

Brief Biographical Sketch
William Henry Sydnor, Sr.



A native of Baltimore, Maryland, William Henry Sydnor, Sr. has been playing in churches since the age of 11. Mr. Sydnor developed his keyboard craft under the tutelage of some of the area's finest piano and organ instructors. His musical instructors include the late Mrs. Pearline Evans, Dr. Mack Statham, the late Dr. Edouard Ward, and Dr. Paul Davis.

His mastery at the organ is well known. Over his 57 year career, he has performed in a number of organ recitals including John Wesley United Methodist Church, Locearn Presbyterian, Perkins Square Baptist Church, Union Baptist Church, New Shiloh Baptist Church, St. Michael and All Angel all of Baltimore, as well First Presbyterian of Westminister, Asbury United Methodist, Cecil Memorial United Methodist of Annapolis, Florida Avenue Baptist Church, to name a few.

His repertoire includes the classic works of composers such as Bach and Beethoven, stylized jazz compositions of artists such as Duke Ellington, arrangements of spirituals and traditional hymns of the church, as well as his own original compositions. Mr. Sydnor has mastered the pipe organ as well as the electronic organs. His gifts have made him highly prized as a recitalist as well as a service organist.

“Billy” Sydnor has worked with some of the country’s best known choral conductors: Dr. Nathan Carter, Mr. Clarence Henderson, the late Dr. Wendell Whalum, and Dr. Roland Carter. He has headed music ministries of a number of familiar congregations here in Baltimore, including Enon Baptist Church and Trinity Baptist Church. In addition to his skill as an instrumentalist, he is an accomplished choral conductor in his own right and a composer of both choral and instrumental music with a significant number of spiritual original works and arrangements. Mr. Sydnor’s major choral work is “Emancipation Jubilation” first performed at Florida Avenue Baptist Church in honor of the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation. The work was performed with the National Symphony Orchestra. In recognition of his lifetime work and commitment, Willim Sydnor was bestowed the honorary degree of Doctor of Sacred Musaic by the Eastern Theological Seminary in 2007.

William Sydnor has made full use of his musical gift as a choral director, composer and organist covering music of several genres. He is well known to the Baltimore community due to his long-time service as organist for advent and lenten ecumenical services for a coalition of local churches. He served as the Minister of Music at Florida Avenue Baptist Church in Washington, DC for 17 years; last March he was called back to his home church, Union Baptist, to serve as its Minister of Music. Billy is husband to Kim Lisbeth Dobson Sydnor and has two sons, William, Jr. and Vernon Sydnor.