



SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:

Tip of the Month

Pedaling Around
Omaha

Recital Dates

Special Events

INSIDE
THIS ISSUE:

From the Dean	1
Tip of the Month	2
2016-2017 Season Young Organists Recital	3
Pedaling Around Omaha	4
Presbyterian Church of the Cross Temple Israel St. Paul's United Methodist Church	5
Hymn Festival Pacific Hills Lutheran	6
Trinity Episcopal Cathedral	7
Sinai Lutheran Fremont	8

From the Dean...

The American Guild of Organists plays an increasingly important role in music education. As more and more universities, colleges, conservatories of music and other music education institutions drop programs offering opportunities for organ instruction leading to career development, the AGO necessarily must assume strong leadership supporting organ and organ-related educational opportunities.

The founding fathers of the AGO revealed their wisdom when developing the certification program. The program provides a life-time of study in organ and choral music. It is comprehensive, including technical, artistic, historical, and theoretical development. The certificates are recognized by academia to be the equivalent to degree programs available in universities and colleges.

Interest in organ instruction often begins at the local level, often subtle, unnoticed. Who comes to the organ console following the postlude? Who looks at the façade pipes of the organ, and asks "what are those?" Who asks to visit the organ chambers? Or to play? Or what is a "stop?" Who in the children's choir sings in a pure, transparent treble voice? Questions such as these often indicate interest in organ instruction. These questions are directed to musicians, including organists, active at the chapter level of AGO.

Local AGO chapters cultivate unusual potential to advance organ and choral music education. Chapter membership includes young people, representing not only the future of the AGO, but the future of organ and choral music leadership in our churches, schools, and communities. Chapters are encouraged to develop programming of constructive interest and opportunity for young people, encouraging participation and membership.

Programming includes recitals presented by young organists under the sponsorship of a local chapter. Young organists playing in these recitals may be students of chapter members or other mentors, students who have attended a POE, earning AGO certification, presenting a program of well-prepared repertoire at any level. Another chapter level event young organists (and many older) appreciate is an annual music exchange, in which they build organ libraries.

The AGO recently developed a new membership program designed especially for younger members ages 30 years and under. Known as AGOYO (The American Guild of Organists Young Organists program), AGOYO members are governed by a convener in each AGO region, utilize updated technology and represent present and future musical, educational, and professional level organ related leadership.

Quoting AGO President Michael Bedford: "Our young people inspire us with the level of dedication. They influence us with their diligence in practice and preparation. They nourish us with worthy music well prepared and well executed. They raise the bar of excellence high with their insights and leadership potential. While it is often said that they are the future of the Guild, they are also the present of the Guild. Their place among us is a valuable asset that we will treasure always." (*The American Organist*, October 645^o, p. 9).

The Omaha Chapter AGO includes AGOYO membership. Another young member, currently finishing a Masters degree, initially became interested in organ when an AGO chapter simply offered her a scholarship for summer organ lessons. Other members have attended POE on scholarships offered through the chapter, church, or the state arts council, with at least one member planning to attend POE-A this summer.

Our challenge: continue to offer opportunities for educational and professional growth, fellowship, and mutual support and encouragement. - Dr. C, Dean

Tip of the Month



“Ear Fatigue”



“Less is More”



February 2017 Tip of the Month

Many times musicians who have been trained and play regularly on pipe organs are called to play on digital instruments. Translating music from one medium to another can be frustrating. Based on thirty five years of sales and service in the digital industry, I offer a few thoughts that may be worth considering.

First, in any instrument that energizes a lot of sound, there is a phenomenon that I call “ear fatigue” This is basic, we get tired of loud noise. We need to remember that this happens more quickly in sound coming from speakers than it does in sound coming from pipes. Vary the sound pressure level more often in a digital organ than you might in a pipe instrument. A Bach fugue played from beginning to the end on a Plenum is perfectly acceptable on a well voiced pipe instrument. It can be taxing on a digital instrument unless something is done to allow the ear to relax. Consider using more terraced dynamics. You may need to change manuals more often than what is in vogue right now, but I believe the end result will be more musical. This applies to smaller combinations also. In an ornamented chorale using a Cornet, try turning off a component (say the 4’) for a phrase or two of the melody, then bring it back in. We do not have to go the excess that Virgil Fox employed, but we do need to try to keep our ears fresh, and make the sound interesting to the listeners. Don’t try to be too literal with registration suggestions. If the score calls for a solo Hautbois, but on the instrument you are playing the Cromorne is more beautiful, then don’t be afraid to substitute. In the final analysis, it is more important to be as musical as possible rather than slavishly trying to follow the score when the organ is not capable of replicating the sounds specified.

Second, less is more. Most digital instruments handle small registrations well. It is when employing the larger combinations that things become less convincing. Try thinning out the registration a bit. There is more clarity if you don’t use all of the foundations at 8, 4, and 2 to add warmth to the ensemble. I am told that Alexander Schreiner used to teach students to use the least number of stops you can, to get the effect you desire. Remember the Organ Reform idea that you use one 8, one 4 etc. per division? Organ Reform theory is not something we think about much anymore as scholarship regarding performance practice has evolved, but in this case it probably has merit. In truth, using all the voices at once in a digital organ can degrade the sound, so be creative!

Finally, to go along with my less is more theory; let me touch on digital reverberation. It is tempting to add more reverb to digital sound than is necessary. Remember, digital reverberation adds another layer of “artificial” to what is already an electronic sound. Try adding just enough to add possibly .5 to 1 second to the natural resonance of the room. This will cushion the sound without drawing attention to itself as unnatural “echo”. It is tempting to try to make a small church sound like a Cathedral, but in reality, reverberation that is obviously out of character with the room you are in calls attention to the fact that the instrument is not windblown.

Really, nothing I have said is any different than approaching a pipe instrument. Be creative, listen, and use sound musical judgment. My rule approaching any instrument is to try to make it sound better than it is. Good Luck, and have fun!



2016-2017 AGO Season

YOUNG ORGANISTS RECITAL
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18th at 2:00 p.m.
 Morning Star Lutheran Church
 331 S 85th Ave, Omaha
 Host: Bev McCollum.

WORSHIP. Intro to Tri-faith Initiative
MONDAY, APRIL 24, at 6:30 p.m.
With Wendy Shermet, Cantor, presenter
 Temple Israel
 13111 Sterling Ridge Drive, Omaha
 Host: Julie Sandene

SACRED SOUND – A documentary about RSCM
(ROYAL SCHOOL OF CHURCH MUSIC)
GIRLS' CHOIR CAMP
MONDAY, MARCH 6, at 6:30 p.m.
 With Robin Arcus, producer and director
 The Cathedral Cultural Center Lecture Hall
 3900 Webster Street, Omaha
 Members and Guests invited to this choral program
 Host: Marie Rubis Bauer

CLOSING DINNER and MEMBER
CERTIFICATION PARTICIPANTS/ RECITAL
MONDAY, MAY 22, at 6:00
 Dundee Presbyterian Church
 5312 Underwood Avenue, Omaha
 Hosts: Dr. Wayne Kalstrom
 J. Gordon Christensen

THE ORGAN IN JEWISH REFORMED

Young Organists Recital Saturday, February 18 at 2:00 p.m. Morning Star Lutheran Church 331 85th Avenue, Omaha

The Chapter's YOUNG ORGANISTS RECITAL will be held at Morning Star Lutheran Church, 331 S. 85th Avenue on Saturday, February 18 at 2:00 p.m.

This is a perfect opportunity to show our support for young organists in our community and area, enthusiastically offering encouragement to the next generation of organists and AGO members!

Bev McCollum, organist at Morning Star Lutheran, sends her regrets she will miss the recital, because she will away on a family vacation. Bev has kindly made arrangements for Morning Star Lutheran Church to host the recital, covering every detail for practice arrangements, reception, and contact information, including:

1. Arrangements for participants to rehearse on the Morning Star organ:
 - Times available for practice: Monday - Friday: 9:00 -12:00; 1:00 - 4:30 at (402) 393-5553; or office@MorningStar.org
 - To schedule: Contact Morning Star secretary, Susie, during office hours:
 - To pick up key to Organ Loft, go to "Office Door," Susie will give you the key to the Organ Loft.
 - Enter door that has a BUZZER leading to the church office;
 - To find door: take sidewalk near the flag pole.
 - Ring the buzzer at door that opens to the west; Susie will open the door;
 - Proceed to the office; Susie will give you the key to the Organ Loft.
2. A reception will follow the recital in the narthex of the church, provided by the chapter.
3. Program information: Forward to Julie Sandene: jasandene@gmail.com, the following information by February 13:
 - Name of organist
 - Title of composition (s)
 - Composer/Arranger of composition
 - Name of teacher, mentor
4. Rosemary Paul will print the programs





PETER LATONA CONCERT AND WORKSHOP

The Omaha AGO Chapter, together with CAP (Cathedral Arts Project) and the Omaha Archdiocese of the Roman Catholic Church co-sponsored Dr. Peter Latona in an organ recital and workshop on Friday and Saturday, January 20 and 21.

Dr. Latona is organist and director of music for the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D. C. He played a remarkable recital on the world-renowned Pasi organ in St. Cecilia Cathedral on Friday night, followed by a two session workshop in the Cultural Arts Center Saturday morning.

Pictured with Dr. Latona are (from left to right) Marie Rubis Bauer, J Gordon Christensen, Peter Latona, and Michael McCabe.

Pedaling Around Omaha

WEDNESDAY-AT-NOON LENTEN ORGAN SERIES

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
239 Frank Street
Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503

St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church is pleased to announce the annual WEDNESDAY-AT-NOON LENTEN ORGAN RECITAL SERIES for 2016. Host organist is Dr. J. Gordon Christensen.

Now in its eighth season, the recitals begin at 12:00 noon, lasting about 40 minutes. The recitals are followed by a home-cooked meal in the Undercroft of the church. Both the recitals and meals are free of charge. Everyone is welcome.

THE 2016 SERIES

February 10:
Michael McCabe, organist;
Janeen Jensen, contralto

Remainder of schedule to be announced!

CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE APPOINTED

The CENTENNIAL of the Omaha Chapter AGO is nearly at hand! Yes, Omaha AGO was founded in 1919, 23 years after the founding of The American Guild of Organists in 1896. The Omaha chapter has been continuously active since its founding.

Dr. Christensen has appointed a Centennial Committee, charged with the responsibility of developing programming and events celebrating our centennial throughout 2019. The committee members include: Marty Wheeler Burnett, Barbara Fremder, Ed Hurd, David McCain, Michael McCabe, Ann Spangler, and Dr. Christensen.

Details for Spring 2017 Research Project Coming Soon

As described in the January edition of *Windchest*, a research project scheduled for early 2017 will be requesting participation from Omaha AGO members. Chapter member Jodi Korth will be conducting a program evaluation entitled "The Value of Professional Music Organizations: An evaluation of the Omaha Chapter of the American Guild of Organists," for a capstone project in culmination of her Master of Public Administration (MPA) through the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO). Over the next few months, members will be contacted through an online survey asking for their feedback on several areas related to their participation in the Omaha AGO. Specifically, the evaluation will explore how the Omaha AGO positively enhances the professional lives of its members and their profession in the areas of professional certifications, performance opportunities, and community value. In the coming months, please be on the lookout for more details, along with a formal request for survey participation. Thank you in advance for your support of this project!



Flowers sponsored by Dr. C at the Cathedral Flower Festival.





News from Presbyterian Church of the Cross

FLUTIST ALYSSA GRIGGS OPENS SECOND HALF OF VESPER CONCERTS 2016-17 SEASON

Vesper Concerts resumes its 2016-17 season with a concert by flutist ALYSSA GRIGGS, on Sunday, February 5 at 3:00 p.m. The concert will be at the Presbyterian Church of the Cross, 1517 S 114th Street in Omaha and is open to the public without admission charge.

Noted for her "high level of fearless skill," flutist Alyssa Griggs, interim second flutist of the Omaha Symphony, is a dynamic orchestral, chamber, and solo artist. In October 2010 Alyssa was awarded first prize in the Alexander & Buono International Flute Competition where she gave her solo debut recital at Carnegie Hall. Ms. Griggs will be joined by pianist, **Christi Zuniga**, cellist **Tim Strang** and oboist **Heather Baxter** in a program that includes works by Bartok, Weber, Madeline Dring and Paul Taffanel. Also...

YOUTH COMPOSES is a composition competition for students from Middle School to College undergraduates sponsored by VESPER CONCERTS. Now in its fourth season,

YOUTH COMPOSES 2017 is pleased to announce the premiers and presentation of awards to its winning composers on Monday, February 20 at 7:00 p.m. at the Presbyterian Church of the Cross, 1517 South 114th Street in Omaha. This program is in collaboration with the Omaha Area Youth Orchestra's Chamber Music program and will include not only performances of the winning compositions but performances by the fine chamber ensembles of OAYO.



News from Temple Israel and St. Paul's United Methodist Church

"One of a Kind" Celebration Friday, February 24 and Sunday, February 26

The annual "one of a kind" celebration of the joining together singers from Temple Israel, (132nd & Sterling Ridge) Omaha's Reform Jewish congregation, and St. Paul United Methodist Church (54th & Northwest Radial) is scheduled for Friday, **February 24** and Sunday, **February 26**, 2017. This tradition has taken a variety of formats over the thirteen years of its happening, this year including a pulpit exchange. The combined ensemble will be conducted by AGO member, the Rev. Jerry Brabec and joined by Cantor Wendy Shermet. AGO member and Temple accompanist, Julie Sandene will join the choirs at the piano in a variety of liturgical songs sung in both English and Hebrew. Friday evening's 6:00 p.m. Shabbat will host the Rev. Scott Shreve to the stunning surroundings of the new Temple. On Sunday morning Rabbi Deana Sussman Berezin will be welcomed to the 10:30 a.m. worship hour in the beauty of the St. Paul Sanctuary.

Please come and bring friends, relatives and neighbors to:

A Hymn Festival



Featuring Dr. Jeffrey Blersch

Professor of Music

Concordia University/Nebraska

Sunday, February 12, 2017

3:00 pm

Pacific Hills Lutheran Church

90th and Pacific

Coffee and dessert reception to follow.

Dr. Blersch is best known for his creative hymn interpretations and regularly performs recitals and hymn festivals across the United States. He has been an active church musician since being appointed organist of Peace Lutheran Church, Cincinnati, Ohio, at age eight.

Oberlin College Conservatory of Music is where Dr. Blersch received degrees in organ performance and music education and at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor he earned his DMA. Principal teachers include Roberta Gary, Garth Peacock, and Marilyn Mason. His organ and choral works are published exclusively with Concordia Publishing House.



Dr. Jeffrey Blersch

CURRENT AGO BOARD MEMBERS 2016-2017

- Dean: J Gordon Christensen, AAGO
- Sub-Dean: Marie Rubis Bauer
- Secretary: Gregory Johnson
- Treasurer: Gina Simpson
- Immediate Past Dean: David Schack
- Members - at - Large:
 - Julie Sandene: 2014/15-2016/17
 - Claire Eason: 2015/16 -2017/18
 - Jean Johnson: 2016/17 - 2018/19



COMMITTEE CHAIRS

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| Education (AGO Certification) | Sally Hodges |
| Chapter Historian | Claire Eason |
| Organ Historian | David McCain |
| Membership | Julie Sandene |
| Membership Directory | Gina Simpson |
| Professional Concerns | Jerry Brabec |
| Programming (2016-2017) | Marie Rubis Bauer |
| Publicity | J Gordon Christensen |
| Referrals | Julie Sandene |
| Webmaster | Mayumi Naramura |
| <i>Windchest</i> Editor | Claire Eason |
| <i>Windchest</i> Publisher | Rosemary Paul |

AGO Board Members

Committee Chairs



Events at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral 113 N 18th Street, Omaha

Compline Choir

at

*Trinity Episcopal
Cathedral*



*New York
Polyphony*

March 24

Lenten Evensong

Sunday, March 5

St. Andrew's
Episcopal
Church



Compline Choir from First-Plymouth Sunday, February 19

7:00 p.m.

Gather by candlelight as the 18 voices of the Schola Cantorum from First-Plymouth Church, Lincoln, Nebraska sing chants and ancient settings of psalms and evening prayers. The office of Compline, sung at the end of the day, offers holy space for prayerful meditation through music. The nationally acclaimed choir, which has been selected to perform at next

month's ACDA National Convention, is directed by Tom Trenney.



New York Polyphony

Friday, March 24

7:30 p.m.

Free admission

The Grammy-nominated vocal ensemble returns to Trinity Cathedral to celebrate their newest CD recorded at St. Cecilia Cathedral in Omaha. Doors open at 7PM for general admission seating. Free admission. Presented by the Trinity Cathedral Concert Series.



Lenten Evensong

Sunday, March 5

4:00 p.m.

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

925 S 84th St., Omaha

The combined choirs of All Saints Episcopal Church, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, and Trinity Episcopal Cathedral offer the traditional service of choral Evening Prayer on the First Sunday in Lent. The annual service, which rotates between the three parishes, is held at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church this year. Dr. Michael Bauer, Dr. Marty Wheeler Burnett, and Dr. Laura Palmer Scow will serve as conductors and organists. All are welcome.

Upcoming Events at Sinai Lutheran, Fremont

The next program in the dedication series for Sinai's new Juget-Sinclair organ takes place on **Sunday, February 19, at 3:00 p.m.** In commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017, Sinai Festival Sounds, concert series of Sinai Lutheran Church, presents a Reformation hymn festival featuring David Schack, Paul Westermeyer, Sinai choirs, and Palladium Brass. The hymn festival celebrates a new organ and the contributions to the song of the whole church stemming from the Lutheran Reformation. Hymns from the fifteenth through the twenty-first centuries will be included in settings composed for the occasion, with commentary.

Paul Westermeyer is Professor Emeritus of Church Music at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, where he was also the Cantor and Director of the Master of Sacred Music program with St. Olaf College. He taught at Elmhurst College and Yale University, was President of the Hymn Society, and is currently Dean of the Twin Cities Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. A graduate of the University of Chicago, his books concern church music and include **The Church Musician, Te Deum**, **Let Justice Sing**, **Hymnal Companion** to **Evangelical Lutheran Worship**, and **Church Musicians**. His wife Sally and he have four children and ten grandchildren.

David Schack has been involved with church music most of his life. He taught organ and piano at Concordia College (now Concordia University), in Seward, Nebraska. He was organist and choirmaster at First Lutheran Church in Omaha for 36 years. He has played organ recitals throughout the country and is past Dean of the Omaha Chapter of the American Guild of Organists.

Schack was featured as organist/composer for hymn festivals held by Association of Lutheran Church Musicians (ALCM). A CD of the hymn festival held in the Meyerson Symphony Center in Dallas was released by ALCM.

The final program on the series will be a recital by Michael Bauer
on **Sunday May 7 at 3:00 p.m.**

A different date has been published in the Windchest at least once,
so please make note of the correct date.

Sinai Lutheran Church is located at 950 East 8th Street in Fremont. I look forward to seeing you at these events!

Claire Bushong



*Sinai
Festival
Sounds
February 19
3:00 p.m.*



Recital by

Michael Bauer

Sunday, May 7
3:00 p.m.