

Collections • **Music Teacher**

Ads by Google

**Church Singer**

Learn About Church Singer Yael R. Wurmfeld - See Now!

[www.cambridgeregistry.com](http://www.cambridgeregistry.com)**Tools to grow your church**

Empower your church's mission. Discounts for churches under 2000.

[www.onthecity.org](http://www.onthecity.org)**MORE LIKE THIS »**

An Old Church Pulls Up Its Roots In New Hope Too Many Tourists And Too Little Parking. United Methodist Is Moving Out. September 14, 1999

A Celebration For 'Fat Saturday' February 12, 1999

Out To Fill A Need For Church Musicians April 19, 1999

**FIND MORE STORIES »**

- Music Teacher
- Worship
- Organist
- Music Education

**Blue Bell church organist being honored for five decades of service**

April 02, 2011 | By Kristin E. Holmes, Inquirer Staff Writer

Barbara Ann Green's five-decade tenure as organist of the Grace Baptist Church of Blue Bell began when she was asked to accompany the choir at its historic original site on North Broad Street.

She was 17.

A senior at Friends Select School and a budding musician, Green was tapped to fill in when the church's full-time organist quit.

Since then - March 5, 1961 - Green has played for 3,000 services and retirement is not in her immediate future.

On Saturday, Green, who lives near Lansdale, will be honored for her 50 years of service, which has outlasted four pastors and continued in two church locations.

Ads by Google

**Church Singer**

Learn About Church Singer Yael R. Wurmfeld - See Now!

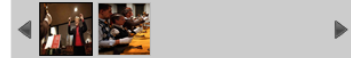
[www.cambridgeregistry.com](http://www.cambridgeregistry.com)**Read "Church Planter"**

Learn church planting from Darrin Patrick— Pastor &amp; Church Planter.

[www.Crossway.org](http://www.Crossway.org)
[Recommend](#)
[Print](#)
[Email](#)
[Facebook](#)
[Twitter](#)
0  
[Tweet](#)

0  
[Digg](#)1 of 2 [View Gallery](#)

Barbara Green, music director at Grace Baptist Church in Blue Bell, leads a bell choir practice. She...

**Signal Fire Conference**

Prepare and Protect Your Ministry. Join Us at Signal Fire On May 12th!

[www.SignalFireConference.com](http://www.SignalFireConference.com)**Online Pastor Degrees**

Pastoral Studies From Home. Earn A Degree. Request Free Info Today!

[eLearners.com](http://eLearners.com)**Tools to grow your church**

Empower your church's mission. Discounts for churches under 2000.

[www.onthecity.org](http://www.onthecity.org)

Ads by Google

"I never felt like a hired hand," said Green, 67. "I'm a member using my talents, and I happen to be the one in charge. It doesn't get any better than working with family and friends at your own church."

Green, who was raised musically in the classical tradition, also directs the church's Sanctuary and Handbell Choirs. She plays every Sunday as well as for special events, such as weddings, funerals, and community concerts.

Green also has worked as a music teacher in public and private schools. She has led community choruses and a singing trio with two friends in the church, and once served as summer music coordinator at Sesame Place.

She sees her role in the church as the accompanist. Despite two degrees in music education and lessons that started when she was 8, Green doesn't consider herself a music virtuoso.

"I don't like to be the show," Green said. "Please don't ask me to play an organ concert."

What she loves to do is plan and implement the musical backdrop for the worship service. "Music determines the feeling you get in a church," Green said.

She is so meticulous about her role in facilitating worship that for years she's kept the sheet music for the Doxology - a hymnal standard - in front of her on the organ, said the Rev. George Hawthorne, church pastor. Green has played the hymn, which is only a few sentences, once a week for 50 years, but she doesn't want to make a mistake.

Each week, Green prepares for church while sitting at her kitchen table. She pulls out music from her messenger bag and begins writing in her black-and-white composition book, selecting music for services.

"Barbara taught me how to plan and plan well," said the Rev. Fred Lewis, former pastor of the church. "While my head was in Christmas, her head was in Easter."

Ads by Google

**Bay City Baptist Church**

Connect with God & Your Community. Join Our Baptist Church Today!

[www.PeoplesBaptistChurchBayCity.com](http://www.PeoplesBaptistChurchBayCity.com)**Freedom Church**

High-Energy, Non-Denominational Church, Meeting in a Movie Theater

[www.freedomchurchphilly.org](http://www.freedomchurchphilly.org)

## Collections • Music Teacher

Ads by Google

[New from Darrin Patrick](#)

"All Church Planters should read this" — Tim Keller. Learn more now.  
[www.Crossway.org](http://www.Crossway.org)

[Employment Job Posting](#)

Find The Right Job Today. 1000s Of Job Postings In Your Area -Free!  
[www.Job.com](http://www.Job.com)

## MORE LIKE THIS »

An Old Church Pulls Up Its Roots In New Hope Too Many Tourists And Too Little Parking. United Methodist Is Moving Out.  
 September 14, 1999

A Celebration For 'Fat Saturday'  
 February 12, 1999

Out To Fill A Need For Church Musicians  
 April 19, 1999

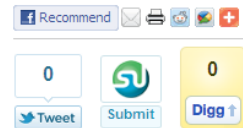
## FIND MORE STORIES »

- Music Teacher
- Worship
- Organist
- Music Education



## Blue Bell church organist being honored for five decades of service

April 02, 2011 | By Kristin E. Holmes, Inquirer Staff Writer



(Page 2 of 2)

Green's roots at the church go back to when her parents, George and Helen Spaeth, joined the congregation, then Grace Baptist Church of Philadelphia. The congregation worshipped at the historic Baptist Temple, which Temple University has since converted into a performance and meeting space.

Green's grandmother - and first baby-sitter - often sang hymns around the house. At 4, Green sang her first solo at the Baptist Temple, but didn't make it through "A Child of the King" before breaking down in tears.

Green took piano lessons and then studied music education at Temple University, earning bachelor's and master's degrees.

Ads by Google

[The True Church](#)

The Church Jesus Founded in AD 31. Learn where it is Located!  
[www.worldtocome.org](http://www.worldtocome.org)

[Online Pastor Degrees](#)

Pastoral Studies From Home. Earn A Degree. Request Free Info Today!  
[eLearners.com](http://eLearners.com)



She became Grace Baptist's music director when the church moved to Blue Bell in the mid-1970s.

Choir members and clergy say Green is skilled at extracting the best performance without embarrassment and hurt feelings.

At a recent practice session of the bell choir, between laughter and music, Green gently, but but firmly, corrected mistakes.

The passage was "a little tentative," she said about one song. "I think you're coming in too soon," she said to one bell ringer.

Frustrations and stress sometimes set in as the pressure of big events approaches, but her respite comes in time spent with her husband, Kenneth, daughters Amy and Kim, and her grandchildren. And Green says she loves the six Sundays she has off each year, when she's likely to be traveling with her husband and friends.

Kenneth Green doesn't see his wife retiring any time soon. Otherwise, there would be a "gigantic hole in her life," he said.

For Barbara Green, 50 is just a number that comes before her 51st year in the musical life of the church.

"I can't see myself giving it up unless I start making a lot of mistakes and can't see," Green said. "I'm still enjoying it, and what else would I do?"

<http://www.philly.com/BarbaraGreen>

Ads by Google

[Masters Degree In Music](#)

Complete Your Masters In 3 Summers At Our Prestigious College, Ithaca!  
[www.ithaca.edu](http://www.ithaca.edu)

[Tools to grow your church](#)

Empower your church's mission. Discounts for churches under 2000.  
[www.onthecity.org](http://www.onthecity.org)