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Association of Lutheran Church Musicians

James Johnson Named Executive Director

Following a national search, the ALCM Board has named **James Johnson** to the newly-created position of Executive Director. For the past 15 years Jim has been Minister of Music at Ebenezer Lutheran Church in Columbia, South Carolina, a job that he resigned after accepting the ALCM position. He also serves as Adjunct Instructor for Liturgical Ministries at Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia.

Jim is a charter member of ALCM and has served the organization in a variety of capacities. He has twice been elected Region 2 President and Region 2 Secretary/Treasurer, has participated in several Region 2 conference committees, and has served on the Foundation Board and the Communications Committee.

A native of Ashtabula, Ohio, Jim began church music studies in high school and received his Bachelor of Music and Master of Sacred Music degrees from Wittenberg University. Additional studies included one year in the Berlin Church Music School in Germany and one summer as an organ scholarship student at Chautauqua, New York. His organ teachers include Trudy Faber and Frederick Jackisch at Wittenberg, Karl Hochreither in Berlin, and Robert Woodside at Chautauqua. He studied improvisation with Renate Zimmermann and Paul Manz, and composition with Heinz Werner Zimmermann and Jan Bender. In Berlin he sang in the Berlin Bach Choir under the direction of Karl Hochreither, and with the Spandauer Kantorei under the direction of Martin Behrmann, with whom he also studied choral conducting.

Jim's many goals for ALCM include expanding the congregational as well as the individual membership base. In his June, 2008 letter of inquiry to the ALCM Board, Jim wrote, "I am convinced we must pursue congregational membership with as much energy as individual memberships. While individual memberships will always be the backbone of ALCM and the source of our leadership and talent, we must connect to the average congregations in a much more intentional way. The vast majority of congregations are relatively small with modestly trained musicians who will never join individually an organization they perceive to be professional. I would develop a plan to invite all Lutheran congregations to become members not for what they would get from their membership (although there are, of course, excellent benefits to membership), but rather join for what they can give as a means of supporting ALCM and its mission as we seek to train and empower the next generation of musicians to serve the church."

Jim and his wife, Kathy, live in Columbia, South Carolina. They have one son, Charlie, who is currently a senior at Presbyterian College in South Carolina.