

Bill Crane bio:

Portland organist Bill Crane came to the Pacific Northwest in 1990 from Washington, DC, where he was engaged for more than a decade in myriad musical activities, including being organist and choirmaster of a large Episcopal congregation there, serving several years as carillonneur and chorister at Washington National Cathedral, and holding fellowships at both the Library of Congress and the Smithsonian Institution. A graduate of both Florida State University in Tallahassee and the Schola Cantorum in Paris, France, Dr. Crane has kept up a whirlwind pace as an artist in his first 18 years in Portland, including solo engagements with the Oregon Mozart Players, preparing choirs for the Oregon Symphony, accompanying countless ensembles and soloists, writing music criticism for *The Oregonian*, serving on grants review panels for the Oregon Arts Commission and Cultural Trust, and so on. He has had his own Sunday afternoon chamber music series, *The Brunches of Champions*, since 1992, involving more than 250 colleague musicians in more than 100 programs so far. He is on the adjunct faculty of music at Pacific University in Forest Grove and on the staff of the Confluence Project in Vancouver, Washington.

Program:

"God Among Us" from "The Nativity of Our Lord," Olivier Messiaen

Partita on "Sei, gegrusset, Jesu gutig," Johann Sebastian Bach

Sonata No. 1, Paul Hindemith

Symphony No. 3 (complete), Louis Vierne

Program notes:

"A good organist playing good compositions on a good organ produces one of the most sublime musical experiences imaginable. Unfortunately, that's only about 20% of organ music. In fact, most organ music is awful." Thus, disparaging the other 80% of the music of his chosen instrument, Portland organist Bill Crane, in typical fashion, invites and challenges his audience to come hear what can be terrifically good coming from an instrument that most people think of as ho-hum, or worse. "I chose the title 'A Vivid Yes' because I wanted to present a program that studiously avoids all that is pious, tentative, or introspective from the organ's vast literature. We live in a time of terrible anxiety, not to mention a terrible war, and I want to play a program that is entirely about 'yes,' about why we can and must remain hopeful in the face of everything. Any artist's protest -- and that is something I wish to do with this concert -- is probably 'meaningless,' but at least for an hour, the artist and the audience can refute all that would say that the world is not a place of abundance and hope.

"That is not to say that it is wrong to be cautious or reverent or respectful in the religious

context, but just for now, I don't want to play 'O Man, Bewail Thy Grievous Sin' of Bach, and the like, even though I love it. Rather, this will be a program solely about confidence and affirmation, in however an abstract form.

"I am especially pleased to have been invited to give this concert at First Presbyterian because of the wonderful organ there, a great big 'yes' in its own right. Too, it's a honor to join the ranks of the many distinguished artists who have performed there and continue to do so."