

HYDE PARK HERALD

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The United Church of Hyde Park, 1448 E. 53rd St., where performances by Music Teachers of Hyde Park will soon begin

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Music teachers add church venue

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Music Teachers of Hyde Park (MTHP) is organizing the three-part MTHP Artist Series concerts at The United Church of Hyde Park, 1448 E 53rd St., slated to begin at 7:30 p.m. this Monday, March 18.

The performances will be MTHP's first in the building, and will benefit both the church and the organization, according to voice instructor and group president Andrea Holliday.

The series will take place alongside MTHP's regular programming at Blackstone Library, 4904 S. Lake Park Ave. The group sought to also play in a more visible venue than the library.

"The building is a gem of a building, but it's hard to see from the street," Holliday said. Its basement is not a "glamorous" location for adult professionals to perform in, she added.

Library hours also led MTHP to schedule its regular concerts there at 6:30 p.m., an earlier time than ideal, according to Holliday and Sheu.

Although the series is not technically a fundraiser, Holliday said the MTHP wanted to support the church by increasing its visibility and that audience members will be invited to make donations to the church.

"The other thing is that 53rd Street is an important part of Hyde Park and we see this church struggling to maintain that building and not getting a lot of attention itself."

MTHP approached Pastor Larry Turpin about holding the series at his church. The group will be using the space at a reduced rate.

"We work hard to keep [the building] up in good condition for our use and for the many organizations that do use it," he said.

"We're glad to welcome the community in, and so we're just delighted to have an opportunity to show off the

building and our piano and invite people in and welcome them.”

The church’s sanctuary houses a rebuilt Mason and Hamlin piano around a century old, according to Turpin.

Holliday says she visited the venue decades ago for performances by the ensemble Music of the Baroque, which her husband, musician Thomas Wikman, founded in 1971.

“It’s wonderful. It has a large capacity for seating,” she said, adding that “we got plenty of room for people and no matter where you sit in that church you can see and hear very very well.”

In addition to this week’s concert, two more are scheduled to take place at the church at 7:30 p.m. on both April 15 and May 20. April’s performances will feature pianists Alice Sheu and Laura Fenster as well as vocalist William Bouvel, while May’s will also include Sheu as well as Holliday, Wikman, violist Daniel Golden and clarinetist Bradley Brickner.

For more information about the series, call Andrea Holliday at 773-363-3526 or visit mthp.org.

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