



# Pipelines

## Bouches et anches



## President's Message

THOMAS ANNAND

## Giving the Gift of Music

Since the snow is already on the ground here in Ottawa, it must mean that Christmas is almost here. Of course for those of us in the midst of planning for concerts and services it has been looming large for a while now, and here we go full steam ahead into the themes and music of the season.

For many people, music is their last remaining tie to what might have been their traditions growing up, customs which, for one reason or another, are now absent or replaced by other habits. The music of Christmas has a profound effect, and it is our great good fortune to be able to share it with others.

Give the gift of music this Christmas whether it is in your work, or with your presents to friends and family, and show how much it means to you too. And don't forget to look for an organ CD or two or three, there is so much great music which is so well played and recorded now, don't be shy about sharing your favourites with a less likely recipient! This might be the gift that opens a world of discovery for someone.

Seasons greetings to all.

- Tom Annand  
[music@standrewsottawa.ca](mailto:music@standrewsottawa.ca)

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## 2010/11 Programme of Events

IAN MacKAY

### Looking Back...

**Organ Demonstration for CAMMAC:**  
A great group of CAMMAC members showed up for the organ demonstration workshop at St. Peter's Church on November 7<sup>th</sup>. The demonstration was led by Karen Holmes, Mai-yu Chan and Ian MacKay. Karen started off the programme by playing Bach's *Prelude in C major* as a fanfare and the afternoon flowed from there to talk about pipes, wind, keyboards and organ repertoire among many other things. Mai-yu played excerpts from John Burge's *St. Peter's Suite*, (a work commissioned by St. Peter's Church a few years ago) and invited the audience to join in singing a choral which forms part of the work. The afternoon ended with some hymn singing including the *Day Thou Gavest* and *A Mighty Fortress*. CAMMAC charged its members a fee for the

programme which they in turn donated to the RCCO scholarship fund. This was gratefully received.

Our Second Annual Pub Night was held on Monday November 29<sup>th</sup> at the Heart & Crown in the Byward market. A small but fun crowd gathered for an enjoyable evening of good food, libations and an endless number of YouTube videos of organs and organists from around the world. This year we zeroed in on Notre Dame and St. Sulpice in Paris, organs in South Germany and the Netherlands, Virgil Fox, and Stephen Tharp, not to mention preacher bloopers and some choice non-organ antics from Rowan Atkinson and the Vicar of Dibley. We are grateful to the H&C for giving us the room for free and for our exclusive use; not that we would mind sharing our music with the rest of the pub but it's difficult to compete with Monday night football...

### Looking Ahead...

**Christmas Concert:** Monday December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2010 at 8:00 pm St-François-d'Assise, Wellington at Fairmont. Unfortunately, due to some unforeseen circumstances, the Choir of St. Barnabas had to cancel their participation in the concert for this year. However, we have managed to rework the concert albeit with focus beyond Christmas Music from Italy which was our original intention. The concert will be about 70 minutes long (a perfect length for the week before Christmas) and include festive and contemplative music for organ, brass and congregational singing. Mark your calendars and plan to attend. Final details will be available on the web site in the coming days and via e-mail notices as well.

## Around Town

### Wednesdays, December 1, 8, and 15, 2010, 12:30 p.m.

*Knox Noonday Recitals* at Knox Presbyterian Church (Elgin at Lisgar).

- Dec. 1: Mervyn Games (organ).
- Dec. 8: Ernest Ruppenthal (piano).
- Dec. 15: Rachel Laurin (organ).

### Friday, December 3, 2010, 7:30 p.m.

*Celebration Bach Organ Recital.* Wesley R. Warren will play a recital of favourite Bach organ works at St. Barnabas Anglican Church, Kent and James Street, on Friday, December 3, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. Mr. Warren is Artist-in-Residence at Augustine College, the sponsor of this event. Further details available from the college's website.

### Friday, December 3, 2010 at 7:30 p.m.

*Festival of Advent Lessons and Carols* presented by the choir of St. Luke's Church, Robert Jones, director. St. Luke's Church, 760 Somerset West. Free-will offering.

### Saturday, December 4, 2010, 7:30 p.m.

Stairwell Carollers, directed by Pierre Massie presents *Jesous Ahatonnia*, an evening of Christmas carols. Woodroffe United Church, 207 Woodroffe Ave. Tickets at the door or in advance at the church office. Info: 613-722-9250 or [http://www.woodroffeunited.org/concert\\_current.html](http://www.woodroffeunited.org/concert_current.html)

### Sunday, December 5, 2010 at 4:00 p.m.

The Seaway Valley Singers present *Hear the Angels Sing: Music for the Christmas season*. Directed by Robert Jones, with Margaret Whisselle (piano/organ), Daniel Edwards (violin) and the Junior Handbell Ringers of Winchester United Church. Concert at the Iroquois United Church (2 Elizabeth Drive, Iroquois). Tickets \$10 (adults) and \$5 (students), at the door.

### Tuesdays, December 7, 21, 2010, 12:15 p.m.

*Organ Tuesdays* with Thomas Annand continue at St. Andrew's Church (Kent at Wellington), 12:15-12:45.

Dec. 7: Bach & Dupré.

Dec. 14: (no recital)

Dec. 21: Noël's by Daquin, Balbastre and Guilmant.

### Saturday, December 11, 2010 at 8:00

*The Bytown Voices Christmas Concert.* Directed by Robert Jones, with Brenda Beckingham (piano/organ) and Larisa Droll (flute). St. Basil's Church (Maitland Ave just north of the Queensway). Tickets \$15 (adults), \$6 (students); children 12 and under: free. Available at the door.

### Sunday, December 12, 2010, 7:00pm

*19<sup>th</sup> Annual Alta Vista Carol Sing Concert* to be held at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, 1758 Alta Vista Drive. Free admission and ample parking. Donations in support of the Heron Road Emergency Food Centre would be appreciated. Come sing the carols of the Season with dedicated volunteers from le Choeur du Moulin, the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church

...continued on page 3



...continued from page 2

Choir, and the Ottawa Wind Ensemble. They will be joined by Dr. Fraser Rubens, tenor soloist. For more information contact: Francine Brisebois at 613-791-9115.

**Sunday, December 12, 2010, 3:00 pm**

St. Paul's Anglican Church, Kanata, presents *Season of Wonder, a concert of music for Advent and Christmas* with the choirs of St. John the Evangelist and St. Paul's Anglican Church, Kanata, accompanied by the Strings of St. John's. Tickets are \$20 (\$15 seniors/students), available from the church offices, or at The Leading Note.

**Sunday, December 12, 2010, 7:00 pm**

St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, 971 Woodroffe Avenue, just north of the Queensway, presents *Christmas Joy*, an evening of Christmas music and carol singing featuring St. Paul's choir, guest organist Mark Thallander, and the Manotick Brass Ensemble. No admission charge or offering. Parking available behind the church. Information from the church office: 613-729-3384.

**Sunday, December 12, 2010, 7:00 pm**

*From Darkness to Light, An Advent Procession with Carols.* The St. Barnabas Choir, directed by Wesley Warren, will sing seasonal carols and motets, with hymns for the congregation. A reception will follow in the Parish Hall. St. Barnabas Anglican Church, Kent at James Street. Info: [www.stbarnabasottawa.com](http://www.stbarnabasottawa.com) and 613-232-6992.

**Sunday, December 12, 2010, 7:30 pm**

Eight local classical talented singers, coached by Polish soprano Maria Knapik, sing traditional Christmas and Christmas-

related songs, duets and ensembles. St. Luke's Church, 760 Somerset St. West. Admission by donation

**Saturday, December 19, 2010, 4:00 p.m.**

St. Andrew's Choir and Soloists directed by Thomas Annand present Vivaldi's *Gloria* with chamber orchestra. Freewill offering. St. Andrew's Church (Kent at Wellington). Information, 613-232-9042.

**Sunday, December 19, 2010, 4:00 p.m.**

The choir at Knox Presbyterian Church, directed by Mervyn Games, presents *Candlelight Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols.* Knox Presbyterian Church (Elgin at Lisgar).

**Sunday, December 19, 2010, 7:30 p.m.**

Christian Elliott (cello): Bach 'cello suites 4, 2, 3. St. Luke's Church, 760 Somerset St. West. Admission by donation

**Sunday, December 19, 2010, 2:00 pm**

Church of St. John the Evangelist, Elgin Street, presents *Season of Wonder, a concert of music for Advent and Christmas.* with the choirs of St. John the Evangelist and St. Paul's Anglican Church, Kanata, accompanied by the Strings of St. John's. Tickets are \$20 (\$15 seniors/students), and are available from the church offices, or at The Leading Note.

**Monday, December 20, 2010, 8:00 p.m.**

Christian Elliott (cello): Bach 'cello suites 1, 5, 6. St. Luke's Church, 760 Somerset St. West. Admission by donation

**Sunday, January 9, 2011, 7:30 p.m.**

Garry Elliott (guitar). St. Luke's Church, 760 Somerset W. Admission by donation

## Christmas Story

Here's the First Christmas Joke  
– and it's Scottish.....

A man in Scotland calls his son in London the day before Christmas Eve and says,

"I hate to ruin your day but I have to tell you that your mother and I are divorcing; forty-five years of misery is enough".

"Dad, what are you talking about?", the son screams.

"We can't stand the sight of each other any longer", the father says.

"We're sick of each other and I'm sick of talking about this, so you call your sister in Leeds and tell her".

Frantically, the son calls his sister, who explodes on the phone, "Like hell they're getting divorced", she shouts, "I'll take care of this".

She calls Scotland immediately and screams at her father, "You are NOT getting divorced. Don't do a single thing until I get there. I'm calling my brother back and we'll both be there tomorrow. Until then, don't do a thing, DO YOU HEAR ME?" and hangs up.

The old man hangs up his phone and turns to his wife.

"Done! They're coming for Christmas, – and they're paying their own way."

- Mervyn Saunders

## Member's News

**G**ordon Johnston has recorded a short CD entitled *Organ Music for Christmas* featuring the organs of the Church of St John the Evangelist.

The CD is available at The Leading Note (370 Elgin Street) for the low, low price of \$10. It is also available for download at CDBaby.com.



## Organ Music for Christmas

GORDON JOHNSTON

AT THE ORGANS OF  
THE CHURCH OF ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST  
OTTAWA, CANADA

## Kiwanis Festival 2011

KAREN HOLMES

Teachers and Students: The **dead-line** for Kiwanis Festival applications is **December 13<sup>th</sup>**. Please consider entering; there is quite a bit of scholarship money, which is usually divided among a small number of competitors. It is good for people to see that there are students learning the organ, and it is good for students to have a chance to play in public, possibly on an organ they have not tried previously. The dates for this year's festival are April 4 to 30. Website is [www.ottawakiwanis-musicfestival.com](http://www.ottawakiwanis-musicfestival.com). Here are the test pieces for this year:



### 001 Bach, Junior:

Prelude and Fugue in F (from Eight Little Preludes and Fugues)

### 002 J.S. Bach, Intermediate:

Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme BWV 645 (from Schübler Chorales)

### 003 J.S. Bach, Senior:

Prelude and Fugue in A major BWV 536

### 011 General, Junior:

Louis Vierne - Prélambule (24 pièces en style libre, op. 31, book 1)

### 012 General, Intermediate:

H. Willan - Matins OR Evening (Two Pieces for Organ - Peters P06358)

### 013 General, Senior:

D. Buxtehude - Passacaglia in d minor, BuxWV 161

### Open classes:

Your own choice of repertoire, up to 15 minutes.

## Isabelle Demers Concert Review

JOSHUA ZENTNER-BARRETT

**On** a cold autumn night like that of November 19th, there's nothing better than to sit in a beautiful church and listen to Isabelle Demers playing the pipe organ. In the second of four Pro-Organo concerts she explored a sweep of organ works focusing most heavily on the 19th and 20th centuries.

Demers opened the evening with the *Prelude and Fugue Ste. Anne* (BWV 552) from Bach. It was powerful, moving, delivering a powerful punch from the beginning. From the front of the basilica the sound felt well balanced; Demers worked easily with the grandiose acoustics of the basilica so that just enough sound would ring between the phrases.

She moved quickly into two pieces by jazz composer Henry Martin. These *preludes* (5 and 7) were startling in contrast to Bach, evoking simple melodies before breaking out into 'jazzy' rhythms (a cornet with Tremulant). They made the concert elegant – the audience was never really sure what would come next.

The final piece before the intermission was a *Fantaisie and Choral* (op.52/2) based on *Wachet Auf* by German composer Max Reger. A vibrant example of program music, the piece was a unique blend of Wagnerian darkness with the finesse of

the Baroque (although, as Demers puts it, "Bach with wrong notes!"). There were many subtleties to the piece, as well as energizing bits, ending with triumph ringing through the church

Elgar's *Allegro Maestoso* (from *Sonata in G*) followed the intermission, setting the audience swiftly back into the mood. The next piece was a highlight of the performance: Demers' own transcriptions of the Prokofiev ballet *Romeo and Juliet*, pulling excerpts from across the score in a brash, yet sweet, interpretation of Shakespeare's

beloved drama. It was the perfect blend of music: concise in presentation, artistic in registration, and as fluid as a ballet.

For the end of the program Demers delivered an impossibly fast rendition of Laurin's *Toccata* from *Symphonie No.1*; it was aching to watch her hands racing up and down the keys before an abrupt ending that left the audience wanting more.

After the thunderous applause, Demers danced the audience out the door with Tchaikovsky's *March of the Toy Soldiers*.



**A**s lovers of the organ, it's no secret that the web has become an indispensable tool for both learning and enjoyment. It's hard to believe that the web has really only been around for a few years and that YouTube, the wonderful new resource for organists, is just over 5 years old. I'm sure that we have all at one time or another perused the web for organ based information and perhaps on other occasions we have stumbled into information that proved to be valuable education and pure fun. At times I wonder: What we did before the web? Of course we survived and thrived but it's amazing to think now that the world of the organ is that much more enriched because of the web. The aim of this monthly column is to highlight some sites that I have personally enjoyed and trust that if they are not already familiar, you will enjoy them too. I'm interested in hearing from you as well about these and other sites that you might want to share with your colleagues. My e-mail is [mackay\\_sap@hotmail.com](mailto:mackay_sap@hotmail.com).

### J.S. Bach Manuscripts

When I was starting out in organ studies, I had an edition of *Orgelbüchlein* that included a few pictures of some of the chorales as part of the preface. The few that were available to me fascinated me the same way that I enjoy looking at an original work of art. All of Bach's autographed manuscripts are now available in high resolution on the web, complete with full information on provenance, dating, dimensions, etc. This is a wonderful resource, previously only available as expensive foreign published facsimiles or expensive and supervised trips to important libraries that hold these manuscripts. Test it out for yourself. Simply put in the BWV number and away you go! <http://bach.digital.de>

### Werner Icking Music Archive

The Archive, named after the late mathematician and musician Werner Icking, is an extensive resource for sheet music of public domain music. The scores are electronically typeset by volunteers and

distributed in PDF and often accompanied by digitized sound tracks. The Archive focuses on, but is not limited to, early music. There are extensive scores for organ but also works for choral and innumerable combinations of instruments. For instance, if you search for J.S. Bach and scroll down to *BWV 245, St. John Passion* you will notice that the full score is available in parts but there is an arrangement of the chorale *Nun ruhen alle Wälder* for 4 violas and an arrangement of another chorale for recorders. (I know the idea of 4 violas sounds a little scary, but you get the idea). Michel Rondeau, a local musician known to many members, has hundreds of brass arrangements of repertoire and original music as well. To navigate in the web site, simply following the link below and type in the name of a composer (or consult the list of composers) and browse through the listings. A warning that these scores are edited by volunteers so one must be critical when using or consulting them and, of course, they are not a substitute for reliable and published editions; but if you're in a rush...or just want to explore, then the Archive is for you. <http://icking-music-archive.org/index.php>

### YouTube Videos

Over the last month or so I have watched a number of videos that have been particularly enjoyable. I found some of them didactic and others I just simply enjoyed the performance in the context of seeing the player, the organ and its environment.

### 1. Random Acts of Culture - Hallelujah Chorus with the Wanamaker Organ at Macy's Department Store

On Saturday, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2010, the Opera Company of Philadelphia brought together from 28 participating organizations to perform one of the Knight Foundation's *Random Acts of Culture* at Macy's in Centre City Philadelphia. Accompanied by the Wanamaker Organ - the world's largest pipe organ - and organist Peter Richard Conte - the OCP Chorus and throngs of singers from the community

infiltrated the store as shoppers and burst into a pop-up rendition of the Hallelujah Chorus from Messiah to the delight of surprised shoppers. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FY8rErqxsxE>

### 2. Messiaen on the Accordion

I know that Messiaen is not for everyone but there is no denying that *Dieu parmi nous* from his *La Nativité* is one of the most important works for organ of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The work is out of reach for most of us but not so, it seems, for Artem Nyzhnyk who manages to play the work masterfully on the accordion! <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FY8rErqxsxE>

### 3. Stephen Tharp plays *Holy God*

Stephen Tharp is a concert organist based in the US who spends most of his time on the road and much of it in Europe. Here is a short video of him playing the very familiar and wonderful hymn *Holy God, we praise Thy name (Grosser Gott)* at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York. His hymn playing is wonderfully rhythmic and his registration changes and manipulations are masterful: it would be a joy to sing this at St. Pat's with him at the console. Apparently some of the background noise is someone actually sweeping the cathedral floor! Other equally enjoyable videos of Tharp playing will pop up in the right hand column after you navigate to: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HXwpNB1pJsE>

### 4. Bob Kames plays *Dance Little Bird* (aka The Chicken Dance)

Apparently Bob Kames was a celebrity on the Hammond in the 1970's and his rendition of *Dance Little Bird* was hit in America and Poland selling millions of records making him a rich man no doubt. Here is a video of him playing *Dance Little Bird* on a Milwaukee cable channel's Christmas Special. His enthusiasm compared with that of his daughter who plays the 'vibes' is simply hilarious. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qdCk7uzWNhI>



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[www.rcco-ottawa.ca](http://www.rcco-ottawa.ca)

**NEXT EXECUTIVE MEETING:**  
**MONDAY, DECEMBER 6<sup>TH</sup>, 7:30 PM,**  
**ST. PETER'S LUTHERAN**

## Supply List

Robert Dunlop	613-235-3778	
Janice Gray	613-276-3172	janicenlpegyp@hotmai.com
Nadia Behmann	613-723-8601	nadia@behmann.ca
		Weddings and Funerals.
Alison Kranias	613-761-6516	alison.kranias@mail.mcgill.ca
Frances Macdonnell	613-726-7984	fbmacdonnell@sympatico.ca
Simon Pinsonneault	613 949-5841 (W)	pinsosi@tc.gc.ca

*Please note: Supply list can also be found on the RCCO Ottawa web site at <http://www.rcco-ottawa.ca>  
Anyone interested in adding their names to the Supply List, please contact Suzanne St-Germain  
at 613-841-0246 or via email at [newsletter@rcco-ottawa.ca](mailto:newsletter@rcco-ottawa.ca)*

## Organ Teachers List

**D. Mervyn Games**, B.Mus., FRCO, ARCM. Students in piano, organ, and theory at all levels. For info call 613-729-2515.

**Robert P. Jones**, M.Mus., ARCCO (ChM). All levels of students (teenager or adult). Lessons at St. Luke's Church (760 Somerset Street W.) Info: [pentland@hotmail.com](mailto:pentland@hotmail.com)

**Heather Rice**, ARCT, BMus, ARCCO (ChM). Welcomes students in piano, organ, voice and theory, Beginner - Intermediate, Children - Adult. Lessons at St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church, 579 Parkdale Ave. at Sherwood. Call 613-563-1409 or email [choirmaster@bellnet.ca](mailto:choirmaster@bellnet.ca).

**Wesley R. Warren**, M.Mus., FRCO, (ChM), ARCT. Beginning to advanced organ students at St. Barnabas Anglican Church, (Kent St. at James), Ottawa. Info: 613-726-6341

## Newsletter submissions

Send your articles and photos to:

Suzanne St-Germain  
628 Tourelle Drive  
Orleans, ON K4A 3H4  
613-841-0246

[newsletter@rcco-ottawa.ca](mailto:newsletter@rcco-ottawa.ca)  
or  
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**Next Deadline**

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Région de Kingston & Ottawa Region

## Pipe Organ to Give Away

The former Erskine Presbyterian Church, now Peace Tower Church, is looking to give away our pipe organ after Christmas.

We are a contemporary-style Pentecostal Church that needs to open up the space on the stage to accommodate full bands and theatre productions.

We ask that anyone who would be interested and willing to take on the removal, clean up and transportation of the organ and pipes to please contact Kirsi West or Pastor John Raymer at 613-729-6343

## Newsletter Advertising Rates

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Perhaps more than anything mentioned so far in this eight-part series, of which this is the second-last submission, the call of the music leader and the process of discernment in his or her ministry are the most challenging, yet the most important.

The nature of the community in which the musician leads and makes music is such that these kinds of topics and questions are not optional. Indeed, if a musician is to be a church musician, amateur or professional, volunteer or compensated, part-time or full-time, urban or rural, he/she must utilize the disciple community context for the basis of all music-making. Everything else stems from that.

The incarnation makes this approach possible; the gospel we respond to and serve is a relational call to new life in Jesus Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit. This is how we move into the first cycle of the Christian calendar—Advent/Christmas/Epiphany.

## Call and Discernment in the Church Musician's Identity - Top 10

10. EXPERIENCE: What is it that brings you to your music ministry in the church? What are the experiences that have helped you to know your calling/role in the church as a music leader?
9. APPROACH: Discernment requires attention and perseverance, even silent waiting. How is this part of your role as a church musician? How do you work with your faith community in choosing the music, and the programs that are developed or maintained?
8. COMMUNITY CALL & PURPOSE: What is the call of your faith community? What is their unique purpose? How is music a part of that?
7. ROLE: What role does the process of discernment have in your faith community, with your colleagues and with other leaders? How might it have a stronger role? What are some basic ways that you can explore that?
6. SELF-EMPTYING: Being able to fully hear a call requires some sense of self-emptying. This enables you to be open to God filling you with something new. Letting go means letting God in.
5. IDENTITY: How is call a part of your identity as a church music leader? What role has discernment had in that? What role might it have?
4. VOICE OF GOD: The approach of discernment is one of being open to the voice (i.e., presence) of God, not only in one's life, but in how one goes about leadership in the church.
3. UNIQUE NATURE: The nature of one's call, the specific identity and role that come from that, are unique to a disciple community, albeit grounded in the same Spirit.
2. RELATIONSHIP AND ATTENTIVENESS: Call is an ongoing process of being in relationship with God, the community you serve, and the wider church. One is always attentive to call, and discernment is an important aspect of that.
1. AFFIRMATION: As a people of God, we are open to the deepening of our calling as disciples in the Body of Christ. We are nourished by the words and actions of Jesus Christ, and as connected with the Sacraments. We sup at his table for the true bread of life, which nurtures our new baptismal nature. How are we engaged in discerning God's fullest call for us and the people of the community in which we are leaders?

## Lilian Forsyth Scholarship

Applications are now being accepted for the 2011 Lilian Forsyth Scholarship for church music. The award of up to \$1,500 may be used for summer study programs, regular diploma or degree courses, or private tuition. Candidates should be active church musicians who have completed their basic musical training.

The deadline for applications is February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2011. For application forms or information contact the Registrar, Lilian Forsyth Scholarship, Knox Presbyterian Church, 120 Lisgar Street, Ottawa, ON

K2P 0C2. FAX: (613) 238-4775. E-mail: [knoxottawa@bellnet.ca](mailto:knoxottawa@bellnet.ca) or visit our web site at [www.knoxottawa.ca](http://www.knoxottawa.ca)







## There He Goes – Ascension

DAN HANSEN

**Y**ou know what it's like to have someone come and visit for a while; when that visit goes well and you are sad to see that person go; what it's like when someone overstays his/her welcome; what it's like to have a visit from that relative with whom you have to talk and don't really see eye-to-eye.

In terms of discipleship, however, Jesus' visit – his words and actions in faithful response to God's Kingdom – is one that shows us something important and changes everything for all of time. Jesus' time on earth in human form is God's word made flesh, as we would hear it put in the Gospel of John. God has visited with us in a way that we can understand and relate to.

Throughout that visit, through Jesus' words and actions, God has shown us the deepest and most important aspects of His reality. The stories and possible lessons are out there. This visit by God in Jesus has made a long-lasting impression. Some of the first disciples wanted to hold on to Jesus. But most, as the story goes today, continue to worship God and to give thanks. They know what God has done and anticipate what we will do.

We might like to have Jesus back, and this promise has been given for the end of time. However, his return is not as important as many have made it out to be. The emphasis should be now: how we are living out his teachings about God's reality, and allowing our bodies and souls to take on His presence as the body of Christ. The risen Christ continues to teach disciples about Scripture and what it means. And Jesus leaves his followers in order that they take up his mission and ministry, and move into a cross-centered life.

As long as Jesus is around, people may want him to do the work. His absence, therefore, thrusts disciples into the thick of the life of following. They are compelled to work out the details of their life together as his body – the church – in the world. An important aspect of Jesus' return to God is reflected in another adage, "Absence makes the heart grow fonder." Disciples look back and know what they had. Yet, they live fully in the present knowing what God has done and is doing amongst

them. They trust in God, and believe fully the new life that is coming about.

Jesus would never leave his newly-formed community alone to do this. His absence is not a complete one, only physical. He takes a different form, one that is needed by the would-be disciple. That presence is one that we usually do not rely too much on or consider very important in world. Though God is always present in God's creation, the Holy Spirit, the comforter and guide, will come in Jesus' place. Jesus' absence then activates a new spiritual awareness, orientation, and dependency. The Holy Spirit brings to the faithful, eyes and ears of discernment.

We are born into a human reality but, as disciples and followers of Jesus Christ, we are re-born in ways from above. This heavenly orientation brings us to a new sense of what it means to be here as men and women in God's world, as co-creators with God. It transforms the ordinary into the extraordinary, and that which was thought to be the end into a new beginning.

Over the years, perhaps our own losses have been significant. You know what it means not to have someone there any more, someone you have loved deeply. We all do, in some way. Sometimes it seems that some have been dealt a poor hand in this regard. But, for all who have loved, the loss of such love is always significant, and provides one with a lifetime of memory, even learning. You know the power of love when you have truly loved and have had to let it go.

I once had an uncle who was a doctor. As a teenager, every time I would go to visit my uncle Jack and his family, I looked forward to playing their piano and home organ. I would play for hours while my uncle sat in his favourite chair and read. Over the years, these relatives came to my graduating organ recitals, and remained very supportive and encouraging. At some point, however, my uncle Jack contracted hepatitis, and he was given a limited number of years to live.

I will always remember the time when my dad took me to have my last visit with him, just before he died. As usual, I

wanted to play music. Not well at all, this time he was resting on the couch. However, soon after I started, he got up the energy to say something. He said, "Stop playing. Come over here. I want to talk to you. I want to hear about your life." I will never forget that day, and the call to a new direction in life.

As I look back, there was a time for music, and there was a time for visiting—to talk one-on-one. It was the beginning of a call to ordained ministry, giving me a pivotal moment of discernment. Moreover, it was also the emergence of a musical-theological approach to church music leadership.

One would think the loss of the resurrected Jesus to be significant for the early church. What will they do? How will they manage? But, now, in his place will be sent what God has promised: the Spirit of truth and learning. In Jesus' absence, the Holy Spirit will provide comfort and nurture, and all that is needed for the church to get off the ground.

Jesus is gone but his power remains with the disciples, and with us today, constantly calling us to new life. It is power at work in the sacraments that makes us his body.

In the reading (Luke 24:44-53), the community was invited to wait for the gift of the Holy Spirit which they will soon receive.

Today, we both live in and wait for the fullness of the Spirit presence to be known, but we also actively pursue it as we are inspired to know and live the way of Jesus Christ. It is that same Holy Spirit that calls us forward and helps us to discern the work and ministry of the church as musical leaders.

How has the Holy Spirit been active in your life? How is the Holy Spirit calling you, now? What discernment opportunity is God putting before you?

As you move through the busyness of Advent into Christmas, especially as a church leader, take time to look at the season through the eyes of resurrection faith. What do you see? How is God working through you?

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