

Musical Passion at All Saints, Worcester

By Elizabeth Butterworth, All Saints, Worcester

Every Friday afternoon 10 high school and college musicians come to All Saints, Worcester, to teach individual music lessons to 25 children from the neighborhood around the church. The teachers, all volunteers, come from a variety of Worcester area schools—Holy Name High School, Worcester Academy, Douglas High School, Anna Maria College and Worcester Polytechnic Institute.

Their students range in age from 6 to 15 and live in the neighborhood around All Saints, which is loosely bounded by Chandler Street, Park Avenue, Elm Street and Main Street. Their families have limited income and financial resources and thus would not have the means to pay for instruments and private music instructions. Families pay a \$10 start-up fee, but all the weekly lessons are free and through the program, the instruments, music, stands, metronome/tuner and other supplies are on loan.

The program is called Afternoon Tunes, and it is a new initiative of All Saints, working in partnership with the Pakachoag Music School of Greater Worcester. Parishioner Elizabeth Butterworth founded the program in the summer of 2009 and is currently a co-director. The goal of Afternoon Tunes is to provide students with the instruments, supplies and quality instruction necessary for a positive music education experience.

Support at home is one of the keys to a music student's success, and Afternoon Tunes, therefore,



Two young people at All Saints, Worcester, learn the basics of violin.

seeks to foster an appreciation for music in parents and guardians, as well as students. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend as many lessons as possible and act as "Practice Partners," taking note of the teachers' instructions during the lessons; setting aside a time and space for practicing at home and helping their children develop effective practicing techniques.

The idea for the program came to Elizabeth while she was volunteering with the Fun and Fab Friday after school programs at All Saints. Many of the students were interested in music, and when she sat at a piano with a student one afternoon, about 10 other students crowded around, all putting their hands on the keyboard at once. Elizabeth saw that they were enthusiastic, eager to learn and had the potential to develop real musical talent. She developed the Afternoon Tunes program so that they could experience music lessons.

Over the summer of 2009 Elizabeth worked with a leadership team to develop the program. One of her first steps was to reach out to Pakachoag Music School of Greater Worcester. Pakachoag's director, Sarah Smongeski, was excited to partner with Afternoon Tunes. She spread the word about the program and its needs, recommended potential teachers and recommended Pakachoag violin teacher, Sheila Reid, to work with the program as a mentor to the Afternoon Tunes teachers.

Elizabeth also reached out to area high schools and colleges to recruit teachers and leaders. She developed a five-person leadership team and a faculty of 10 teachers, who teach piano, violin, flute, saxophone, clarinet, guitar, drums and recorder. Afternoon Tunes is a learning experience for teachers as well as for students. Sheila Reid works as the program's Music