and led our midweek praise service; to Christy Wenzlaff, our patient and effective Pre-K through Grade 3 school music teacher, and Jackie Jarvis, our talented school piano and string instructor. Last but not least, I am continually grateful for the beauty Walt Kittel pours into our worship through his excellent organ playing, as well as for his assistance and creativity in helping with worship planning, and for his gracious help in other musical activities. These are delightful folks, and I encourage you to make their acquaintance if you haven't yet had the chance! **Thanks to you all for fulfilling your vocation in service to God and your neighbor!**