

Announcement of Anthem Dedication
“Songs of Praise” Hymn Festival
February 22, 2015

Featured on today’s program is an anthem composed by our guest conductor Paul Leddington Wright who has chosen the hymn tune WONDROUS LOVE from one of the principal collections of shaped-note tunes in the American South. William Walker of Spartanburg, South Carolina, published this moving text and melody in the second edition of his renowned volume titled *Southern Harmony* in 1840. The tune also appeared in B. F. White’s collection *The Sacred Harp* just four years later. Countless believers since that time have found in this hymn an expression of wonder and awe as they contemplate its text on the sacrifice of God’s only Son in the person of Jesus Christ.

One hundred seventy-five years after Walker’s publication, another Spartanburg native, our own Justin Addington, Director of Music and Worship at SIUMC, has reached the fifth anniversary of his ministry at SIUMC as well as *fifteen* years in music ministry, and is about to observe a special, landmark birthday in just a few days. Several of Justin’s friends felt that the opportunity to commission an anthem in his honor by none other than Paul Leddington Wright was too enticing to pass up, so at this time we want to announce that this new setting of “What Wondrous Love Is This” was composed in Justin’s honor.

A complete list of Justin’s accomplishments would require too lengthy a pause in our program, but we should acknowledge some of them. All his life he has inspired those around him through his talent as an organist and pianist, a choral director, teacher of singing, and vocal soloist. In the brief span of five years here, Justin has earned a master’s degree, overseen the design of a magnificent new organ, brought to our music and worship programs his energy, zeal, and quest for excellence, served as an officer in the Savannah Chapter of the American Guild of Organists, organized and led two Chancel Choir tours, increased the number of children’s and youth choirs, and reached out to the community at large through the *Arts on Skidaway* concert series of which today’s program is a part and through musical contributions to various programs throughout the community.

Many of Justin’s friends and associates have commissioned this piece in his honor, and one of the world’s most ardent champions of the English-language hymn tradition has brought it to life; we hope that he finds it as meaningful and inspiring as his music and his friendship are to us.

Bob Haney, February 22, 2015