

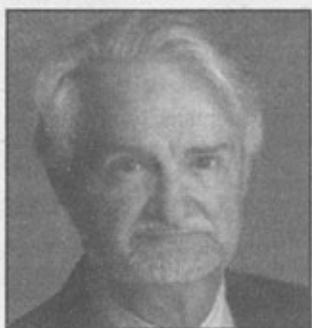
Beverly Hills Weekly

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Issue 710 • May 9 - May 15, 2013

Nick Strimple, Beverly Hills Presbyterian Church Music Director, to retire



Nick Strimple

Nick Strimple, music director for Beverly Hills Presbyterian Church for the last 35 years, will retire on Sunday, June 23.

"I've had a

very good run. 35 years is a long time," said Strimple.

Strimple, who is also a faculty member in the Thornton School of Music at the University of Southern California, works seven days a week. He said will retire to spend his weekends with his wife, Beverly High Assistant Principal Toni Staser.

Strimple will also retire from his role as music director of the Choral Society of Southern California.

"I think primarily the music we've done at the church is just whatever seemed appropriate for a given Sunday," said Strimple. "I've always worked very closely with the pastors of the church just to make everything match up."

Strimple said there has been variety in the music played every Sunday including music he's written for the church.

Prior to working at USC, he worked in the music industry as an arranger/composer.

Strimple worked at USC from 1976 to 1978 and went back to teaching at USC in 1996. He is the head of the sacred music program at USC.

"This is also a reason why I'm retiring from the church... [USC has] one of the best programs in the country and we get very good students and they keep us busy and we keep them busy and I really enjoy the teaching," said Strimple. "We just put in a new curriculum for our master's and doctoral programs so that students can focus in either Jewish music or Christian music. I wanted to be able to devote my time to that."

Pastor James Morrison was the pastor when Strimple was hired until Morrison retired in 2003 after suffering a heart attack. Strimple also worked with Pastor Vahe Simonian, the church's interim pastor for three years, and

associate pastor Andrew Eagles and Pastor David Worth, who currently work at Beverly Hills Presbyterian Church.

Strimple brought the christmas concert to Beverly Hills, which began in December of 1978. Strimple asked Hollywood actor Jimmy Stewart to read *A Christmas Story* at the concert.

"That became a big tradition, it went on for over 30 years," said Strimple, who named other actors who participated such as Danny Aykroyd, Mel Gibson, and Sally Struthers.

Strimple said around 1985, he became very involved in music that was related to the Holocaust:

"That over the years opened up an interest in Jewish music in general so we've done a lot of interfaith projects at the church, cooperating with the Jewish Music Commission of Los Angeles and the Roman Catholic Archdiocese," said Strimple, who said the most recent interfaith program was held in March.

The 11 a.m. morning worship on June 23 will feature music Strimple has composed for the church over the years and will be followed by a noon luncheon and a 4 p.m. concert.

The concert will include a new work by Strimple and a piece by Mozart. The performers are Lauren Buckley, Emily May, Calista Hoffman Campbell, Marc Lowenstein, Timothy Campbell and Cale Olson, BHPC Chancel Choir, the Choral Society of Southern California, and the BHPC Chamber Orchestra.

A donation of \$15 is suggested for the concert. Child care will be provided. Reservations are strongly recommended. To make reservations, contact the BHPC office at (310) 271-5194.

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