

## Handbells and Choir Annual Report for 2020

In addition to other annual reports, I'd want to point out the contribution both choirs can have on the spiritual experience in worship. The acoustic SOUND of music can stir and soothe the soul.

So, the QUALITY of the music making is important to communicating spiritually. I believe all of our bell ringers and singers are devoted to the worship experience. It goes both ways; that music making is also a real blessing to the "ringers and singers".

It is noticeable that all our music makers were eager to be active again. We are also grateful for the support of the congregation.

Blessings,

Dan Wright

I am thankful for the opportunity to play handbells with the Voices in Bronze at Atascocita Lutheran Church. Even though ALC is not my home church, they have welcomed me to play with them as an act of service to the church, and in worship to God. It is great to be able to learn something new, and at times challenging, with like-minded people. It is also a privilege for me, and a blessing to the church to have Dan as the Music Director. He has the experience, expertise, and humble heart to lead those of us led to serve the church through music.

# Voices in Bronze Annual Report for 2020

I thought it would be helpful to give some background on the Voices in Bronze.

We are an all-volunteer group. Our rehearsal time is scheduled for 1 hour each week. Our goal is to play at least once a month. We do have a videographer that uploads our performances to YouTube. Here is the Christmas Eve performance

<https://youtu.be/VxjSd-JpAJg>

When this group began, they had to set up the tables, pads, and pad covers for every week's rehearsal, and play dates. When the church underwent renovation, it was decided that the group deserved a designated area, so they did not have to go through all the above before playing.

The Voices in Bronze has been in existence for more than 20 years. The membership has fluctuated between 14 to our current 9. We have a playable, 3 octave bell range. They are kept in specialized cases to maintain their integrity. Most bell maintenance is done by members in the bell choir. We also have hand chimes, but some are in disrepair.

During my 10 years with VIB, we have had 5 directors, including Dan Wright, our current director.

We are a very cohesive group. We cover each other's bells. If someone is having difficulty, someone is always there to help.

We participated in the All Saints Sunday worship service honoring our members who have died in the current year.

This past Christmas season, we had theme nights for practice- festive shirt & hat night, favorite candy night and PJ night. Everyone seemed to enjoy this.

We have in the past participated in a 3 church Thanksgiving program. A 3 church bell choir is awesome to play in and to listen to.

We participated in the Lenten Dinners by sponsoring one meal during Lent.

The VIB music closely follows the seasons of the church. We do have our favorites, but we're not afraid to branch out to new and harder pieces.

The bells were sent out for refurbishing about 4 years ago. The bell group helped to raise money for this expense, (approximately \$3000.00).

We continue to look for additional members.

Respectively submitted,

Laurie McDonald

# **“When Team” Report for Annual Congregational Meeting**

January 2021

After the initial shut down of in-person worship in the Spring of 2020 due to Covid-19 pandemic, Russ Senti created a team of ALC members to study and monitor the situation and help advise as to when ALC could safely return to in-person worship.

The members of the team are/were Laurie McDonald, Sid Nice, Tim Trautman and Renee Wallace. Russ Senti and Pastor Deckinger would occasionally join a meeting.

The When Team agreed to meet on a weekly basis through the Zoom App. We had our first meeting on May 1, 2020 and continued to meet on a weekly basis throughout the summer. Our last meeting was on September 21, 2020 and reported, that week, the most recent data to the ALC leadership team to help them as they made the decision to return to in-person worship.

There were 3 different desired outcomes for the team. 1) Come up with an opening date for returning to group worship, 2) To use a process of listening to a list of voices in making the decision, and 3) Use available data to inform others of how decisions were made.

The team used many sources as guidance in making the decision, including God’s voice, our synod, our members, the government, the local mayor, and Judge Hildago.

However, the focus, mostly, was on the data that Tim Trautman collected, graphed and reported to us on a daily basis. We owe him a debt of gratitude for his dedication and expertise in keeping us informed of the number of cases in our immediate area, the areas where our members live and in Harris County.

Thank you Tim. We couldn’t have done it without you!

The team took its job very seriously and kept the safety of the ALC congregation at the forefront. The team will begin meeting again if needed in the future.

Much thanks to everyone on the team!

Respectfully Submitted,

Renee Wallace

# Word & Sacrament Team Report 2020

A special "Thank You" to all who have served on the team and our extended family of angels who have helped out as needed during this most unusual year.

We did begin the year with our annual cleaning of the church sanctuary; then we went to shut down in March.

I was a member of the "How Team" that met almost weekly by Zoom Meetings May through September. Worship was conducted from Pastor's Office March through late September when a limited number of members for "In Person Worship" began just for running the sound, video, music and changing of altar paraments.

In early September, members of the "How Committee" and a few volunteers removed the hymnals, papers and pencils from the pews and set up the Sanctuary with six foot social distancing blue tape, masked signs and procedures for using the rest rooms. The Cry Room was designated as a "Non-Mask Area", if needed, for those with health issues.

By the end of September, Pastor offered limited "In Person Communion" and began "Drive Through Communion" following the service. Continuation will be determined by Pastor Brian for the New Year.

Currently worship leaders may be unmasked just for singing and reading at the microphones. Congregation has been encouraged to sing softly while masked and bring their own printed materials. Large TV projection screens have been added along with the continued "Face Book Watch" service.

To promote contact tracing, the Greeters have been checking off a list of members as they enter the building and have offered "Blessed" masks to all. Passing of Peace has been conducted in place in the pews.

Russ Senti and a few volunteers have been disinfecting pews following service. The small hand sanitizers have now been removed from the pews.

As you may have noticed through "Face Book Watch Service" and "In Person", communion and offering procedures have changed. We are currently not offering Gluten Free Wafers and only a Chalice with Host and wine are now on the altar. There is now a small communion table in front of the altar steps draped with white and the colored veil that corresponds with the liturgical season.

We are using the Communion trays with every other slot for safety along with a slightly larger wafer placed on top. White Grape juice is in the top middle of each tray. Pastor wears gloves and mask during this time. All preparation for communion and cleanup is done with masks and gloves and washing of hands.

When taking communion, members now move down the side aisles, alternating every other person and every other side and exit center aisle to dispose of plastic communion cups in baskets in center of middle of sanctuary cross over. There are offering plates at the corner of choir and bell lofts and on the baptismal font.

When possible again, team service assignments will be resumed. It is still the team's responsibility to change the paraments, fill and light the altar candles. As always, we are open to receiving new people who wish to serve on the team. We do mentor and teach new members all they need to know. If you are interested, please contact me.

Yours in the service of Christ. Be blessed and stay safe.

Peg Swavely – Word & Sacrament Team Leader.