

**CHARLES TOMPKINS, organist**  
**GREGORY TOMPKINS, violinist**  
**The Parish of Christ Church, Andover, MA**  
**Sunday, February 1, 2026 at 3:00 p.m.**

**PROGRAM**

*Sonata in A major, Opus 65 No. 3*

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Con moto maestoso; Andante tranquillo

Felix Mendelssohn, famous for his orchestral, chamber, and piano music, was also an avid organist. He composed six sonatas, three preludes and fugues, and numerous individual works for the organ; in addition, he was a leader in reacquainting the general public with the organ works of J.S. Bach (after a long period in which Bach's music was essentially absent from public concerts) through a series of all-Bach recitals he performed in Leipzig.

Mendelssohn's organ sonatas were originally entitled *Voluntaries* (a title more understood and appreciated in England than *sonata* in the early nineteenth century, and thus preferable to the publisher). The sonatas vary in their number of movements, and in general the individual movements do not follow form types established in the German classical and romantic period for sonatas, symphonies, and quartets, such as sonata allegro, rondo, and so forth. The Third Organ Sonata consists of two movements, which are highly contrasting in style and length. The extended first movement, in three-part (ABA) form, begins and ends with broad, majestic, celebratory music in A major that suggests a wedding march. The central B section, by contrast, switches to the parallel minor key (A minor) and is a double fugue - a fugue with two subjects, each of which are heard separately at first and then in combination as the section progresses. The subjects are quite different, the first solemn and the second more energetic, consisting of continuous sixteenth notes.

Underneath the fugal writing in the hands, the pedal plays a melody based on one of the most famous Lutheran chorales (hymns), "Aus tiefer Not schrei' ich zu dir" ("Out of the Depths I Cry to Thee," a paraphrase of Psalm 130, with text and melody by Martin Luther):

Aus tie - ffer Noth schrey ich zu dir Herr Gott! er - hör mein Ru - ffen  
dein gnä - dig Ohr neig her zu mir und mei - ner Bitt sie öf - ne

denn so du wilt das se - hen an was Sünd und Un-recht ist ge - than wer kan Herr für dir blei - ben.

*From deep distress I cry to you; Lord God, hear my call.  
Bend down your merciful ears to me and open them to my plea.  
If then you wish to consider  
the sin and injustice which is done,  
who, Lord, can remain before you?*

Translation by Dr. Mark Bighley, in *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Complete Organ Works, Series II: Vol.2, The Chorales of the Organ Works* (Wayne Leupold Editions, 2018)

The double fugue gradually builds in volume and rhythmic intensity, culminating in a brief pedal cadenza followed by a return to the opening "wedding march music." The short, lyric second movement is written in a style reminiscent of the composer's *Songs Without Words* for piano.

From *Cinq Pièces, Opus 180*

Jean Langlais (1907-1991)

1. Assez lent; 3. ♩ = 100; 5. ♩ = 104

Jean Langlais was a major figure among twentieth-century French organists and composers of organ music. He served for many years as Organist of the Church of St. Clothilde, Paris, where he numbered among his predecessors two of the greatest figures in nineteenth- and twentieth-century French organ music, César Franck (1822-1890) and Charles Tournemire (1870-1939). Langlais's *Cinq Pièces*, originally composed for flute with accompaniment for piano, harpsichord, or organ, were composed in 1976, and illustrate well Langlais's typically colorful harmonic style. The first, third and fifth of these pieces are heard this evening. The first is lyric and restrained, the third scherzo-like, and the fifth has the character of a miniature march.

*Fantasia No. 7 in E-flat for Solo Violin, TWV 40:20*

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767)

Dolce; Allegro; Largo; Presto

While the six sonatas and partitas of J.S. Bach for solo violin are more well-known, the *Twelve Fantasias for Violin Without Bass* of Georg Philip Telemann have recently been experiencing a well-deserved renaissance. A friend of J.S. Bach, Telemann was one of the most prolific composers in history, with more than 3,000 compositions to his name. In addition to the fantasias for solo violin, he also wrote similar sets of fantasias for unaccompanied flute and unaccompanied solo viola da gamba (the latter were rediscovered in 2015). The seventh Fantasia for solo violin, in E-flat major, is described by Telemann as "Galanterien," in reference to the late-Baroque move away from complexity towards simplicity and accessibility of the Classical period. From the first movement's captivating and emotive Dolce, through the vivacious Presto of the final movement, this piece encapsulates this inflection point in music history through the sophistication and grace of Telemann's violin writing.

*Toccata in F major, BWV 540*

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

The exuberant, virtuosic Toccata in F major, one of Bach's greatest free (non-hymn based) organ works, begins with canonic passagework in the hands, played over a long held pedal note (or *pedal point*); this is followed by an extended solo for the pedals. These two elements are then repeated - transposed to the dominant key level (C major) - which then leads to a striking harmonic sequence using arpeggiated (broken) chords in the hands. The remainder of the Toccata alternates repetitions of this harmonic sequence, separated by passages of contrasting, three-part (trio) writing. The final pages of the Toccata include some of the most magnificent writing in all of Bach's organ music, including a passage where the music literally traverses the entire compass of the keyboards: first from the top to the bottom, then returning back to the top. A final emphatic series of sequences brings the Toccata to an exhilarating conclusion.

## *Pavane*

Carl Rütti (b. 1949)

The Swiss composer Carl Rütti has made extensive and outstanding contributions to the contemporary sacred choral and organ literatures. Several of his anthems have been performed on the worldwide broadcasts of the annual King's College (Cambridge, England) Christmas Eve Service of Nine Lessons and Carols. Rütti's *Pavane* for violin and organ (1997, revised 2011) is in two large sections. The first most clearly recalls the Renaissance dance that the work's title invokes: it is slow and stately, in D minor, and in triple meter with a recurring emphasis on the second beat of each measure. The second half of the piece provides a vivid contrast: switching to the parallel major key of D major, it employs a brisk tempo, constantly changing (and often asymmetrical) meters, and fast, dance-like figures in both the violin and the organ parts.

## *Adoration*

Florence Price (1877-1953)

Finale (From *Organ Sonata No. 1*, CN 29)

Florence Price - composer, pianist, organist, and teacher - was the first Black woman to have her music featured by a major orchestra, when her *Symphony No. 1* (the first of four) was performed by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in 1933. She also wrote numerous works for the organ; her *Adoration*, a lovely, lyrical piece originally written for solo organ, is presented here in an arrangement for violin and organ by Elaine Fine. By contrast, the final movement of Price's First Sonata for Organ is a rousing toccata; set in the key of D minor, the final pages of this movement switch to the parallel key of D major, providing a sonorous and thrilling conclusion.

-Program notes by Charles and Gregory Tompkins

## THE ARTISTS

**CHARLES TOMPKINS** is Distinguished University Organist and Professor of Music Emeritus at Furman University, Greenville, SC where he taught organ, harpsichord, church music, and music theory from 1986-2022 and oversaw the design and installation of the Hartness Organ (C.B. Fisk Opus 121, 2004) in the Charles E. Daniel Memorial Chapel. Since his retirement from the teaching faculty three years ago, Dr. Tompkins has continued his work at Furman as organ accompanist for Furman's outstanding choral ensembles (Furman Singers, Furman Chamber Choir, and Belle Voci), director of the Hartness Organ Recital Series, and organist for University academic events and services including Opening Convocation and Baccalaureate. In addition to his duties at Furman, Charles is Organist of First Baptist Church, and Artist in Residence for Christ Church (Episcopal), both in Greenville.

An acclaimed performer, Dr. Tompkins continues to present recitals at major universities and churches throughout the United States, often in conjunction with masterclasses and lectures. Highlights of his performing career in the United States have included recitals at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC, the Piccolo Spoleto Festival in Charleston, SC, and for national and regional conventions of the American Guild of Organists, Association of Anglican Musicians, Music Teachers National Association, and College Music Society. He has performed abroad in Germany, Italy, Switzerland, France, and England, including recitals at the Cathedral of Notre Dame, Paris; St. Paul's Cathedral, London; and the Chapel of King's College, Cambridge. He regularly performs duo recitals with sons Gregory and Kevin, both professional violinists. His performances have been broadcast nationally on American Public Media's *Pipedreams*.

Dr. Tompkins holds the degrees Doctor of Musical Arts and Bachelor of Music with High Distinction in organ performance from the Eastman School of Music, which awarded him its Performer's Certificate in recognition of outstanding performing accomplishment. He holds the Master of Music degree in organ performance from the University of Michigan. His organ study was with Russell Saunders (Eastman), Robert Glasgow (University of Michigan), and Norman Scribner (Washington, DC Choral Arts Society and St. Alban's Episcopal Church, Washington, DC), and harpsichord study was with Dr. Lenora McCroskey (Eastman).

Violinist **GREGORY TOMPKINS** regularly performs in solo, chamber and orchestral settings throughout the United States. Based in Providence, RI, Gregory is a member of the New Haven Symphony Orchestra, the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, the Cape Symphony Orchestra, and serves as principal second violin for Orchestra New England. In addition, Gregory frequently appears in recital with his father, organist Charles Tompkins. As a duo they have performed in venues including Trinity University in San Antonio, TX, Harvard Memorial Church in Cambridge, MA, and at the Piccolo Spoleto Festival in Charleston, SC.

Gregory holds a Bachelor of Music degree from the Eastman School of Music where he was a student of Charles Castleman, and a Master of Music degree from the New England Conservatory where he was a student of Lucy Chapman and Jennifer Frautschi. From 2013 until 2024 Gregory performed as the second violinist in the Haven String Quartet, the quartet in residence at Music Haven in New Haven, CT. In that position he also served as a member of the violin faculty and Director of Artistic Operations. He currently teaches on the faculty of Gateway Community College and at the Hopkins School in New Haven, CT, and during the summer at Point Counterpoint in Brandon, VT where he coaches young chamber music groups.

This season's performances include appearances with the Nautilus String Quartet on the Isle of Shoals, NH, as well as with Charles Tompkins at First Baptist Church, Greenville, SC and Westminster Presbyterian Church, Charlottesville, VA.