

# Teaching Improvisation to Beginning Organists

Anne Laver, presenter

# Improvisation is within your grasp!

- It's never too late to try
- Anyone can improvise
- Improvisation takes regular practice, just like repertoire. If you want to get good, you have to put in the time. Gerre Hancock said "There is no mystique or magic to improvising, just consistent and conscientious practice."

# Why is it important to teach improvisation?

- Improvisation can help you make interpretive choices with repertoire
- Improvisation in worship setting engages a congregation
- Improvisation teaches focus
- Improvisation develops your musical ear

# Structuring a beginning improvisation class

- Group lesson (3-4 students), one hour/week
- Separate tracks for beginner and advanced students
- Improvisation as an entry point to the organ

# Some tips

1. Give assignments with a clear set of parameters
2. Provide warm-up exercises or patterns and a set of steps to the end goal
3. Demonstrate how to incorporate the pedals
4. Provide written registration suggestions that students can recreate on their own.
5. Find a good model from the literature that demonstrates the technique you want your students to work on.