

“For I know the *plans* I have for you,” declares the Lord,
“plans to *prosper* you and not to harm you,
plans to give you a *hope* and a *future*’.

-Jeremiah 29:11

Greetings to you and yours, as we begin the 2017-18 Music Ministry Season! I believe I've used this Scripture text before, but it seems very appropriate for the St. Andrew's Congregation, and particularly our musicians at this time.

This week we had a potluck gathering of current Ringers and Singers and, though it doesn't seem possible that fall is here, I sense an eagerness to move on with Music Ministry. Due to storms passing thru the area, we were forced indoors and I took advantage of the situation doing this year's version of "Choir Orientation". Most of it was focused on the "Purpose of Music Ministry" in a Church. I believe our Choirs are already well established in these four critical areas:

- ✓ Church choirs lead and enliven the congregation's song
- ✓ Church choirs present music in which the congregation typically cannot participate
- ✓ Church choirs serve as small-groups within the church for faith formation
- ✓ Church choirs present music to praise God and edify the Congregational worship experience

We will continue with both the Vocal and Handbell Choirs this year. Rehearsal and Worship Presentation schedules will be driven by the availability of participants. We have a very mobile team that seems to work through attendance issues quite well; thanks to great communications and absence forecasting!

Speaking of Rehearsals....

The Chancel Choir (Singers) will commence rehearsing on September 7th @ 6:30 pm. We expect to sing in Worship on September 10th. The remainder of our "start-up" calendar will be determined at the first rehearsal.

The St. Andy's Ringers (Handbell group) will begin rehearsing later in the month of September. Ringers please submit your September thru December attendance forecast asap, so our schedule can be set.

Returning to the Text quoted on the header of this editorial page... I feel confident that Music Ministry can and will be a vibrant part of life at St. Andrew's this season. There are many changes going on in our lives and the life of St. Andrew's as a Church. I believe God has "Plans" for us, has a "Purpose" for our ministry in this community, has promised us "Hope" for a prosperous "Future", if we will listen and respond to His direction. Both as an individual and as your Minister of Music, I look forward to experiencing His leadership in our lives in the coming months.

If I may turn back the clock four months for a moment... This is my first opportunity to officially thank EVERYONE who in any way helped make the May 7th Spring Celebration a grand event. I believe that in preparation for it many things were accomplished that had been on the back burner for a very long time. St. Andrew's still sparkles from your investments of sweat equity, time, creativity and financial support. As we move forward, we need to continue to maintain our welcoming spirit and presentation of the facility, so that first time visitors will recognize that there is "Something Special" about our family of believers at St. Andrew's.

At this Concert, I presented a varied collection of music on purpose. It proved to satisfy the tastes of several types of people and pretty much pushed our Allen Organ to its max. My greatest joy was to see people come together glorifying God by quietly listening and also singing with tremendous gusto. Thank you for coming and participating.

And now, May God Bless you and yours richly as we begin the more formal nine months of the Liturgical Church year. May we be nourished as we Worship together and take our experience here into the rest of the week, 24/7! Proclaim the Good News!

Take care, play safe, work safe and God Bless,

Merle