A CELEBRATION OF LIFE

In memory and honor of
Millard H. ("Mel") Kinney
(1929-2016)

Sun Lakes United Methodist Church
Saturday, April 16, 2016
3:00 pm
PROGRAM

Welcome & Mel’s Legacy
Harold Jeffers

Shrine of the Ages Alumni Choir
Alicia Ferrin, accompanist
Ave verum corpus, K. 618 ................................Wolfgang A. Mozart
Hail, true Body, born of the Virgin Mary,
Who has truly suffered, was sacrificed on the cross for mortals:
Whose side was pierced, whence flowed water and blood:
Be for us a foretaste of heaven during our final examining.

Yonder! Yonder! ..............................................Russian folk song
arr. Samuel R. Gaines
Shannon Cochran, soprano

Shrine of the Ages Choir
Denn er hat seinen Engeln befohlen .................Felix Mendelssohn
For He has commanded his angels to watch over you,
To protect you on all your paths,
And to uphold you with their hands,
Lest you dash your foot on a stone. [Psalm 91:11-12]

Mel’s Gifts for his Family
Harold Jeffers

Symphony No. 5 ..............................................Gustav Mahler
IV. Adagietto

Shrine of the Ages Choir
O magnum mysterium.......................................Morten Lauridsen
O great mystery, and wondrous sacrament,
That animals should see the newborn Lord lying in their manger!
Blessed is the Virgin whose womb was worthy to bear the Lord Jesus Christ.
Alleluia!

Shrine of the Ages Alumni Choir
Blue, Green and Gold ...........................................arr. Eric W. Knight
Reading of Psalm 23
The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
He leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul:
He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil: for thou art with me;
Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies:
Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Shrine of the Ages Alumni Choir
God so Loved the World...................................................Sir John Stainer
Sung for the Easter Sunrise Service at the South Rim of the
Grand Canyon by the Shrine of Ages Choir between 1935-1968.

The Lord’s Prayer
Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy Name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
And the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Closing Prayer
Harold Jeffers

Shrine of the Ages Alumni Choir
Ain’t Got Time to Die .................................................arr. Hall Johnson
Alan Williams, soloist

“The family and friends of Mel Kinney are grateful
for your support, kind words, and heart-warming memories.
May Mel’s love and passion for life live on forever in our hearts.”
Greg & Gale Fuller
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Sun Lakes United Methodist Church & Choir for the reception following the Mel’s Celebration; NAU Shrine of the Ages Choir, Edith A. Copley, conductor; Bartlett Evans for organizing the photo slideshow; Mel’s friends and Shrine alumni who provided so many wonderful photos of this gifted man.

In Loving Memory of Millard H. Kinney
by Bartlett Evans

Millard H. “Mel” Kinney, professor emeritus of music, died March 9, 2016 at the age of 87. Mel Kinney was born in Ontario, Oregon on February 10, 1929 and was known for his dedication to his students and music. He served on the Northern Arizona University music faculty for 28 years. At NAU Mel conducted the famed Shrine of the Ages Choir, Madrigal Singers, University Singers, Oratorio Society, and the vocal jazz ensemble, “Splinters.” He also taught piano, voice, conducting, arranging, and music education courses.

Mel started many NAU choral traditions, including the NAU Holiday Dinner (first presented in 1975) and the February High School Choral Festival (started in 1977), which is now the Jazz/Madrigal Festival, the largest choral festival in the Southwest. He also was the founding director of the Oratorio Chorus, which is now the Master Chorale of Flagstaff.

Mel developed first-rate choirs of all types. His “Splinters” did several USO tours abroad. Shrine of the Ages Choir toured Europe performing in the prestigious Vienna Invitational Symposium. Shrine and the “Splinters” also participated in two USO tours for the US State Department entertaining our troops in Iceland, Greenland, New Foundland, and later in Japan, Korea, the Philippines, and Taiwan.

The crowning choral music work of Mel’s career was the Shrine of the Ages Choir. When he became the conductor in 1955, the choir was still part of the NBC national broadcast of the Easter sunrise service at the south rim of the Grand Canyon that began in 1935. Under Mel’s leadership Shrine built a reputation as one of the outstanding collegiate choirs in the nation.
Mel received numerous awards during his time at NAU and beyond. In 1980, he received the Faculty and Students’ Recognition of Service Award. The Arizona Chapter of the American Choral Directors Association honored him in 1985. After Mel’s retirement, NAU Shrine alumni created the “Mel Kinney Scholarship” in 1990—an endowed fund with the NAU Foundation that awards scholarships each year to promising choral music education students. Mel was inducted into the Arizona Hall of Fame by the Arizona Music Educators Association in 2005. In December 2014, Dr. Edith Copley commissioned a new choral work in Mel’s honor for 40th anniversary of the NAU Holiday Dinners. Mel conducted “Still, Still, Still” for the Friday and Saturday night performances. It was a very special weekend reunion for many of Mel’s alums; it was to be his final performance at his beloved university.

“Mel demanded musicianship and expression in rehearsal and performance. He was an inspiration and was always filled with so much energy,” said Dr. Copley. “His students loved him for his knowledge, his wonderful sense of humor and his great big heart. He will be missed and always remembered.” “Mel was pure inspiration to students, alumni and audiences, who remained devoted to him for decades,” said Dr. Todd Sullivan, director of the NAU School of Music.

Following his NAU retirement in 1983, Mel served for ten years as the Minister of Music at the Church of the Beatitudes in Phoenix, Arizona. His last position as Director of Music was at the Sun Lakes United Methodist Church in Sun Lakes, Arizona.

Wherever Mel lived and worked, he immediately made friends. He knew how to connect and love every person for who they were. Servers and security personnel in the retirement facilities where he recently lived wept when they heard of his passing. Former neighbors and cashiers in businesses he frequented felt the impact of his love and energy. His “family” was huge. His circle of influence was larger than we can imagine. Countless people from all walks of life were saddened by the loss of this truly great man.

None of the awards and accomplishments can even begin to define the impact Mel had on his students and church choir singers. Singing under Mel’s direction meant giving everything you had—physically, mentally, and emotionally. Finishing a Shrine concert or a church cantata or an oratorio with him left singers physically exhausted, emotionally drained, and elated beyond belief. This man was impassioned and demanding,
yet loving and supportive of everyone who sang in his choirs. Some singers remember actual “out-of-body” experiences during concerts. Rich Boyd (a 1970-1973 Shrine member) writes, “There were numerous times we would have so little energy left, we almost stumbled off the risers. He had the amazing ability to reach into you and pull out everything you had to give for that performance and then pull out even more. I’ve not worked with another director who was so deeply emotionally involved with their choir.”

Life does not end with a choir concert—although at times we perhaps wish it could—and Mel’s influence will not end with his death. Mel had an impact on every singer. Many of his students followed his career path and became lifelong choral teachers/conductors—but those people were not the only ones inspired by him to attempt great things for humanity. Mel’s students have made a difference in practically every field imaginable—from school administrators to doctors; from elementary teachers to university presidents; from successful business people to clergy. There are few professions that do not have a Mel Kinney alum doing great work.

Rest peacefully, Mel. Yours was a life well-lived.

Memorial contributions may be made to the **Mel Kinney Scholarship Fund** (#1137) NAU Foundation, PO Box 4094, Flagstaff, AZ 86011-4094 or online at naualumni.com/givetonau