William Clayton Whittington, M.M.

CONDUCTOR | VOCALIST | ORGANIST

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Seasoned conductor, organist, and vocalist with over twenty years of professional experience leading sacred music ministries in vibrant Reformed and Anglican worship settings. Demonstrated excellence in choral direction, organ and piano performance, and multi-ensemble leadership, shaping worship through expressive music, careful planning, and collaboration with clergy, staff, and congregants. Skilled in cultivating intergenerational choirs and developing vocalists of all ages and abilities through thoughtful pedagogy and supportive mentorship. Experienced in managing comprehensive music programs, coordinating multiple worship services, supervising instrumentalists and soloists, and planning concerts and community outreach events. Actively recruits and nurtures musical gifts within the congregation, fosters strong relationships, and expands artistic engagement through inclusive, welcoming leadership. Committed to enlivening congregational song, stewarding ensembles with warmth and hospitality, and strengthening the church's mission through excellence, joy, and collaborative ministry.

Facebook: **@claywhittington** | Instagram: **@claywhittington** | Threads: **@claywhittington**
YouTube: **@claywhittingtonmusic** | SoundCloud: **@claywhittington**

Employment Experience

ACTIVE APPOINTMENTS & CONTRACTS

Positions are organized by scope of responsibility.

Immanuel Presbyterian Church — **Tucson, Arizona**
Director of Music Ministries — 2022 – Present

- Introduced new concert initiatives and collaborative worship arts events, including performances with University of Arizona student ensembles, silent film accompaniment paired with Trunk-or-Treat, and musical offerings for festivals and community celebrations, expanding artistic engagement and strengthening community presence
- Lead a multi-ensemble sacred music program (choir, handbells, worship band), cultivating **intergenerational participation** and shaping worship rooted in Scripture, liturgy, and community life
- Develop and direct seasonal concerts, community worship partnerships, and special services, strengthening congregational engagement and expanding the church's artistic visibility
- Recruit, mentor, and pastor volunteer and professional musicians, **increasing ensemble participation and musical leadership capacity** across the congregation

The Gaslight Theatre — **Tucson, Arizona**
Pianist, Entertainer — 2023 – Present

- Deliver high-energy piano and vocal performances for **9 shows weekly (up to 28 during the Christmas season)**, consistently contributing to fully sold-out productions in a fast-paced theatrical environment
- Collaborate with musicians and production staff to provide seamless musical support, adapting repertoire and arrangements in real time to maintain performance excellence across frequent shows
- Cultivate strong audience engagement and rapport, sustaining the theatre's signature interactive entertainment experience for **over 100,000 patrons each season**

Cochise College **Sierra Vista, Arizona**

Associate Faculty – Music: Piano 2025 – Present

- Teach applied and class piano across diverse skill levels using clear pedagogical sequencing while developing lesson plans, assessing progress, and maintaining required academic records.
- Support artistic and technical growth through individualized coaching and prepare students effectively for end-of-semester performances.

Tucson Summer Chorus **Tucson, Arizona**

Artistic Director, Conductor 2024 – Present

Assistant Conductor, Collaborative Pianist 2024

- Lead artistic and organizational vision for a **90-voice intergenerational chorus**, fostering musical excellence and inclusive community participation
- Expanded audience and donor engagement, achieving a **50% increase in concert attendance and a significant rise in donations** in first season

Tucson Interfaith Choir & Orchestra **Tucson, Arizona**

Chorus Director (Volunteer Role) 2024 – Present

- Prepare and conduct a **120-voice interfaith chorus** for large-scale sacred oratorio performances, fostering spiritual depth, musical excellence, and inclusive community belonging
- Expand interfaith participation through strengthened outreach, an improved web presence, and instruction in diverse sacred repertoire

Clay Whittington Music & Entertainment **Tucson, Arizona (Touring)**

Lead Vocals, Keys, Guitars • *Dreams & Rumours: The Fleetwood Mac Experience* 2025 – Present

Producer, Pianist • *Straighten Up & Fly Right* 2025 – Present

Every Era Entertainment **Tucson, Arizona (Touring)**

Lead Vocals, Keys • *The Best of Huey Lewis and the News* 2025 – Present

Producer, Performer • *Gaslight Dueling Pianos* 2024 – Present

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PRIOR APPOINTMENTS & CONTRACTS

Positions are organized historically from most recent to earliest.

University of Arizona **Tucson, Arizona**

Assistant Director, University Singers (Graduate Assistantship) 2024

Assistant Director, Treble Glee (Graduate Assistantship) 2023 – 2024

- Assisted in planning and leading rehearsals for collegiate choral ensembles, conducting sectionals and shaping ensemble tone, balance, and musicianship
- Accompanied rehearsals and performances (piano & guitar) and supported curriculum delivery in vocal technique, score study, and ensemble leadership

Tucson Symphony Orchestra Chorus **Tucson, Arizona**

Chorister 2022 – 2023

The Helios Ensemble **Tucson, Arizona**

Chorister, Chamber Singer 2022 – 2023

First United Methodist Church **Fuquay-Varina, North Carolina**

Director of Music Ministries 2020 – 2022

- Directed chancel choir and handbell choir and served as principal organist and pianist, supporting traditional worship and seasonal liturgical services
- Established a structured cantor and worship-leader formation program, mentoring emerging musicians and strengthening congregational song leadership
- Led special services, concerts, and collaborative ministry events and contributed to digital worship media production during COVID-19, sustaining musical participation and engagement

Spilman Memorial Baptist Church **Kinston, North Carolina**

Music Director 2019 – 2021

- Directed choir and handbell ensemble for traditional worship services and seasonal liturgical observances
- Designed and produced digital worship music during COVID-19, supporting congregational worship continuity and engagement

St. Thomas Episcopal Church **Bath, North Carolina**

Interim Choirmaster & Organist 2018 – 2019

Carnival Cruise Line **Miami, Florida**

Piano Bar Entertainer 2016 – 2018

- Entertained diverse audiences as a solo pianist-vocalist, delivering high-energy, request-driven performances that encouraged guest participation and created an engaging nightly atmosphere
- Curated an extensive repertoire across multiple genres, adapting sets in real time to audience demographics and shipboard programming while maintaining a professional, customer-focused presence

Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd **Salinas, California**

Choirmaster & Pianist 2015 – 2017

Westminster United Methodist Church **Kinston, North Carolina**

Music Director 2014 – 2015

Camp Ground United Methodist Church **Fayetteville, North Carolina**

Chancel Choir Director, Pianist 2012 – 2014

Temple B'nai Sholem **New Bern, North Carolina**

Assistant Music Leader, Organist 2011 – 2013

Sharon United Methodist Church **Kinston, North Carolina**

Music Director 2008 – 2012

Lenoir Community College Theatre **Kinston, North Carolina**

Music Director 2005 – 2008

Trinity United Methodist Church **LaGrange, North Carolina**

Pianist 2004 – 2006

Education & Certifications

University of Arizona **Tucson, Arizona**
Master of Music, Choral Conducting
Graduating GPA: 4.0

East Carolina University **Greenville, North Carolina**
Bachelor of Music magna cum laude, *Sacred Music (Vocal/Choral)*
Graduating GPA: 3.82

Lenoir Community College **Kinston, North Carolina**
Associate in Fine Arts in Music

Presbyterian Association of Musicians **Louisville, Kentucky**
Certified Church Musician (In Progress) *Expected 2027*

Publications & Lectures

Worship & Music Conference, Presbyterian Association of Musicians **Montreat, North Carolina**
Interest Session: *Come Sunday: Duke Ellington in Worship* 2026

***Tactus*, American Choral Directors Association Western Region**
Article: "When Dissonance Finds Resolution: Healing and Strengthening Clergy–Musician Partnerships in the Church" Spring 2026

Choral Conducting Program, University of Arizona **Tucson, Arizona**
Guest Lecture: *Mozart's Vespers and Martines' "Dixit Dominus"* 2026
Guest Lecture: *Pipe Organ Essentials for Choral Conductors* 2025

State Summer Conference, Arizona American Choral Directors Association **Phoenix, Arizona**
Interest Session: *Jazz in Worship* 2025

Summer Choral Literature Intensive, University of Arizona **Tucson, Arizona**
Lecture: *The Choral Music of Kurt Weill* 2025

Choral Journal, American Choral Directors Association
Choral Review: *"Kiddush" by Kurt Weill* vol. 64, no. 8 (May 2024), p. 89

Discography & Broadcasts

Marianna Martines, *Terza Messa* (Album) 2025
University of Arizona Symphonic Choir; Elizabeth Schauer, conductor

- Contributing Artist: Chorister (tenor)
- Album cover and artwork design

Holiday Card to Tucson (Broadcast) 2024
University of Arizona School of Music

- Conductor (Two movements from Martines' *Terza Messa* performed by the University Singers)
- Broadcast on Classical 90.5 and NPR 89.1

Hymnprov (Album) 2013
Clay Whittington

- A 10-track recording of improvised pieces based on hymn melodies
- Producer, Performer
- Recorded at and mixed by Sound Pure Studios; Durham, North Carolina

Rider on the Rim: A Musical Tribute to TEXAS (Album) 2008
Stephen Hilton and performers from the TEXAS Musical Drama

- Contributing artist (mandolin, tracks 1 and 7)

Honors & Awards

University of Arizona Scholarship Awards

Donald and Mary Ruth Shropshire Scholarship	2023, 2024
Merrylees W. Mayer Choral Scholarship	2024
John Bloom Choral Scholarship	2024
Bruce Chamberlain Endowed Scholarship	2023
Albert M. Haldeman Music Scholarship	2023
Lutheran Brotherhood Bach Scholarship	2023

The Society of Pi Kappa Lambda **Inducted 2022**
Beta Zeta Chapter, East Carolina University

Boy Scouts of America
Eagle Scout 2005

Professional Memberships, Leadership, & Philanthropy

American Choral Directors Association Member since 2009
Vice President, University of Arizona Graduate Chapter 2024 – 2025

American Guild of Organists Member since 2018
Communications Officer, East Carolina Chapter 2019 – 2022

Presbyterian Association of Musicians Member since 2022
Church Musician Certification in progress Expected 2027

East Carolina Musical Arts Education Foundation Donor since 2022
Marketing Consultant, Webmaster 2022 – Present

References

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