John R. (Dell) Smith II

Laurel, Mississippi · dell.smith999@gmail.com

PROFILE

Musician, educator and small-business owner. Eleven years as a church music director with adult, youth and children's choirs and handbells, and over a decade of college teaching in music theory and aural skills at the University of North Texas and The University of Southern Mississippi. Since 2017 has owned and run a coffee business in Laurel and Hattiesburg, handling hiring, training, payroll, purchasing, pricing, bookkeeping and sales tax. Also runs a live sound and recording operation and plays keyboards in several regional bands.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Music: choral conducting (concert, chamber, vocal jazz and church choirs), handbells, music theory and aural skills, keyboard, Hammond organ, guitar, voice, arranging

Business operations: hiring, training and scheduling; payroll; budgeting; purchasing and vendor management; recipe costing and menu pricing; bookkeeping; state sales tax filing; permits and licensing; catering and events

Audio: live sound for venues and events; system setup and mixing; in-ear monitor systems; recording, mixing and mastering

Software: Universal Audio LUNA and Apollo, Pro Tools, Logic Pro, Ableton Live, MainStage, Reason, Omnisphere, Finale; QuickBooks Online, Clover POS, Squarespace, Ecwid; Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint; Adobe Creative Suite, Canva; Planning Center, ProPresenter, EasyWorship

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Owner 2017–present

Lee's Coffee & Tea and Crossroads Coffee Roasters, Laurel and Hattiesburg, MS

- Bought Lee's Coffee & Tea in 2017, then launched Crossroads Coffee Roasters as the company's roasting brand in 2021, bought Mulvi's Coffee Co. in Hattiesburg in September 2024, and rebranded it as Crossroads Coffee Roasters in early 2026.
- Lead a staff of 10+ across both cafés; have hired and trained more than 25 high school students since 2017.
- Run payroll, budgets, bill pay and bookkeeping in QuickBooks; now prepare and file the monthly Mississippi sales tax returns for both cafés.
- Roast all coffee for both cafés and for retail sale on a San Franciscan SF-10 drum roaster; keep a versioned roast profile book and costing workbooks, and develop house and seasonal blends.
- Built a 110-recipe costed recipe book and an 88-page staff recipe manual; price the full menu against cost targets and local competitors and load prices into the Clover POS.
- Operate a catering service for local organizations, including the Mississippi School of the Arts and South Central Regional Medical Center.
- Manage purchasing across food, coffee, tea, dairy, produce and packaging suppliers.
- Maintain city permits and licenses, including a retail beer permit; wrote the employment application package, including the background-check consent forms.
- Run the website, online ordering, online coffee store, social media and digital menu boards; host Lee's at Night, a monthly board game night and trivia night.

Owner and Live Sound Engineer 2020–present

The Soundsmiths, Laurel, MS

- Provide sound systems, setup, mixing and teardown for outdoor events, breweries, fairs, a museum and private events in south and east Mississippi.
- Clients and events include Laurel Main Street (Loblolly Festival), Knight Features Presents (South Mississippi Fair, America Bash), the Mississippi Arts + Entertainment Experience (The MAX) in Meridian, South Central Regional Medical Center, Threefoot Brewing's Oktoberfest in Meridian, and Day of the Dead in Meridian.
- Provided sound for the Keg & Barrel Sunday music series in Hattiesburg.
- Write service agreements and itemized quotes, and handle scheduling and billing.

Recording, Mixing and Mastering Engineer 2020–present
The Soundsmiths Music Studio, Laurel, MS

- Record, mix and master music for regional artists in a studio built around Universal Audio LUNA, an Apollo interface and vintage Neve 33114 preamps.
- Tracked two songs for Red and the Revelers, an eight-piece band with horns, and played piano and Hammond organ on the sessions (2026).
- Mastered "Play It Cool" for Grits & Greens (2026).

Adjunct Faculty, Music Theory Spring 2016–Spring 2022
The University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, MS

- Taught Music Theory III and IV (MUS 201 and 202) each year: chromatic harmony, modulation, an introduction to Schenkerian analysis, twentieth-century techniques, dictation and sight-singing.
- Kept teaching through COVID-19, including the move to online and hybrid instruction.
- Designed course materials, including a Schenkerian analysis unit with a final analysis project.

Director of Music 2015–2017
Franklin United Methodist Church, Laurel, MS

- Conducted the chancel choir, planned all service music, and led weekly traditional and contemporary services from piano and guitar.
- Managed the music and technology budgets and the choral library; supervised church musicians and audio and video technicians.

Director of Traditional Music and Worship 2008–2015
First United Methodist Church, Lewisville, TX

- Conducted the chancel, youth and children's choirs; oversaw the handbell program, the organist, and the audio and video technicians.
- Produced two choir concerts a year, usually with orchestra, including a 2013 Christmas program with a 61-voice combined choir and a 21-piece orchestra, for which he arranged "We Wish You a Merry Christmas."
- Planned and ran the church's first youth choir tour; produced a children's choir program twice a year.
- Hired and managed contract musicians and managed the music and technology budgets; played keyboards and rhythm guitar in contemporary services and served as substitute worship leader.

Teaching Fellow and Teaching Assistant, Music Theory 2008–2013
University of North Texas, Denton, TX

- Taught Aural Skills I, II and III (2009–2013) and Fundamentals of Music Theory (2008–2009).
- Editorial assistant for *Theoria* (2008–2012): edited and typeset articles for publication.

Director of Music 2005–2007
Richton United Methodist Church, Richton, MS

- Conducted the chancel choir and the handbell choir and planned music for weekly services.

Graduate Assistant, Choral Activities and Music Theory 2003–2007
The University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, MS

- Conducted the Southern Chamber Singers (2004–2007, including a 2006 tour of Italy and San Marino), University Singers, Southern Chorale, Concert Choir, Southern Chorale Chamber Choir and Vocal Jazz Ensemble.
- Taught Freshman Written Theory and Sophomore Aural Skills (2005–2007).
- Coordinated and conducted the 2003 Southern Regional Choir Tour; assistant director for continuing education units at the Southern Invitational Choral Conference (2004–2006).

Additional Church Music Positions 2004–2005

- Substitute music leader at Good Hope Baptist Church (Purvis), First Baptist Church (Petal) and Poplar Springs Baptist Church (Mendenhall); section singer, First Presbyterian Church, Hattiesburg.

PERFORMANCE

Keyboardist and Booking Contact 2020–present
Organized Grime, Hattiesburg, MS

- Play keyboards and synthesizers in a four-piece instrumental band; run the show laptop (Ableton Live tracks, click and MIDI) and the band's in-ear monitor and split system.
- Book regional shows and built the band's press kit, stage plot, input list and technical rider; album *Beat Tape* (2026).

Keyboardist 2020–present
Stephen Wade Scott (SWS & the Low Spirits)

Keyboardist (Ray Manzarek) 2025–present
Cancel My Subscription, a tribute to The Doors

Keyboardist 2026
Red and the Revelers (select dates and recording sessions)

Show Choir Keyboardist
Northeast Jones High School and Columbia High School, Mississippi

Conductor 2019
Agape Christmas Choir

EDUCATION

Doctoral Study, Music Theory 2007–2017
University of North Texas, Denton, TX
Completed Ph.D. coursework and qualifying exams; advanced to candidacy. Dissertation research on Frank Martin.

Master of Music, Music Theory and Choral Conducting 2007
The University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, MS
Thesis: "A Two-Part Analysis of György Ligeti's *Lux aeterna*"

Bachelor of Science, Music; minor in Biology 2003
Millsaps College, Jackson, MS

CERTIFICATIONS

ServSafe

SERVICE AND COMMUNITY

Board Member October 2026–present
Erata Water Association, Jones County, MS

Coach, U6 Youth Soccer 2026
Laurel Jones County Futbol Club

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

- "Rameau's Concept of Subposition and Its Place in His Music." *Harmonia* 8 (2009–10): 74–85.
- "Symmetry and Structure in Ligeti's *Lux aeterna*." South Central Society for Music Theory conference, Louisiana State University, 2007.

HONORS

Teaching Fellowship and Robert Ottman Scholarship, University of North Texas; Graduate Assistantship and Service Award, The University of Southern Mississippi; Cook Foundation Scholarship; Second-Century Scholarship and Music Scholarship, Millsaps College; Phi Kappa Phi.

INTERESTS

Hiking, backpacking, camping, mountain biking, coffee roasting, sustainable farming (2015 internship, Steadfast Farm, Gilbert, Arizona), and reading in philosophy, theology and literature.