



JOHN THOMAS CAVICCHIA's earliest memory is of his father rocking him to sleep as an infant and singing the classic hymn, "Abide with Me." John is a third generation ordained Elder in the Presbyterian Church, and has held music leadership positions in the UCC, UMC and Episcopal churches. He had his first musical experiences in the church, singing in choirs beginning at age 6, ringing handbells at age 12 as a charter member of the youth handbell choir, and later taking organ lessons. His piano teacher was also a member of the church, and he studied classical piano for 16 years.

He earned his Bachelor of Science in Language Arts from the Georgetown University School of Languages and Linguistics, graduating in 1983 with a major in French and a minor in Spanish. During his undergraduate years, he sang for and studied choral conducting with the late Paul Hill, a renowned choral director in the Capitol region. John was also very active in musical theater as a member of the historic Mask & Bauble Dramatic Society, one of the oldest collegiate drama clubs in the country. He served as musical director for *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Anything Goes*, *Babes in Arms* and *Brigadoon*. Musical theater is truly his first love. As recently as last spring he served as music director/pianist for a production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* with the Stone Church Players in Atlantic Highlands, NJ. He loves anything Gershwin, Cole Porter, and Stephen Sondheim.

He spent three years working on a second bachelor's degree at Westminster Choir College in Princeton, NJ. Although he never completed the degree, it was there that he gained solid basic skills in musicianship, vocal technique, choral conducting and playing the organ. While at Westminster, he worked for the New Jersey June Opera Festival, held a church music position at the Lawrence Road Presbyterian Church in Lawrenceville, and played the role of Teddy Roosevelt in *Arsenic and Old Lace*.

John earned his Master of Music degree in Music Education with a choral conducting focus from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst in 1998, and worked with every vocal ensemble there, including the Opera Workshop and the Vocal Jazz Ensemble. He studied conducting with E. Wayne Abercrombie, and was fortunate enough to have worked with the late great Dr. Horace Clarence Boyer, world-renowned expert in gospel music. His musical tastes run from Bach to Broadway to the Beatles.

Currently, John is working on a Doctor of Musical Arts in Music Education with a choral conducting focus at the Hartt School at the University of Hartford. He hopes to complete his dissertation by 2013.

John has taught and conducted in the Pioneer Valley since 1998. He was music director of the Pioneer Valley Gay Men's Chorus from 1995-2002. He considers the peak of his conducting career to have been leading the group on stage with Judy Collins in her holiday concert at the Calvin Theater in Northampton in 2000. His favorite moments were ending every First Night performance in Northampton with the disco classic "I Will Survive!" More recently, he served as Music Coordinator and Director of Choirs at Western New England College in Springfield from 2000 to 2009, where he built the academic and ensemble music programs from the ground up.

John is excited to be a new member of the ELUMC family, and is looking forward with great gusto to further cultivating and already vibrant and eclectic music in worship program. Music is a vital part of the life of any congregation, and John is eager to provide new energy and leadership for the program.