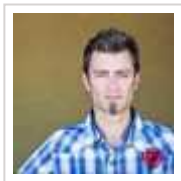


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Personal Life

50 Years of Worship

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We were made to worship. Since Scottsdale Bible's founding 50 years ago, engaging worship has been woven into the fabric of the church. Harriet "Hattie" Runyon, the first choir director, said, "We had a little group of 8-10 members in the choir back then. We led the hymns and had a special worship number each week. Terry Moore sang the men's solos and I sang the soprano solos."

The choir grew along with the church. In 1965, Scottsdale Bible moved into the first church building on McDonald drive and the choir "became official." Hattie explained, "We had 25-30 choir members by then and Gif Runyon bought choir robes for us."

One day, Pastor Jim Borrer called Hattie and told her he had met a talented choir director named Stan Cook. Hattie was thrilled that Pastor Borrer wanted to invite him to join the staff. Stan was gifted in music and also had a radio program on a local station where he read poetry.

Stan served until 1970, when another talented musician from Ohio State University named Dr. Bill Epley was approached to join the staff of Scottsdale Bible. Since his wife Ann didn't care for Columbus, she declared, "It's of the Lord!" and they moved to Arizona.

God used Bill to take the music ministry to a new level. "We broadened the complexity of the music we sang with intricate harmonies. The choir grew. We started the orchestra. It was small at first. We used some of our own musicians and also invited professionals to help." In the tradition of quality of worship, Bill devoted himself to bringing the congregation into the presence of God in relevant ways.

As youth director and worship pastor, Bill began the Koinonia Choir for the high school group. "We were doing cutting edge, complex stuff. It was such a joy seeing the young people worship," He remembered with fond laughter. "I'm considered the classicist when it comes to music. But back then, they were having prayer meetings about me over their concerns that I introduced an electric guitar on the platform!"

Another music revolutionary of the time was also part of the Scottsdale Bible congregation. John W. Peterson was a songwriter who significantly influenced evangelical Christian music from the 1950s to the 1970s. He wrote more than 1000 songs and hymns and 35 cantatas (musicals). John was also a member who served Scottsdale Bible as a teacher and elder.

Due to his involvement, the choir participated in the international premiere of Peterson's musical, "Jesus is Coming." According to Epley, "We rented out Grady Gammage auditorium for multiple performances. We sang next to many professionals. It was such an honor to glorify God that way."

Bill resigned to pursue his teaching career, yet remains an active member of Scottsdale Bible today. Ed Willmington, a young, talented musician working for Peterson's publishing company, stepped in as a volunteer interim worship leader for a year and won the hearts of the congregation with his quiet persona and worshipful heart. On January 1, 1985, he became the full time worship pastor.

Ed served for 22 years. Pastor Darryl DelHousaye explained how he wanted Ed to envision his position. "I never wanted Ed to be a music director. I wanted him to be a worship pastor. He wasn't supposed to be the 'pastor of prelims.'" This intentionality and prioritization helped the musical worship develop into a deeper and richer experience as Scottsdale Bible matured as a church. Staff

members Tammy Reimche and Leah Powell remembered with appreciation how Ed regularly said, "Worship is a verb!"

He explained, "I believed that the formative nature of the ones leading the worship was an important factor, as imperfect as we all are. Worship leadership on any level is a spiritual activity, not just a skillful ministry."

Choir member Nancy Nixon explained, "Ed had a great way of teaching us we were serving an audience of One during worship."

Ed also taught the congregation different ways to worship. "I also thought that worship should be more than music. I thought prayers and postures were important. Sometimes music would be the prayer or aid the posture, but worship is more than music." Services would include prayer times with people on their knees and elders present to pray for people. Multiple styles of worship were included over time. "I believed in the breath of the church being represented in worship leadership, which meant that dance, bells, children, sign language, drama, choir, orchestra are the gifts of the whole church."

The choir grew together. Being part of the choir and orchestra was more than just being artists; it was about serving the Lord in a multitude of ways. More than 120 people traveled on a missions trip to Buenos Aires, Argentina in 2001, and in 2003, 90 members set out to serve in Romania. "You prepare for a mission trip to go and serve people. And then you are so humbled by the people's love for you... they give up their beds and feed you food they probably can't afford. It is so humbling and we became attached to all of our host families. You come back thinking they did more for you than you did for them. It was life-changing to serve together that way!" expressed Leah Powell.

During Ed's tenure, the leadership saw a need for divergent worship styles. The evening services became the setting for praise bands and contemporary Christian music to lift worship to the Lord. In 1999, Steve Hickok was hired to lead the PM services. The tradition of excellent worship continued, even though guitars were turned up and the drums were louder. The PM choir was started, and people had a choice of styles for their taste in music.

When Steve Hickok left for Atlanta in 2004, Sean Johnson stepped into the leadership role. Sean had been raised at Scottsdale Bible. His free spirit before the Lord helped the congregation cast away any masks and be honest before the Lord in the way they confessed their shortcomings and sin and in asking God to transform them. Ed Willmington took these younger pastors under his wing and disciplined them to make sure every service was led by godly pastors.

The evening worship continued to flourish. Sean invited worship leader Kim Larson to join him in leading. When Sean left in 2009, Kim assumed sole leadership responsibilities. Under her leadership, the PM choir continued to grow as the congregation was blessed by her beautiful voice and tremendous skills as a pianist.

In 2007, Ed was approached by Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, CA, to direct the Fred Bock Institute of Music. It was time again to search for the man God wanted to fill the worship pastor position.

During that interim, the church was privileged to be led in worship in the morning worship times by Bruce Pearson. Bruce is a composer, author, music educator, and clinician. Bruce was well known and deeply respected in the world of musical composition, yet he humbly accepted this opportunity to serve the kingdom by offering consistently excellent worship to the morning congregations. He selflessly served for four years while the search committee scoured the country. The committee worked hard to follow God's leading, which finally took them to Pennsylvania. They rejoiced when they realized the search was over: they had found Troy Peterson.

With the depth and maturity needed to follow someone as beloved as Ed, the gift of having a soloist's voice, and exuding godly humility, Troy fit perfectly. "What we have at Scottsdale Bible is a unique combination of needs. We go from 'Bach to Rock,' and we needed a pastor who can facilitate that range. After searching, we knew there were few people who could do that, and Troy was one of the few in the country who could fit the bill," explained Elder Jeff Goble.

As Scottsdale Bible follows Christ forward to the future, we are poised to worship God in different ways. In 2008, Scottsdale Bible pioneered video venue worship services. "We are out of room on our campus, but there are so many lost people in our city," said Pastor Jamie Rasmussen. "We had to get creative to see how we were going to move into the future and be relevant for Christ in this city. We asked Lucas Cooper to start a video venue on our campus to make more room for people, to have contemporary worship, and to have a smaller congregation for those who want that type of experience. Video venue MultiSites are our model for going into the future. "

In the book *Worship Matters*, Bob Kauflin writes, "Show me the songs a church sings and I'll show them what they believe." Lucas explained, "When we choose music, we are careful to select songs to reflect the depth and richness of God's Word. Doctrine is reflected in all our music, whether it is accompanied by a violin or electric guitar."

While Scottsdale Bible's worship ministry has developed over 50 years, the goal has remained the same. From 1962 to 2012, Scottsdale Bible Church has worshipped "for an audience of One."