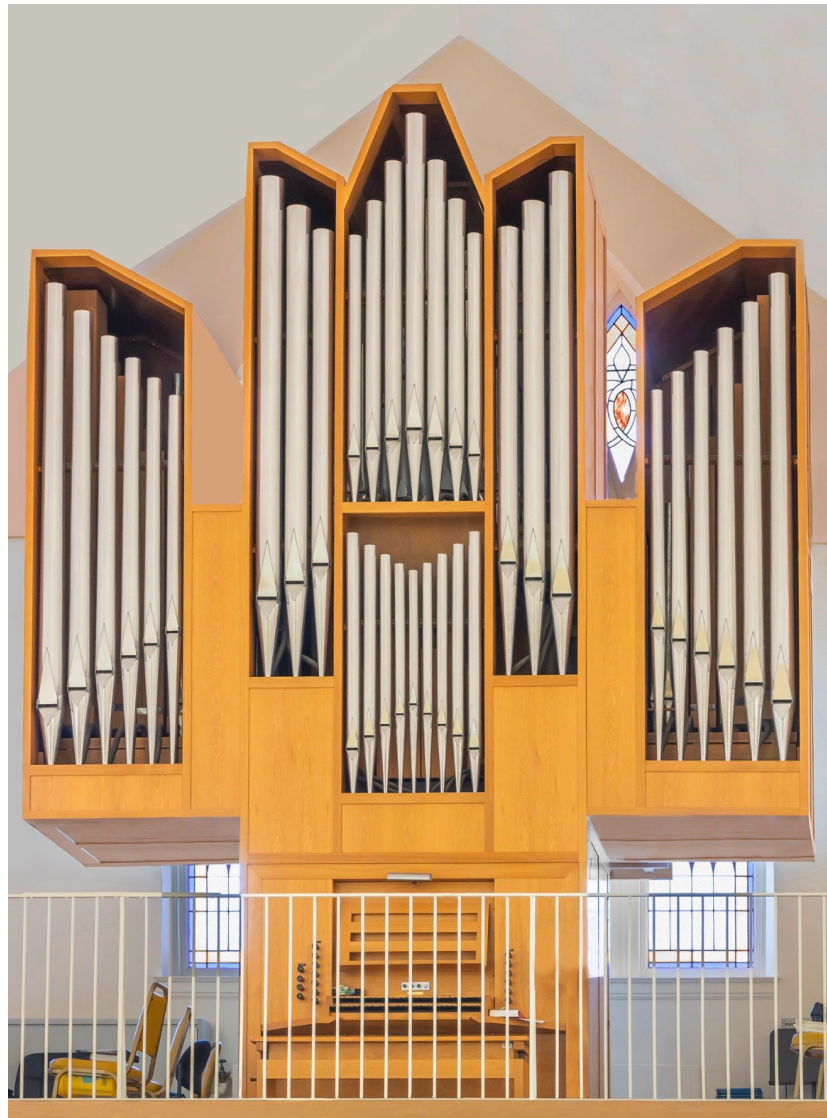


THE IMMANUEL MUSIC OUTREACH INITIATIVE

A Unique Church-Based Organ Scholar Program

Immanuel Lutheran Church

Evanston, Illinois



Since 2002, Immanuel Lutheran Church has cultivated one of the most distinctive church-based organ scholar programs in the United States.

A Living Tradition of Worship and Music

Rooted in the Lutheran conviction that music serves the proclamation of the Gospel, Immanuel's liturgical life is distinguished by thoughtful organ leadership, strong congregational singing, and a deep engagement with sacred repertoire.

Recognizing when and how to add to the worship experience is the foundation of leadership from the bench. At Immanuel, organ music contributes to transcendent worship by supporting song and facilitating meditation.

Congregational singing plays a particularly important role in this tradition. Hymns are sung confidently in four-part harmony. At moments in each service, the organ accompaniment falls silent so that the congregation's voices alone carry the melody – and the harmony.

Repertoire is selected with great care to reflect the liturgical season, align with weekly Bible readings, and include a wide range of composers, particularly those historically underrepresented.

This living culture of congregational song provides the musical context in which Immanuel's Organ Scholar Program and Music Outreach Initiative have developed and reflect the congregation's emphatic welcome to all:

We welcome people of every age and size, color and culture, every sexual orientation and gender identity, socio-economic status and marital status, every ability and challenge. We welcome believers and questioners, and questioning believers.

The Organ of Immanuel Lutheran Church

Immanuel's mechanical action "tracker" pipe organ is perfectly designed and positioned for the size and acoustics of the worship space. The organ's 16 stops over two manuals and pedal are remarkably versatile, inviting the organist to play a wide variety of organ literature, from the 16th-21st centuries. The clarity of speech and beauty of tone inspire and enhance the robust and heartfelt singing of the congregation.

The components of the organ were manufactured by the August Laukhuff Orgelbau of Weikersheim, Germany, and installed and voiced by local Evanston organ builder Kurt E. Roderer in 1981. The stop list was developed in consultation with Laukhuff by Mr. Roderer and Gregory Hummel, Immanuel's organist emeritus.

The term "tracker" describes the mechanical means by which the keys enable the pipes to sound. In tracker action the organist is in direct control of the pallets which allow air into the pipes. Many components comprise tracker action, including trackers, stickers, levers, backfalls, squares, rollers, roller boards, and stops.

There are over 800 pipes divided into three sections corresponding to the three keyboards and 16 stops. The tremolo is a mechanical device which shakes sound of the pipes, causing a trembling effect. The zimbelstern is a set of pitched bells rung electronically.

Great M. I

8' Principal, 8' Met. Gedeckt, 4' Octave, 4' Rohrflöte, 2' Kl. Octave, IV Mixture, 8' Trompet

Positiv M. II

Tremolo, 8' Holz Gedeckt, 4' Spitzflöte, 2' Principal, II T.C. Sesquialtera, 1 1/3 Larigot

Pedal

16' Subbass, 8' Flachflöte, 4' Choralbass, 16' Fagott

Couplers I-P, II-P, II-I

Zimbelstern (added 2013)

The Organ Scholar Program

Drawing applicants from around the country and beyond, the Immanuel Organ Scholar Program supports talented young musicians pursuing advanced study in organ performance and church music.

Applicants must:

- Provide a letter of recommendation from their private organ instructor
- Prepare a selection from J.S. Bach's masterworks as well as an additional piece of their choosing
- Play a live audition, including the accompaniment of a hymn with live singers
- Participate in an interview with a nine-person panel active in worship roles

Alumni of the program now serve as directors of music, cantors, educators, and performers across the United States.

A Unique Church-Based Jury

Unlike most organ competitions, which take place in conservatories or concert halls, the Immanuel jury occurs within the musical life of a worshipping and singing congregation. Members of the jury are active church musicians who evaluate not only technical virtuosity but also musical judgment, liturgical awareness, and the ability to lead congregational song.

Evaluation therefore considers not only technical virtuosity but also the candidate's ability to serve the musical life of the church.

Organ Scholars (2002–2026)

| | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2002 – Ross Updegraff | 2012 – Matthew Gerhard | 2022 – Katherine Jolliff |
| 2003 – Brian Wentzel | 2013 – Priscilla Weaver Gabriel | 2022 – Sol Rizzato |
| 2004 – Joy-Leilani Garbutt | 2014 – David Lim | 2023 – Kelsey Berg |
| 2005 – Nathan LeMahieu | 2015 – Kevin J. Vaughn | 2023 – JoEllen West |
| 2006 – Laura Zimmer | 2016 – Nicole Simental | 2024 – Trevor Good |
| 2007 – Emily Woock | 2017 – Hannah Koby | 2024 – Hansol Kim |
| 2008 – Paula Maust | 2018 – Andrew Barbour | 2025 – David Devine |
| 2009 – Jonathan Rudy | 2019 – Josh Ring | 2025 – Katie Gunn |
| 2010 – Justin Knabach | 2020 – Matthew Wachtman | 2026 – Áron Sipos |
| 2011 – Kipp Cortez | 2020 – Dale Nickell | 2026 – Gege Bi |

2026 Music Outreach Concert Series

April 25, 2026 — 3:00 PM
Vincent Dubois Organ Recital

October 10, 2026 — 3:00 PM
Áron Sipos Organ Recital

May 9, 2026 — 3:00 PM
Shakespeare in Song

November 21, 2026 — 3:00 PM
Gege Bi Organ Recital

Leadership

James Morehead — Director of Music
Dr. Christine Kraemer — Principal Organist
Laurie Stivers — Associate Organist
Gregory W. Hummel — Organist Emeritus

Music Outreach Endowment Fund

The Music Outreach Endowment Fund supports the Organ Scholar Program, the concert series, preservation of the church's pipe organ, and education in sacred music. Donate today!



<https://immanuelevanston.org/donate/>

Immanuel Lutheran Church, Evanston – where sacred music is lived, taught, and shared.