



Pizza, Pipes and Prayer Feeds the Organist's Need

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Pittsburgh's "Pizza, Pipes, and Prayer: A Night for the Organist" has become an annual event, both well-attended and highly anticipated. The premise of the meeting is simple and inexpensive. And the idea is easy to replicate in most any chapter: Gather your organists for delicious local pizza, supplement it with a salad, drinks, and dessert, before moving to the sanctuary or organ loft for an interesting and informative talk on a topic that appeals to the organist. Conclude the evening with Night Prayer.

Our first Pizza, Pipes and Prayer was held at The Church of the Assumption in Bellevue, Pennsylvania. After the meal, Dr. Neil Stahurski, took us on a brief tour of the exquisite church, highlighting its architecture and works of art. We then proceeded to the choir loft where Don Fellows, St. Paul Cathedral organist and choir director, joined Neil in presenting an informative

program on "Practical Suggestions for Service Playing." It demonstrated various ways to creatively improvise the accompaniment of the psalms, how to adapt piano accompaniments to the pipe organ, and suggested proper organ registration for hymn playing. Following Night Prayer, the organists in attendance were invited to play the wonderfully renovated Casavant pipe organ.

Our second PPP event took place at the beautiful Holy Name Church in Duquesne, Pennsylvania. The talk and theme was on the topic of "The Advantages of Hybrid Organs." George Pecoraro enlightened us on the merits of creating a hybrid organ from an existing pipe organ. Following the presentation, the attendees were invited to take the instrument for a spin, showing the organ's versatility and the church's exceptional acoustic space.

This month, our third annual PPP will be held at Our Lady of Grace Church in Scott Township. Aaron Sproul will offer suggestions for "Accompanying the Choir."

– Kevin Maurer, chapter director