



Many thanks to the Music Search Committee

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*Covenant Presbyterian Church is
a dynamic Christian community
that gladly invites all people
into a transformational experience of faith;
boldly proclaims the gospel,
bravely works toward a whole and just world,
and passionately nurtures discipleship.*

We joyfully introduce

John Richardson

as our next Director of Traditional Music
and Principal Organist

About John Richardson

John has served as Director of Traditional Worship and Principal Organist at First Presbyterian Church of Allentown, Penn., since 2012. Previously John served at Saint Mark United Methodist Church in Atlanta and First Baptist Church in Philadelphia. While in Atlanta, he was also organist and Music Assistant for the Candler Singers of Emory University.

John is a graduate of the prestigious Curtis Institute of Music, where he studied with John Weaver. He has served as an assistant at the Wanamaker Grand Court Organ in Macy's Department Store in Philadelphia, playing the world's largest operational organ consisting of over 28,000 pipes! A talented improviser, instructor, conductor, countertenor, piano/organ tuner, fiddler and saw player, he delights in a wide range of musical styles.

John began playing the piano at the early age of three. He was the organist at his father's church at age eight and formally studied organ as a teen under the instruction of Marie Johnson in his hometown of Lakeland, Fla. He made his concert debut at the world-renowned Spivey Hall at Clayton College and State University in Morrow, Ga. There he had the privilege of studying under Virgil Fox's chosen student, Richard Morris.

Obviously, John's credentials are sterling. His broad professional experience has prepared him well for the job at Covenant, and his musical talent is abundant. But what really makes John special is his spirit. He is enthusiastic, warm, genuine, easy to talk to, and fun to be around. He laughs easily. He is self-assured but extremely humble. His deep faith is apparent. He cares about others, and sees music ministry as an opportunity for outreach. John is a firm believer that anyone at any age can learn how to play an instrument or sing if they have the desire and determination.

About our Search

When we began our work in January, before we reviewed the first resume, the Music Search Committee compiled this list of adjectives to describe the music ministry we hope for, based on the church's mission statement and input previously gathered from our congregation through multiple listening sessions:

- Joyful
- Alive/Vibrant
- Inspiring (“dynamic, bold, transformational, passionate”)
- Christ-centered
- Welcoming
- Participatory
- Pastoral
- “In tune” with total ministry of church, collaborative with clergy and other staff
- Musically excellent
- Broad/multi-faceted

With these qualities as our rubric, and prayer undergirding all our work, we evaluated nearly 80 potential candidates for the position. As we moved through the process of resume-reading and scoring, initial phone interviews, and more in-depth conversations with our top candidates, John consistently rose to the top. His talent was unquestionable as we listened to recordings, enjoyed live organ and choral auditions in Charlotte, and worshipped at his current church.

Having spent countless hours in prayer, discernment, and hard work, we are grateful that God has led us providentially to John Richardson and called him to serve at Covenant. We are delighted he has answered that call.

John's first Sunday in worship with us will be August 16. He is eager to get started, as there is much to do in preparation for the new program year which is fast approaching! We are equally eager to work with him.

We know you will enjoy meeting John, and hope you will extend a very warm welcome to him soon.