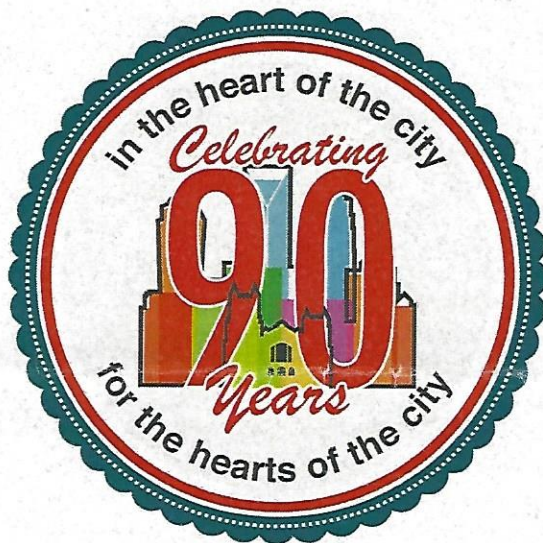


**First United  
Methodist Church**  
Charlotte, North Carolina



**Möller Organ, Op. 10260**  
**Fiftieth Anniversary Recital**

***Dr. Joby Bell, Recitalist***

Sunday, September 10, 2017  
5:30 pm

---

**Grand Choeur Dialogué \***

Eugène Gigout (1844-1925)

This heroic piece for organ is also frequently performed for organ and brass. The stately march quality eventually gives way to a more flowing texture, while maintaining a sharp rhythmic drive to the end.

**“O Man, bewail thy grievous sin,” BWV 622 \***

(from the *Orgelbüchlein*)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

This famous setting continues to inspire with its soothing harmonies and gentle, abundantly ornamented melody. At once plaintive and exquisitely beautiful, the piece suggests reflection on sinful humanity yet quiet contemplation of redemption. A curious chord near the end that comes from nowhere has been variously interpreted as “sinful.” The chord settles on a C-flat major triad before returning to more “proper” harmonies and finishing the piece in the home key of E-flat.

**Prelude in E-flat, BWV 552i \***

J. S. Bach

Bach tends to fill a single work with everything he has learned up to that point. In the Prelude and Fugue in E-flat (the Fugue will conclude today’s program), in addition to his customary masterful counterpoint and complete exploitation of the organ and its player, Bach takes us on a tour of Europe in the prelude and on an encounter with the number 3 in the fugue. The prelude is a study in three contrasting sections: stately French overture on full organ, light Italian dialogue and melody, and the sturdy harmonic progressions of German fugal scales.

**Prelude and Fugue on the name “Alain” \* Maurice Duruflé (1902-1986)**

Maurice Duruflé was a master at constructing huge, magnificent works from tiny musical motives. His *Prelude and Fugue on the Name “Alain”* pays homage to Jehan Alain (1911-1940), prodigious and pioneering organist/composer. Duruflé sets up a five-note theme based on the letters A-L-A-I-N, developing that theme through his characteristically rich harmonies and use of canon and motivic expansion, then finishing off with a masterful fugue that increases in velocity and excitement. The Prelude contains one direct quote from – and several clever allusions to – Alain’s famous *Litanies* for organ solo.

*\* Performed during the 1967 inaugural recital*

---

## *Brief Intermission*

### **Pastorale \***

Jean-Jules Aimable Roger-Ducasse (1873-1954)

Depending on your preferred definition of "French Impressionism," Roger-Ducasse's *Pastorale*, his only organ work, is the closest that French organ music comes to Debussy. The single, gently lilting theme on which this twelve-minute piece is based appears in nearly every measure, whether as a melody or as a rhythmic undercurrent. Myriad treatments range from rhythmic alteration to multi-voice canons to hidden statements amidst other interesting passages. This piece builds to the customary "storm scene" so common in pastorales, and the ensuing denouement is truly breathtaking.

### **Symphonie gothique, Op. 70**

#### **II. Andante sostenuto**

Charles-Marie Widor (1844-1937)

This second movement of Widor's penultimate organ symphony is one of the most often-excerpted movements from this French Symphonic style. For its sheer beauty and craftsmanship it speaks for itself, but it also bespeaks the continuing development of its composer. By the time this symphony was written, Widor had already composed eight earlier symphonies for solo organ, all of which demonstrate an inexorable increase in quality and in the continuing maturation of a compositional style for organ "inherited" from César Franck. Widor was also of high social status, and his music tends to demonstrate that respectability in the background.

### **"St. Anne" Fugue in E-flat, BWV 552ii \***

J. S. Bach

The implied numerology in this fugue (most agree that it is Trinitarian in inspiration) has kept both aficionados and scholars engaged in lively conversation and constant discovery. It has three subjects, is in three sections, and is in a key signature that contains three flats. The first fugue subject appears in all three sections as an organizational anchor. Plenty more may be said about the numerology, but let us simply agree that this fugue, like nearly all of Bach's fugues, is unique. The fugue subject bears a striking resemblance to the hymn tune St. Anne ("O God, our help in ages past"), although there is no concrete evidence Bach knew that tune.

*\* Performed during the 1967 inaugural recital*



## Biography

Born in 1968, Joby Bell attended high school at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts, where he studied piano with Marian Hahn and Robert McDonald. He earned the Bachelor of Music degree in organ and piano from Appalachian State University and the Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees in organ from Rice University. His teachers include H. Max Smith and Clyde Holloway, organ, and Rodney Reynerson and Allen Kindt, piano. His church posts have included St. John the Divine Episcopal, Houston; St. Philip Presbyterian, Houston; First Presbyterian, Houston; First Presbyterian, Lenoir, N.C.; and First Presbyterian, Statesville, N.C.

Since 2004, Dr. Bell has served on the faculty of the Hayes School of Music, Appalachian State University, where he teaches organ and church music studies. His teaching specializes in practice techniques, memorization, service playing, choral accompanying, and maintaining grace under pressure – lessons always best taught by example.

In 2000 he garnered Second Prize and the Audience Prize in the American Guild of Organists National Young Artists Competition in Organ Performance. He is featured on several recordings. His latest, **Sonatas and Variations**, features large works by Jongen, Brahms, and Reubke, recorded on the Fritts organ at St. Philip Presbyterian, Houston, and is available on the Centaur label. **Music City Mixture** is recorded on mechanical-action organs of Nashville. **Live Performances** is a compilation of works played live at Appalachian State University, Rice University, Houston Baptist University, and the Washington National Cathedral. Upcoming recording projects include the complete works of Widor, to be released on the Centaur label.

Dr. Bell currently serves as organist for St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Boone, N.C.

See Joby's blog at [www.JobyBell.org](http://www.JobyBell.org)