

St. Francis in the Fields hires internationally known organist Bruce Neswick

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St. Francis in the Fields has recruited a leading American organist, Bruce Neswick, to be its new assistant organist. Conductor, choirmaster, composer, teacher, service accompanist and improviser, Neswick was recently appointed to the organ faculty of Indiana University, Bloomington. This new position placed him in such proximity to St. Francis that organist-choirmaster James Rightmyer seized the opportunity to select Neswick for the position of assistant.

Neswick is no stranger to St. Francis, as he has over the last 15 years directed several choir workshops, played and conducted festival evensongs, and written commissioned choral works.

A consummate musician, Neswick's previous appointments include director of music at St. John the Divine in New York City; assistant organist-choirmaster for the Girl Choristers at Washington National Cathedral; director of music at St. Alban's School for Boys and the National Cathedral School for Girls; organist and choirmaster at Christ Church Cathedral in Lexington, KY; Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Geneva, Switzerland; and St. Paul's Cathedral in Buffalo, N.Y.



At St. Francis in the Fields, Neswick plays weekly liturgies on Sunday mornings, and monthly Choral Evensongs, held on the first Sundays of the academic year. He will be playing for the Choral Concert and Festival Eucharist on Christmas Eve (10:30 p.m. EST) at the eastern Jefferson County parish, located at 6710 Wolf Pen Branch Road in Harrods Creek.

Rightmyer says he feels as though he is living in a dream, having the opportunity to work with such a talented organist on a regular basis. "Every Sunday liturgy and every monthly evensong are full of delightfully surprising and gloriously rewarding musical surprises," he said. "Bruce is intuitively sensitive to my musical direction and helps me to communicate my musical ideas. Whatever I ask for, he is already there, making it happen!"

Neswick holds the Fellowship degree from the Royal School of Church Music (RSCM), for which he has conducted several courses for boy and girl choristers. The RSCM program trains the treble voice to sing with appropriate pitch, phrasing, dynamics and diction, and it teaches the seasons of the church year, the Psalm cycle, the Canticles and the choral responses used in Rites I and II. The RSCM has invited Rightmyer and Neswick to jointly lead the course for boys, teen boys and adults at the Tulsa, Oklahoma course in summer, 2012.

Neswick has also served on the faculties of and performed for several church music conferences, including Master Schola, the Mississippi Conference, the Association of Anglican Musicians, Westminster Choir College Summer Session, the Montreat and Westminster Conferences of the Presbyterian Association of Musicians, the Disciples of Christ Musicians, the Conference of Lutheran Church Musicians, the Sewanee Church Music Conference, Organ Alive! and the Evergreen Conference.

In addition to his commissions for St. Francis, Neswick has composed for numerous performers and churches throughout the United States, and his organ and choral music is published by the presses of Paraclete, Augsburg-Fortress, Selah, Vivace, Hope, Plymouth and St. James. His skill at improvisation garnered him three first prizes from the 1989 San Anselmo Organ Festival, the 1990 American Guild of Organists' national convention in Boston and the 1992 Rochette Concours at the Conservatoire de Musique in Geneva, Switzerland.

A graduate of Pacific Lutheran University and of the Yale School of Music and Institute of Sacred Music, Neswick's teachers have included Robert Baker, David Dahl, Gerre Hancock, Margaret Irwin-Brandon and Lionel Rogg. A Fellow of the American Guild of Organists, Neswick has served the guild in many capacities, including chapter dean, regional convention chair, regional education coordinator, member of the national nominating committee and member of the national improvisation competition committee.

As a recitalist, Neswick has performed extensively throughout North America and has been a featured performer at national and regional conventions of the American Guild of Organists. In 1994, he played the opening convocation for its national convention in Dallas, Texas, and he was a featured artist at the guild's 2000 national convention in Seattle and its 2010 national convention in Washington, D.C. He is represented by Phillip Truckenbrod Concert Artists.