

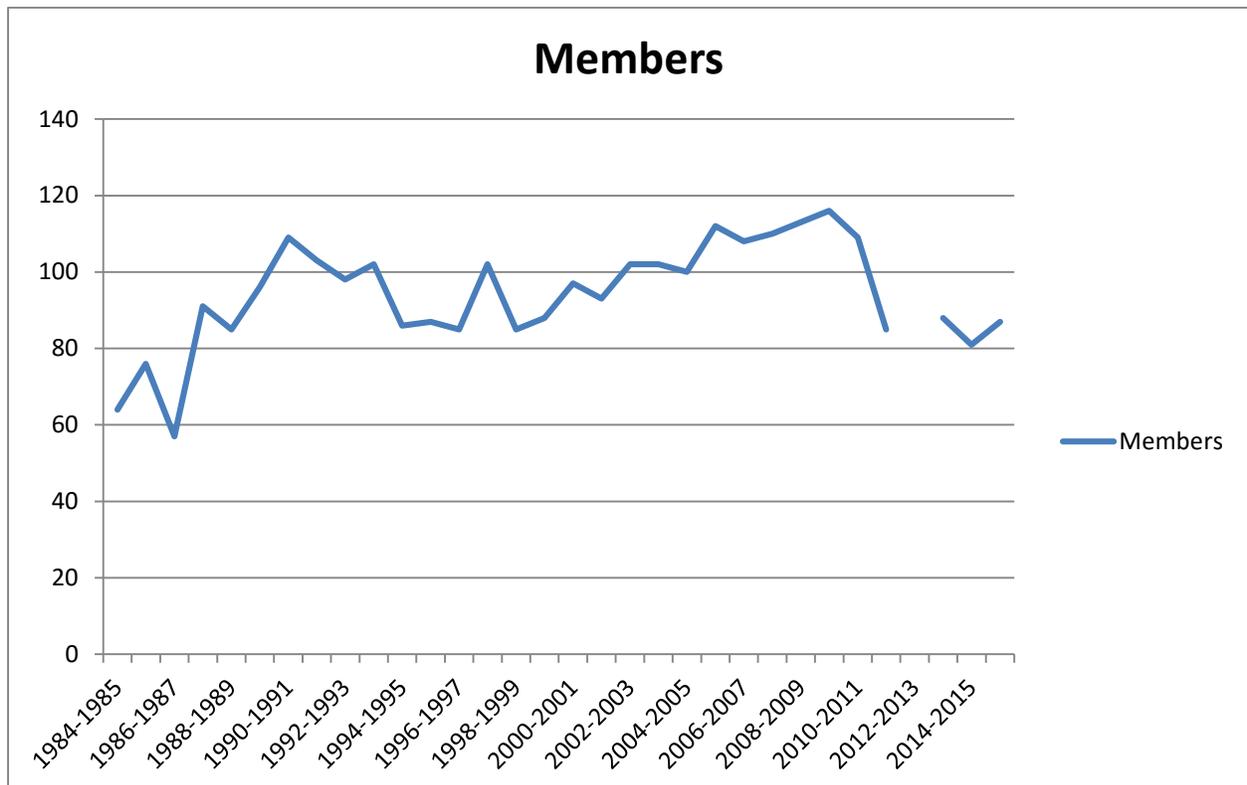
## Dean's Message for August, 2016



For the past few weeks chapter membership has been on my mind. At the program committee meetings this spring we discussed ways to increase membership. The chapter treasurer has kept me updated on membership renewals. And at the May banquet a couple of members mentioned their concern about dwindling membership.

Dwindling membership? It seemed to be fairly steady at the mid to upper 80s since I've been on the board.

So, I counted members in each of the chapter directories from 1984 through 2015 and since I tend to be a visual person, I made a graph.



As you can see, membership has fluctuated quite a bit over the past 32 years. (I couldn't find a directory for 2012-2013, hence the gap in the graph.)

I have no quick or easy explanations for the yearly fluctuations. People renew or don't renew for a variety of reasons.

What we do know is that folks tend to join professional organizations for several reasons. Here are some in no particular order:

- Broadening their knowledge
- Networking
- Meeting new people and making friends
- Staying inspired and motivated

So, what do we do? Accept the dwindling membership numbers as a sign of the times? Or do we become proactive and promote membership to the nonmember church musicians in our area?

The program committee will be presenting a membership campaign to the executive board this month for approval. But let's not rely totally on a membership campaign.

Do you know a church musician who is not a member? Invite them to our September 19 meeting. (See the website for details.) But don't just invite them – bring them! The personal touch is important! Social time is scheduled and the program will be entertaining.

Dwane Grace  
Dean