



THE PIPELINE

March-April 2021

Volume 36, Number 4

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Diamond Anniversary Committee

- Dillon J. Swanson, Chairman
 Alex P. Swanson, Secretary
 Bradley Steen Michael Olson
 Susan Clambey Dr. Jean Hellner

Message from the Dean

Submitted by Michael Olson



I am writing this letter on Thursday, March 4. I realize that you will probably not be reading this on March 4, but I still remember what one of the First Lutheran pastors told me long ago: March 4 is the only day that's a command – MARCH FORTH!

I do realize that marching does connote some negative things, but I know that was NOT what the pastor meant “many long years ago” and it's not what I meant to imply, either. We all need to go forth in our daily lives in service to Him and others.

I think back to about a year ago when everything changed as we once knew it. And, it's very likely that some things will never be the same again. Perhaps change is good...

I have rehearsal in places the next few weeks to work with students at Fargo North, Fargo South, and Fargo Davies High School for their upcoming EDC music contests. And I'm working with students at all three colleges – Concordia, NDSU, and MSUM – for upcoming performances. And I'm continuing to teach my private students (something I've been privileged to be doing since Monday, February 1). And there's “a few” things going on at First Lutheran Church as we continue through the Lenten season and eventually enter into Holy Week and Easter Sunday.

I am waiting patiently to get a COVID-19 vaccination, and hopefully this will happen soon. With everything going on in my life in the next couple of months, I don't know if now is the “right time” for a vaccination, but I'd better not say “no” if one is offered to me.

First Lutheran Church has resumed live, in-person worship as of Sunday, January 31. Some have been so happy to return to the church building, while others continue to worship virtually. I know that there are still some churches which have not yet opened for in-person worship. May we all continue to navigate life with His help and strength and guidance.

I have been giving virtual organ recitals since mid-October 2020, but for the last five Wednesdays, there are people in the pews listening as well as those watching and listening virtually. Perhaps one of YOU would like to share a piece on a recital or present 30-minute recital. Please let me know of your willingness and availability. Several of you participated in live recitals last fall which was very fun indeed.

We all need music now more than ever, so keep playing and singing and making a joyful noise to the Lord. May God richly bless each and every one of you, today and always.

Most sincerely,
 Michael Olson, Dean

Message from the Sub-Dean

Submitted by Dillon J. Swanson



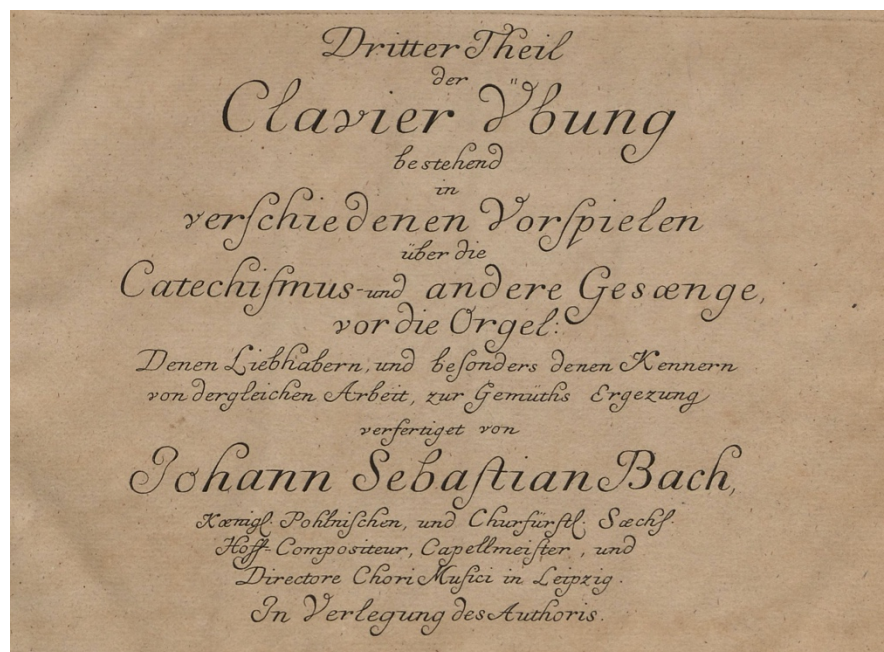
Greetings! Here we are a year into the pandemic and we're still here... making music. As I reflect on this last year and I can't help but feel blessed. While many of the things I look forward to in a year were simply cancelled for safety, I am reminded of the many positive things that have come from this time of isolation and social distancing.

Our chapter leadership has had the opportunity to revisit and revise the By-Laws/Operating procedures, update and improve our online presence in terms of social media platforms and streaming equipment. I'm very proud of the work that has been completed this year even if we were unable to celebrate our Diamond anniversary as planned.

In my personal musical career, I've had the opportunity to practice more and also conduct a couple of really interesting musicological studies with incredible mentors at Concordia College and abroad. I am currently studying the musical rhetoric and theology found in J. S. Bach's *Clavier-Übung III*. I am also currently preparing for my junior recital at Concordia College with Professor Steinberg and it's exciting to know that it's only a little over a month away!

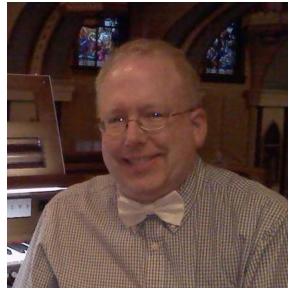
If you are interested in participating in any of the upcoming programming or have programming ideas you'd like to be discussed at the next Executive Committee meeting, send me an email! I will be sure to respond promptly.

Dillon J. Swanson, Sub-Dean



Secretary's Report

Submitted by Bradley J. Steen



Regular Executive Committee Meeting – 02/29/2021

A regular meeting of the RRVAGO Executive Committee was held on the above date via Zoom.

The meeting was called to order by Sub-Dean Dillon Swanson at 7:56pm. The secretary's report was emailed to all members of the Executive Committee. Dillon Swanson moved to approve the report, seconded by Dr. Jean Hellner; motion carried.

Officer Reports

Dean's report: none. The Sub-Dean's report was given by Dillon Swanson. Dillon shared with the Executive Committee his experience and impressions of the AGO Leadership Conference which he attended via Zoom. He will write an article for a future issue of the *Pipeline*. Alex Swanson moved to approve the Sub-Dean's report, seconded by Dr. Jean Hellner; motioned carried. Alex Swanson gave the Treasurer's report. Dillon Swanson moved to place the report on file, seconded by Bradley Steen; motioned carried.

Committee Reports:

By-Laws/Operating Procedures Standing Committee report was given by Alex Swanson. Members of the Standing Committee were Alex Swanson, Dr. Jean Heller (Chairperson), Mark Frisco, and Bradley Steen met, reviewed the most current document, and made recommendations for additions and edits to be presented to the Executive Committee for any further additions and edits. After reading through the proposed amendments and some discussion, Alex Swanson moved to adopt the proposed amendments, seconded by Dillon Swanson; motion carried.

Old Business:

Sub-Dean Dillon Swanson reported on the "Bach Birthday Bash" indicating that it is scheduled to take place on Sunday, March 21, 2021 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Moorhead, MN. The exact time is yet to be determined. The concert will be live-streamed.

New Business:

The Executive Committee discussed that all of us should stay alert for any announcements and information on possible grants the RRVAGO might consider applying for.

Officer Elections: This year elections will be held using the same online format as last year. The cost will be about \$25. The online election will take place on Friday, April 9, 2021. The slate of officers standing for election will be published in the *Pipeline*, and email reminders will be sent out by the Secretary on two occasions to the RRVAGO membership.

Chaplain: There was a brief discussion about securing a chaplain for our chapter.

Good of the Order:

The next Executive Committee meeting will likely be Tuesday, April 6, 2021 at 7:30pm with a Zoom option available.

There being no further business, Bradley Steen moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Alex Swanson. Motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 9:07pm.

Bradley Steen, Secretary

Treasurer's Report

Submitted by Alex P. Swanson



Regular Treasurer's Report For the period December 31, 2020 – March 4, 2021

BEGINNING BALANCE – Checking (December 31, 2020) \$5,547.82

INCOME

<u>Date</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>
1/12/21	National A.G.O. for membership dues	92.00
2/10/21	National A.G.O. for membership dues	<u>74.00</u>
TOTAL INCOME		\$ 166.00

EXPENDITURES

<u>Date</u>	<u>Check No.</u>	<u>Payable To/Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>
1/15/21	Debit Card	U. S. Postal Service for P. O. Box rent	<u>92.00</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURES			\$ 92.00

Net Profit (Loss) 74.00

ENDING BALANCE (December 31, 2020) \$5,621.82

A. P. Swanson

Alex P. Swanson, Treasurer

Chapter Administrator's Report

Submitted by Alex P. Swanson



We've experienced a net gain of 1 member since the last report.

Membership Breakdown

Regular (voting)	10
Special	9
Young Organist	5
Dual Member	2
<u>Chapter Friend</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTAL	26

Chapter Happenings



Dillon J. Swanson presents “Light Everlasting”, a recital for the Epiphany Season

On Sunday, January 31, Sub-Dean Dillon Swanson presented “Light Everlasting”, a recital for the Epiphany season. The repertoire included the following:

Grand Triumphant Chorus in A Major, Op. 47, No.2 Alexandre Guilmant
Christ, unser Herr, zum Jordan kam, BWV 684..... J. S. Bach
Adoration..... Florence Price
In Manus Tuas (from 12 Gregorian Preludes)..... Jeanne Demessieux
In Domine Jesu (from 12 Gregorian Preludes)..... Jeanne Demessieux
Partita on “O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright”..... Michael Burkhardt

The recital illustrated the themes of the Epiphany season including the visit the of the Magi, Christ’s Baptism, and light throughout our lives into death. An archived video of the recital is available on the chapter’s Facebook page.



The Swanson Duo present a recital of duets at First Presbyterian in Fargo

Dillon and Alex Swanson (The Swanson Duo) presented a recital of piano and organ duets as well as a special organ duet feature from First Presbyterian on Sunday, February 28th, 2021.

The duo experimented with pre-recording and premiering the recital on the chapter’s new YouTube channel. The recital included pieces based on hymns and transcriptions. The video of the recital is available on the chapter’s YouTube Channel (article with information below).

Announcements

NEW CHAPTER YOUTUBE CHANNEL!

During this time of pandemic, our chapter has grown its online presence through the addition of a new Facebook page, AV equipment, a new website, and now a YouTube channel! We hope to archive our digitally-recorded programming to this platform as well as on an external hard drive for safe keeping in our archives.

To access our YouTube channel visit the following link or simply search RRVAGO on the YouTube website:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmrL3RhWe50UK3dks3BIhrA>

CHAPTER ELECTION VOTING

Once again, this year’s election will take place online through the same secure website as last year (Election Runner) via private ballot.

Chapter members will receive an email with directions as to how to access the ballot with the nominees for the 2021-22 Program Year.

The election will take place on Friday, April 9, 2021 and the polls will be open all day, for one day only.

The terms of office for those elected will be July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022. Several reminders will be sent out to the membership from chapter secretary, Bradley Steen. If you have any questions, please contact Bradley at secretary@rrvago.org.

The slate of officer candidates including brief biographies and photographs is presented below by the 2021 Nominating Committee for election. The committee included current dean Michael Olson, Sally Harmon, and Robin Vinje (chairperson). Please take the time to read the biographies to better know your candidates!

Candidates for 2021 Officer Election



DEAN: Dillon J. Swanson

Dillon J. Swanson is an organ performance major at Concordia College while also serving as the Chapel Organist for the campus' Office of Ministry. He joined the chapter in 2017 and has served as Sub-Dean since July 2020 and chairman of the Diamond Anniversary Committee since November of 2019.

Swanson has served as organist and music director in many churches in North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota. His current appointments include Concordia College and Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, both in Moorhead, Minnesota. He will also serve as Organ Fellow for the 40th Session of Lutheran Summer Music Academy and Festival this summer at Valparaiso University in Valparaiso, Indiana under the mentorship of Chad Fothergill.

Dillon is active in the Red River Theatre Organ Society, currently serving as President as well as one of the current House Organists at the Fargo Theatre on the Mighty Wurlitzer.

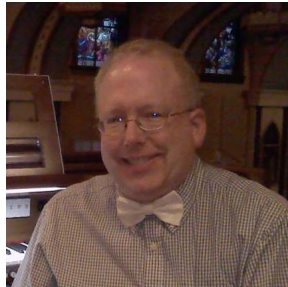
Dillon Swanson is also an avid musicological research with current interests in J. S. Bach's *Clavier-Übung III*. He also a published author in the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians' magazine *CrossAccent*. His primary teachers have been Dr. Peggy Johnson, Andrew Steinberg, with special mentorship from Dr. Annett Richter and Chad Fothergill.



SUB-DEAN: Andrew Steinberg

Andrew Steinberg is the organ instructor, conductor of Symphonia, and choral area accompanist for Concordia College and the sanctuary worship director and organist at Trinity Lutheran Church, Moorhead. He is frequently called on as a soloist as well as a collaborative accompanist in instrumental and choral activities featuring organ, harpsichord, and piano and as musical director for a variety of music theatre experiences across the country including Concordia Theatre. At Concordia, Steinberg coaches singers into creating their own musical theatre cabaret shows, exploring the world of musical theatre literature, and preparing performers for professional experiences.

Steinberg has served as organist and worship director at congregations in the Twin Cities, Fort Collins, and the Fargo-Moorhead area. Steinberg coaches and accompanies soloists and ensembles throughout the region and nationally. He performed as solo organists in Wittenberg Germany, as part of the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, and has performed across the United States, Germany, and Scotland (University of Glasgow). Steinberg holds a master's degree in organ performance and certification in liturgical studies from Colorado State University, Fort Collins. He remains active as organist, collaborative pianists, vocal coach, and musical director for Concordia College's theatre program. Steinberg has earned credits toward a doctorate in collaborative piano. His primary teachers have been Peter Nygarrd, Dr. Joel Bacon, and Dr. Tyler Wottrich.



SECRETARY: Bradley Steen

Bradley J. Steen, Secretary of the Red River Valley Chapter of the American Guild of Organists, is Cathedral Organist at St. Mary's Cathedral in Fargo, ND, a position he has held since May 2017. He has also served as an organist, pianist, and accompanist at Sts. Anne & Joachim Catholic Church in Fargo since January 1996. He has been a ringer in the hand bell choir during part of his tenure there.

Bradley is originally from Fergus Falls, MN where he graduated from Fergus Falls High School. He is a graduate of Minnesota State University Moorhead where he received a BA degree in History and Music. He retired from North Dakota State University in November of 2014 after being employed at the NDSU Bookstore for thirty-seven years.

He is a member of the American Guild of Organists where he has held various offices in the Red River Valley Chapter through the years, the Red River Theatre Organ Society, and the Knights of Columbus.

Bradley enjoys reading, listening to music, viewing classic television and cinema, and has an avocational interest in architecture, church history, and transportation history including automobiles, trains, ships, and airplanes.



TREASURER: Alex P. Swanson

Alex Swanson works as a funeral director at West Funeral Home in West Fargo. He joined the chapter in 2017 and has served as chapter treasurer since February 2020, also serving as chapter administrator, archivist, secretary of the Diamond Anniversary Committee, and is on the Yearbook and By-Laws/Operating Procedures Committees.

He resides on his great-grandparents' farmstead in Kragnes Township, 10 miles north of Moorhead, Minn., where he was organist of the Oak Mound Congregational Church until its closing in 2011. He now belongs to North Buffalo Lutheran Church and serves as a substitute organist and has subbed for many F-M Area churches since 2008.

He has been active in the Red River Theatre Organ Society for 10 years, currently serves as its treasurer, and is a house organist of the Fargo Theatre on the Mighty Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ.

Composer's Corner

Submitted by Dillon J. Swanson



Jacob Ludwig Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy
Felix Mendelssohn
(1809-1847)

Portrait of Mendelssohn by Eduard Magnus, 1846

Felix Mendelssohn was a German composer and one of the most gifted and versatile prodigies. He stood at the forefront of German music during the 1830s and 1840s, as conductor, pianos, organist, and above all, composer. His musical style, fully developed before he was 20, drew upon a variety of influences, including the complex chromatic counterpoint of Bach, the formal clarity and gracefulness of Mozart and the dramatic power of Beethoven and Weber.

Mendelssohn's emergence into the first rank of 19th-century German composers coincided with efforts by music historiographers to develop the concept of Classic-Romantic dialect in 18th and 19th- century music. To a large degree, his music reflects a fundamental tension between Classicism and Romanticism in the generation of German composers after Beethoven.

The close study of Bach's music no doubt explains in large measure Mendelssohn's characteristic love of learned counterpoint and complex chromatic part-writing; indeed, the generating of fugues and canons became an avocation for him, in an age where other composers were eschewing the rigor of strict counterpoint.

Mendelssohn was one of the finest organists of his day. The Three Preludes and Fugues, Op. 37, dedicated to Mozart's pupil Thomas Attwood, form a pendant to the Op. 35. The Six Organ Sonatas op. 65 (1845), teeming with artful fugues and chorales, summarize and epitomize Mendelssohn's rediscovery of Bach, and may have inspired Schumann's six fugues on B-A-C-H op. 60.

Taken from: Todd, R. Larry "Mendelssohn (-Bartholdy), (Jacob Ludwig) Felix" [Grove Music Online](#). 2001. Oxford University Press.

Six Organ Sonatas, Op. 65 (1845)

Felix Mendelssohn's Six Organ Sonatas, Op. 65, were published in 1845. Eric Werner, a notable biographer and scholar of Mendelssohn has written of them "Next to Bach's works, Mendelssohn's Organ Sonatas belong to the required repertory of all organists."¹ (Werner (1963), 424)

Mendelssohn's frequent excursions from Germany to England presented opportunities for extended improvisations and performances in venues such as St. Paul's Cathedral, London, that were generously received. In 1844, Mendelssohn was commissioned by the London publishing firm of Coventry and Hollier to write three "voluntaries" for organ. Throughout the fall and winter of 1844 and the spring of 1845, Mendelssohn carefully worked and reworked smaller sections of new and existing material into six unified multi-movement works which he termed "sonatas" rather than "voluntaries." Mendelssohn scholar R. Larry Todd explains Mendelssohn's choice of title for his Op. 65 pieces: "By sonata Felix had in mind not the classical paradigm, dependent on sonata form and thematic development, but a conception more familiar to J. S. Bach—a multi-movement instrumental work that might encompass a variety of genres and styles, such as the fugue, toccata, or fantasia."²(Todd, 2003,486-487) It is believed that by using a universal term like sonata is what allowed Mendelssohn to publish the collection simultaneously in England, Germany, and Italy.

- No. 1 in F minor
- No. 2 in C minor
- No. 2 in A major (based on Luther's chorale *Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir*)
- No. 4 in B-flat major
- No. 5 in D major
- No. 6 in D minor (based on Luther's chorale *Vater unser im Himmelreich*)

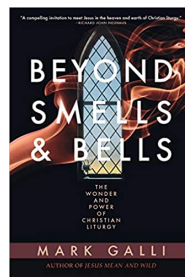
¹Werner, Eric (1963). *Mendelssohn, A New Image of the Composer and his Age*. New York; London: Free Press of Glencoe.

²Todd, R. Larry (2003). *Mendelssohn – A Life in Music*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press. 486-487.

Recommended Resources & Music

Submitted by Dillon J. Swanson

BOOKS

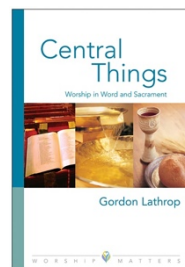


Beyond Bells & Smells: The Wonder and Power of Christian Liturgy

By Mark Galli

Paraclete Press (ISBN 978-1-55725-521-1), \$16.95.

Beyond Smells & Bells is a short book that appeals to two kinds of people. For those already in liturgical churches, Galli's brief book will either explain to you for the first time how the liturgy intends to form you spiritually or it will renew your love for liturgy. For those not in liturgical churches, Galli's book works as an apologetic for more thoughtful liturgy. Even though a positive apologetic for liturgy is not his intention, Galli's work accomplishes this promotion in an indirect way.



Central Things: Worship in Word and Sacrament

By Gordon W. Lathrop

Augsburg Fortress (0-8066-5163-6), \$10.99.

This small book makes a large contribution to the single most important project in the renewal of worship in our time: the Christian assembly refocused on the central things of word and sacrament. With remarkable simplicity and extraordinary insight, Gordon Lathrop unfolds for us here how these central things are about the one thing at the center – Jesus Christ alive among his people for the life of the whole world. Attention to this center clarifies a multitude of urgent matters. (Thomas H. Schattauer)

While this resource is 15 years old, it could be quite helpful as we start to envision our returns to our various churches and corporate worship settings.

ORGAN MUSIC

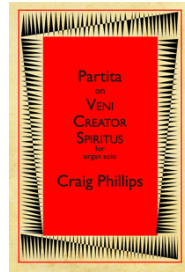


Partita on Duke Street

Donald Rotermund

Concordia Publishing House (976537POD), \$18.00.

Eight stanzas of the Easter hymn, “I Know that My Redeemer Lives,” are interpreted in the eight movements of this practical partita. Two, free, and four-voice movements in various styles are present, including an impressionistic sustained-cluster setting for stanza 4. Also includes a free accompaniment and an alternate harmonization.

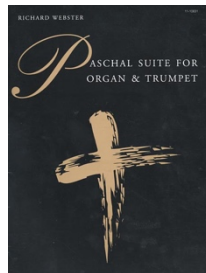


Partita on Veni Creator Spiritus

Craig Phillips

Selah Publishing (160-440), \$12.50.

This set of variations is a technical challenge, but the musical result is superb. One of the appealing factors of these variations is the colorful way in which they use the organ’s tonal palette, in combination with Phillips’s extraordinary sense of harmony. Each variation presents the cantus firmus in an evocative, colorful manner that is full of rhythmic vitality.

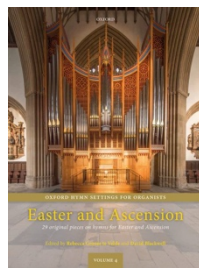


Paschal Suite for Organ and Trumpet

By Richard R. Webster

Augsburg (ISBN 978-0-800656-92-8), \$17.00.

Stunning prelude, voluntary, and postlude for Easter! This suite incorporates three Easter tunes (Easter Hymn, Victory, and Gelobt sei Gott) into a Passacaglia, Pastorale, and a Paean to the Risen Christ. *Paschal Suite for Organ and Trumpet* could be of great use during this time of pandemic when and where live choral anthems and congregational song are not an option. Having a solo trumpet could add some flare and excitement to this unusual Easter Sunday and season.



Oxford Hymn Settings for Organists: Easter & Ascension

Ed. Rebecca Groom te Velde and David Blackwell

Oxford University Press (ISBN 978-0-193393-46-2), \$31.95

29 fresh, imaginative new pieces on all the major hymn tunes for the season, written by a range of experienced organ composers based in the US and the UK, and displaying a great variety of styles and approaches. This practical, concise settings for all part of the church services are suitable for the busy church musician at the intermediate level working in all major denominations. Some pieces are also suitable for recital use with registration suggestions that can readily be adapted to suit most instruments.

Upcoming Events

SUNDAY, MARCH 21st, 2021 at 3pm: BACH BIRTHDAY BASH

This pre-recorded program will be available on our YouTube channel. Organists for this program include Dillon J. Swanson, Oliver Knudson, Susan Clambey, Rachel Horan, Sally Harmon, Ruth Strawn, Michael Olson, and Dr. Jean Hellner. This program has been recorded on various organs in a number of churches in the Fargo-Moorhead Area acting as a virtual organ tour as you enjoy great organ music by the master himself – J. S. Bach

FRIDAY, APRIL 9th, 2021: OFFICER ELECTIONS

Be watching your emails for more instructions and reminders regarding the 2021 Officer Elections. If you have any questions in the meantime, contact chapter secretary, Bradley Steen.

FRIDAY, APRIL 16th, 2021 at 7:30pm: DILLON J. SWANSON, JUNIOR RECITAL

Join Sub-Dean, Dillon J. Swanson as he presents a Junior Recital for his Organ Performance degree at Concordia College from the Holtkamp organ at Trinity Lutheran Church in Moorhead. This recital is performed in partial fulfillment of the Bachelor of Music degree in Organ Performance. The program will include works by Bach, Mendelssohn, Whitlock, Alain, and Duruflé. Trinity Lutheran Church has allowed for a live audience (up to 50) for this performance and a live-stream option will be made available as well.

Contact Information

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