



Saint Peter's Episcopal Church

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Former National Cathedral organist performs at St. Peter's

(LEWES, DE – September 22, 2015)

St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Lewes continues its tradition of inviting a prominent Anglican/Episcopal church musician to spend a weekend in residence; these musicians are selected for their expertise in both choir training and organ performance. Dr. Douglas Major, former organist and choirmaster of Washington National Cathedral, will serve as St. Peter's 2015 Anglican Musician in Residence.

The weekend-long celebration of the Anglican music tradition begins on Friday, October 9 at 7:00 p.m. with an organ recital by Dr. Major. Featured works include those by J.S. Bach, Cèsar Franck, Charles Tournemire, William Walton, Richard Dirksen, and the performer himself. A free-will offering will be taken at the door.

Saturday, October 10 will feature a choral workshop beginning at 10:00 a.m. with the adult choir of St. Peter's conducted by Major. The workshop will focus on preparing the choirs for Choral Eucharist and Solemn Evensong the following day. This is an open event – members of the public are invited to come to the rehearsal and observe Dr. Major working with the choir.

Music for the Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost, October 11, will highlight composers associated with Washington National Cathedral, many compositions featured were commissioned during Dr. Major's 28 years of service to the cathedral. Choral Eucharist is celebrated at 10:00 a.m. featuring the *Communion Service in E minor* by Dr. Major's predecessor at the cathedral, Richard Wayne Dirksen, as well as Irish born composer Charles Villiers Stanford's setting of *O for a closer walk with God*. Solemn Choral Evensong will take place at 5:00 p.m. featuring the *Magnificat and Nunc dimittis "Mt. St. Alban"* by former cathedral choir member, David Hogan; *Preces and Responses* by former Assistant Organist and Choirmaster, Robert Lehman; and the anthem, *All hail adored Trinity*, by the founding director of the College of Church Musicians at the cathedral, Leo Sowerby. A reception catered by Palate Café follows Evensong affording parishioners and guests an opportunity to greet Dr. Major.

Born in 1953 in Berwick, Pennsylvania, Douglas Major studied organ at Webster College, St. Louis, MO earning a Bachelor of Music in Organ Performance. In 1974 he was appointed by the late Paul Callaway as assistant organist at the prestigious Washington (DC) National Cathedral, when Major was just twenty-one years of age. He succeeded Richard Wayne Dirksen as organist and choirmaster at the Cathedral in 1988, where his first career as a church musician continued to 2002. During his 28 years of service there, he conducted daily choral services, played for presidents, kings and queens, and administered one of the country's largest church music programs and concert schedules, frequently televised nationally. In 1995 he was awarded a Doctor of Music (h.c.) by Nashotah House Episcopal Seminary.

As an internationally recognized organ solo artist, Douglas Major has toured throughout North America, Europe and the Far East. Dr. Major plays many recitals and concerts each season, as well as concerts with the Empire Brass Quintet and as accompanist for Elizabeth Von Trapp. During the last 30 years, his appearances have taken him all over the United States, from California to Maine, and Florida to Washington and Canada. He has toured as organ soloist with the Orchestre National de France and Lorin Maazel, and toured in Japan in 1992 and again in 2002 with the Empire Brass Quintet. In November of 2005, Major played a concert tour in China, Taiwan, Singapore and Malaysia. In May of 2001 and again in 2004 he participated in the American Organists' Festival in Kiev, Ukraine, playing recitals to standing-room-only audiences. During the last four seasons, Major has toured the US with Elizabeth Von Trapp and the Empire Brass Quintet, playing in over 35 American cities. Major's career has afforded

him the opportunity to play with many of the great musicians of our generation including Dave Brubeck, Leonard Bernstein, Mstislav Rostropovich, Yo Yo Ma, Wynton Marsalis, Aretha Franklin, Lorin Maazel and Ravi Shankar.

Dr. Major's solo recordings include eight organ compact discs, recorded on the Washington Cathedral's magnificent 186-rank Skinner organ. With the Empire Brass of Boston, Major has recorded *A Bach Festival* for Angel/EMI, now in its fourth release, and one of the all-time best-selling brass and organ recordings.

In addition to his concert schedule, he composes music for organ, choirs and chamber ensembles, and also serves as Music Director of St. Michael's Church in Marblehead, Mass. His recent compositions include *Love Poem to God*, which was commissioned by the American Guild of Organists; *Requiem in C Minor*, a large-scale work premiered in Atlanta in October of 2005, and a suite for organ entitled *Cape Ann Portraits*, based upon locations along the Massachusetts coastline. His compositions include many sacred works, masses, anthems, psalm settings and organ music.

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Attached to this e-mail message please find press photograph of:

Douglas Major

Source: submitted

