

*The Music Ministry of Messiah Lutheran Church presents
A 'Bob Gustafson' Production of:*

**WOODTICK
THEATER**

The Choir Goes
COUNTRY

**6:00 P.M. | SEP 8, 2018
MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH | MADISON, AL**

~ A Benefit Dinner Show ~



**LEAP
ACADEMY**

LEAP Academy is an educational program to help student Leaders Emerge with Amazing Potential. Learn more at leap-academy.org - a 501c(3) Non-profit Organization

LEAP Academy is a 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable organization that supports innovative public school programs specifically designed to give children the tools needed to deal with adverse circumstances in their lives.

We believe that it is both a tremendous blessing and an awesome responsibility to educate every student so that they may live a life that is rewarding for both them and their community.

Programs supported by The LEAP Academy strive to teach their students to live by the following ten principles:

- I can play a role in defining my own destiny.
- I will define my goals and put forth my very best to achieve them.
- I will seek to find innovative and imaginative solutions to problems.
- I will use music and the arts to inspire my efforts.
- I will believe that doing good will always come back to me.
- I will act with energy and enthusiasm to lead.
- I will value relationships and recognize their role in everyone's success.
- I will value education because it increases the quality of life.
- I will embrace diversity and believe that everyone is valuable.
- I will serve my community.

Thank you for your support!

Learn more:

www.leap-academy.org

If you would like to make a tax-deductible gift to LEAP Academy this evening, feel free to use the donation envelopes found by the entrance doors before you leave.

We welcome and seek corporate partners who believe in the goals of LEAP Academy!

PRODUCER COMMENTS

One May morning, while wondering what the MLC 2018 choir show was going to be, I thought of the shows of the past, including one from before I became a member where there were western songs, performed in the Fellowship Hall. It was good – I still remember it. So, I thought, it is time for another show of country music.

At the same time, I thought that a tongue-in-cheek show, performed in the “Woodtick Theater” would be an interesting concept. Then came the concept of a show within a show – which gave me a plot. Tonight’s show is the result of those musings.

The concept is that every Saturday night, the Woodtick Theater would broadcast a radio performance of some show over the local, low power AM WHAT Radio Station (1517 on your Lutheran radio dial). There would be lots of country/western songs, sung by members of the choir, interspersed with humorous readings.

There is no question that we have the talent in the church for such a show. And, Paul Zutter has the equipment and talent for the technical requirement. The only question was, “Will the choir and contemporary combo members endorse the concept?” Fortunately, both the performers and Paul Zutter agreed.

I decided to pitch the concept to Lois for the 2019 show. She liked the concept, but moved it into 2018 rather than next year. This show is the result of the efforts of the people listed in the program, learning music, spending evenings in rehearsals, and finally singing and reciting for you. Terry took the announcer’s script and modified it to fit her style. Thank you, Terry.

Enjoy the show! - *Bob*

HIS-STORY OF THE WOODTICK THEATER

The best time to find the Woodtick Theater is on a late Saturday afternoon. To find the theater, start at the center of Nashville, drive to the outskirts of the city and continue for another 20 miles. As you come over the top of the hill, an expanse of a valley is before you, mainly rolling farm country, with several large groves of trees. In one of them is what appears to be an old barn. Follow the country lane to that grove. What's in that grove is not a barn, but a rustic building about the size of a barn, unpainted, with a chimney at one end, and maybe smoke curling up through the trees. If there is smoke, you are in luck, because that means that Chef Greg is preparing for the Saturday evening dinner theater show.

By now you probably ask yourself. Is this real? Does it exist? The answer is, Yes, it does, at least in the bizarre mind of the creator of this show! So welcome to the Woodtick Theater. Relax and eat the enjoyable meal prepared for you by our kitchen volunteers and enjoy the show presented by the Messiah Lutheran Church adult choir.

TONIGHT'S ENTERTAINMENT

Give Me That Old Time Religion African-American Spiritual
MLC Vocal Ensemble

Prop Me Up Next to the Jukebox Joe Diffie
Recorded by Don Palmer

Walkin' After Midnight Alan W. Block
Laura Peterson with MLC Vocal Ensemble

Take me Home, Country Roads John Denver
Gerry Myers with MLC Vocal Ensemble

Cool Water Bob Nolan
Neely Family Singers

Jackson Billy Edd Wheeler and Gaby Rogers
Audrey and Bob Gustafson

Always On My Mind Hank Williams
Andrew King with ensemble

Crazy Willie Nelson
Anisa Montgomery

- Intermission -

Entr'acte Arranged by Ric Birdsong
Country Combo

Ring of Fire June Carter Cash and Merle Kilgore
Recorded by Don Palmer

You Are My Sunshine Jimmie Davis and Charles Mitchell
Dick Azzam

Grandma's Feather Bed John Denver
Laura Peterson, with MLC Vocal Ensemble

Your Cheatin' Heart Hank Williams
Rebecca Kollmeyer

Foolin' Round Harlan Howard and Buck Owens
Natalie Tidwell

Amazing Grace Arranged by Randall Fields
MLC Vocal Ensemble

CAST and OTHER PERSONNEL

Announcer: Terry Frakes

Story Teller: Jean Stuart

Other Spoken Roles: Bob Gustafson

Chorus Director: Randall Fields

Technical Director: Paul Zutter

Radio Station Engineer: Lee Seitz

Sound and Lighting Assistants: Stephen and William Strand

Stage Hand: Jacob Huwaldt

Singers: Adam Neely, Anisa Montgomery, Art Rockett, Audrey Gustafson, Andrew King, Barbara Azzam, Dick Azzam, Gerry Myers, Heather Neely, Jan Murphy, Larry Frakes, Laura Peterson, Marc Neely, Linda Zutter, Natalie Tidwell, Aleksey Smith, Bob Gustafson, Rebecca Kollmeyer

Orchestra "Country Combo" Ric Birdsong, Group Leader and Rhythm Guitar; Paul Zutter, Bass Guitar; Lois Graff, Keyboard; Rob Alferink, Percussion

Publicity, Program, and Tickets: Meredith Kilby

Woodtick Theater Decorations and Table Décor: Linda Zutter

BEHIND THE SCENES - BIOGRAPHIES

Rob Alferink I have dabbled in music in various stages of my life, beginning with some early piano lessons, singing in choirs a little later, and then progressing to stringed instruments with a short stint in guitar lessons in high school. Life took over and several years later after graduation from college, I once again picked up an old beat-up guitar and began to teach myself as best I could. About 8 years later, I was searching for bandmates to “jam” and realized that I did not know any drummers. So a drummer I became! I picked up drumsticks for the first time around 2008. My lovely wife, Rebbecca, will tell you the early years were not pretty. I stuck with it though and have since joined a few bands, including the MLC contemporary music group. I became part of the MLC contemporary music group late in 2016 thanks in large part to Stephen Strand and the encouragement of Lois Graff. Many thanks go out to the entire MLC group (and congregation) for bearing with a novice drummer in those early days. And many, many thanks for my wife and two sons, Michael and Matthew, for putting up with the time I need by myself for practices. To this day, I continue to practice weekly with fellow MLC musicians Paul Zutter, Stephen Strand, and Bob Davis. I enjoy playing MLC contemporary services which have stretched my abilities. I am excited at performing my very first country set during The Choir Goes Country!

Ric Birdsong I started out in a school band program back in 1967 learning the trombone and branched out to the Euphonium and Sousaphone in Jr. High for marching band. Then I traded my go-cart for my first guitar in the eighth grade and started hanging around some really good players who showed me how to jam. I started my first rock band in 1972 playing homecoming celebrations, after-proms, and the like until I went to college at Southern Illinois University where I majored in Music Ed./trombone. There I learned trumpet, clarinet, and piano while utilizing SIUE’s renowned Jazz program to hone theoretical and improvisational skills on both the guitar and trombone, and I did a little singing. Professionally, one of my rock bands made some waves playing in clubs which got to be a bit much, having to take biology tests and all in the morning. So I got into a wedding (reception) band playing weekends and making good money. I stopped when I graduated and became a school band director for seven years. During that time, I got my Master’s degree in Counselor Ed./Community Counseling and the later became my lifelong profession until my recent retirement. I’ve continued playing music on weekends professionally in that time, mostly in St. Louis area

cover bands, three of which had prosperous four-year-runs. Since coming to the Huntsville area, it's been mostly acoustic music work in coffee houses, studio recording, and you'll see me here at Messiah on the third Sunday of the month for our Contemporary Christian service. I also sit in with Praise Bands throughout Northern Alabama.

Randall Fields is the Choir Director at Messiah Lutheran Church. He also teaches chorus and class piano at Bob Jones High School, serves as Youth Repertoire and Resources Chair for Alabama chapter of American Choral Directors Association, and is President-Elect of the Alabama Vocal Association. A recent recipient of the Huntsville Youth Orchestra's Educator of the Year Award, he holds degrees from The University of Alabama. Randall is honored to be a part of the music ministry of Messiah Lutheran Church, and looks forward to a fun show as the Lutheran choir goes country!

Lois Graff A country girl since birth (once a farm girl, always a farm girl!), my parents listened to classical, sacred, jazz standards, and a splash of country. Music was always a big part of our lives and piano lessons began at the age of 4. Choosing between a math emphasis and a music emphasis, the latter won out in the end and I pursued a music degree. Thrilled to be teaching, playing, directing, composing and working in ministry, I serve as Director of Music Ministries at Messiah Lutheran Church, have a piano studio of over 30, and accompany individuals, and middle and high school choirs for concerts and competitions. 'Wearing different hats' is exciting, rewarding, and challenging. Gus has written another entertaining and hilarious show! And I am enjoying playing with fellow combo musicians Ric, Paul and Rob and working with the other talented people involved in *The Choir Goes Country!*

Bob "Gus" Gustafson Back in 1999 I retired from gainful employment with the expectation that I could enjoy some years of just having fun. That was provided by Messiah Lutheran Church with their absolutely wonderful group of people. So, I wrote a show. "The Unexpected Visitors" which exceeded my expectations because of the great group of qualified performers and technical people. It has been several years since I promised Audrey, "never again", so I wrote another show. Again, I am impressed with the capabilities of our congregation. From Ric and his musicians, to the technical staff, Meredith and the church staff, Greg and his helpers, and finally, Lois, Randall and the singers. I spent lots of time laughing these last few months while working on the script and music. Enjoy the show.

Greg Kilby My training as chief cook and bottle washer started in 1981 with the slinging of burgers, pancakes, and omelets for Perkins Restaurant. I really enjoyed that but the pay was not very good so I joined the Army. After 28 years of doing Army things, Meredith and I settled in Madison and I have been cooking at Messiah since. Every event takes a team of volunteers and at Messiah, folks readily volunteer to help out! Kitchen prep sessions are lively and fun. The decoration and set up crew always make the event space festive. If you're interested in helping out, there's definitely room for you at a future event!

Lee Seitz Lee's family joined Messiah in 2004 and he's been surprised by what he's volunteered for since. He rings bells with the bell choir, has "acted" in two dinner theater shows, and now is learning how to use expensive sound equipment. He's very thankful to his church family for humoring his attempts at such things.

Paul Zutter "The Choir Goes Country" makes my theatrical debut as a bass player and musician. I've been involved with the technical side of music since 1979, when a buddy wanted to form a rock band. I tried playing bass in this band, but having no music experience or training, I didn't do well at all. I then found myself on the technical side of the band building light control panels, lighting and sound reinforcement systems. This was my hobby throughout high school which I gave up the fall of 1982 to focus on my college studies in electrical engineering. Upon my arrival at MLC in 1996, somehow this hobby was realized and I became involved supporting dinner theater events, facility expansions and began to rebuild my personal inventory of sound and lighting equipment. I still enjoy this technical side of music! During the setup of the MLC sanctuary expansion in 2012, John Shriver convinced me I needed to learn to play an instrument. Since then, I have been learning to play bass guitar and the creative side of music. I enjoying playing bass for MLC contemporary services and learning to play these country tunes has been an interesting challenge. Much thanks and appreciation to John Shriver for encouraging me to play bass, as well as Bob Davis, Mike McAlister, Ric Birdsong, Stephen Strand, Rob Alferink and Lois Graff for having patience with me as my teachers and mentors. Most importantly, I thank Linda for being supportive and my #1 fan.