

Features



A Joyful Noise

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Barb Rice has loved music as far back as she can remember, and she notes that her long-term memory is still credible. Barb enjoys most types of music with the exception of rap, hip-hop, etc.

Barb says, “I have such an admiration for anyone who can write, play instruments, and sing. I’m almost jealous which isn’t exactly a trait I like in myself or in others.”

Barb believes music is a wonderful, joyous way to worship. Barb claims she can be a little “Methacoastal” when it comes to music; she explains that that’s a blend of Methodist/Pentecostal. She can hardly sit still at times when hearing the likes of Buddy Heaton, Geneva Accord, Debbie Stogsdill, Delissa Sitze, Mary Ruth Boone, Gayle Clippard, Rosemary Walker, Tony Thorn, Dale Williams, and Eric Pendergrass. All are great local artists.

Barb feels there are many more in our area who are talented with their varied instruments. Also, Barb feels we have awesome singers in this area. She mentions Maggie Thorn and family, Rebecca Northern, Cis William and Dale, members of Ringer Hill group. Barb says, “These are just a few of many that I am familiar with due to them singing at Trinity quite often.”

There is also music/musicians periodically at the nutrition centers in both Bloomfield and Dexter. “Even of the throes of whatever I may be experiencing at any particular time, music calms and speaks to my spirit. Both in joy and in sorrow,” Barb explains.

“A few months ago, I was invited to join a group that has brought me much joy, the Dexter Senior Choir.” Barb says to say that the group has been a blessing in her life would be putting it too mildly.

The Dexter Senior Choir consists of approximately twenty-five people. The youngest being in their early sixties, and the eldest being in their mid to late eighties. Among the group, there is one married couple, Bob and Barb Gillespie. Barb says the group has a couple more men, and most others are widowed.

Barb once heard someone say there were fourteen different churches represented in the choir.

The Dexter Senior Choir sings each Monday at 2:30 P.M. for an hour at Central Gardens assisted living facility in Dexter. Each Thursday at noon, the group performs at the Dexter Nutrition Center, and at 2:00 P.M. is alternated between Crowley Ridge, Golden Living Center, and Cypress Point.

The leaders of the choir are: Marida Atherton, director; and Geneva Acord, pianist.

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The group sings out of hymnbooks such as Heavenly Highway, and the residents are always invited to select their favorite songs. "It is such a blessing to have the residents join us in song. At Central Gardens, a few of the residents join the choir, and many of them sing along."

Barb says about the residents, "They're always complimentary of our efforts. I have noted while singing at these facilities that even though some may have suffered the loss of memory, eyesight, and hearing, they can still recall every word of a hymn. There's certainly a lesson in life here, or maybe a sermon in song."

The choir has sung at various churches, revival meetings, bereavement services, and nutrition centers. Barb has a difficult time expressing how much joy the special group of friends brings to her. She says, "There are some awesome singers, soloists, even 'scrap iron' quartets that our leaders choose at random to sing together."

When the choir isn't making a joyful noise, or fails to sing from the heart, the leaders stop them and they do it again until they get it as close to right as possible.

"Anyone who knows these two ladies realizes their powerful witness for the Lord that has blessed them with such talent and ability which they freely offer back to Him. They remind me of the energizer bunny," comments Barb on the two leaders.

Harold Zimmerman and Tom Arnold often assist with the music on their guitars as well as helping out with special music. Judy Acord sets up the equipment along with Sandee Durham, who keeps up with hymnals and sheet music. Mary Lou Northern

often bakes cookies for the choir, something everyone eagerly appreciates.

“I would love to name each choir member, but fearful I would forget someone, I won’t make that attempt. I will just say that each person does a great job and has a special place in my heart,” Barb says compassionately.

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Several of the group members close out their time of singing by gathering at one of the local fast food spots to eat, talk, laugh, and settle the world’s problems. Barb says the choir has had a positive effect on her life by ministering to others, and making friends with those who are also widowed or single.

Barb closes by saying, “Our goal in being choir members is to bring praise and glory to our Savior because without Him, none of us would be able to sing. We probably won’t be asked to sing on a Gaither video, but this group gets as much joy in the places we do sing as that would bring us. It’s the joyful noise that counts, and we do that part well!”

The Dexter Senior Choir invites anyone who would like to, to come out and join them anytime, anyplace. They would love to have you join them in making a joyful noise. Barb Rice guarantees a blessing.

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Written by Unknown

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