

# A CONCERT OF ORGAN MUSIC FOR THE SEASONS OF ADVENT, CHRISTMAS, AND EPIPHANY

Sunday afternoon, February twentieth at two-thirty

## BRUCE POWER, ORGAN



**Welcome** to the Church of the Holy Cross. We are a diverse urban parish, worshipping in a beautiful building that was consecrated in 1905. Our life together is grounded in worship of God and is lived out in fellowship and care for one another and in our commitment to serve in God's name our neighborhood, and the Community of Shreveport-Bossier City.

**We are happy** you have come to worship with us. If you are visiting, please sign our guest book, as we would love to be in touch with you. If you would like more information about Holy Cross or about the Episcopal Church, please stay after the service, speak to Father Garrett, or call the parish office.

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The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry, Ph.D. *Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church*

The Right Rev. Jacob W. Owensby, Ph.D., D.D. *IV Bishop of Western Louisiana*

The Rev. Garrett Boyte, M.Div. *Rector*

The Rev. Mary B. Richard *Rector Emerita* The Rev. Kenneth W. Paul *Rector Emeritus*

The Rev. Donald D. Heacock *Director of Holy Cross Child Placement*

Bruce Power *Organist/Choirmaster*

Laurie Connell *Office Administrator*

Faith Smith *Videographer*

Charles Alford *Sexton*

Brian Jackson *Asst. Sexton*

*Please reserve applause until the conclusion of each seasonal section.*

*Silence phones, beepers, and other devices before the concert.*

*For hymn textual and tune reference, the hymn numbers in the program notes refer to The Hymnal 1982, found in the pew racks.*

*Restrooms are in the Undercroft (downstairs).*

## ADVENT

**Chorale-Improvisation on *Wachet, auf!***

**Op. 65. No. 33**    *Sleepers, wake*    Hymn 61 or 62

**Sigrid Karg-Elert**

**(1877-1933)**



Karg-Elert was a professor at Germany's Leipzig Conservatory. He regarded himself as an outsider. The cultural climate in Germany in the 1920s and 1930s was very hostile to the internationally oriented, French-influenced Karg-Elert; and although his works were admired outside Germany, especially in the U.K. and U.S.A., in his home country his music was almost completely neglected. Notable influences in his work include composers J. S. Bach, Grieg, Debussy, Reger, Scriabin, and Schoenberg. In general terms, his musical style can be characterised as being late-romantic with impressionistic and expressionistic tendencies. His profound knowledge of music theory

allowed him to stretch the limits of traditional harmony without losing tonal coherence. -*Wikipedia*

**March du Vielleur**    **Charles-Marie Widor**

**de Nuit**    **(1844-1937)**

**March of the Night Watchman**

Hymn 61 or 62    *Widor's title refers to stanza 2 of the hymn.*

Widor was the organist of St. Sulpice and Professor of Organ at the Paris Conservatory. He later became Professor of Composition at the conservatory. Widor's ten organ symphonies revolutionized the art of organ playing and composition in France. Widor became a giant in the musical scene of 19<sup>th</sup> Paris. He was a cultured,



elegantly dressed, widely read and intelligent man, who knew everyone of importance. He mingled with the aristocracy and politicians and was recognized and respected for his intelligence, erudition, and willingness to help others:

The music of J. S. Bach played an important role in Widor's career. In 19<sup>th</sup> France, Bach's music was seldom heard and it was, to a great extent, through the efforts of Widor that interest in the great cantor's music was revived. In 1925 the publisher Durand approached Widor with a proposal that Widor transcribe some of his favorite Bach pieces for the organ. He responded with *Bach's Memento*, six transcriptions from various works, ranging from literal transcriptions of the originals to rather free, expressive treatment. *Marche du Veilleur de Nuit* is based on the famous chorus from *Cantata 140, Wachet, auf! (Sleepers, wake!)*. It is a Lisztian-style paraphrase of Bach's original, perhaps indicating that waiting for Advent could be a rather rollicking affair. -Robert Delcamp

As a side note, a motto appears on the title page of some of the original editions of Widor's organ symphonies: *Soar above*. Widor was simultaneously alluding to his descent from the Montgolfier brothers (aviation pioneers and hot air balloonists) on his mother's side of the family and stating his vision of what the modern organ should be: symphonic in scale and of dimensions that should go beyond the limited horizons of everyday life and its banality. -Joris Verdin

## For Advent Paul Benoit (1893-1979)

French by birth, Paul Benoit was a Benedictine monk living most of his life at the Abbey of Clervaux in Luxembourg. This lovely piece is based on two themes: *Rorate coeli desuper (Drop down ye heavens from above)* and the French carol, *Venez, Divin Messsie (O Come, Divine Messiah)*.



**Nun komm,  
der Heiden  
Heiland, BWV 661**

**Johann Sebastian Bach**  
(1685-1750)

*Now come, Savior of the heathen* Hymn 54

This chorale prelude (a work based on a hymn) is based on a Lutheran hymn with words by Martin Luther, basing his text on a Latin text by St. Ambrose. The tune, also composed by Luther and possibly Johann Walther, is a reworking of

a plainsong tune. In the Lutheran tradition of Bach's time, the hymn was most appropriate for the first Sunday of Advent.

This chorale prelude is from the *Great Eighteen Chorale Preludes*. The collection was prepared by Bach during the final ten years of his life.

**Meine Seele erhebt den Herren, BWV 733**      **Johann Sebastian Bach**

*My soul magnifies the Lord (Magnificat)*      S-242, Stanza 1

*Tonus peregrinus* is a traditional Gregorian psalm tone of the church. Martin Luther set the *Magnificat* text to this psalm tone. In this chorale prelude, the *Tonus peregrinus* tune weaves in and out of the keyboard voices, with the final and majestic statement of the tune being heard in the organ pedals only one time.

## CHRISTMAS

**In dulci jubilo, BWV 729**

**Johann Sebastian Bach**

*In sweet rejoicing*      Hymn 107

This chorale prelude is a short, to the point, exuberant setting of *Good Christian friends, rejoice*. The melody is harmonized with thick chords and interspersed with electric flashes and flourishes.

**Offertoire sur le Noël**

**Alexandre Guilmant**

*"Joseph est bien marié", Op. 60, #5*

(1837-1911)

*Offertory on the Noel "Joseph is well-married"*



Alexandre Guilmant was a Parisian organist: he succeeded Widor as Professor of Organ at the Conservatoire, presided at Ste-Trinité from 1871 to 1901, and was 'Organiste honoraire' at Notre Dame from 1902; and as well as composing prolifically for the organ, he was a widely travelled recitalist, and a musicologist who did much for French music of earlier centuries.

The reach of the traditional, old noëls in French culture in the Baroque is demonstrated in astonishing fashion by their use among the Indians of North America, transmitted by settlers and Jesuit missionaries. *Joseph is well-married* survives in a Québec City archive in an early 18<sup>th</sup> manuscript with its music in a version for the indigenous Abenaki peoples in Maine.

– Ross W. Duffin

***Où s'en vont ces gais bergers*** (excerpts)  
***Where are these gay shepherds going?***

**Michel Corrette**  
**(1707-1795)**

Traditional carols, or *noëls*, held a special place in the repertoire of French Baroque organists. These *noëls* generally originated not as liturgical music, but as folk songs, popular songs, or even dances. Despite the tunes' playful origins, at Christmas, the Catholic church in France allowed organists to work these *noëls* into their church music, and as a result, we have the fascinating mix of popular and sacred which is the Baroque *noël d'orgue*. -*Emma Riggle*



A sympathizer of the French Revolution, Corrette spent most of his life in Paris as a music teacher, composer, and parish organist until 1791, the year he lost his parish position due to the French Revolution's closure of his parish.

***Rhapsodie sur des Noëls*** from *Ten Pieces for Organ, No. 6*  
Hymns 83 and 93

**Eugène Gigout**  
**(1844-1925)**



*Gigout's Rhapsody on Noëls* interweaves carols including the French carol, *Joseph is well-married*, *O come, all ye faithful*, and *Angels we have heard on high*.

Eugène Gigout was for 62 years Organist of the Church of St Augustin, Paris. He was best-known at the time as a performer and was one of the first French organists to embrace the new technology of recording. Today, he is best known for his organ compositions that are a still a staple of the repertoire.

From the age of 13 he was good enough to be taught by Camille Saint-Saëns at the Ecole Niedermeyer in Paris. After graduating from the school, he joined the teaching staff and, in 1863, at the age of 19, began his 62-year tenure at

St. Augustin, Paris. In 1911, he succeeded Alexandre Guilmant as Professor of Organ and Composition at the Paris Conservatory.

When César Franck died in 1890, among the many famous organists of the day who were present at the funeral, it was Gigout who played the organ for the occasion. *-Rousseau Media Music*

## EPIPHANY

### Noël: La Marche Des Rois Mages *The March of the Three Kings*

### Clément Loret (1833-1909)

Loret, a Belgian, became professor at the Niedermeyer School, Paris, in 1858. He instructed many noteworthy organists of his time including Fauré.

The Crusades created an enormous interest in both faith and fighting in the Middle Ages. French peasants from Provence in the 13th century (when the tune for this *March of the Three Kings* was being sung and danced to) must have endowed the three kings of the Epiphany story with all the virtues and appearance of their own folk heroes nearer at hand. These were the French dukes, clad in gleaming armor, carrying brilliant banners and be-jeweled shields.



*-Hymns and Carols of Christmas*

In the second variation, Loret asks for an effect called *Tonnerre* or *Effet d'Orage* (Storm Pedal/Thunder Pedal). Some of the French Romantic instruments employed a stop (a knob pulled by the organist to produce sound) evoking a storm or drum. In the organs built earlier, the effect was achieved by the organist pressing very low notes on the pedal board.

### Prelude in C, BWV 547

### Johann Sebastian Bach

### Christ unser Herr zum Jordan kam, BWV 684

*Christ, our Lord, came to Jordan* Hymn 139

### Fugue in C, BWV 547

During his tenure at Leipzig, which spanned three decades until his death there, Bach worked for St. Thomas' Church and some smaller nearby churches. It is during this time that he composed this prelude and fugue. The exact date of

composition is uncertain. However, he seems to have drawn much of the material for this prelude from a cantata written in 1724 for Epiphany: *They shall all come forth from Sheba*. The text alludes to the three kings coming from afar to honor the newborn Christ. The prelude retains the pastoral feel of the cantata. Its motifs of rising eighth and descending sixteenth notes paint a picture of nighttime travel: the guiding star and the excited caravan. The gentle lilt of a camel's gait in the prelude gives way to awe, wonder, and majesty in the five-voice fugue. Both movements end with only an eighth note, as though Bach is telling us he has nothing more to say. -*Jacob Berns*

Interspersed between this prelude and fugue is a chorale prelude most appropriate for the Feast of the Baptism of our Lord, a feast day occurring not long after the Feast of the Epiphany. This chorale prelude is from Bach's German *Organ Mass (Clavier-Übung III)*. In long notes, the hymn tune is heard in the pedals while the manuals (keyboards) are playing fast-moving 8th and 16th notes, perhaps reflecting the rippling waters of the River Jordan. -*Jacob Berns*

### Lumen ad revelationem . . .

*from Six Antiennes pour le Temps de Noël, Op. 48*

**Marcel Dupré**

*(1886-1971)*

### A light to lighten the gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel

*from Six Antiphons for the Christmas Season*



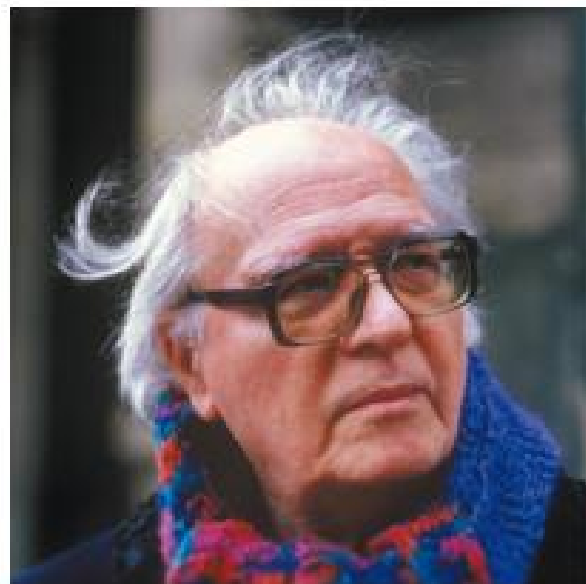
Dupré descended from a family of organists and musicians. He was born in Rouen. He had his first appointment as an organist at the age of 12 and in 1898 became a pupil of Alexandre Guilmant, his teacher at the Paris Conservatoire, with Vierne and Widor, studying composition with the last and winning the Prix de Rome in 1914. Un-fit for military service, he substituted for Vierne at Notre-Dame between 1916 and 1922, and found time to study all Bach's music for the organ, in 1920 playing in recital the complete organ works, thus establishing his reputation. An international career followed, with recitals throughout the world. This he

coupled with the position of Professor of Organ at the Paris Conservatoire and Widor's successor as organist at the Paris church of St. Sulpice. He served as director of the Conservatoire from 1954 to 1956. Equally gifted as a composer and as a performer, Dupré was a master of organ improvisation. -*Keith Anderson*

**La Nativité: Dieu parmi nous**  
*The Nativity: God among us*

**Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992)**

It is most appropriate to end this concert with Messiaen's *Dieu Parmi Nous*. *La Nativité* is a composition in nine movements. After the first movement (*The Virgin and Child*), the work progresses to movement eight (*The Magi*), with the whole work ending with *God Among Us*.



Olivier Messiaen was born in Avignon, the son of Cécile Sauvage, the poetess, and Pierre Messiaen, known for his translations of Shakespeare. By the age of eight his piano studies had begun and he had produced his first compositions; when only eleven he entered the Paris Conservatoire, where he carried off a host of first prizes and to which he returned in 1942 as professor. Messiaen was organist at La Sainte-Trinité and a professor at the Paris Conservatory.

Regarded by many as the most significant composer of his generation, Messiaen is noted for his use of mystical and religious themes, Hindu rhythms, birdsong, microtonal music, electronic instruments, and new harmonic and tonal languages. In Claude Samuel's *Conversations with Olivier Messiaen (1967)*, Messiaen said, "... *La Nativité du Seigneur*, [is] a work which gained great success in France and abroad (without deserving it, for I've done much better)".

In the last movement of the suite, *Dieu parmi nous*, a powerful fanfare interrupts our dream and brings us back to the night of Christmas. It announces the birth of the Lord as if we were experiencing and witnessing the event. With a tremendous descending figure (played by the feet), God in human form descends to earth and is now among us. This grandiose gesture is immediately answered by a theme of love: delicate, quiet, and magical. The main part of the piece is a thunderous, energetic toccata which is built on the opening descending pedal theme, overflowing with joy. -Gillian Weir and Jon Gillock

**Skinner Organ Company, Boston, Massachusetts, Opus 306, 1920**  
**Aeolian-Skinner Organ Company, Boston, Massachusetts, Opus 306-A, 1949**  
*The specifications of the organ may be found on the parish's website.*

*For the live stream of this concert, a thank you is extended to videographers, Faith Smith and Reid Raymond.*