

CrossPoint is a contemporary church with a rock band format





Frank Hart serves as the worship leader and music director at CrossPoint Community Church



St. Peter's has a traditional music format that compliments the liturgical services, but also has a wide variety of eclectic music



Wayne Fancher serves as music minister to more than 5,000 people each Sunday



The music program at Second Baptist consists of an orchestra, youth band, contemporary praise band, and several other groups

Katy's Music Ministers

Gift of SONG

Katy is a better place thanks to the music ministries of area churches.

Written by Melanie Saxton and Photos by Kenzie dela Torre

Along with his work at the church, Galasso is finishing his doctoral studies



Regardless of denomination, Sunday mornings ring with the sound of music. Instruments add a special component to every service, and songs flow as voices throughout congregations join in praise. It's this gift of song that makes the efforts of staff and volunteers so worthwhile. Scratch the surface of any service, and beneath beats the heart of a worship leader, a music director, a music pastor, a music minister, or a music coordinator. Lay titles aside, and each holds the key to the mood and tone of the service.

David Galasso, St. Peter's UMC Touching Hearts with Music

At St. Peter's, music touches people in profound ways. "Music is an incredibly powerful ministry," says David Galasso, Director of Music Ministries. "You never know what people are struggling with. I've seen grown men in tears." In the grand scheme of things, Galasso believes that people are blessed both by singing and by hearing the song. "To be able to offer something meaningful to our brothers and sisters in Christ blesses everyone." Most importantly, music touches people and opens their hearts to receive the sermon. "We have a traditional music format that compliments our liturgical services. But we also have a wide variety of eclectic music." The variety ensures that nothing gets stale. "Expressing ourselves through music is a calling. We meet as a worship staff and talk about how it all fits together - the hymns, vocalists, choirs, and the message," says Galasso. "The point is to praise the Lord and worship Him. We all seek a closer relationship with God and Jesus Christ. Music is one venue that enhances our walk."

Beyond the Sound

There is more to the music ministry at St. Peter's. Much more, in fact. Galasso oversees a large span of endeavors and volunteers. Virtually all the musical aspects of St. Peter's are his responsibility. The organist, accompanist, soloist, chancel choir, youth choir (7th through 12th grade), orchestra, men's ensemble, music staff, and volunteers all look to him for leadership. Gale Shipley and Sue Lieberman coordinate the women's ensemble, children's choir (preschool through 5th grade) and 6th grade choir. "We have a large body of servants. Our staff and volunteers feel it's a privilege to be able to serve others through song and music." Galasso is married to Gail and they have four sons ranging in age from 11 to 26. He's judged All-State choirs and worked with Andre Previn, an award-winning composer, pianist, and conductor. He was a member of the group Robert Shaw Singers and the Light Opera Company in Ohio. He's already received his Master's degree and is about to finish his doctoral studies.

Frank Hart, CrossPoint Alternative Inspiration

"We're not being different, we're being obedient," says Frank Hart of CrossPoint Community Church. As a Worship Leader and Music Director, Hart oversees the music at Sunday morning services. "We have a rock band format," says Hart, who sings and plays the guitar. CrossPoint is a contemporary church. Music is its unifying force. "Music gets inside you and touches deep places. Through music our entire congregation unifies as one body, one heart, one soul," says Hart. "It's beautiful to recognize what God has done in our lives, in our history, and through His promises. Through song, His promises are set to music." Hart meets with his pastors prior to each service to work out the tone, subject and theme. "We choose music that accomplishes an objective," says Hart. "We sing standard praise songs and modern hymns. And we always do a secular song as a tone-builder, just before the sermon." People outside of CrossPoint

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More Notable Musicians

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AJ Bass

Grace Fellowship United Methodist Church
2655 South Mason Rd. • whatisgrace.org

Walt Brown

First Baptist Church of Katy
600 Pin Oak Rd. • fbckaty.com

John Cordes

The Fellowship at Cinco Ranch
22765 Westheimer Pkwy. • thefellowship.org

Darren Hall

Life Church
2610 Greenbusch Rd. • lifechurchkaty.org

Jeremy Howard

Westland Baptist Church
1407 W. Grand Parkway S. • westlandcc.com

Mark Wells

Redeemer Community Church
24201 Cinco Ranch Blvd. • redeemercommunity.org

may wonder why secular music is included in a worship service. But Hart uses it to introduce the topic and to give an emotional touch point. "Our Western culture has an enormous lexicon of music that we've processed deeply into our subconscious. At CrossPoint, we draw upon that cultural soundtrack and apply it to a message."

Worship Through Music

People jump in to share their talents. "Volunteers are at the heart of what we do," says Hart. "We train them to a professional level in technology, drums, bass, guitar, keyboard, or singing. We rehearse on Thursday nights to prepare for Sundays." A couple of times each month an informal adult choir joins the band onstage. "Joey Lizotte oversees the music ministry at our Seven Lakes sister church and mirrors our worship format at Westgreen," says Hart. "The word 'worship' translated in the Greek means 'bow,'" says Hart. "That paints a picture of what we do when confronted with someone greater than ourselves." Frank Hart is married to Kim, his junior high sweetheart and is blessed with two young children. A graduate of Central Bible College in Missouri, he's also been a member of Atomic Opera, a recording artist with Warner Brothers in the 1990's, and frequently blogs at ancienttruthmodernsound.com.

Wayne Fancher, Second Baptist Embracing Music

"Music and powerful moments go hand-in-hand," says Wayne Fancher, music minister of Second Baptist. "Just read the Book of Acts. As a result of praying and singing, Paul and Silas were set free from prison. Rather than escaping, the other inmates stayed put. And the jailor wanted to commit suicide, but instead became a Christian." This is just one of many Biblical examples of God's love of music. With upwards of 5,000 people worshipping at Second Baptist west campus every Sunday, the congregation embraces music. "We have wonderfully involved and gifted people at Second Baptist. The Book of James says, 'Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of joy.' And we do! The theme of our music ministry comes from Psalms 150 - 'Let everything that has breath praise the Lord,'" says Fancher.

Speaking to the Soul

According to Fancher, music speaks to the hurts and hopes of each soul. "Music is vertical as we express ourselves and horizontal as we encourage others. John 4:23 says 'The Lord is seeking those who worship Him.' That's what our praise and worship services are all about - drawing closer to our Lord and Savior." Fancher has a wide range of responsibilities. He gets passages in advance of sermons, prays for guidance, then ties the music portion of each service together thematically, by key structures and by feel. He also considers what the choirs are going to do. "We have an orchestra, a youth band, a contemporary praise band, an adult choir, ensembles, praise teams, and hand bells. We also have sound technicians and others who make our music possible. We know music is dear to God. There's music in heaven and around God's throne." Wayne Fancher is married to Renee and they have three children, two in high school and one still in junior high. He did his undergraduate studies at Mississippi State University, graduate studies and some conducting at the University of Kentucky, and received his Master's in Music at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth. He was the director of Continental Singers & Orchestra in California, served at First Baptist Church of Katy for 17 years, and has been with Second Baptist for six years now. **KM**

MELANIE SAXTON is a local area writer and editor, community volunteer, and proud mom of daughter, Emily.