



Music Ministry strikes harmonious chord with excellence

One of the key trademarks of *Breath of Life* is musical excellence. Our musical ministry has been described as inspiring, elevating . . . even transforming. Moreover, it is uniquely diverse—spanning the entire spectrum from old school gospel, to urban contemporary, to jazz fusion, to classical, to traditional hymns, to spirituals. On any given Sabbath, the music may be expressed vocally, chorally, instrumentally, a cappella, or by sign-ing. This rich mosaic of musical genres reflects the colorful vision of **Jerry Warren**, who has served as BOL’s Minister of Music for the past 12 years and is one of the area’s most sought-after musicians. Jerry spends nearly every waking hour and his boundless energy thinking of innovative ways to bring glory to God each week through the powerful medium of the creative arts. We probed his philosophy about musical ministry and its impact on the worship experience and the life of the church.

BOL: What are the goals of the music ministry at BOL?

Jerry: We always aim to exalt the name of Christ; instruct and lead believers into a worship experience; provide a platform and opportunity for Christian artists to share their gifts of ministry; and to help every church musician and vocalist to understand the seriousness of their calling as a “temple minstrel,” under the anointing of 1 Chronicles 15:16-22.

BOL: How long have you served as a Minister of Music, and how do you view your specific role?

Jerry: I have served as a Minister of Music for some 30 years now for various SDA churches (12 years at BOL) and for other Christian fellowships. I see my role as a ministry of “helps” (assistance) to the pastor, the local church, and the body of Christ at-large. Aside from planning and preparing music, I also minister to members of the flock.

BOL: How important is the role of music in the life of the church, particularly in the worship experience?

Jerry: The role of sacred music is very important to the body of Christ, because it binds us together as a community of believers. Music confirms our faith and shared beliefs, especially in the singing of hymns. Music lifts the human spirit and heals the brokenhearted. God requires euphony and realms of praise before His throne (Isaiah 6:1-4). But the main reason music is essential to any worship experience is its power to draw the very presence of the Holy Spirit into our mortal sphere. A worship service without music would be like the Sahara Desert . . . dry!

BOL: What is your assessment of the quality, diversity and impact of the music at BOL?


Jerry: The quality of music is superb, because the musicians are extraordinarily talented, and they present their very best musical offering to the Lord first and foremost. That blessing trickles down to us in the congregation. Also our musicians and singers are attuned to what’s happening in the moment and capture that through appropriate selections. We have always encouraged musical diversity at BOL, because—simply put—too much of one thing would drive us all mad! I would

like to see more genres of music played in all of our churches. This is important, because the musical tastes of the saints vary, and *everyone* should be fed. That’s why we even diversify the guest artists who perform here. There’s not a week that goes by that someone doesn’t share how the music blessed them. What’s given from the heart reaches the heart.

BOL: What’s next on the musical horizon at BOL?

Jerry: Of course, by popular demand, a CD project would fit the bill. But along with that, I would like to see the formation of “Holy Hit Squads”—teams of musicians going into homes, hospitals, jails, and rehab clinics with gospel in song. BOL does that to an extent with our praise and worship outreach at retirement homes, but I would like to see that expanded.

BOL: What are your thoughts about “Praise & Worship,” which many churches incorporate into their services?

Jerry: We are currently looking at incorporating this form of adoration to the Lord into our worship. However the term, “Praise & Worship,” is inaccurate, as it tends to isolate a particular segment of worship from the rest of the service, which should also be praiseful and worshipful. As we move in this direction, we don’t want to repackage “song service,” nor do we want bystanders in the congregation admiring the beauty of the music. It’s all about engagement and invoking the presence and power of God for the healing, deliverance and encouragement of the people . . . all to His glory! 

BOL MUSIC DEPARTMENT
 Jerry Warren, *Minister of Music*
 Committee: Clarence Brown ~ Sheron Petrie ~ Sonya Sampson

CHORAL GROUPS & DIRECTORS
 BOL Singers ~ Kevin Henderson
 Children’s Choir ~ Dawn Arceneaux
 Todd Co. ~ Eric Todd

RESIDENT MUSICIANS
 Keyboards: Shelea Kyle ~ Kevin Nickelson ~ Sean-Anthony Todd
 Organs: Justin Wilson ~ Clarence Brown ~ Judy Brown
 Drums: Gentry “Tray” Richardson
 Bass: Keith Harris ~ Chris Watkins ~ John Steward