

A Message from Organist Paul Jacobs

Twenty years ago, July 28, 2000, we made history together at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Upper St. Clair, Pennsylvania. At precisely six o'clock in the morning, a large audience gathered to hear the first triumphant chord of Johann Sebastian Bach's silvery Prelude in E-flat major, which was to commence an 18-hour odyssey through the composer's complete works for organ.

All walks of life – from seasoned music aficionados to curious novices – poured in and out of the church throughout the day. During much the event, the sanctuary was bursting with audience members. Several hard-core Bach fanatics remained for the entire duration, nibbling on sandwiches in between brief breaks from the music, none lasting longer than a minute or two. I, myself, had nothing but a single cup of chocolate pudding to eat during the marathon, along with periodic sips of water. Bach's music was my sustenance that day, along with the palpable enthusiasm expressed by the scores of listeners for Bach's timeless creations. We concluded at 12:18 a.m. the following morning, with the thundering notes of Bach's Passacaglia. After inhaling several hamburgers, fries, and a chocolate shake at Eat'n Park, I immediately went home to bed to experience the deepest sleep of my life, awakening the following day around four o'clock in the afternoon.

This momentous occasion – forever imprinted on my heart and mind – could not have occurred without the unwavering support of our dearly departed friend, Bill Evans. And Westminster's continued commitment to the arts in the Pittsburgh region, through the dedication of Jim Burns, Chris Hestwood, and Sara Kyle, remains a source of inspiration for us all. I look forward to being with you all again.

Sincerely yours,

Paul Jacobs