

# The First Lutheran Church of Boston

*presents a*

## Fundraiser Recital

*to complete  
the 3 prepared reed stops of  
the*

## Richards, Fowkes & Co. Opus X

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**Balint Karosi, organ**

*Friday, November 13, 2009  
8 p.m.*

***Es ist das Heil uns kommen her, KN 209/25***

Matthias Weckmann (ca. 1616-1674)

*Primus versus à 5 vocem — im vollen Werck*

*Secundus versus Canon in hyperdiapente post minimam — manualiter*

*Tertius versus — uff 2. Clavier*

*Quartus versus Canon in subdiapason post semiminimam*

*Quintus versus Canon in disdiapente post semiminimam*

*Sextus versus — uff 2. Clavier*

*Septimus et ultimus versus à 6 — choral im tenor*

***Partite diverse sopra Sei gegrüsset Jesu gütig, BWV 768***

***(12 variations; 1708-17)***

J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

### *About the campaign*

Matthias Weckmann's monumental composition on the chorale "*Es ist das Heil kommen her*" is "one of the most extended and extraordinary organ works of the 17<sup>th</sup> century," according to Dr. Christoph Wolff, one of the most noted musicologists of our times. In his review of period-ensemble Exsultemus' concert in September, that the organ at First Lutheran Church "is the very best instrument in the city of Boston for the North-German Baroque".

First Lutheran is happy to announce Dr. Wolff will serve as an honorary committee member for the fundraising campaign to complete this exceptional instrument, (Richards, Fowkes & Co., 2000). We are particularly thankful to *Jane Wilson*, who inspired the campaign for the three prepared reed stops with a generous donation.

### *About the composers and the music*

In 1655, *Matthias Weckmann* (1615/16-1674) became the music director at Hamburg's Jakobikirche, where he served until his death. In 1660 he founded Collegium Musicum, a group of about 50 musicians that, for the first time in Germany, performed weekly public concerts. Weckmann studied with Heinrich Schütz in Dresden and Jacob Pretorius in Hamburg. Only a few of his compositions survived, all demonstrating superb compositional techniques of the highest quality.

*(Andrus Madsen's Dec. 2 concert at First Lutheran features works by Weckmann and Scheidemann for Harpsichord and Organ.)*

The text of "*Es ist das Heil kommen her*," by Paul Speratus, is a strongly-worded statement of some of the most important teachings in Lutheran theology: the Christians are redeemed by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and faith alone. "Salvation unto us has come" is based on the following passage in Ephesians 2:8-9: "*For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing: it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that one may boast.*" The hymn tune first appeared in a Wittenberg hymnal in 1524, without any credit to its author.

Weckmann's elaborate organ work demonstrates a mind-blowing amalgam of polyphonic techniques drawn from the works of Monteverdi, Palestrina and Lassus, along with newer diminution techniques of the Italian baroque. Such variations

were sometimes improvised or performed during the Saturday Vesper Services, alternating the organ verses with the choir and congregation's singing.

In the first verse, the composer uses a thick imitation technique on a descending figure, thereby musically depicting the first verse as “*from above*”. The entire melody is quoted in augmentation in the pedal.

***(1) Salvation unto us has come, by God's free grace and favor  
Good works cannot avert our doom, they help and save us never  
Faith looks to Jesus Christ alone, who did for all the world atone  
He is our one Redeemer***

The second verse is a three-part setting using a stunning canon (could refer to “law” in the text) in the left hand displaced a fifth above (*hyperdiapente*) and a half-note apart (*post minimam*). The melody is clearly played by the right hand. Tonight's rendition will use two of the reed stops in this variation: Rp. Krummhorn 8’ for the left hand and Gr. Trumpet 8’ for the melody.

***(2) What God did in His Law demand, and not to Him could render  
Caused wrath and woe on ev'ry hand, for man, the vile offender.  
Our flesh has not those pure desires the spirit of the Law requires,  
And lost is our condition***

One of the most interesting and difficult distribution of voices is found in the third verse, where the organist plays the melody in the tenor on the pedal while playing the bass with the left hand. The opening introduces the melody in motet-style followed by figuration in the left hand in dotted French rhythm. Here you will hear two of the reed stops on the Rp. and the pedal trumpet. In this variation, the organist would ideally use the prepared Cornet 2’ in the pedal and the Shalmei 4’ on the Rp.

***(3) It was a false, misleading dream that God His Law had given  
That sinners could themselves redeem and by their works gain Heaven.  
The Law is but a mirror bright to bring the inbred sin to light  
That lurks within our nature.***

In the fourth variation, Weckmann uses a canon displaced by an octave (*subdiapason*) and a quarter note (*semiminimam*) in the manuals, quoting the melody in the pedal. Here you will hear the 4’ Flutes for the canon and the Octave 4’ of the pedal for the melody.

***(4) From sin our flesh could not abstain, sin held its sway unceasing;  
The task was useless and in vain, our guilt was e'er increasing.  
None can remove sin's poisoned dart or purify our guileful heart --  
So deep is our corruption***

Similarly to the fourth, the fifth variation is a strict canon between the two hands, this time displaced by a fourth below (*disdiapente*) and a quarter note. The entire melody is quoted in the tenor, played on the pedal trumpet.

***(5) Yet as the Law must be fulfilled or we must die despairing,  
Christ came and has God's anger stilled, our human nature sharing.  
He has for us the Law obeyed and thus the Father's vengeance stayed  
Which over us impended***

In the sixth verse, Weckmann deploys all of the techniques available to a composer of his time in one of the most beautiful and mind-blowing masterpieces of the organ repertoire. He first introduces the melody in five voices, in motet technique, followed by the cantus firmus in an almost unrecognizable ornate form. Then he imitates fractions of the melody in every possible style and transposition. This scheme is applied innovatively to each phrase of the melody, that making this 12-minute variation interesting from slow beginning to seven-voiced virtuosic end.

***(6) Since Christ has full atonement made and brought to us salvation,  
Each Christian therefore may be glad and build on this foundation.  
Your grace alone, dear Lord, I plead, Your death is now my life indeed,  
For You have paid my ransom***

The seventh verse returns to a straightforward motet setting of the triple-length version of the tenor melody. Six voices almost continuously play in a stunningly rich texture deploying double-pedal, making the organ sound the loudest possible.

***(7) Let me not doubt, but truly see Your Word cannot be broken.  
Your call rings out, "Come Unto Me!" No falsehood have You spoken.  
Baptized into Your precious name, my faith cannot be put to shame,  
And I shall never perish***

The chorale melody "***Sei Gegrüßet, Jesu gütig***" first appeared in 1682 in "*Das Neu Leipziger Gesangbuch des Gottfried Vopelius*" in Leipzig. Vopelius was one of Bach's predecessors as cantor of St. Nicolas Church. As opposed to the strict theological content of "*Es ist das Heil*", this Lenten text by Christian Keime focuses on the emotional aspects of the Christian faith. Jesus suffered death for *me*, the pain he suffered gained eternal life for *me*. "*Sei gegrüßet*" is an example of the pietist movement of the early 17th century that emphasized emotion over reason, promoting hymns and sermons in order to move congregants.

***Jesus, Saviour, heed my greeting, kind and gentle is Thy being  
Long the torture Thou has suffered, deep the insults to Thee offered***

*Let me all Thy love inherit and meet death in Thy sure merit*

*On my sins look Thou with pity, Christ, who bearest all men's frailty,  
Faints my heart, my soul doth languish,  
Thou alone canst heal my anguish.*

*Let me all Thy love inherit and meet death in thy sure merit*

*O Thou fountain ever flowing, Gracious comfort ever bestowing  
When death lays his hand upon me, hlp me to be loyal to Thee.  
Let me all Thy love inherit and meet death in Thy sure merit*

Bach's 12 variations focus on the subdued Lenten emotion expressed by both the melody and the text. The opening movement is a simple harmonization of the melody in the soprano. Partita No.1 is a *bicinium* with two voices -- a lamenting line in the left hand with an ornate chorale melody in the right, followed by four *manualiter* (no pedals) variations. These variations show signs of the "*style brisé*" (broken style), a French harpsichord technique Bach may have first learned from his mentor Georg Böhm while in Lüneburg. The addition of the pedal for the last six variations indicates that these variations were added later to an earlier work. Variation eleven is probably one of the most lyrical organ pieces by Bach.

*Program notes by Balint Karosi, 2009*

### *About the organist*

Hungarian organist **Bálint Karosi** is a versatile composer, harpsichordist, clarinetist, improvisateur and an organist specializing in historical performance practice.

Karosi has to his credit an impressive resumé of triumphs at prestigious international performance competitions including: First Prize at the 16<sup>th</sup> International Johann Sebastian Bach Competition in Leipzig; First Prize and Prize of the Audience at the Dublin International Organ Competition; First Prize at the Arthur Poister Organ Competition; and First Prize and Prize of the Audience at the Miami International Organ Competition. He was also a winner of the Prague Spring International Clarinet Competition in 2002.

As a composer, Karosi was commissioned to write a work for the new organ at the National Concert Hall in Budapest, and gave the premiere performance of the work, "Consonances" a concerto for organ and symphony orchestra, as soloist there in 2007. This performance was broadcast on American Public Media's "Pipedreams" program, and his compositions are published by Wayne Leupold Editions Ltd. He has just completed a new commission for the National Concert Hall in Budapest on

a poem by Czeszlaw Milosz for tenor, harp, two percussionists, organ and violin for a performance on February 8, 2009.

He studied at the Liszt Academy in Budapest, at the Conservatoire Superior de Genève, and at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music in Ohio, earning two master's degrees and two "Prix de Virtuosité", as well as both an Artist Diploma and a Master of Music degree in historical keyboard performance. He was awarded the "Prima Primiissima Juror Prize" for music in 2009, which honors the most distinguished performers of his native Hungary.

A resident of Boston, Karosi is active as a performer in chamber music circles and plays historical clarinet for Boston Baroque. He is organist and Minister of Music at First Lutheran Church. His debut solo CD was released in 2009 and he is under exclusive management at Phillip Truckenbrod Concert Artist. For more visit: [www.karosi.org](http://www.karosi.org)

### ***About First Lutheran Church of Boston***

First Lutheran Church is a proud sponsor of a vivid music program that aims to spread the Gospel through sacred music.

First Lutheran is a house of orthodox Lutheran liturgy married to traditional Lutheran music. Each Sunday, hymns and chorale preludes are drawn from the 16th, 17th and 18th century North German musical tradition, a language our pipe organ speaks natively. The congregation has a passion for singing and worship services are musically inspired. An international concert series brings renowned artists from around the world to share their passion for sacred music with us.

***Exsultemus***, our Ensemble-In-Residence, performs concerts and also at worship. A volunteer FLC choir regularly performs special service music with instrumental accompaniment on celebrations. For more details, see the concert series brochure in the narthex, or visit our website at [www.flc-boston.org](http://www.flc-boston.org).

***What we believe:*** The Gospel -- the good news of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the sins of the world -- is at the core of what we believe and teach. Lutherans believe sinners are justified (declared right) with the Creator God by grace alone (sola gratia), through faith alone (sola fida), on the basis of Scripture alone (sola scriptura). These three great "Reformation solas" form a handy outline of what Missouri Synod Lutherans believe, teach, and confess.

## *Recordings*

*“Bach in the Back Bay”*, a new CD from *Bálint Karosi*, features great organ works of Johann Sebastian Bach, including the *Passacaglia in C Minor*, the *Trinitarian Prelude and Fugue in Eb Major (“St. Anne”)* and the *Toccatina and Fugue in F Major*. The CD is available for purchase for \$15, with proceeds benefiting the Music Program at FLC.

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Tonight’s concert has been pre-recorded and duplicated as a donation from Christopher Greenleaf and are also available at the door for \$15. The proceeds of the CD sales support the fundraising campaign.

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Our Ensemble-In-Residence Exsultemus’ live concert recordings are also available in the Narthex for Purchase for \$15 supporting the fundraising campaign.

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A limited number of T-shirts with the organ at FLC are available for \$20.

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## ***Upcoming services and musical events at First Lutheran Church:***

### ***Wednesday, December 2, 8 p.m.: Andrus Madsen, harpsichord***

An inaugural solo recital on the new Italian harpsichord, built by Robert Hicks, living at FLC. Madsen features a program of selected Advent keyboard works of Hamburg composers Weckmann and Scheidemann.

### ***Sunday, December 6, 3 p.m.: Weihnachten (German Christmas Service)***

Exsultemus Period Vocal Ensemble and period instruments, with the FLC choir, performs at the German language service. Rarely heard Advent and Christmas-themed works by Briegel and Graupner are featured.

### ***Wednesday, December 9, 8 p.m.: Joseph Ripka, organ***

1st Prizewinner of the 2008 International Organ Competition in Dublin, Joseph Ripka will present a concert of Advent organ music.

### ***Wednesday December 16, 7 p.m. Christmas Organ Vespers Service***

The last Advent Vesper service this year features the FLC choir and Balint Karosi on organ. The program includes Advent and Christmas music by Buxtehude and Bach.

## ***First Lutheran Worship Service Schedule***

***Sundays at 8 a.m. and 11 a.m. with Holy Communion***

***Sundays at 9.30 a.m.: Bible Study***

***Wednesdays during Advent at 7 p.m. Vespers (6 p.m. supper)***

## ***Special thanks to ...***

***... Becky Musser and Liz Spira for the sign and brochure for the campaign***

***... to the FLC Student Young Adult Fellowship for providing the reception***

***... to the members of the Concert Committee and all volunteers and staff of FLC***

## ***Please ...***

***.... be considerate and turn off your cell phones***

***... sign up in the Narthex for flc-concerts, our e-mail list or on [www.flc-boston.org](http://www.flc-boston.org)***

***... locate the restrooms downstairs, via the side exit doors. An accessible restroom is available on the main level in the church office. See an usher for directions.***

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