

ST MATTHEWS LUTHERAN CHURCH CELEBRATES ITS RADIO ROOTS IN NEW CKWR BROADCAST CONCERT SERIES

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Remember the Statler Brothers' country gospel hit, "Turn Your Radio On"? Back in the 1930s when the original song was penned by Albert Brumley, radio was the main form of social media.

And it was also during that difficult Depression era that St. Matthews Lutheran Church in downtown Kitchener, Ontario, first began an uninterrupted tradition of broadcasting its Sunday worship services, fondly known as The Golden Hour.



Fast-forward nine decades to 2021 and another challenging time, as a world-wide pandemic rages and millions in lockdown around the globe turn to virtual media to stay connected with friends, families, work, school, faith, and community culture. Terms like Zoom, FaceTime and Skype have suddenly become part of our everyday language.

But as Covid-19 drags toward its second year of social disruption, St. Matthews is still giving southwestern Ontario listeners good reason to turn their radios on.



Now the church is using radio for community outreach as well as worship, as musicians and technicians prepare an upcoming series of eight hour-long concert broadcasts set to air at 7 p.m. on Friday evenings from March 5 through April 23.

Plans for "Music at St. Matthews," a pandemic-inspired partnership between local radio station CKWR-FM 98.5 and the congregation's music director Scott Knarr, started

back in the fall of 2020 as a way to fill a slightly different audience niche – that of longtime devoted radio listeners, along with younger folks looking for an alternative to ubiquitous live-streamed video entertainment platforms.

While St. Matthews, like other places of worship, is closed to the public until Covid-19 is under control, musicians are being recorded there under strict safety measures in groups of no more than three, so that listeners in the wider community will be able to enjoy the building's legendary superb acoustics – something cooped-up working musicians can appreciate as well!

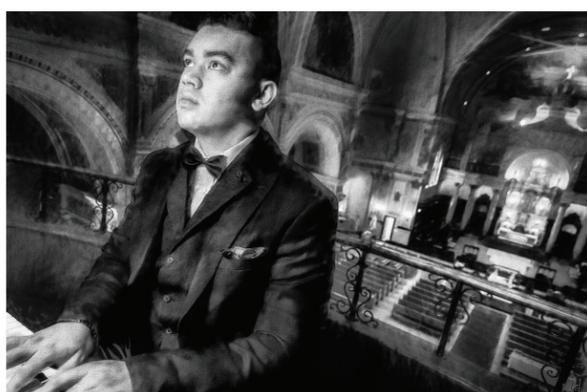


"Music at St. Matthews" launches on March 5 with a program by Alex Straus-Fausto, a locally trained rising star in the pipe organ world who already has an international profile and is now studying in Montreal. The following weeks (see schedule below) feature a wide spectrum of musical genres, including vocal soloists, chamber music, historic instruments, strings, world music and some surprises.

More details about each week's performers and their upcoming programs will be posted on the St. Matthews Lutheran Church website: www.stmattskw.com



photos
left, top to bottom:
Gerard Yun; Magdalena Tomsinska,
Elizabeth Lepcock, Joanne Bender,
Alex Strauss-Fausto
right, top to bottom:
Sebastian Meadows-Helmer, Bruce Skelton,
Anthea Conway-Wright



Music at St. Matthews on CKWR FM 98.5

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|-----------------|---|
| March 5 | Alex Straus-Fausto (organ) |
| March 12 | Magdalena Tomsinska (lute), Jennifer Enns-Modolo (voice) |
| March 19 | Janelle Santi (soprano), Caroline Schmidt (mezzo-soprano), Devin Hilliker (piano) |
| March 26 | The Stillwater Trio: Bruce Skelton (violin), Ben Bolt-Martin (cello), Joanne Bender (piano) |
| April 2 | Sebastian Meadows-Helmer (violin), Gerard Yun (shakuhachi), Scott Knarr (organ) |
| April 9 | Mike & Elizabeth Lepock (voice), Anna Ronai (piano) |
| April 16 | Anthea Conway-White (baroque flute), Corey Cotter Linforth (voice) |
| April 23 | Glen Soulis, Bill Gastmeier (guitar), Peter Winkler (percussion)
Scott Knarr (keyboard) |