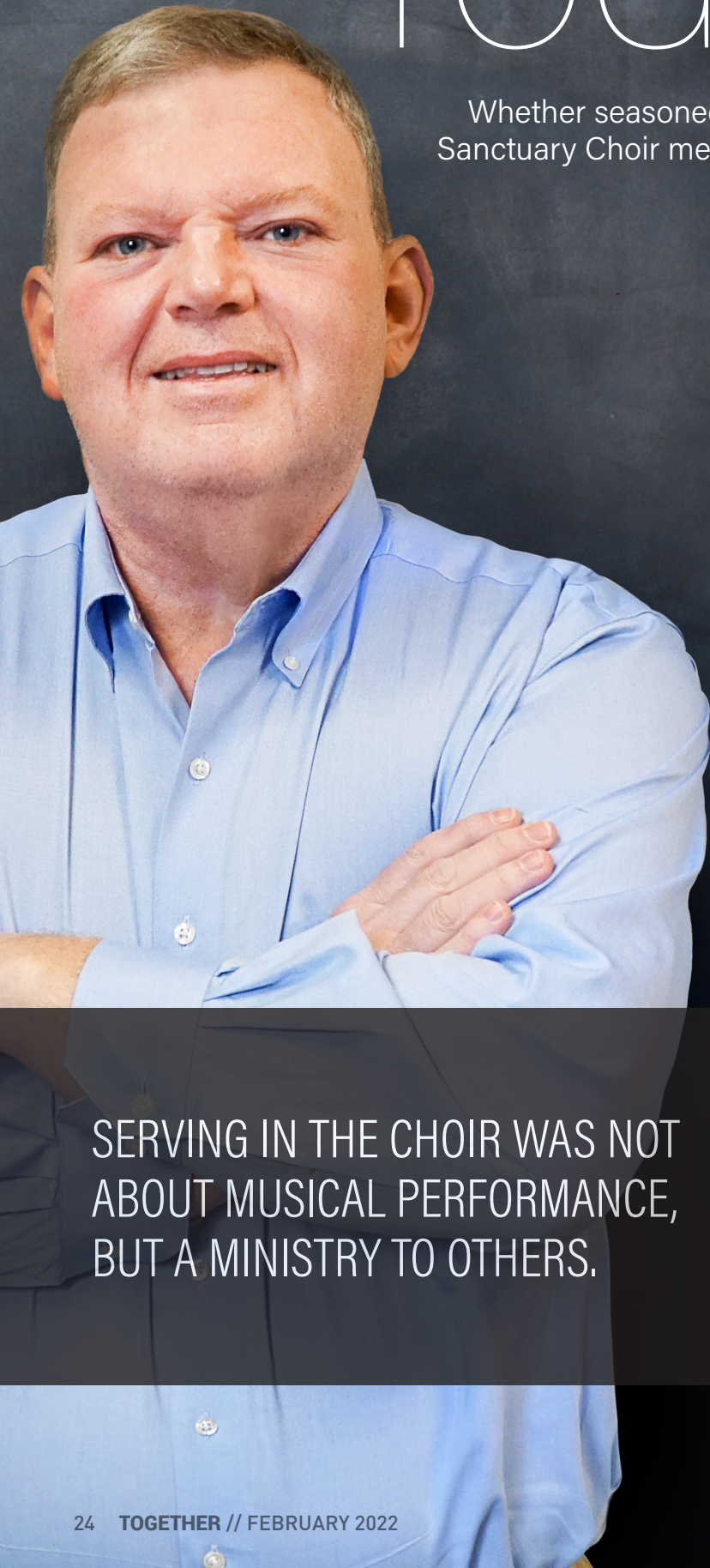


TOGETHER

Whether seasoned veterans or brand new to Dawson, our Sanctuary Choir members love serving (and singing) together.



SERVING IN THE CHOIR WAS NOT ABOUT MUSICAL PERFORMANCE, BUT A MINISTRY TO OTHERS.

I joined Dawson and the Sanctuary Choir in May of 1989, having just graduated from college and about to get married. Though I enjoyed singing, the choir really was about the social aspect for me at first. It gave me a place to "fit in", and an activity that I could do with Julie, my new wife. Quickly, however, the choir became so much more than something to do on Wednesday nights and Sunday mornings.

I began to learn from Dr. Bob Hatfield to not just sing the hymns and anthems, but allow the Spirit to fill my heart and mind with these sacred words of our faith. I began to learn from the men and women of all ages around me in choir—watching how they strove to lead Christ-filled lives in all that they did. I also learned how serving in the choir was not about musical performance, but a ministry to others. Sanctuary Choir became a foundational source of my growth as a Christ follower, and has remained so throughout my adult life.

As I have gotten older, the privilege of serving our Family of Faith in worship on Sundays only gets sweeter! We never know how God is working in those moments in worship. Whether we sing hymns as a congregation and feel His presence moving among us, or even in those moments when things may feel a little flat to us, we can rest assured that even then He is moving!

To be given the opportunity to be used in the Sanctuary Choir as an instrument for His Glory, even with all of my imperfections, is humbling.



Joe Raines is the lucky husband of Julie for 32 years, and proud dad to two daughters, Evan and Laura Clayton. He is the Managing Director of UB Community Development and is an official for high school, USA Swimming, and NCAA swim meets.

we sing!

It had been five long months of searching for a church. I visited churches with full bands, mosh pits, a single man with a guitar, and many more. I visited Baptist churches, non-denominational churches, and listened to any online service I found. None of them worked! My prayers had become desperate, and I didn't know if I would ever find a church I felt confident in. This was until one day I sat down in the back pew of Dawson at 9:47 a.m. and the choir began to sing. I don't remember the name of the song, but I do remember God using that choir to tell me it was worth the wait! I immediately picked up that little blue card and asked about joining the choir. The next week I had a folder waiting for me, and this was the beginning of my service at Dawson.

At the end of the summer I unexpectedly lost two of my grandparents. It was the worst pain I have ever experienced, and I didn't want to talk to God about it. The thing with singing in a choir is even when you don't want to talk to God, you have to! (And if you choose not to sing, John will know, and he won't be happy!) While singing and serving with your brothers and sisters in Christ, it's nearly impossible to not see God at work. Members of the church who were once strangers are now my great friends. I even made a special choir friend who reminded me of the Mawmaw I had lost.

God uses a group of regular people who just love Him and love to sing (you don't even have to be that good!) to minister to newcomers, engage others in worship, and to spread the good news of the Gospel! I am blessed and honored to serve as a part of this family and this ministry!



Cailyn Thompson is a member of Dawson Choir, Dawson Choir Social Committee, and Dawson Young Professionals Group. She loves singing praises and investing in her community through Dawson and her job at Sozo Trading Company.

I DO REMEMBER GOD USING THAT CHOIR TO TELL ME IT WAS WORTH THE WAIT!