

Jason Pennington
From the Organ Bench
August 2015

In these final weeks of summer break, the St. Luke's choir and bell choir enjoy Wednesdays off until September's Rally Day celebration marks the start in the new year for all ministries and activities of the parish. Summer, without Wednesday rehearsals, means an earlier choir call for the 10:30am service with very familiar repertoire or literature easily read and prepared with limited time. This more casual, holiday schedule gives our dedicated singers a chance to travel, take time off on their own, and most importantly to refresh, recharge, and to renew. The ease in scheduling is an invitation to you, who might be considering joining the choir, or you, who would like to experience what it is like to worship on Sunday as part of the choir. Simply come to the choir room at 9:15am on Sunday morning. Meet the singers and sing with them. Of course, we do hope that you will find us so welcoming and that the one experience in choir was so overwhelmingly inspiring and enjoyable, that you would consider joining on a regular basis. But, if you're just curious about what we do, how we prepare, or if you'd just like to try it once, we welcome you just the same! Join us! Debi Fricks, our hand bell director, has included some information in this Evangelist regarding the start-up of our bell choirs this year. Instead of doubling her words in my article, I kindly direct you to her description of our excellent bell program, and encourage you to consider joining!

Most of all in this time of year, St. Luke's anticipates the start of the Festival of the Senses, the parish's year-long Arts series, featuring musical concerts, spoken word events, as well projects in the visual arts. You will recall that the series, already in place for several years yet operating independently of the Music Department under the guidance of a most dedicated ad hoc committee, was incorporated into the St. Luke's Music Department last fall to function as a part of the department itself as a means of artistic and cultural outreach to the entire Central Arkansas community. We are reminded that for centuries the Christian Church has been the center for education, knowledge, culture, and the arts, both of curator of them as well as their strong and effective advocate. Thus, the offerings of the Festival of the Senses, are not only an opportunity for St. Luke's to host some of the most talented artists in our area, but the Festival too is a reflection of our heritage as Anglican Christians as persons who hold in highest esteem culture and the arts. We are pleased to announce the first musical concert event of the 2015/2016 season Monday, August 31 at 7:00pm: an evening of Mozart for Quintet featuring internationally acclaimed pianist Tatiana Roitman, violinist Kiril Laskarov, and others from the Arkansas Symphony. The season continues with a taping of the NPR broadcast Tales From the South, Four concerts offered by ARMusica (a local ensemble of musicians directed by pianist Julie Cheek), an organ concert by Jason Pennington (premiering two new keyboard works of local composer Dr. Stephen Kemp), a stellar all-piano program by Neil Rutman including works of Debussy and Ravel. This year, St. Luke's was awarded the privilege of hosting one of the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra's "Intimate Neighborhood Concerts", a series of ASO programs for chamber orchestra performed throughout the LR/NLR area in neighborhood churches. Hosting these important concerts is an immense honor for us at St. Luke's and is further an opportunity to bring more and more persons from the community through our Red Doors. A complete listing with dates and times of the 2015/2016 Festival of the Senses season will be available in the Rally Day ministries and outreach brochures. Also, you can keep abreast of the schedule by "liking" St. Luke's Festival of the Senses on Facebook. The Festival is funded solely by the generosity of its sponsors and benefactors. If

you would like to inquire how you might be counted among them, or if you would like to become a volunteer at Festival events, please contact Jason Pennington, the St. Luke's Organist/Choirmaster at the church office.