

Cezeaux Lead in the Peace Window Project

Phil and Ute Cezeaux are leading the effort to give to the City of Leipzig the last window to go into St. Thomas Church. The gift of the Peace Window



Phil and Ute Cezeaux

is a project of the Houston-Leipzig Sister City Association and Rotarians from District 5890 (Houston). The church is the final resting place of Johann Sebastian Bach and was recognized as a World Monument in 2000. The congregations of Christ the King Church and St. Thomas Church have nurtured a relationship over the last thirteen years. Pastor Christian Wolff has visited Houston several times. In 2005 Pastor Moore served for 4½ months as guest pastor at St. Thomas Church. A congregational exchange of primarily youth and young adults just returned from a visit in March.

The official relationship between Houston and Leipzig was signed into existence in the summer of 1993 by the president of the Leipzig city parliament, the Rev. Friedrich Magirius, and Council Member Kristin Hartung of Houston. The official sister-city relationship was promoted skillfully by Wolfgang Schmidt and his wife Angelika Schmidt-Lange, members of Christ the King Church. Both have worked tirelessly to advance the relationship.

Phil and Ute Cezeaux conceived the idea of the gift of a "Peace Window" while Phil was president of the Houston-Leipzig Sister City Association in 2006. The window is located above the choir loft where the famous St. Thomas Boy Choir sings. The dedication will take place on October 11 in the 9:30 a.m. service. The church council of St. Thomas Church chose the theme of the final window to be that of "peace." The dedication takes place during the celebration of the Twentieth Anniversary of the "Peaceful Revolution" that brought an end to communist rule in East Germany and ultimately led to reunification. Professor Ann Gebuhr was invited to compose a cantata for the dedication service on the theme of peace. Phil Cezeaux is a "humble" man, that is, Phil was born and raised in Humble, Texas. Ute and he met as students in 1959 at the University of Göttingen, near Hanover. They married in 1961 and came back to Texas where Phil studied law at the University of Texas and Ute completed her Ph.D. in German studies. Phil and Ute joined Christ the King Church in 1981.

Competitions were held in Germany and in the United States to select the design for the window. The jury appointed by the council of St. Thomas Church selected the design by David Schnell, a prominent member of the "Leipzig School." Mr. Schnell's design will finalize the sequence of windows on the south wall of the church. From left to right viewed from inside the church the series begins with six historical windows: the World War I Memorial window, followed by King Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden, Johann Sebastian Bach, Luther-Melanchthon-Prince Friedrich, Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, Kaiser Wilhelm II, and ending with the Peace Window.

Rotarians are helping fund the window, which costs approximately \$120,000. Rotary International Districts 5890 (Houston area) and 1880 (Leipzig, Dresden, Nuremberg area) have scheduled a World Peace Conference in Leipzig that weekend. A large contingent from the Houston area is expected to travel to Leipzig for the conference, the 20th Anniversary Observance, the Dedication of the Peace Window and the presentation of the Peace Cantata by Professor Gebuhr.

Persons wishing to participate in the events in Leipzig October 5-12 this year, may contact Pastor Robert Moore, current president of the Houston-Leipzig Sister City Association, at robertmoore@ctkelc.org.



Artist David Schnell with design for the new "Peace Window."