

Music has been the main source of strength, spiritual expression, and the most palpable avenue for connection in my life. It has played a major (and minor, Ha!) role in my survival with all that life has thrown my way: love, loss, joy, trauma, growth, and healing. It is the most natural way I know to pray – regardless of venue, genre or audience.

As my parents have told the story many times, I sang before I could talk. They have always supported my musical and artist journey since I was young with training rooted in classical studies in piano and voice. To this day the soundtrack for our family is wildly eclectic -something I absolutely treasure.

Music Ministry was something my sister Mo and I did together, harmonizing and taking turns playing piano or guitar at youth services at our church since middle school. Two of our beloved great uncles (Jesuit priests/professors of theology at Creighton University) presided over countless masses on our porch or in our living room where we'd grab our guitars and sing everything from sacred to spiritually rich secular music. Since 1988 participating in music ministry has continued in many capacities including soloist, accompanist, choir director and music ministry hiring committees at the Catholic churches I attended: Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis in Santa Fe, NM; St. Matthew in Norwalk, CT; Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Glenview, IL; St. Ignatius of Loyola in Denver, CO.

The greatest influences on my faith life were my parents and their commitment to vocational work in the Greater Chicago area serving at-risk, marginalized youth at their special education schools as well as serving the hungry and poor through our church's sharing parish programs. The Jesuit emphasis on education and outreach also infused my views of world and self. Progressive Dominican and Franciscan nuns at my high school taught me the meaning, necessity and privilege of social justice work. They gave me many opportunities to select and provide humanitarian themed music for masses at school. These experiences taught me how important music is to the liturgy: lifting the messages of the Word into song so *people can feel it* – THAT ignited something deep within me. That, to me, was the feeling of Holy Spirit working her mystical ways through song.

From 1992-2005 I lived in Santa Fe, NM where I began training as a classical vocalist while studying for my BFA from the College of Santa Fe in a customized degree combining music and performing arts with a minor focus on women in world religions. Directing and writing also became areas of focus that inspired what I continue to do today as a professional musician/artist in various capacities. Although a life in the opera world wasn't my ultimate gig, the training is with me to this day – something I heavily rely on within the vast range of musical genres in my repertoire. For 5 years Stephen and I shared the post as Associate Artistic Directors and Administrators at Santa Fe Performing Arts School and Company serving nearly 400 children ages 5-20 and a resident adult theater company.

As a professional recording artist, song writer, vocalist and pianist I've had the privilege of working with Grammy award winning producers/musicians in various recording studios from Santa Fe, NM, Austin, TX, New York City, Norwalk, CT, and Boulder, CO on 5 original albums as well as a guest musician. At some point I'll introduce some of the original compositions/hymns we wrote and recorded in collaboration with orphan children, nurses, doctors and clergy of CHAI-India, the hospital and medical NGO in India and Australia. Otherwise, at the moment there isn't much of an online presence for my work as most of my original recordings are waiting in the wings, planned for a package release as an original soundtrack to a book I've written and am currently editing (recording an accompanying pod-cast is also underway).

In addition to the book project (which I believe to be a life calling) I continue to teach music and performing arts to 20+ students from my home studio. For the past 5 years I've enjoyed volunteering in our community and elementary school particularly on the Safety Committee, directing the all-school annual talent show, and as our sons' flag football coach. Being Jonathan and Michael's mom is the best thing in the world and we pinch ourselves every day that we get the honor of this grace-filled role. It's truly awesome.

Stephen, Jonathan, Michael and I have found St Mary Magdalene to be our family's spiritual home after a long and painstaking search. This is a sacred place and welcoming community. We are deeply grateful to be here and we thank you all for making us feel so at home. My parents, Mike and Cathy, have really been enjoying SMM as well during the months they live in Colorado. It's an honor to be in this new

role as Music Director and I promise to meet the challenge with 2 simple ingredients: sincerity and focus.

Fr. Bruce and Reverend Tory as our amazing, humble, soulful shepherds here at SMM and the warmth of this community made accepting this position an easy decision. The spiritual tone of the services here leaves all the space necessary for the music to continue to support and enhance the liturgy. Building the choir, ensemble and a children's choir is something I look forward to as well so if you are willing to give it a try please come and share your voice and/or instrument. Details to follow...

Thank you for trusting me with this opportunity.

~Kate