

Organ Music Notes for November 2nd

Prelude: Pieter Bustijn: Preludio in E

Offertory: Pieter Bustijn: Corrente in D

Communion: Pieter Bustijn: Sarabanda in E; in A

Postlude: Pieter Bustijn: Toccata in A

Little is known about the Dutch composer Pieter Bustijn. Born in 1649, he was organist at the Nieuwe Kerk in Middelburg, as well as playing the carillon until his death in 1729. Some of his keyboard music was of such high quality that it was mistakenly included in a 19th century edition of some Bach harpsichord suites. For this Sunday, I have selected some movements from these suites to play on the organ. Published in 1712, they are typical of the Baroque form, starting with a Prelude or Toccata, and then a progression of dances. Seven of his nine suites follow the same order: Allemande, Corrente, Sarabande, and Giga; the fifth has a Gavotte for a last movement instead. The sixth inserts a short "Aria" before the Giga, and the ninth follows a different formula entirely. While the pieces are appropriate for either harpsichord or organ, it is more likely than not that the dance movements would not have been played in church at the time, though this is not a hard and fast rule. I think that the slower ones are very much in place with their more contemplative mood.

Thomas Dawkins, organist/choir director