

Town of Boone



PRESS RELEASE

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Boone 150 Celebration Continues with Sacred Sounds

The Town of Boone's sesquicentennial celebration, Boone 150, continues on Saturday, October 1, at Three Forks Baptist Church, with Sacred Sounds, featuring performances by local church groups and choirs, starting at 2:00 p.m. The concert will feature a number of local musicians and a special choir with members from several Baptist and Methodist churches in the area.

"When the Boone 150 group first came together last fall, we learned about a sacred music celebration that took place 50 years ago for the centennial, and we wanted to replicate it in some way," says Cultural Resources Director, Mark Freed. "With Three Forks Baptist also celebrating an important milestone this year, it has been great to work with them to present the Sacred Sounds concert."

Historic Three Forks Baptist Church dates to the late 1700s, when pioneers began migrating to isolated wilderness settlements in and beyond the Blue Ridge Mountains. In 1790, a small group of settlers met to organize the first church in what is now Watauga County - then a simple log cabin where local families met for worship. Three Forks soon became a pillar in the community, with attendees coming from all over western North Carolina, and even as far away as eastern Tennessee and western Virginia. The church membership rolls and minute books from 1790 to 1974 are still in existence, providing a glimpse into the development and role of the church in this early community. The wooden cross on the righthand side of the church sanctuary was formed from timbers of the original building, the site of which is marked by a granite monument on the South Fork of the New River. In 1922, the church moved from its location on the river to its present address on US Highway 421. The history of the church is

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presented in the fellowship hall with an exhibit capturing highlights from the past 232 years.

One of the members of the Three Forks choir, Stephanie Greer, has been integral in helping organize the event. She has been working with musician and Methodist choir member, Pat Lanno, to organize a choir of singers from a number of Baptist and Methodist churches in the Boone area. Under the direction of Tressie York Marcum, the choir will present a variety of hymns in the shared Baptist and Methodist tradition. The program will consist of 18th and 19th century hymns that would have been sung by the early settlers in the Boone area, many of which are still sung today. There will be an opportunity for everyone to participate in an old-fashioned hymn sing at the end of the concert. The group will be accompanied by Greer on piano.

Mary Greene, a retired music teacher and long-time staple in the local traditional music scene, will be performing a few pieces with the mountain dulcimer. Greene has been involved with music in local churches all of her life, and she directed and produced a documentary film on local shape note singing traditions. She will also be accompanying Pat Lanno, who will perform a couple songs on flute at the Sacred Sounds event.

The Sacred Sounds concert begins at 2:00 p.m. at Three Forks Baptist Church, located at 1922 US Highway 421, in Boone. There is no admission for the performance, which is expected to last about two hours. For more information, please contact Mark Freed, Director of Cultural Resources, at mark.freed@townofboone.net.