



Times Chancel

PUBLISHED FOR THE MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF THE MANCHESTER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH CHANCEL CHOIR

Record Crop of New Singers Brings Choir Total to 170

They arrive with curiosity, anxiety, enthusiasm and excitement. They've listened to the choir from the pews for years or perhaps they're new in town and our church. They may be musicians by profession or enthusiastic amateur musicians who know the enjoyment of singing. They are new members of the Chancel Choir and this year they've arrived by the dozens. With more than 30 new members this fall, the Chancel Choir's roster now stand at more than 170.



Kara Krause

Listening to the choir during church was always a very moving experience for Kara Krause, new member of the alto section. Now as a Chancel Choir member, she is thrilled with being a part of the choir's ministry. "I remember how very moving it is to hear the Chancel Choir on Sunday morning. Now being a part of

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New soprano Laurie Underwood fills out a new member form at the season's first rehearsal in September as Asst. Treasurer Tim Zink welcomes her. Zink served as new member orientation chair this year. Making new members feel welcome has been a major priority for choir officers this year.

From Adversity Came The World's Most Beloved Composition – Messiah

On a warm April evening in 1742, a rotund composer stepped to the podium on the stage of Dublin's New Musick Theater and gave a downbeat on what was to become



one of the Christian world's most popular musical works.

A choir of 26 boys and five men recruited from Dublin cathedrals, accompanied by a small chamber ensemble, debuted Handel's Messiah in the face of an angry dean of Dublin's St. Patrick's Cathedral who called the work a debauchery on the church because it would be performed by a "club of fiddlers in a Fishamble Street theater."

Despite the clergy's objections, the performance was a success and raised money for several charities. The next year, Messiah was premiered in England at London's Covent Garden Theater in the presence of King George II. The King was so moved when he heard the word's "The kingdom of this

world . . ." that he jumped to his feet bringing the audience up with him as a matter of protocol and the rest of us to our feet through history as a matter of tradition.

When the Chancel Choir sings portions of the Messiah this spring, it will be a labor of love and respect for music that we might believe was inspired by the great Cathedrals of Europe. But this is not the case. As it is with so many of our traditions, the origination of Handel's Messiah comes from simpler and more worldly beginnings.

George Fredrick Handle is regarded as one of the world's greatest composers. He achieved much fame and success in London as a composer of operas and could easily have been

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Messiah Came From Adversity

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the Andrew Lloyd Weber of his time since opera was the public's entertainment passion then.

But by 1741, things were not going well for Handel. Performance costs had risen and he was losing money. He suffered from insomnia, depression and rheumatism and struggled with obesity. His operas were denounced by influential churchman as profane and unseemly. Theaters such as Covent Garden, which Handel ran at the time, were

regarded as "low haunts of dubious characters."

Handel steadfastly continued his compositions in the face of adversity, never giving up.

One night in 1741 after wandering the streets of London, he returned to his room to find a thick envelope. It was from Charles Jennens, the man who wrote the librettos or text for his compositions. The pages were covered with Biblical texts.

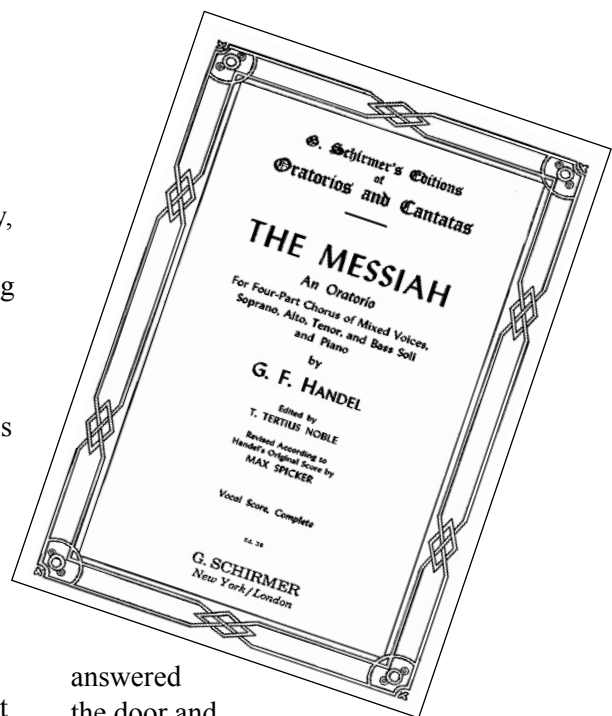
Comfort, ye, comfort ye, my people.

*For unto us a Child is born
King of Kings and Lord of Lords*

It is said that Handel read the manuscript and tossing it aside, went directly to bed. But, unable to sleep, got up and went to his piano where the music began flowing from him.

Night and day for the next three weeks, Handel composed the Messiah refusing to see anyone and forgetting to eat or sleep.

As Handel was finishing, he



answered the door and allowed one friend to enter. The friend reports the composer was at his piano, sheets of music strewn around him, tears streaming down his face. "I do believe I have seen all of Heaven before me, and the great God Himself," he exclaimed.

Messiah Trivia

- The Chancel Choir will present excerpts from the 2 1/2 hour Messiah for a 90-minute concert. An 27-piece orchestra will accompany the choir.
- Twelve soloists from the choir will sing the solo parts.
- Handel was 57 years old when he wrote the Messiah in 24 days.
- He refused to accept money from any performances of the work.
- The melody for "For Unto Us a Child is Born" is from an Italian love song.
- Handel was born in Germany, lived most of his life in England and could speak five languages.
- Handel refused an honorary degree from Oxford University.

Treasurer's Report

The Choir Activity account is the main standing account the choir uses to fund its activities, scholarships and community outreach. The other accounts are created to track specific events and are eventually closed after balances are transferred to the Choir Activity account. Balances below reflect proceeds from the Fall Follies, funds collected for the Fall retreat, and an overcharge by the Great Britain tour company which is currently under negotiation for reimbursement.

Choir Fund Balances

	Balances 10/31/05	Balances 12/31/05
Choir Activity	9,279.23	9,540.70
Fall Fundraising	(250.00)	6,512.70
Fall Retreat	3,542.03	735.03
Choir England Trip	(3,710.21)	(3,072.21)
Total All Funds	\$8,861.05	\$13,716.22

Chancel Times

February 2006

Chancel Choir Officers ~ 2005-2006

Mary DeanPresident
Chris KennedyVice-President
Lois HendricksonRecording Secretary
Ann GarberAttendance Secretary
Jacque RocchioTreasurer
Tim ZinkAsst. Treasurer
Rose Carlisle, Judi Shepard,
Josh Hayes, and Doug Ross
.....Member Representatives
Jim DescherPast President

Operations Staff

Jo Ann Jones, Kristie Whitney,
Donna Biolchini, Carol Broyles,
Roanne and Andy Miller,
Rhoda and Bud KemperHospitality
Rose CarlislePhone Tree
Tim ZinkFellowship Friends
Sandy FordSocial Events
Jim BelvalOperations
Fran McMillianRecognition
Melissa LarsenWardrobe
June Van KlaverenPublicity
Harriet Kettenhofen, Rose Carlisle,
Janie Walker, Carolyn Andrews,
Jo Ann JonesLibrarians

Section Managers

Cece SpatolaSoprano
Barb FarmerAlto
Bud KemperTenor
Charles ShafferBass

Kevin McBethDirector of Music Ministries
Ted CronbaughAccompanist

Chancel Times Editor/Webmaster Gary Ford

Published for the Chancel Choir by
Ford Communications LLC

Available electronically in PDF format.

www.mumchancelchoir.org

New Singers Flock To Choir's Music Ministry

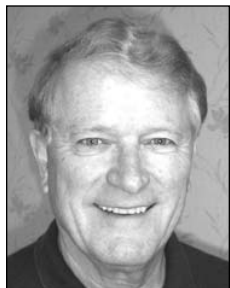
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that ministry is awesome," Kara says.

As a new church member, Kara soon joined a Sunday school class and found herself being recruited for choir by classmates John Lemen and Debbi Brader. "They said if you're in Sunday school, you've got to be in choir too," Kara remembers.

So, on the first night of rehearsal last fall, she came to choir "a little nervous. But everyone was so nice." Kara found the rehearsal a little intimidating after Kevin "jumped right in and started us singing."

For Kara, singing with the choir has been more work than she expected. "I didn't read music then, but I do



Cy Gruenloh

now," she says. Since joining the choir, she has purchased a piano and taught herself to read music.

"This has been a great experience for

me. I enjoy the comedy – Kevin's great. Choir is a great way to relieve tension," she says. Coincidentally, Kara's father-in-law was the choir director at the Arlington United Methodist Church here in St. Louis where Soprano Claudia Fallert was a choir member.

When new tenor Cy Gruenloh reported for his first night of Chancel

Choir rehearsal, he was expecting a military experience. "I thought this would be very rigid – all work and no play," Cy said. "I was a little apprehensive at first because I wasn't sure of my singing ability." He had only sang once with a group while in high school.

That apprehension quickly left him. "The choir is so much different than I thought it would be. It's a lot of fun and I'm enjoying it."

But Cy says one of the down sides to being in the choir loft on Sunday morning is not hearing the choir sing. "You get a very different impression of the music when you're singing it. I miss hearing the choir," he said.

Cy's decision to accompany his wife as she joined the choir has

turned into a fulfilling experience for him as well. "I feel honored to be allowed to be a member of a group this good. It's fun and at the same time I'm an active participant in a function of the church," he said.

Cy is retired after a 30-year career with the Union Pacific and Missouri Pacific Railroads here in St. Louis. Chancel Choir members are encouraged to continue recruiting new singers, there is no limit on the size of the Chancel Choir.

The Music Ministry of the church continues to be one of its fastest growing programs. The Chancel Choir provides music for worship, support for activities and ministries in the church, and outreach projects for the community.

Both new and returning choir members were welcomed by Chancel Choir President Mary Dean at the first rehearsal of the season last September. The choir has experienced a record number of new members this year.



Chancel Choir Asst. Treasurer Tim Zink, right, welcomes prospective new members Ju Young Lee and S.B. Hong at the choir's fall kick off party in August. Ju and S.B. were among 30 new members joining the choir this year.



Both new and returning choir members were welcomed by Chancel Choir President Mary Dean at the first rehearsal of the season last September. The choir has experienced a record number of new members this year.

Gourmet Dinners Raise Money For Youth

The first of two gourmet dinners sold at last year's Youth Auction was served on Nov. 18. Scott and Kay Stiles and their guests dined on beef tenderloin stuffed with crab and pecan encrusted salmon. The second dinner will be served in March to Rose and Dean Carlisle and their guests. The dinners raised \$400 each for the youth ministries. An anonymous donation of \$1,000 was added to the proceeds from the dinners.



Iron chefs Jim Descher and Tim Zink plate the main course, above. Scott and Kay Stiles, along with their guests, enjoyed the meal and entertainment provided by Kevin; Alto Carol and Baritone Charles Shaffer accompanied by Alto Kay Sherrill; and Soprano Jenny Mattox.

We Are Headed For An Important Milestone – 200 Members

By Kevin McBeth

The View From My Window

(Thoughts from the Director of Music)

It seems like it's been years since writing my last article for the *Chancel Times*. I treasure this opportunity to



McBeth

share some important and timely thoughts with you all. We've started the year off with a bang, and have received six new members in the choir since Jan. 1.

That's great news for many reasons, mostly, because you are still attracting new members to our ministry and people feel welcome! That's it ... plan and simple ... people who come and sing with us will often times base their decision on how they were welcomed!

Within the next two years the Chancel Choir could reach an important milestone! Having 200 singers in the Chancel Choir is not only a big accomplishment, but it's another sign that outreach within the choir is alive and well. Each week, as the room con-

tinues to fill up with singers, I hope you will be mindful of two concerns that come with growth:

1) Will there be enough room? One of our former choir members called this the "loaves and fishes syndrome." You can imagine that after Jesus blessed the bread and the fish and those baskets were passed, many peo-

Chancel Director

ple were wondering if there would be enough. That question is still with us today! Will there be a chair for me? Will I have a folder? Am I going to get to sing MY favorite song? Will I get MY solo this time? We are doing everything possible to make sure that there is enough for everyone!

2) Can we still be a close-knit family? With so many new faces in the choir, there is worry about losing that closeness that we've had. It's hard to feel connected when you can't even see everyone. Thanks to our officers, we're coming up with some fun and creative ways to get to know each

other and to build that family bond!

Although these are two important concerns, there are two even more important joys to remember:

1) We are creating a place where people feel at home! Each week, your fellow choir members come to sing and to fellowship with you because it is a place they call home. One choir member has remarked that if it wasn't for the choir, she would have no other reason to leave her house, other than to work. What a difference you are making in her life!

2) We must make room for others to share in our joy! There are countless people who are looking for the opportunity to be a part of our music ministry. Just as there was a place for you when you joined, we must also make a place for them!

We have grown so much in than last 10 years, and not just in numbers. Most importantly, I've grown in that time! I continue to pray for us to find ways to be in ministry with our musical gifts and resources. I am so blessed by your commitment to musical excellence and spiritual awareness!

Happy New Year!

Fun Social Events Planned For Spring

Get ready for some fun this spring. The Chancel Choir's social director is planning the calendar. Here's a look ahead. Details, dates and times will be announced in the email updates.

February – Dinner and a movie.

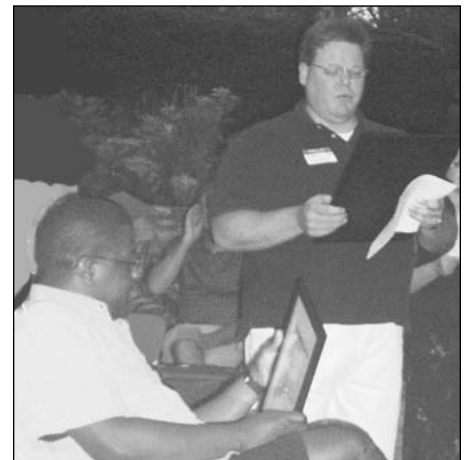
We'll pick a favorite theater for a show of our choice and meet up at a nearby restaurant after.

March – Return to Fast Eddies in Alton. Back by popular demand. We'll be at the door when the joint opens on Saturday for lunch. Big shrimp. Big shrimp. Big shrimp.

April – Dinner with the Emperor at his Palace. A favorite of the summer dinner bunch, if you can't find a favorite dish at the Emperor's Palace in Chesterfield, it's time to tune in the Food Channel.

May – We're headed to the Zoo to see the new Jungle of the Apes that just reopened after a lengthy renovation.

June – Dinner and a float at the Forest Park Boat House.



Soprano Ann Garber dances with Dean Carlisle at the Choir's annual holiday party in January.

It was a big secret. Learning a newly written piece of music for a surprise concert at the back to choir party in August. Mike Latimer directs the choir during rehearsals and Vice President Chris Kennedy, along with other officers, presents the surprise to Kevin following an inspired performance.

Kevin's 10th Anniversary Marked With Special Music

It was hard to believe that 10 years ago last September, the new guy from Iowa dared move to St. Louis to direct us, the Chancel Choir of Manchester United Methodist Church. Who was this guy? Would we like him? Would we get along? Was he a "flash in the pan" and then would he just move on and leave us?

Exactly 10 years later at the same kickoff party where he was first introduced, he received a surprise and we had our answers.

Kevin's years with us were commemorated with a special, commissioned piece of choral music written

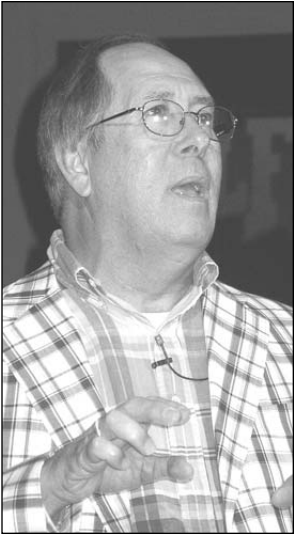
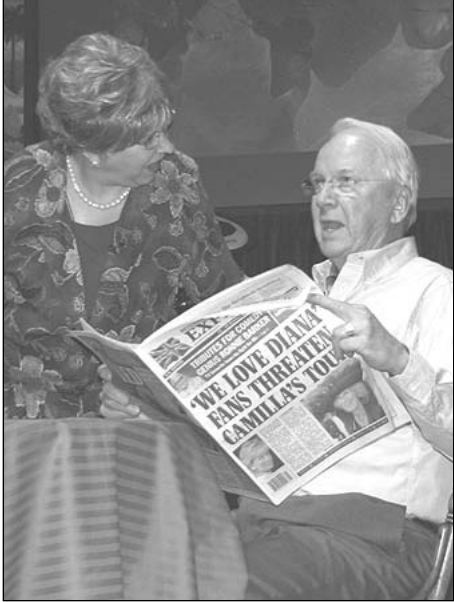
for the occasion by noted composer Howard Helvey. Entitled "Cor mundum crea in me Deus" (Create in my a clean heart, O God) the piece was rehearsed in secret this summer and performed by the choir as Kevin watched in amazement.

The inscription on the music reads: *"This music is dedicated to Kevin McBeth, Director of Music at Manchester United Methodist Church, Manchester, Mo., with love and appreciation from your Chancel Choir for 10 wonderful years of music ministry."*

The music will be published by Oxford Press later this year.

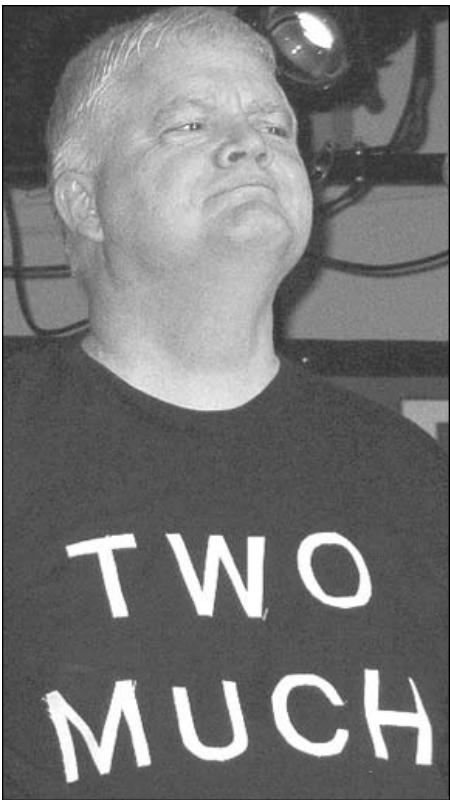
2005 Fall Follies Brings Out The Talent







Show Raises \$6,500



The Chancel Choir's second bi-annual Fall Follies talent show presented on Oct. 29 set a new level of achievement with 22 acts featuring singing, dancing, drama and even some comedy. More than 850 people attended the show which netted about \$6,500 for the choir's scholarship and community outreach activities. The show was again directed by Bill Borger. The Fall Follies and a bi-annual fall concert alternate and serve as the choir's chief fund raising projects.

Photos by June Van Klaveren, Joe McCormack, Lori Borger and Gary Ford





Rehearsals during the annual fall retreat in October were held in the main chapel at Mercy Center in Frontenac, a retreat center operated by the Sisters of Mercy religious order. The chapel is round in design and has excellent acoustics for group singing.

Chancel Choir 2005 Fall Retreat Sets Record

The annual Chancel Choir fall retreat moved back to Mercy Center in Frontenac Oct. 7 and 8 and saw a record number of singers participate.

A total of 114 Chancel Choir members was registered for the retreat, but only 12 spent the night at the center. This was the second visit to Mercy Center for the choir. The retreat was held there four years ago with about 80 attending. That year

about 40 stayed over night.

The past three years, the choir retreat has been held at the Revive Us Again Retreat Center in rural Dittmer, Mo.

After a recent survey showed that members preferred more rehearsing and less playing, Kevin altered the schedule this year to focus more on the music. Fall service music, the

Rutter Gloria and Christmas music were introduced at the retreat.

The 12 choir members staying overnight at Mercy Center were joined by one other non-staying member and watched two movies in the downstairs recreation room.

Next year's retreat is scheduled for Oct. 13 and 14. The location and format have yet to be set.



Herb Walker, left, and Tenor Richard Shelton enjoy a few moments before dinner at the Chancel Choirs holiday party in January at Spazio's in West Port.

Chancel Calendar

Thursday, Feb. 9, 7:30 p.m. ~ Messiah Kick-Off Party

Friday, Feb. 10, 7:30 p.m. ~ In Concert: St. Olaf Choir

Sunday, April 16 ~ Messiah Celebration on Easter

Sunday, April 23, 7:30 p.m. ~ Choral Masterworks Concert: MESSIAH with chamber orchestra.

Sunday, May 21 ~ Youth Sunday - Announce Scholarship

June ? ~ End of Year Party

Saturday, Aug. 26 ~ Back To Choir Party

Thursday, Aug. 31 ~ First Rehearsal

Oct. 7 & 8 ~ 150th Anniversary of Church and Chapel Celebration

Oct. 13 & 14 ~ Fall Retreat location and time TBD

President Reports 'State of Chancel Choir' Is Good and Growing

By Mary Dean
Chancel Choir President

*Order our steps in your word dear Lord,
Lead us, guide us, show us your way.*

That is my wish for Chancel Choir as we begin 2006.

It seems it's the season to provide an update on the State of the Union, so here's my take on things:



Dean

- **I am pleased to report the "state of the chancel" is very good.**

- **We are large and growing,** thanks to Kevin's

superior leadership and our strong track record. Our size alone amazes and elevates expectations, challenging us to take our music – and our preparation – to the next level.

- **We have a balanced budget.**

Recent hard work behind the scenes on the choir budget has returned clarity to our finances. (Please thank John Lemen and Jacque Rocchio for their efforts here.)

- **We are blessed ...** by our belief in the power of music, and by our privilege of membership in this amazing choir. We have so much to be thankful for.

When people ask me ... "what is it about your choir that makes so many people want to join?" I naturally point to our brilliant count singing, amazing diction (farty-far), etc., etc.

But the simple answer is: "it's not a musical organization ... it's a *music ministry*." This makes all the difference. It calls us to sing not just the notes on the page, but to "sing the sunset." And not just to sing the sunset, but live it ... and share it ... over and over and over.

But remember that our music ministry is not just when we sing. It's when we mobilize the message ... step out of our comfort zone and reach beyond where we are right now – to the congregation ... the community.

Chancel President

*Oh, I keep so busy workin' for the kingdom
Ain't got time to die*

So in summary, this "state of the chancel" brings you both good news and bad news.

- Good news: we are large, vibrant, capable of doing great things
- Bad news: the kingdom ain't here yet ... so we gotta keep working

One of my favorite family stories is about my nephew, Matt. One morning while I was home in Raleigh getting ready for some special occasion, I was standing in the bathroom doing "final prep work" on make-up, hair, etc., and Matt – who was about 6 – was standing in the doorway just watching me. I asked him, "Okay Matt, am I beautiful yet ... or do I need to keep working?" He replied, "Keep working." Apart from the resulting sad estrangement from my former nephew, I love that story ...! And the message applies to us as well ... we need to *keep working ... for the kingdom ...*

At my work, I'm learning about *servant leadership*. The more I learn, the more I realize it's a big part of what makes our choir so special. It requires no real explanation ... simply speaks to the power of service.

I would like to salute some of the "unsung heroes" of Chancel Choir who show us how servant leadership is done:

- the librarians (who tirelessly shepherd the music in and out of my ... er ... *our* folders)
- the hospitality crew (who serve us with a smile)
- the back-up accompanists (who show up, over and over, often on short notice)
- Eedy (who supports us and Kevin behind the scenes in countless ways)
- the cantors (who regularly share their musical gifts with other services)

- former choir officers, whose work didn't end with their terms (talk to Jim Descher and John Lemen)

- the chefs (Emeril-Schlemeril ... we got "Jim and Tim")

- the social committee chair ...

Sandy Ford, who coordinates choir fun month after month, year after year

- David Schenck ... for his "door ministry" at the close of the service

- and of course, Fran McMillian, who for me is a role model of servant leadership. She faithfully attends choir and has done so for the past 50 years. She invests significant time every week in preparing to sing. She generously builds community within the choir through her greeting card ministry.

If we could all be as faithful as Fran, who knows what we could accomplish?

When I gaze into the night sky...

Following is my wish list for this year for our choir.

- **Sing the Sunset** – Come to choir so prepared and sing something so well that Kevin insists we perform it without sheet music. (If the Good News Quartet can do it, I believe we can too.)

- **"Adopt" a ministry at our church** – Extend our musical and financial support to support a specific MUMC ministry.

- **Share our music ministry at two new events** – (Ideas under consideration are a "parking lot" concert on the 4th of July and caroling senior citizens at Christmas) ... **and regularly, locally somewhere in St. Louis.** (This could be something some of us do once a month, or on Sundays when we aren't scheduled to sing. Officers are discussing ideas now.)

- **Forever banish River in Judea from our song list.** (Okay – just kidding!)

That's my wish list. What's on yours? The officers would love to hear from you in February.

Notes

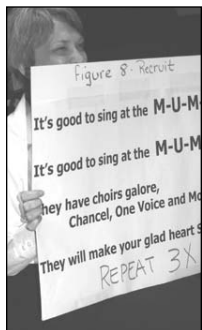
Chancel



Holiday party host Lois Hendrickson and Bass Larry Woolweaver enjoy the dance floor at Spazio's in West Port.

REST IN PEACE. Bass Tom Lawrence has a special connection with George Frideric Handel. He stood on Handel's grave last summer at Westminster Abby.

SAY AGAIN. That visiting organist last week said he had a MIDI in his console. A tenor was overheard saying, "We'd rather have a MAXI."



Secret for success in the Fall Follies talent show: Cue cards. The Village Idiots swear by them.

SOS. At rehearsal, guest organist Dan Brown told the choir he was playing an OSO – an organ shaped object. "That's nothing," said one bass. "We have several ASOs – alto shaped objects – in the choir."

10 LONG YEARS. Kevin has been our director for a decade. That's longer than most Republican presidents serve.

PUSH BUTTON CHOIR. That fancy electronic organ can simulate a choir. "He can turn on a section of sopranos with the push of one but-

ton," came a mutter from the back row. "Too bad there isn't a button to turn them off."

MILESTONE. The choir has hit 170 members. When we reach 200 maybe we can talk the church into providing us all lockers.

PRECOOKED. Pressure is building for the choir's gourmet chefs to prepare all the food for the next choir party. Why do potluck when you can have burgundy pot roast?

SPARE PICKUP. Tenor Bruce Brader rolled a perfect 300 game at a local bowling alley recently. No word on induction into the Bowling Hall of Fame downtown.



Tenor Don Erhardt, left, was honored for 20 years as an associate organist. Ted Cronbaugh, music associate, presented him a framed plaque and a pair of official organist shoes at the first rehearsal of the year.

geospatial specialist. Hope there's a couple of singers.

TRADING SPACES. Bass Dave



Three alto brighten the holiday party at Spazio's. From left, Christie Whitney, Lisa Sudduth and Carol Shaffer.



Alto Fran McMillian won't let macular degeneration stop her. Choir friends help her prepare special music with big type and notes.

Gnaegy has traded his architectural office for his own contracting business. If building our new Sanctuary doesn't qualify him for home rehab, we don't know what does.

FREE HELP. One Voice warbler Bill Borger has raised more than \$12,000 for the Chancel Choir directing our two talent shows. Imagine what he could do if he actually sang with us.

SHE WHAT? We've begun playing "what's my line" at rehearsal each week as secret clues are revealed about a choir member. "I hope they don't dig too deep," says one bass who flunked out of music school.

ALTON EXPRESS. The choir can't get enough of that cheap Fast Eddie's food. A caravan will be headed back to Alton later this spring. It's our members' craving for the finer things in life, good shrimp, cheap burgers, cold beer, and a dozen of your closest Hell's Angels.



What choir member posed as the fighting banana slug mascot at the NCAA museum in Indianapolis?