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Friday, June 12, 2009

I begin this letter with some profoundly sad news. Larry Dalton, one of my closest friends and a pillar to our ministry, passed away suddenly on May 30th. His passing is a great loss to the body of Christ here on this earth but as we all know Larry is rejoicing in the presence of our Lord and participating in the finest worship in the universe. At approximately 11:00 AM on May 30 I received an official letter from the State Kremlin Palace Theater (former congress for the Russian Federation) that we had permission to perform Handel's "Messiah." Then a few hours later I received a telephone call that Larry Dalton had passed away. Needless to say, it was a very shocking day! Sharon Wilkins wrote a tribute which is at the end of this letter. I have been signing our letters this year "Undaunted" which, in light of the unprecedented events in our personal and ministry life, will remain our posture.

Banner Year for The Messiah Project !

Merging Musical Worlds - A Concert Tour of Russia

We are thrilled to report that we have just received written confirmation that we have permission to perform a portion of Handel's Messiah in the State Kremlin Palace Theater, originally the Palace of Congresses and formerly used for diplomatic, governmental, and Communist Party gatherings. This is truly an amazing opportunity to "Praise God among the Nations, among all peoples praise Him!" Please spend some time and review the enclosed brochure. Possibly this is your year to be a part of history and travel with us.

Team O' Ten's

We are very thankful for our friends and partners who have remained faithful to our mission and to the new folks that have signed on for the coming year. We have enclosed a card acknowledging our new friends and partners.

Credo Dance Academy—

Kate Riegler has done a masterful job of leading the second year of Credo Dance Academy. Since our last writing CDA has premiered their new performance ensemble on April 25, their spring show was a tremendous success, and they just finished a wonderful time of learning under the direction of Steve Rooks. Yet to come will be a summer series for children, **Ballet & Books "Fairy Tales"** July 13 – 17, 2009: For their fall schedule and more details please check their web site at www.credodance.com

Heritage of Hymns Concert

The 2008 Heritage of Hymns concert was a tremendous success, with close to 3000 in attendance, bringing together believers from dozens of churches in the area. Reports from all circles were very encouraging. We have already reserved Springfield Second Baptist and the Springfield Symphony for September 27, 2009. A portion of this concert will be dedicated in memory of our dear friend Larry Dalton. We are also pleased to add that the very popular hillbilly gospel group "Big Smith" will share a portion of the concert, rounding out our Heritage celebration. There will be something for everyone! **Premiere sponsor still needed! If you know a business or professional practice that has an interest in supporting this event, please let me know and I will be glad to make a proposal.**

The Miracle of Christmas – December 18

Messiah Project will bring *Amahl and the Night Visitors* by Gian-Carlo Menotti to the stage at Juanita K. Hammons Hall for the Performing Arts on December 18 at 10:00 AM for area public and private school children. This performance is also open to the general public. Act II of this year's evening performance (also on the 18th) will present selections from the Christmas portion of "The Messiah" with sing-a-long options on many of the pieces. We will also offer a medley of "Songs for the Holidays," completing the evening celebration.

NEW THIS YEAR will be the addition of a visual and literary arts festival. We will give invitation to public and private school children to prepare a piece of literary and/or visual art that will be professionally evaluated. McDonald's Restaurants in this region will assist us in promoting the event through their restaurants.

The Messiah Project continues to move forward with new and innovative outreach. We do not intend to allow the current economic trends to move us off our mission. That being said, we have received notification that some of the grants we are accustomed to receiving have been declined because of the overall decrease in funding by these organizations. Please join us in prayer and faith that all spiritual, physical, and financial needs are supplied and that new benefactors will come to the front to help us with the above concert series and outreaches.

We remain Undaunted !

In His Service,

Lindsey Robison

Lindsey Robison, President and Founder

Restoration

The people who have partnered with us over the years are truly pioneers in restoring the arts to the declaration of our Christian faith!

Tribute to Larry Dalton by Sharon Wilkins:

My recollection of Larry is that he is one of the most talented people I have ever known. His musical talents are well-known and documented by his recordings and world-wide associations, but his gifts went well beyond music. He was also a talented story teller. He had a related story for every situation. He was hilarious! His humor could lighten up the most somber occasion. He was a ruthless Rook player—we made interesting opponents, sometimes into the wee hours of the morning. Neither of us would quit as a loser. He was a great defender of the hymns and cherished the best of the contemporary music. He was a gifted conversationalist....he could talk authoritatively about any subject to anyone. Talking politics and sharing political emails were a must for us. Most of all, he had a way of making everyone around him feel important. Most of his friends probably refer to him as one of their best friends. He made each of us feel that way. We did many concerts together in Missouri, Europe and Asia. I have a plastic bag of fried caterpillars in my curio case that he left on my pillow in China. I purposely ate in a Western restaurant instead of enduring the Oriental delicacies, and he thought I needed a reminder of where I was before I went to sleep that night. My many memories of our shared experiences in ministry, in music and in all his crazy antics could fill a book. His faith was solid, his testimony was unwavering, his love for the Lord uncompromising and his love for life, unquestionable! I miss my dear friend already. I am so glad to know with assurance that he is not gone, he has just gone ahead of the rest of us to our ultimate home. We continue in this life with that great hope.

Sharon Wilkins