

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Myra Trask Selected As New Director Of Music At First Baptist Church Of Birmingham

First Baptist Church of Birmingham is pleased to announce that Myra Trask has been selected as the Church's new Director of Music. She started mid August. Jack Ellis, who served as the Church's Director of Music and Organist for 28 years, retired in January.

Pastor Scott Runyon affirmed her selection. "Based on her combination of skill and passion for music ministry, she rose to the top among a very talented and accomplished pool of applicants," he said.



Myra Trask, the new Director of Music of First Baptist Church of Birmingham plays the church's Mason & Hamlin grand piano.

Trask's goal is to expand the music offerings at First Baptist by incorporating into worship more diversity of styles and participation. She is excited to mix into the schedule a range of ages and talents from instrumentalists, to smaller ensembles and soloists, in addition to the Choir and Bell Choir that contribute to the worship experience.

Trask's vision is beyond the Sunday morning worship schedule. She intends to collaborate more with other churches in the American Baptist denomination and locally of other denominations, and create other music events that can enrich people's lives.

Her musical philosophy is rooted in her deep sense of faith with an appreciation for the profound impact of music. "Church music is an integral part of the worship service. It sets the tone of worship and often is even more powerful than the words spoken," she said.

The content of music is also paramount for Trask. "Church musicians are leaders in worship rather than performers. The focus should always be the message of the music which is based on sound theological principals."

Trask has served previously as Music Director or Organist for a number of congregations in various denominations through the years, most recently serving as serving as Organist at Central United Methodist Church in Waterford Michigan..

Trask has a BA degree in Fine Arts from Judson University, Elgin, Illinois. She regularly interacts with other church musicians as a member of the Fellowship of American Baptist Musicians and as past board member and President of the Detroit Chapter of the Choristers Guild.

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Church To Explore New Ministry In Birmingham

At the same time the Music Search Committee was doing its work, First Baptist Church of Birmingham also has had a Pastor Search Committee seeking to add another key staff member — a second pastor with the title Minister of Community Engagement.

This position is key for the church to explore and develop a fresh, creative, and new expression of faith community in Birmingham. The plan is for the new ministry to not be limited by the patterns of the current congregation or the past, but instead tailored to the current needs and life of people in the community.

The congregation is open for this effort to take on a unique form that is very different from a traditional Christian church organization and worship experience.

So, what will it look like? The church is open and trusting God's Spirit to lead in a dynamic way to create something new under the leadership of the new pastor.

The Minister of Community Engagement position is not yet filled, but the congregation looks forward to pioneering new ministry in and for the Birmingham community while continuing to tweak and update their current service, programs, and organization.

"Through history, the Church has never been static," said Scott Runyon, Pastor of First Baptist Church of Birmingham. "From the moment go, when the Church was born in the first century and right up to this day, it has been experiencing growing pains, challenges, and breakthroughs as each new generation reimagines how faith can be expressed in their world. Now is our season to reimagine the Church!"

"Some lament the shrinking membership of congregations throughout the country," said Runyon. "However, I see it differently. We are simply going through a sorting process and can come through stronger than ever. I firmly believe the best days of the Church are in our future."