

First United Methodist Church*Washington, NC*

Organ Recital – June 24

Cristiano Rizzotto will present a program of sacred music at First United Methodist Church on Sunday, June 24, at 3pm, in the sanctuary. Born in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Cristiano holds a Bachelor's Degree in Piano Performance from the Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), where he graduated in 2010, Magna cum Laude.

In Brazil, the organ culture is practically nonexistent, even in a city as large as Rio (approximately 10 pipe organs in a metropolis inhabited by nearly 8 million people), and so is the very existence of the concept of a church musician as a professional. Years before his first lessons, in order to do something about the complete absence of music during the service in the church he attended, and having always been passionate about playing what he considers to be the authentic liturgical instrument, Cristiano decided to volunteer as an organist at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Lagoa. He later became the organist at Our Lady of Glory Catholic church in Largo do Machado. In the fall semester of 2009, sponsored by the Brazilian government's Ministry of Education, Cristiano attended East Carolina University as an exchange student where he finally had the chance to have real organ lessons and to learn from fine professors at East Carolina University.

Back in Rio, he was nominated the organist of the city's Benedictine Monastery, home of the oldest organ in South America and where the tradition of the chants and liturgy has been kept fresh and alive by the Carioca monks since the 16th century. He returned to the United States last August for a Master's Degree in Sacred Music/Organ, where he studies under Dr. Andrew Scanlon. He is developing his technique and understanding of the instrument and its use in church, and is serving as organist at First United Methodist Church in Washington, NC. Cristiano was awarded the Richard VanSciver Church Music Scholarship in a competition promoted by the Metropolitan Music Ministries in Charlotte, NC this past March.

One of Cristiano's goals is to contribute to the resurrection and development of the organ culture in Brazil, and as long as he is in the USA, to develop his skills as a church musician and contribute to the American liturgical scenery, using his musical gifts to serve and praise the Lord, and also lift up the hearts of members of the congregation.

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