



Christ Church Welcomes George Ingram

By John La Boone

Last February, we at Christ Church were blessed with the addition of George Ingram to the staff as part-time Assistant Organist and Choirmaster. George brings a wealth of skill and experience, as well as a deep personal faith, to his new job.

"Church music does a great deal to add to my personal faith," he commented. "It makes me focus and it makes me realize how our faith comes together and gives meaning to life. I think music does that for a lot of people."

Before coming on board at Christ Church, George had been the organist at First United Methodist Church, Brunswick since 1993. Prior to that, he had served as organist at St. Simons Baptist Church and Lovely Lane Chapel at Epworth by the Sea. His main job has been in the real estate industry for many years but his love of sacred music has been a constant in his life since childhood.

"I sang in my church choir growing up," he recalled. "As a teenager I was part of a large choir of 50 young people at Putney United Methodist. We toured across the country and we went to Canada once. It was a wonderful experience to share music like that."

George's love of the piano and organ started when he was in the sixth-grade. He traded lawn cutting services for piano lessons from a lady in his native Dawson, Georgia, and it just grew from there. When he graduated from high school, he served as organist for a nearby church while attending junior college. Later, at Georgia Southern University he played keyboards in the concert and jazz bands.

George says he loves all the traditional hymns and he especially enjoys offering fresh arrangements when he plays them. He loves all aspects of the music at Christ Church and he has discovered a special love of the music we use at X Church.

"It's contemplative and it's calming; there are times when we really need that," he explained. "It meets a different kind of spiritual need. There is something about the service that invites people to slow down and really listen and think about everything. It's a little different from the music we use on Sunday mornings but both kinds of music do a lot to reach people and help them digest and express what's really important about our faith.

"Sacred music can do a lot to assist a person's prayer life," he continued. "It doesn't replace prayer but in some cases it helps people to learn how to pray. When you think about it, our theology is condensed into the verses of the hymns in a continuous, concentrated way. No matter what the denomination, the teachings of the church come through in music."

George said he loves working with Kathleen Turner, the Christ Church Music Director, and finds her sacred music expertise a great resource. When the parish hall service is in normal session, he usually plays piano at that service, and then he assists Kathleen however he is needed at the 11:15 a.m. service in the historic church. (While Kathleen is on sabbatical he is handling all music director duties.) He also fills in wherever needed in the choir or the hand bell choir when that is called for.

George is a longtime St. Simons resident, having moved to the area in 1980. He has been friends with many of the members of Christ Church for more than 30 years and he enjoys seeing them at services and helping to meet their needs with church music. He also got married at Christ Church and feels a strong connection to the congregation whenever he serves.

"It's wonderful to be on the music team at Christ Church," he said. "Everything about it feels right. I'm very thankful for the opportunity to serve here."