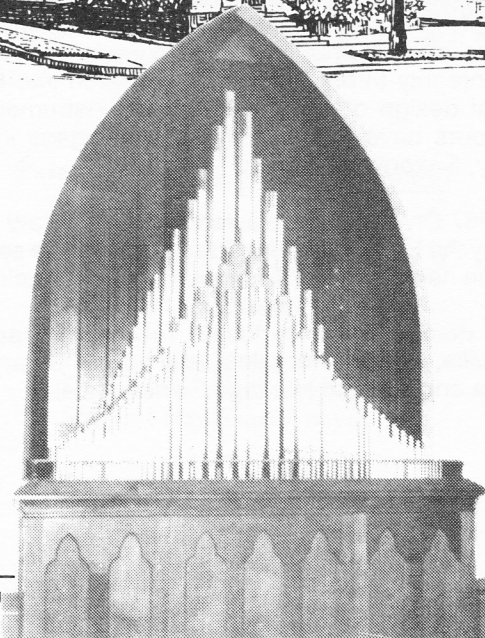
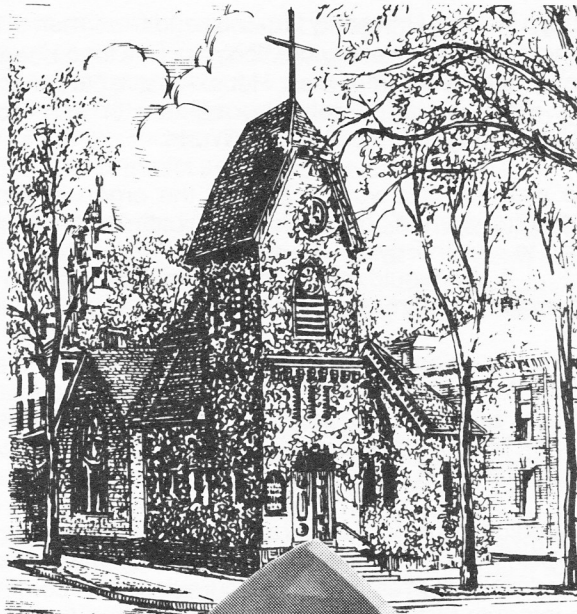


St. John's Church

of the city of
Ionia, Michigan



CENTENNIAL RECITAL

St. John's Church • Ionia • October 6, 1991

Marilyn Mason - Organist

Flourish and Chorale (1987)*..... Michael McCabe (*b. 1941*)

Magnificat du huitieme ton en sol Majeur..... Le Clerc
Plein Jeu, Duo, Jeu de Clarion, Flutte, Musette, Grand Jeu

The Magnificat (Hymn of the Virgin Mary) comes from St. Luke's gospel. Although it was usually sung, the practice of performing alternate verses with the organ began in the 17th century. Because there were twelve verses in the Magnificat, composers would write six verses for organ alone. Here, Le Clerc utilizes the 8th tone as his melodic source. The work was obtained from the British Museum and edited for performance by Marilyn Mason.

Prelude and Fugue in D, BWV 532..... J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

Partita, "Christus, der ist Mein Leben"..... Pachelbel

March on a Theme of Handel..... Alexandre Guilmant
(1837-1911)

* *Commissioned by Marilyn Mason*

Variations on Adeste Fidelis..... Raynor Taylor (1747-1825)

Variations on the Sicilian Hymn..... Benjamin Carr
(1769-1831)

The Last Rose of Summer, Op. 59..... Dudley Buck
(1839-1909)

Concert Variations on the

Austrian Hymn, Op. 3..... John Knowles Paine (1839-1906)

John Knowles Paine (1839-1906) received much of his training in this country; in 1875 he was appointed Professor of Music at Harvard University, being the first incumbent of a chair of music in an American university. The Variations were written in 1860. The theme is stated, followed by four variations and concluding with a fugue.



Today's recital benefits the Marilyn Mason Scholarship Fund at the University of Michigan. The fund was established by Dr. Mason's students in recognition of her 40th year of teaching.

About the Artist....

Marilyn Mason, University Organist and Chairman of the Organ Department at the University of Michigan, has long been acknowledged as a world-class musician. Her extensive career as a concert organist, recording artist, teacher, adjudicator and lecturer has carried her throughout the Western World.

She was the first woman to play the organ in Westminster Abbey, the first woman organist to play in Latin America and the first American to play in Egypt. (On her second Egyptian visit she was also asked if she would "tune" the organ, since it had not been properly maintained from the time of her previous recital.)

During one single year, invitations took her to five different continents. In 1989, she was honored by the American Guild of Organists by being named "International Performer of the Year." In addition, Dr. Mason has served as adjudicator at nearly every major organ competition in the world.

Her dedication to contemporary music is evidenced in the forty-five works she has commissioned (one of which will be heard today) and premiered. Currently she is pursuing her commitment to stylistic integrity through scholarly research into the construction and tonal design of historic European instruments. Sixteen research tours have focused on historic organs in France, North Germany, Saxony and Spain.

In 1987 Dr. Mason was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Music degree by the University of Nebraska, where she served as consultant for the new Casavant Freres Limitee mechanical action organ.

Her discography includes music of Bach, Pachelbel, Mondonville, Handel, Pergolesi, and contemporary composers on Columbia and Musical Heritage Society labels.

About the Parish (con.)

Construction on the present building began in 1882 and was completed at a total cost of \$7334.89 including the English Cathedral glass windows, but not including the pews. For the next eight years, the Parish worshipped without a pipe organ to provide the Sunday morning music. That role was handled by a small, reed organ with the organist supplying the pedal power.

The church appears today on the outside as it did when it was built, except that the steps to enter the building have been moved to the interior of the bell tower. Other than the movement of some furnishings, the interior remains basically as it was at the time of its construction.



We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Marjorie Henshaw, the archivist of Christ Church, Rochester, New York for searching the parish records for details surrounding the original construction of the organ, and its subsequent sale to St. John's Church. Additional details will be found in the parish history which will be published in 1992.



Patrons for the Centennial Recital

- Miss H. Gertrude Welker
- Mr. and Mrs. Robert Clore
- Mr. and Mrs. Robert Miller
- Mr. and Mrs. Edward Truswell
- Mrs. F.W. Boyes
- Mr. and Mrs. Stephen McCord
- Dr. and Mrs. Timothy Millsap
- Mr. and Mrs. Harry Boyes

About the Parish...

St John's is celebrating its 150th birthday this year, having been founded on February 4, 1841 at a meeting of the old Ionia courthouse. The parish is unique in several ways. In addition to being one of the oldest Episcopal parishes in Michigan, St. John's has always been a parish...unlike many of those founded years later, which began life as a mission and then graduated to parish status. Also distinguishing St. John's from most other parishes is the fact the local congregation not only organized and affiliated with the Diocese of Michigan, but also raised the funds and built the church...all within the first year.

The Rt. Rev. Samuel McCoskrey, the first bishop of Michigan, came to Ionia to consecrate the structure on Easter Sunday, April 24, 1842. The church building the founders erected was also the first church to be built by any denomination in Ionia County. To this day, it continues to serve the community and the parish as the Parish House. (Longtime residents of Ionia still refer to it as "the little chapel.") It is officially listed as the second oldest Episcopal building still extant in Michigan. And depending upon whose definition of the word "building" is used, it is arguably the oldest.

Interestingly, the parish did not use the word "episcopal" in its official title, and to this day it is still omitted. Regardless of the way the sign on the front of the building may read, and regardless of the fact that everyone refers to it as the "Episcopal church", the official, incorporated title is "St. John's Church of the City of Ionia."

The original church (now the Parish House) stood on the same plot of ground where the present brick church is located. It faced onto Kidd Street (which was then known as First Street) just as the present church does. When plans were drawn for the "new" church, the wooden building was moved to its present site and turned ninety degrees to face onto Washington Street.

....and the Instrument

The Organ was originally built in 1864 for Christ Church in Rochester, New York by the Levi U. Stuart Company of New York City. Its total cost at the time was \$1600.00. In 1890, the Vestry of Christ Church decided to replace the organ with a new instrument, and in July of 1891 it was sold to St. John's Church for \$800.00. Subsequent shipping and installation charges hiked its eventual cost to \$1746.00. It was shipped to Ionia in September of that year. (Parts of it went astray and were later located in Montreal.)

Upon arrival, it was found the organ would not fit into the organ chamber properly, requiring an adjustment which not only reversed parts of the mechanism, but also meant some of the pipes could not be installed. These simply were laid out on the floor of the organ chamber and never used. For the next several years, air pressure for the pipes was provided by men and boys of the parish operating bellows which were pumped by hand. The last surviving "pumper" was the late Louis Utess who died in 1986 at he age of 91. An electrically powered blower was added in the World War One era.

In 1957, the organ was refurbished and enlarged to its present form at a cost of over \$15,000.00...and the long-unused pipes were finally installed. Thus, at its rededication and blessing in February of 1958, the organ was heard for the first time in Ionia at its "full voice"...some 67 years after leaving Rochester.

Although not a large organ by metropolitan standards, it nonetheless contains over a thousand pipes which comprise its fourteen and a half voices and seventeen and a half ranks. The solid walnut casework which enclosed the organ prior to its refurbishing was restyled and rebuilt by Mr. Jesse Robords of St. John's Parish, to enclose the mechanical parts of the present organ. The walnut console was built with panels styled to match the casework around the pipes.