

# JOHN LINKER ORGANIST

9 MARCH 2014

4:15PM RECITAL

CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD  
LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY

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## Chorale Preludes

Herr Jesu Christ, dich zu uns wend, BWV 655  
Von Gott will ich nicht lassen, BWV 658  
Wenn wir in höchsten Nöthen sein, BWV 668

J.S. Bach  
(1685-1750)

## Selections from *Organ Book* (1956)

II. Pastoral Song  
IV. Flûtes

Jean Langlais  
(1907-1991)

## The Peace may be exchanged (from *Rubrics*, 1988)

Dan Locklair  
(b. 1949)



## **JOHN LINKER**

A native of Princeton, Illinois, John received a Bachelor of Music degree from Northern Illinois University (DeKalb) in 1997 where he studied organ with Robert Reeves and Richard Hoskins, and a Master of Music degree from the Chicago Musical College (Roosevelt University) in 2003, an organ and harpsichord student of David Schrader. He is currently a candidate for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree at the University of Cincinnati (College-Conservatory of Music) where he studied organ with Roberta Gary and conducting with Stephen Coker and Earl Rivers. Linker has performed numerous roles at CCM, and was first place winner in the annual Strader Organ Competition in 2004.

Since 2001 Linker has been Organist/Choirmaster of the Church of the Good Shepherd (Episcopal) in Lexington, Kentucky, where he leads a vibrant choir program of professional and volunteer singers of trebles and adults. In addition to the usual rigorous rehearsal and service schedule, the Choir has performed in concert numerous masterworks. National and international tours also occupy much of the Choir's time, and under Linker's leadership the choir has honored four English Cathedral residency invitations, (Gloucester Cathedral, 2003; Lichfield Cathedral, 2006; Durham Cathedral 2006; Ely Cathedral 2009). The Choir has also made many stateside tours including Atlanta, Chicago, Washington DC, New York, and all around Kentucky. This past summer the Choir had a very successful tour throughout Europe, singing in Rome, Florence, and Paris.

In addition to liturgical work and teaching, Linker keeps busy as a recitalist and chamber musician, making numerous tours in the United States and abroad. He is an active member of the Association of Anglican Musicians, the American Guild of Organists (former Dean of the Lexington Chapter), the Organ Historical Society, and Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia music fraternity. Rekindling an early interest in trumpet music, John also plays organ and trumpet with Kentucky Baroque Trumpets. Linker is married to Lexington native Molly McCann Linker, and both are proud parents to a daughter named Lila and guardians to felines Nigel, Pierre, and Tom.

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## PROGRAM NOTES

The three chorale preludes opening this afternoon's program are from Bach's collection known as the "Great Eighteen Chorales." Bach began compiling these in the last decade of his life. *Herr Jesu Christ, dich zu uns wend* is a chorale trio in that there are only three voices sounding at any one time: one for the right hand, one for the left, and one for the feet. The choral tune for this prelude is #3 in *The Hymnal 1982*. Displaying Italian influence, the material is derived from the cantus firmus in ritonello form, and also features a complete statement of the cantus firmus in the pedal during the last third of the piece. *Von Gott will ich nicht lassen* features two accompanying voices in the hands (with material derived from the chorale tune) while the chorale tune is stated in the pedal. This is the first of these settings in a minor key. *Vor deinen Thron tret ich hiermit* is the final chorale of the Great Eighteen, and is a revision of the chorale *Wenn wir in höchsten Nöten sein* (same tune, different text). Amazingly, Bach reuses many compositional procedures as heard before: vorimitation (using material from the chorale in accompanying figures before the appearance of the chorale phrase), chromaticism for dramatic effect, and clearly audible cantus firmus in the pedal.

French composer Jean Langlais (1907-1991), by his life and testament, united two traditions in France in the twentieth century. As organist at St Clotilde in Paris for more than forty years, he strengthened the spiritual musical legacy established there by César Franck and continued by Charles Tournemire. As a blind man, he was his generation's foremost successor to the great blind virtuosos Louis Vierne and André Marchal. *Organ Book* (1956) was written as a gift for Marchal's daughter on the occasion of her marriage to composer Giuseppe Englert. *Pastoral Song* features the haunting registration of 8' Clarinet with 2 2/3' Nazard of the Choir division pitted against the warm 8' & 4' flutes of the Swell. *Flûtes*, as the name implies, is a delightful movement that features the various flute stops of the organ. A profound sense of mysticism abounds in both movements, and the irregular meter of *Flûtes* gives the impression of a certain improvised spontaneity.

Dan Locklair's liturgical suite *Rubrics* is a collection of five pieces inspired by various rubrics (directives originally printed in red, hence "rubric") from the *Book of Common Prayer*. "The Peace May Be Exchanged" beautifully interprets the idea of being at peace with oneself, with each other, and with God. Locklair lives in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, and is among the most celebrated of contemporary American composers.