

THE LITTLE ORGAN THAT COULD

Imagine an organ builder's surprise and delight when his modest instrument, installed in a small church, becomes the catalyst not only for a vital church music program, but also for a first-rate annual concert series of 24 events per season!

Meet Trinity Lutheran Church, Manhattan Beach, Calif., home to our Op. 56 (II/17; 1992). Located just south of Los Angeles' LAX airport and the aerospace research and technology complex, the unassuming 1970s building seats about 180 people and possesses a clear, intimate and inviting acoustic. The organ and an adjacent choir area are situated to the left of the altar.

Pastor Lynn Bruer and Organist/Director of Music Karla Devine have worked together since before the organ arrived. They plan two Sunday services at which any of four children's choirs or an adult choir may sing. Instrumentalists from the congregation join in providing prelude music or choral accompaniments. The organ is an integral part of every service.

"We knew from the beginning that we also wanted to share our new instrument with the community," Karla recalls. After the dedication in the fall of 1992, a second recital took place the following spring. Soon Karla began a noon series on the first Friday of the month, with farm market fresh lunches provided by volunteers at nominal cost. She also made the bold move to invite hymn writer Jaroslav Vajda and organist David Schack to present a hymn festival. The Trinity Concert Series had begun!



Karla Devine, Artistic Director

"By 1994 the Series had taken on the format we have today," says Karla, who serves as Artistic Director. "We have an organ anniversary concert, my own Christmas concert, a spring hymn festival, a choral concert and extra programs as opportunities come up," she says. "The hymn festivals are great, since they involve singers from the community and provide opportunities for the congregation." The

Friday *Bach's Lunch Recitals* include eight programs; half are organ solo, the rest include instrumental and vocal offerings. A new component of the Trinity Concert Series is *Saturday Previews*, nine monthly programs previewing the Beverly Hills Public Library's prestigious *Sundays at Two Recital Series*.

In the beginning Karla just asked her friends to play. Now she has a lengthy waiting list of performers from all over. The roster of guest organists alone is impressive: Michael Burkhardt, David and Susan Cherwien, John Ferguson, Robert Hobby, Edward Murray, Frances Norbert, Gregory Peterson, David Schack and Mark Sedio. Several of them have appeared twice. The incredible 2002-2003 Series publicity brochure reads like a who's who of the greater Los Angeles classical musical scene!



Dobson Op. 56 (II/17; 1992)

Organ Specification

GREAT	SWELL	PEDAL
8' Prestant	8' Gedackt	16' Subbass
8' Rohrflöte	8' Gemshorn	8' Bourdon (<i>ext.</i>)
4' Octave	4' Spillflöte	Great to Pedal
2' Waldflöte	2½' Nazard	Swell to Pedal
IV Mixture 1½'	2' Gemshorn	Tremulant
8' Trumpet	1½' Tierce	Zimbelstern
Swell to Great	8' Hautbois	Mechanical action

The Series is self-supporting from free-will offerings and fundraisers. Karla explains, "Our *Patron Dinners* are elegant \$100 per plate affairs in gorgeous oceanfront homes, with a gourmet chef from Trinity Church in the kitchen. Our *Benefit Suppers*, at \$35 per plate, are slightly less formal events in members' homes and feature an informal recital." One of the main Series concerts is designated a fundraising program, and, for a \$100 contribution, patrons may select a professionally recorded CD of a *Saturday Preview* performance.

The Trinity Concert Series is an artistic success because of its unwavering emphasis on quality and the determined hard work of a large group of volunteers. Helping Karla manage everything are two key people. Lois Alton is Chair of the Recital Committee and oversees all arrangements and finances. Jim Eninger, an aeronautical engineer with Northrup-Grumman, shares in artistic decisions, produces all printed publicity material and concert programs, maintains the Series' outstanding website (www.palosverdes.com/tlcmusic) and e-mails concert reminders.

We at Dobson Pipe Organbuilders salute the members and staff of Trinity Church for an inspiring, first-class endeavor that many larger churches can't match. We're also pleased that our Op. 56 so inspired the people at Trinity and that it is enjoying a full and happy life making music!