

## THE STATE OF MUSIC MINISTRY ADDRESS

(For First Baptist Church, Lancaster, SC)

by Tom Eggleston, Feb. 6, 2008

“Sing to Him a new song; play skillfully, and shout for joy.” Psalm 33:3

First of all, I want to thank each of you for your commitment to the music and worship ministry of First Baptist Church. This is a ministry where EACH of you have an important role in serving as worship leaders for our congregation. I, along with David, Dr. Coleman and Kelly are “lead worshipers”. Our role is no more important than yours because we are all God's servants.

We are blessed to have great leaders for our music ministries. I want to thank those leaders and for the wonderful work they do week by week:

PreSchool--Teresa Willis

Children's--Cindy Barlowe, Beth Winn

Youth—Patti Steen, Mitch Norrell

Adult—Ella Ruth Simpson, Paula Rhyne

Handbells—Cindy Vincent

Pre-Service Musicians

Soloists

From time to time we all need to reexamine our role and commitment to what and how we are doing things. I think there are several measuring sticks...

**M**usical Growth

**U**nity

**S**piritual Impact

**I**nspiration

**C**hallenges (attendance, relationships)

### **Musical Growth**

I think our choirs have grown musically speaking. You have been stretched by some contemporary anthems. You have inspired many with southern gospel anthems and you have encouraged many with traditional anthems. You have also done quite a number of challenging original anthems from a composer who shall go nameless.

### **Unity**

I am continually amazed at your sense of openness to my leadership. You have been very gracious in your spirit and welcoming of new people that have joined us. However, let me warn you, this is not a clique or a club, we must be open to new growth and perhaps new ideas as we look to a new pastor.

### **Spiritual Impact**

Are you aware that most people remember the invitation hymn that was sung when they became a Christian more than they remember the pastor's sermon?

Are you aware that many Alzheimer's patients don't know their own relatives, but can sing from memory entire verses of hymns?

The music we sing or play in worship is **NOT sung or played** to please the congregation. It is **NOT** here to please ourselves. We are here to please an **AUDIENCE OF ONE...GOD, ALMIGHTY!!** We can and do make a spiritual impact through our music when we make it an offering to God.

## Inspiration

Other than financial problems in churches, the next most troubling aspect for some is the style of music sung. That's why they have called it "worship wars." It's unfortunate but true. Music is a very subjective medium. What speaks to one person, doesn't always speak to the next. That is why we seek to give diversity and balance to our music ministry. Inspiration can come from ALL styles of music if we are singing from our hearts, as unto the Lord.

## Challenges

We have 33 people on roll and 3 leaders. Our average attendance for Adult Choir for the past 6 months was 18:

Jul. --16 choir, 3 staff

Aug.--17 choir, 3 staff

Sep.--19 choir, 3 staff

Oct.-- 18 choir, 3 staff

Nov.-- 23 choir, 3 staff

Dec.-- 16 choir, 3 staff

We are still in our "teens" and once again I want to challenge us to become a 20-something. We have made progress. From Feb.-June our average was 16. But we must continue to grow musically, in our unity, in spiritual impact, in our inspiration and numerically for the service of His Kingdom.

*"But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."*  
*John 4:23-24*