



“Angels in our midst”

Barry Kitchen



Barry is a wonderful musician. As our organist and pianist he brings such an enormous gift of musical talent to our worship services.

Not what one might imagine as a typical and traditional church organist, our Barry!

He delights in leading us in singing ‘Happy Birthday’ when we learn, during announcements, that it’s someone’s special day. Or, like a few weeks ago, when he did an impromptu rendition of the Gilligan’s Island theme during the offering, after a reference to Gilligan during Bev’s sermon. And you should have been there last Sunday when he offered up a jaw-dropping arrangement of ‘Classical Gas’ as the postlude – playing the piano together with his pre-recorded accompaniment on the organ. Pretty awesome!!

Here are some of the things our congregants say when asked, “What do you like about Barry?”:

“Barry is amazing! As a church musician, he is always “in tune” to the needs of the service. If there is a lull in the service, Barry will play appropriate music to fill in the quiet time. After each sermon, we have time for reflection, and Barry always plays appropriate music - maybe one verse of an appropriate hymn while the congregation ponders the message of the sermon. We have witnessed Barry switch entirely what he “planned” to play, to what is appropriate at the moment (e.g. Gilligan’s Island theme song). His witty choices are always received with warmth and a smile.

Barry is a quiet leader. His role in music ministry is major, but he quietly and unassumingly leads the hymns and responses with authority.

As a former choir director, I was always happy to know that I could ask Barry questions about choral music, and he would help me out with timing and inflection, and in any other area where I needed assistance. His ESP ability to be able to just tell what was happening with the choir - maybe I didn't bring them in on time, or even early - Barry was always aware, and modified his accompaniment to support the situation. More than once, he would play an extra bar of music when he saw the look of panic in my eyes because I had not brought the choir in on time!

Barry is also supportive of other musicians who enhance our Sunday worship. He willingly accompanies violinists, flautists, guitarists, drummers, and others, for special music. He also encourages our younger musicians, and will invite them to play their instrument of choice during the taking of the offering, or other appropriate times during the service.

Barry always has time/makes time for extra practices with either the choir, special musicians or vocalists. His knowledge of music is never-ending.

AND he does all this without a complaint. We love Barry, and he loves what he does. We are so blessed to have Barry in our community and as a member of the Whitehorse United Church family"

"What I like about Barry is.....

- His unfailing good natured manner and willingness to contribute in so many ways to the life of our church family.*
 - That he shares with us his fabulous talent, with such sensitive, beautiful touch and feeling.*
 - The postludes - they are all fantastic - and the wave and bow that follows them.*
 - The Christmas tie!*
 - His sense of humour."*
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"What I like about Barry is his endless patience and kindness. His generosity and his sense of true whimsy. His seemingly endless supply of cool ties. His laugh."

"What I like about Barry is his incredible musical talent and his incredible lack of ego. Love ya, Barry!"

"In addition to his great skill at the keyboard, Barry brings humour and warmth to his wonderful musical offerings every Sunday. He shows great patience with those of us who need to "hear" the notes repetitively during choir practice."

“Where to start?? I like the way Barry provides such strong, quiet leadership, always there to step in as needed in the music of the church, whether it is leading the choir, playing ad lib to fill in a gap, preparing those marvelous postludes. And he does it all in such a self-effacing manner that sometimes we don't even realize what a gem he is.”

“What I like about Barry is his generosity of spirit. Even though he is such a talented and accomplished musician, he never makes other musicians feel anything but welcome and part of the team. He has a great sense of humour too.”

“Barry always seems to find a way in his busy schedule to join in with every musical scheme we come up with. Whether it's transposing music for the 'church band', accompanying a quartet or a soloist, working with the children's Christmas Pageant – the list goes on – Barry is there! He is truly a blessing.”



Look up, Barry. Your halo is shining!