St. Stephen’s on the Green

Middlebury, Vermont

Organ Recital: *Orgelgebet*

12:15 PM Thursday March 24, 2016

George Matthew Jr., organist

1. Prelude for Passiontide Ronald Arnatt, 1954

(b. 1930)

1. Prelude on *Valet will ich dir geben* Anton Heiler, 1976

(1923 – 1979)

1. Psalm 22 Emma Lou Diemer, 1999

b. 1927

1. Prelude on *Herzliebster Jesu* Johannes Brahms, 1897

(1833 – 1897)

1. The Last Supper Jaromir Weinberger, 1939

(1896 – 1967)

1. Prelude on *Vexilla Regis Prodeunt* Garth Edmundson, 1937

(1892 – 1971)

1. Prelude on “Were you there” David Hurd, 1994

(b. 1950)

From “Contemplations on the Seven Words of Christ on the Cross” Paul J. Sifler, 1979

(1911 – 2001)

1. “Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise”
2. “It is finished”

Mr. Matthew is organist of St. Stephen’s and Carillonneur of Middlebury College and Norwich University.

Thoughts and Program Notes: *Orgelgebet* 2016

*Orgelgebet* may take several forms: organ music (frequently but not always chorale preludes), alternating with scripture readings, or sometimes simply annotated with scripture references. I experienced this first in Hamburg, Germany.

This year the program will be somewhat different. It will reflect on the events of Holy Week and the thoughts of many people… the authorities of the time, the disciples, our Lord, the people of the Middle Ages and the people of the distant future – us.

In a tradition borrowed from carillon recitals, strokes on a bell will announce the number of each selection.

1. Prelude for Passiontide Ronald Arnatt

This piece is based on the Antiphon to the Benediction of the Good Friday Tenebrae. At the very end is a brief reference to *Herzlich tut mich verlangen* (hymn #168).

1. Prelude on *Valet will ich dir geben* (hymn #154) Anton Heiler

Rather than the triumphal entry suggested by one of Bach’s preludes on this hymn, or the child-like joy suggested by the other, Anton Heiler’s setting suggests confusion, amazement, even fear; yet the unaltered theme goes relentlessly ahead…

1. Emma Lou Diemer’s piece is titled Psalm 22 but it starts out as a syncopated, almost jazzy march; then it gradually morphs into *Herzliebster Jesu* (hymn #158) and finally into silence.
2. Brahms’ familiar prelude on *Herzliebster Jesu* (hymn #158) expresses the mood of Holy Week, both in its subject and its harmonic progressions.
3. Scriptural reference, St. Luke xxii:14. Composer’s words: “The theme is that of the melancholy which overcomes the creative spirit of one who knows that not only his work but his very life has come to an end.”
4. “The Royal Banners forward go”… to Calvary. Read the words of hymn #162…
5. Composer’s words: “Were you there” (hymn #172) “features the unadorned melody in the top voice accompanied by a rocking figure in 4ths that suggests an atmosphere of desolation suitable to the spiritual”.
6. Scriptural reference: Luke xxiii :43
7. Scriptural reference: John ixx:30