

Lou-Anne Smith

Director of Music Ministries

Lou-Anne Drechsler Smith received her Master of Music degree in Vocal Performance from Baylor University in Waco, Texas. She has sung with the Fort Worth Opera Chorus, Shreveport Opera, Commonwealth Musical Stage and Virginia Opera. With Virginia Opera, Mrs. Smith was a Spectrum Artist, having traveled around the state of Virginia singing accessible operas for children in elementary schools. These roles included the mother and grandmother in *Little Red Riding Hood*, as well as a variety of very entertaining opera scenes. Additionally, in mainstage productions, she has performed the roles of Hansel in *Hansel and Gretel*, Amina in *La Traviata*, the page in *Salome*, Giovanna in *Rigoletto*, and Mary in *Der Fliegende Hollander*. At Baylor, Mrs. Smith studied voice with John Van Cura and coached with Richard Aslanian.

Mrs. Smith has worked for over twenty years in the United Methodist Church at a variety of churches in the Hampton Roads area, including Zion Grace United Methodist Church in Norfolk, Great Bridge United Methodist Church in Chesapeake, and Trinity United Methodist Church in Poquoson. In January 2013, Mrs. Smith came to Williamsburg United Methodist Church as Associate Director of Music Ministries. In November 2014, she was named the permanent Director of Music Ministries. At Williamsburg United Methodist Church, Mrs. Smith directs the Sanctuary Choir, Sanctuary Orchestra, Covenant Ringers, and In Nomine Dei Ringers, and supports the pastoral staff in worship planning. Together with Anthony Williams, Associate Director of Music and Tom Marshall, Organist, she oversees all of the music ministries of the church. Every year in early December, Mrs. Smith conducts Handel's *Messiah* with an 80 voice church and community choir, professional soloists and professional orchestra. This concert is a highlight of the year for the community, as well as visitors to Colonial Williamsburg during Grand Illumination Weekend.

The Smiths purchased a home in Williamsburg in 2012 that had been destroyed by fire. After they sold their home in Poquoson, they were able to reconstruct the home in Williamsburg, and enjoyed moving into their new home in July of 2015. The Smith's theme for renovating the home came from a song by Kathryn Scott, whose text exclaims, "Now I can trade these ashes in for beauty, and wear forgiveness like a crown; Coming to kiss the feet of Mercy, I lay every burden down at the foot of the cross." Lou-Anne and her husband, Mark, have two sons, Hunter, a Senior Music Major (French Horn) at James Madison University, and Hamilton, a Second Year Aerospace Engineering Major at Georgia Tech.