

Bonnie Shimulunas



Whenever a musical opportunity presented itself to me, I took it. From a young age, I was captivated by the world of music.

I received a BA from UW, Madison and always enjoyed the piano throughout my years of formal education. After high school, during my adult life I continued my studies on the piano under eight different instructors. I have played for weddings, funerals and a few choirs and even collaborated with other musicians for special events. I accompanied church services as a substitute, held a regular church organist position for three years and was the music coordinator for the same church for six years.

As I delved deeper, I discovered various musical genres. Each style offered unique rhythms and emotions, enriching my musical palette. I attended workshops, joined community groups, and connected with fellow enthusiasts, all of whom shared their insights and experiences. This collaborative spirit fueled my passion and helped me grow.

If I did not know about an instrument or genre, I did whatever I could to learn. For example, I found out that the aforementioned church in which I served had a two-octave set of handbells that had not been used for some time. Through a friend whose church had handbells and conversations with her choir director I joined the American Guild of English Handbell Ringers to learn more about bells and directing. This collaboration was very helpful to become more knowledgeable and prepared in the area of handbells.

When a volunteer at the Salvation Army, there was a request to begin a children's choir. That summer, Silver Lake College in Manitowoc offered a weekend long workshop session on children's choirs. I signed up for the session which is when I met Sister Lorna Zemke. As she learned more about me, she talked me into getting a piano pedagogy certificate from Silver Lake College, which I did. And, as they say, the rest is history. Today, I continue to explore and expand my musical horizons, always eager to learn more. My journey is a testament to the power of curiosity and the belief that with dedication, anyone can master an instrument or genre, no matter where they start.