

# MUSIC MAN

BY ERIC DIEKHANS

LVPC pianist John Erickson brings his jazz versatility to Sunday worship.



JOHN ERICKSON

When John Erickson started taking piano lessons at age 11 in his Santa Ynez, California hometown, he never imagined he would be playing hymns at a church in Chicago. “In high school I was into jazz,” remembers John. “My older brother was in the jazz band so I joined too. I thought they were cool guys.”

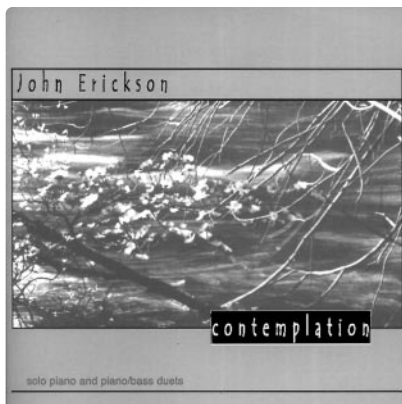
After graduating from San Diego State, John spent the next few years in area bands, playing mostly salsa and Latin jazz. But the San Diego music scene was limited, so in 1997 he packed his bags and headed east to Chicago. “I worked in a record store,” says John. “It took me a year to start getting gigs.”

In 1998 he answered LVPC’s ad for a pianist. He’d never played in a church before. That lack of experience didn’t hinder him. His background in jazz and popular music, as well as a stint accompanying a high school choir, made it easy for him to tackle the variety of music at LVPC. Pastor Joy calls him “the most versatile church pianist I’ve ever worked with.”

In 2000, with the encouragement and financial support of Anne Tooman, a college friend, John released his first CD, *Contemplation*. The album is a collection of original piano solos and piano/bass duets that Keyboard magazine calls “subtle, sensitive piano in a gentle jazz or free-form new age vein.”

John’s hoping to get back in the studio this fall, but his toughest job these days is learning to play LVPC’s newly restored Lyon and Healy pipe organ. “It’s a bigger challenge than I thought,” he remarks. “Learning to use the pedals is the hardest part.”

As anyone who has heard John behind the organ console knows, it’s a challenge he’s not afraid to undertake.



To order a copy of John Erickson’s *Contemplation*, log on to [www.cdbaby.com](http://www.cdbaby.com).<sup>9</sup>

## PRAISE SONG

BY ERIC DIEKHANS

LVPC’s worship music blends the best of old and new.

For many Christians, Sunday morning worship music resonates deep in our souls. Traditional hymns like “Joy to the World,” “Christ the Lord is Risen Today,” and “Amazing Grace” can evoke a powerful sense of God’s presence that echoes all the way back to childhood.

But for Christians who didn’t grow up in a church—people who may be more familiar with Ricky Martin than Martin Luther—LVPC is looking for diverse ways to convey the word of God.

Dale Heidebrecht, LVPC’s Choir Director, believes traditional and popular music can both be used to worship God. “Different music touches people in different ways,” he explains. “The organ stretches us on the hymns, and it’s balanced out by the contemporary music.”

Dale looks for what he calls “contemporary anthems” to supplement the *Presbyterian Hymnal*. During Lent the New Music Group, young musicians who bring an array of instrumental and vocal talents to worship, performed songs like “I’m On My Way” from the *Shrek* movie soundtrack, Sheryl Crow’s “Every Day Is A Winding Road,” and Sting’s “Brand New Day.”

For people who object to popular music as too light and frivolous for serious worship, Dale points out that some of the hymns we know and love started their lives as drinking songs. “People were familiar with the tunes,” he says. “The Church just changed the words.”

Another place where LVPC stretches itself musically is the first Friday Taize service, where the music can only be described as meditative. Past services have featured bassoon, flute, recorder, and oboe.

With all the musical innovation at LVPC, the Choir continues to be the church’s musical foundation, performing both traditional hymns and new music. Dale sees Choir as a way for even the non-musical to participate. “It’s not important that you can carry a tune,” he says. “What’s important is that you want to worship God through song.”

Dale is excited about his plans for a Congregational Choir in the fall. Less structured than the regular choir, it’s an opportunity for “anybody who’s shown

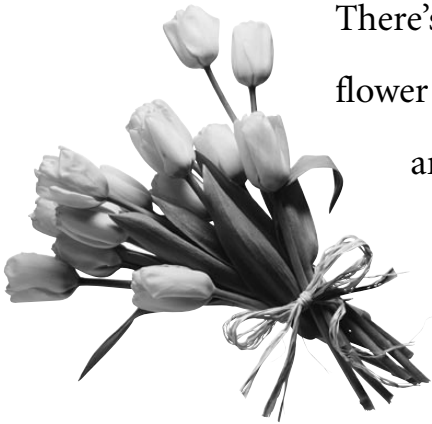


LVPC CHOIR AT THE SANCTUARY DEDICATION

interest in music.” The Children’s Choir has also added more variety to LVPC’s music program and encouraged adults to sing in front of the congregation. Dale says two or three people have joined choir since the children’s choir began. “Seeing kids sing makes other people want to sing.”<sup>9</sup>



## NEW FLOWER ARRANGEMENT



There's no need to attend Martha Stewart's flower arranging class! We supply the flowers and for only \$20.00 per Sunday you can make a difference in our church community worship experience. Sign up for a week or a month.

Flower commemoratives may be placed in the Sunday bulletin. Contact Floyd May or Holly Jensen to order.

### WEDNESDAY, MAY 1

The Building and Grounds Committee meets at 6:00 p.m.

Choir practice at 7:15 p.m.

Young Adult Bible Study at LVPC meets from 9:30–10:30 p.m.

### FRIDAY, MAY 3

The Playgroup meets in the Mulford Room from 3:00–5:00 p.m. Contact Julie Chafin at 773-296-0043 for more information.

Taize is a worship style taken from an ecumenical community in Taize, France. The service is prayer, music and silent meditation. Join us tonight in the chapel at 7:30 p.m. for Taize.

### SATURDAY, MAY 4

The Social Justice Committee of LVPC will meet today at 9:00 a.m. Contact Erika Poethig at 773-288-0467 for more information.

### SUNDAY, MAY 5

Lake View Pantry food donations and Two Cents A Meal offerings will be taken at the morning worship service.

### TUESDAY, MAY 7

Food for Thought continues tonight with Elizabeth Butler leading a discussion regarding Earthkeeping—how people of faith can care for the environment. Join us from 7:00–8:30 p.m. as we discuss the church's role in caring for God's creation. Optional dinner is at 6:30 p.m., which requires advance registration.

### WEDNESDAY, MAY 8

The Playgroup meets in the Mulford Room from 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

So you're ready to join LVPC? Find out what it means to be a Presbyterian and a member of the church at the New Members Class from 7:00–8:30 p.m.

Choir practice at 7:15 p.m.

Young Adult Bible Study at LVPC continues from 9:30–10:30 p.m.

### SATURDAY, MAY 11

The Young Adults Group of LVPC will spend the afternoon volunteering at Lakeview Shelter.

### MONDAY, MAY 13

The Finance and Stewardship Committee meets at 6:00 p.m.

The Brighter Spirit Committee meets at 7:00 p.m.

### TUESDAY, MAY 14

Food for Thought continues. See May 7.

### WEDNESDAY, MAY 15

Worship Committee meets at 6:00 p.m.

The New Members Class continues from 7:00–8:30 p.m.

Choir practice at 7:15 p.m.

Young Adult Bible Study at LVPC continues from 9:30–10:30 p.m.

### FRIDAY, MAY 17

The Playgroup meets in the Mulford Room from 3:00–5:00 p.m.

Monthly prayer meeting in the chapel at noon. Call Peg Hazenbush at 773-871-0312 for more information.

### SUNDAY, MAY 19

Get a first-hand account of the current crises in the Middle East from LVPC member Deanna Boyd, who recently traveled to Palestine as a part of Christian Peacemaker Teams. A discussion and potluck lunch will follow the 11:00 a.m. worship service. Bring a dish to share.

### WEDNESDAY, MAY 22

The Playgroup meets in the Mulford Room from 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Session meets at 7:00 p.m.

Choir practice at 7:15 p.m.

Young Adult Bible Study at LVPC continues from 9:30–10:30 p.m.

### WEDNESDAY, MAY 29

Choir practice at 7:15 p.m.

Young Adult Bible Study at LVPC continues from 9:30–10:30 p.m.

### FRIDAY, MAY 31

The Playgroup meets in the Mulford Room from 3:00–5:00 p.m.†

