

Cathedral Concert Series

St. Mary's Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption ~ Covington, Kentucky

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cathedralconcertseries.org

Dear Colleague and Friend in Music,

Thank you for your interest in the Cathedral Concert Series.

The West Gallery of the Covington Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption offers a new home to a musical treasure of historic beauty and significance to the Diocese of Covington and the entire tri-state region. A fine tracker (mechanical) organ built by German immigrant Matthias Schwab (1858) was saved from destruction. In 1970 the instrument was moved to the Basilica from nearby Old St. Joseph Church and eventually restored over the next four years.

The Cathedral Concert Series was founded in 1975. A re-dedication concert for the restored Historic Matthias Schwab Organ (1858) was given in 1974 by Robert, Rita and Mark Schaffer and the Cathedral Choir. Several more organ concerts were offered and well received with the help of a small but enthusiastic following. The offerings collected made it possible to continue the music and maintain the delicate tracker organ and local treasure. The Cathedral Concert Series offered our community an opportunity to hear music which was written for a sacred space – performed live by mostly regional guest artists – all in one of the region's most pristine acoustic and visually inspiring edifices.

Mission Statement:

“The Cathedral Concert Series endeavors to present instrumental and choral music from the rich traditions of Western Liturgy and inspired classical in a suitable visual and acoustic environment. Series expenses and restoration of the Historic Matthias Schwab Organ are funded exclusively by charitable donations and facilitated by the efforts of volunteers.”

The format originally featured the two Cathedral Organs, and perhaps a solo instrument. Over time, choral and instrumental groups of varying size were requesting to perform, as well as occasional visits from international artists.

The Cathedral Concert Series operates on freewill offerings and with the help of a small volunteer staff. No finances come from the parish or the diocese. No admission is ever charged. Many performers either donate their time and talent, or receive a modest stipend to help with expenses. Being a very small inner city parish, the vast majority of monetary support comes from outside the parish and the urban community. The annual budget barely allows for nominal honorariums, and any proposed arrangement is possible. A major restoration of the Schwab Organ is in the planning stages.

The series season runs from October to the following April. There are currently three recurring “in-house” concerts each year in October, December, and January. The available months for guest performances are November, February, March (Bach's Birthday concert), and April (depending on Easter).

Please take time to consider our situation and budget and, by all means, feel free to send any financial details for review. Your interest is most appreciated and any support is also valued.

Kind Regards,



Gregory J. Schaffer
Principal Organist, Choir Director
Executive Director, Cathedral Concert Series
St. Mary's Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption