



WORSHIP ARTS REPORT

Susan Hart | Worship Arts Director

Worship Arts began the ministry year with some new initiatives, including a “New Song Café” series designed to help our team work together to write original worship songs. Members of the worship team met several times to collaborate on this project, leading to Valley’s first original worship song, “You Are with Me.” Dave Swanson arranged and recorded the song in his studio, and Annette Haskins wrote an orchestration for the blended service. The song was introduced at all Valley campuses in February. We are looking forward to writing more in the coming year!



In October, we hosted a dance workshop and demonstration led by Awakening Movement, a faith-based organization based in New York. The workshop was attended by 24 dancers, many of whom were from the community and neighboring churches. It was a wonderful time of teaching that movement can be an expression of worship to God! The Awakening group then performed several original pieces to an audience of nearly 100 people. They explained the motivation and story behind the pieces they performed, and ended the event with a question-and-answer session. This was a great time for the audience and dancers to hear the heart that these professional artists have to worship God through their art form, introduce others to God through dance, and be a support and encouragement to other professional dancers in New York and beyond. It was a powerful and encouraging experience.

In December, Worship Arts hosted two services of Lessons & Carols. These special services presented the story of God through Scripture and song, from

Genesis through Revelation. This event included children’s choir, adult choir, scripture readers, and orchestra. These wonderful services focused on worship and edification as well as outreach: Many guests attended, and participants brought more than 280 bags of groceries to donate to Gifts of Love!

In January, our Avon and Bristol Worship Teams combined to provide musical leadership for a celebration of *21 Days of Prayer*. The evening was filled with stories of amazing things God did during those three weeks of prayer and fasting.

In March, we had the opportunity to host a concert by the Sidewalk Prophets and Bonray, two Christian bands that were touring New England. More than 50 volunteers from Valley served to help make the concert happen. They loaded equipment off and on the trucks, provided security, food service, staffing of merchandise tables, and audio-visual support. The crowd for the sold-out concert was blessed by the music and testimony of the artists.

In April, some students from the Worship Team planned and led a night of worship called “Surrender.” In May, members of the Worship Team were privileged to plan and lead a “Converge Night of Worship” at Elim Park in Cheshire. Both events were powerful times of extended worship.

Throughout the year, we were blessed to add 12 members to the orchestra, nine of whom were middle- and high-school students; five to the tech team; and six to the choir and worship teams. Each of these volunteers played integral parts in our weekly ministry to the congregation in worship.