

OLD NORTH CHURCH
Music Patrons Fund
8 Stacey Street, Marblehead, MA 01945

May 2025

Dear Friends,

I hope this finds you very well – restored after several long winter months, motivated by the gorgeous days, colors, and sounds of spring, and anticipating a wonderful and relaxing summer. How blessed we are to be surrounded by such beauty here in New England!

As I approach the conclusion of my 36th year as *Minister of Music* at Old North Church, rather than reflect on the last many months and years of extraordinary musical accomplishments, I'd prefer to enthuse about the future! I am thankfully aware that the ever-growing, constantly reaching, always vitalizing, and enthusiastically embraced nature of my work at Old North has been an essential cornerstone throughout my tenure. Of course, I cherish my countless and deep friendships with you – the members of our congregation – but I am especially grateful that you value our music program and continue to allow me to grow and flourish in this musically precious environment.

Speaking of flourishing, the annual ***Music Patrons Fund*** initiative is essential to our musical journey here at Old North. As always, our collection will coincide with the 10am service on ***Music Sunday*** (known as ***Jazz Sunday***) – this year, taking place on **Sunday, May 11, 2025**.

We have an extraordinary jazz feast prepared! Internationally-acclaimed jazz artists – Mark Shilansky, *piano*, Dave Clark, *bass*, and Jeff Stout, *trumpet* – will provide an electrifying prelude and postlude, while our gifted soloists and Senior Choir have prepared truly exhilarating musical contributions. Of course, the congregation will be invited to join in singing throughout the worship service – I can promise you that you will not be able to sit still – so please feel free to invite family and friends on Sunday, May 11!

Our general church budget supports many core elements of the music program we all deeply cherish at Old North, but certainly not the *entire* program. Many of the musical events we provide, present, and produce – which minister to the entire community – ultimately depend upon you and your generous gift to the ***Music Patrons Fund***. We describe our ***Music Patrons Fund*** as a revolving account, supporting *special* music throughout the church year, including: Jazz Sunday, an entire worship service devoted to sacred jazz and gospel music; Thanksgiving, Advent, and Christmas services; and Easter services with brass and timpani. One such “special” service was the Installation of our Reverend Lindsay Popperson in October. Thanks to the Patrons Fund, a fabulous trombone quartet provided exhilarating music for such a significant occasion in our church history. One important clarification: our annual Festival Chorus Christmas Concerts are funded separately and do not rely on support from the Old North Church budget or the Music Patrons Fund.

The ***Music Patrons Fund*** also provides partial funding for the annual Lenten Choral Concert on the evening of Palm Sunday. Our recent Lenten Choral Concert – which featured Dan Forrest's *Requiem For the Living* – included over 70 singers accompanied by an outstanding orchestra, a breathtakingly-beautiful harp prelude, and a most appreciative and enthusiastic 300 fans in attendance! Sprinkled throughout the season are other remarkable and unique musical events supported by the ***Music Patrons Fund***, including performances by acclaimed string quartets, jazz pianists, brass players, classical guitarists, African drummers, and others.

While I firmly believe that the Old North Church community enjoys and appreciates all types of music – many, in fact, *love* music – as evidenced by my 36-year tenure, it is your ongoing commitment to support the quality and variety of our music program that I find truly inspiring. As the next chapter of our Old North journey unfolds, I am energized by the prospect of providing consistency and growth in our music program, and I am deeply moved by the rich connections that are made through the physical and spiritual acts of music making.

On behalf of the hard-working Music Ministry Board, it is my sincere hope that you will attend ***Jazz Sunday*** on May 11, 2025, and support our vibrant music program with a gift to our ***Music Patrons Fund***. A special collection will take place on this occasion – with labeled envelopes provided for your convenience – but you are also welcome to mail your contribution. While we accept donations at any time of the year, our May collection helps inform the programming we can provide for the upcoming season (September 2025 through May 2026).

Kindly make your check payable to ***Old North Church***, noting “Music Patrons Fund” in the memo line, and mail to:

Music Committee
Old North Church, 8 Stacey Street, Marblehead, MA 01945

Most importantly, please know that your gift will not only help fund numerous programs which minister to the entire community and preserve our vibrant musical life at Old North, but you will be providing sustenance to so many artists who *still* continue to restore their careers after an unimaginable professional upheaval resulting from the Covid pandemic.

Our Music Ministry Board – Ruth Ann Wallace and Becky Robison (Co-Chairs), Dee Burgett, Pattye Comfort, Nicole Eicker, Kevin Hayden, and Andrew Rodger, as well as Bell Choir Director Liz Smith – join me in *thanking you* for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Maria van Kalken
Minister of Music