

Origins of the Third Sunday Band at St. Margaret's Church

Memories from Al Todd 2020

After playing guitar for Sunday school classes, in 1995, Nancy White asked me if I would help her start a children's "choir". We formed the Spirit Singers.

When Nancy left for the Diaconate, in 1996, I continued to lead the Spirit Singers in weekly practice and singing periodically in church. About the same time, a number of people at St Margaret's who had been to Cursillo began meeting for a casual "Prayer and Praise" gathering on Sunday nights. This was led by Beth Knorr and Beth asked me to lead music. Kevin Magnuson also joined in along with Nancy White, Barbara Ridout and others on occasion. I began collecting a collection of "praise" music for this gathering.

When Wes Wubbenhorst arrived as Assistant Rector to Mary Glasspool in 1997, she asked him to preach once a month. He chose to do a Children's service at 9 am on the third Sunday of the month and suggested that the Spirit Singers sing for this service.

In 1998, Mary Glasspool suggested that we give Mike Menne and the Choir off this Sunday and replace the music with all guitar led praise songs. That was a transforming moment. Kevin and I stood in front of the Congregation with our guitars and led songs on the third Sunday for the 9 AM service.

Soon we had a couple of ladies join us on vocals. First Siobhan (?) joined us, followed by Cathy Dea Code. Then we added flute with Ernie Tucker and my sons Travis and Austin played bass and percussion. We began setting up a sound system in Choir area for the 9 am service and tearing it down by the 11:15 when Mike Menne and choir came in.

When Mike Menne left, Louise Carlson joined SMC as interim music director and suggested that we just play music for both services on the third Sunday. Louise joined us for a time on piano until she left St Margaret's and we recruited Tim Arnold-Moore to join us.

Then I recruited Norm Mayfield and Emilie Stafford after a Coffeehouse event. Thelma Smullen as interim rector continued to support us and the Third Sunday Band grew and diversified, adding instruments and sound equipment and playing for more SMC events. When Mark Wastler arrived as rector we were a full 7 piece group. Drums were added during Mark's term. We began recording in 2004, with 5 CDs now released.

We really had no name as a group until we were asked to come and play at a Coffeehouse at St Thomas' in Towson. Ken Phelps, associate rector, wanted to introduce us and asked "What do you call yourselves?"

We all looked at each other and shrugged, "We don't have a name?" He asked "Tell me a little about yourselves?" I said, "Well we play on the third Sunday each month at St

Margaret's" and Ken turned around and introduced the "Third Sunday Band from St Margaret's" That was it, the name stuck! Many other funny stories along the way.

Over the years, musicians have come and gone. So far we have had:

Guitars: Al Todd, Kevin Magnuson, George Hazen, Norm Mayfield, Ernie Tucker

Bass: Travis Todd, Austin Todd, Josh Chapman,

Keyboards: Louise Carlson, Tim Arnold-Moore, Mike Lundein, John Koloski

Vocalists: Siobhan, Cathy Dea Code, Leah Droof, Mary McKiel, Jeanne Burton, Emilie Stafford, Colleen Chiochetti, and Alli Smith

Drums: John Sutton, Scott Tabor, Jamie Wilson

Plus, Dusty MacMillan-harmonica, Alli Smith – Violin, Ernie Tucker flute and mandolin