



April 10, 2024

A Note from Jeff Rone

**Dear Friends,**

Music has been a passion of mine for as long as I can remember. My mom likes to tell the story of when two-year-old Jeff would toddle around the house singing his ten-year-old sister's piano recital music. This kind of thing is how my mind works. I can't tell you what I had for lunch yesterday, but I can still sing you music that I learned when I was nine in a children's choir that met once a week.

After 20 years of teaching high school choir and 20+ years of serving as a staff musician at a handful of churches, I still love serving at both church and school; it is part of who I am and something that fulfills me day in and day out.

This past Sunday, Pastor April and Lindsay Robinson, our Director of Children's Ministries, shared how HUMC continues to live out our calling to be an inclusive, accepting church through our children's ministries.

Throughout their discussion, they spoke about how a big component of both Godly Play (<https://hilliardumc.org/grow/children/sunday-mornings/>) and the exciting new Vacation Bible School curriculum (<https://hilliardumc.org/vacation-bible-school/>) is about allowing children the space to simply ask questions — to wonder.



**Instead of being spoon-fed a scripted list of beliefs, children are encouraged to discover who they are and what their identity as a child of God looks like.**

Lindsay closed with a series of "I wonder" statements to encourage youth and adults to consider volunteering for VBS, like "I wonder who has a heart for gardening," and "I wonder who has a heart for activism."



As I listened to Lindsay and April speak, I began wondering whether there are people in our congregation, or folks connected to our community somehow, who have musical gifts they could offer for Sunday worship.

I wonder who plays piano, who may not want to play by themselves but might really thrive with a laid back group of people.

I wonder whether there is a cellist, violinist, or violist who would love to play somewhere but isn't sure where to fit in.

I wonder whether there is someone who goes to their basement and plays electric guitar riffs or drum fills to their favorite classic rock songs, but hasn't played out in a while.

Mike Boyers, one of our main drummers, a core member of the Warehouse 839 worship band, and just an all-around great person, used to play out quite a bit and found his way into the worship band right around COVID.

I asked him what it is about being in the band that keeps him coming back: "I feel like it gives back just as much (if not more) to me. Playing music with a group of people is always a special kind of bond, and helping to spread God's love as part of it makes it even more special. The whole process feeds my soul and brings me joy."

I also wonder if there is someone who loves music, listens to all sorts of different genres, likes to geek out on technology, and would love to get plugged in somewhere.



Brian Bradley, our only sound board tech volunteer in Warehouse 839, dabbled in A/V at other churches and saw we had a huge need for volunteers in that area. When I asked him what it was that kept him coming back week after week, he said, "The primary reason I stay engaged is the relationships I've built."

Contrary to the fact that I am a musician by trade and I serve as a staff member at HUMC, Brian and I have the exact same reason for loving what we do at church. **The relationships at HUMC are real, authentic, and far beyond surface level.**

We hear from the pastors pretty much every Sunday:

**"YOU MATTER. Authentic relationships matter here at HUMC."**



This is not a tagline, a gimmick, or something we aspire toward but do not live up to. Authentic relationships are what HUMC is all about. This church is filled with caring, genuine people.

I asked Rachel Porrello, one of our new folks in the congregation, what keeps her coming back to worship at Warehouse 839, and she told me about how comfortable and relatable the people and the space feel. She recently felt like serving in some way and is one of the newest members of the Welcome Team!

So what passion, interest, or gifts could you offer?

**Our Warehouse 839 Worship Band is always open to welcoming new folks.** The band can be made up of any combination of singers, acoustic guitar, electric guitar, drum set, bass guitar, piano, and any solo instrument like violin, viola, cello, flute, saxophone, etc.

**The A/V team is also a vital part of the worship team** and can involve showing the slides, running the cameras for the livestream, and/or running the sound board. David Crone, our staff Tech Director, is a great teacher, so prior experience is not necessary! (Sign up [HERE](#) to get more information.) <https://forms.gle/MJ7fNP2Mk2fnRmpA9>)

**If the worship team is not something that interests you, but you are feeling a nudge to get involved, I want to encourage you to reach out and find a space to volunteer.**

Maybe this is the year you contact Lindsay and help with VBS for the first time, or help with Godly Play (you can come observe first, to check it out — connect with Lindsay Robinson to sign up: <https://hilliardumc.org/people/children-ministry/>).

If smiling and saying hello is something you can do, maybe you could help with the Welcome Team at one of our three services. (<https://hilliardumc.org/serve/serving-within/>)

Perhaps hearing about the Thanksgiving Outreach this year has inspired you to help in 2024, or maybe even volunteer some time at the Hilliard Food Pantry. (<https://hilliardumc.org/serve/serving-beyond/>)

Whatever your gifts may be, serving in any capacity is really a great way to give back to the church and to our community. As Mike put it, “there’s always a good feeling that comes with serving in any way.”

I hope you can find a place to serve that fulfills you as much as HUMC fulfills that passion in me.

Jeff



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