



SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

Tip of the Month

Members

Dates to
Remember

Pedaling Around
Omaha

Prairie Voices

Dean's Ciphers

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From the Dean...

PERFECTION
December 2016

December, the month on the calendar that includes the church year seasons of Advent, Christmas and the beginning of Epiphany, is one of the two most demanding seasons of the year on church musician's professionalism, time and energy. In addition to the preparation of music for regularly scheduled services, organists, choral directors and cantors prepare music for many special services and programs. Much time is spent planning for specific services and programs, practicing and rehearsing music appropriate for each service or event.

Musicians preparing music for any occasion, but especially for the sacred seasons of Advent and Christmas, face many challenges, even occupational hazards. One of these hazards (faced by all artists regardless of discipline) is the drive for perfection. Musicians strive for the ideal of what is seen on the score and heard in the mind, which is virtually never achieved. Regardless of how successful the performance is, there is always something that could have been better or needs to be changed. As artists, musicians working with either sacred or absolute music, strive for perfection.

For the church musician, the demand for perfection is intensified because he or she is dealing not only with their own ideal, we are challenged with the "absolutely unattainable ideal that God demands. It is no accident that the musician who serves a church is often acutely conscious of this ideal and most likely to remind us that God both demands our best and requires we dare not come into the presence of God with anything less than our best." (Paul Westermeyer: *The Church Musician*. Revised Edition. P. 74).

For the church musician, this becomes a relentless burden, leading to frustration, guilt, and despair. Tension increases and intensifies as artistic perfection is sought, leading only to failure.

The church musician has an option. He or she may continue the struggle to reach perfection (law) leading to failure, or he or she may embrace a Christ-centered gift known as grace (Gospel).

Quoting Paul Westermeyer (pp. 75, 76): ". . .both perfection and grace, law and gospel must be maximized. The "resolution" here is the paradox of the gospel itself. Christ calls us to be perfect as God is perfect.

". . . The demand for perfection that Christ brings is even higher than we can imagine. The church musician is called to this demand. The musician's discipleship is costly—not only in terms of justice, peace, and neighborly living. . . but also in terms of musicianship and the highest possible standards of musicianly living as the leader of the Lord's song among the people of God. The demand is not minimized in the least.

On the other hand the church musician is also forgiven. . .the musician's selfhood. . . is dependent on God's grace. Paradoxically, it frees us from the law's (perfection) demands and frees us to strive to meet those demands with even more energy. We are freed to try and freed to fail, freed to succeed in whatever measure we can, and freed to take risks. . . . The song takes on new life when perfection is not the measure of its integrity or validity, and when the God of love and grace frees us to sing."

Yes, we all reach and strive for perfection, because Christ reminds His people that ". . . My grace is sufficient for thee!" *II Corinthians* 12:9.

May your preparations for Advent, Christmas and Epiphany be filled with the blessings of success, happiness, peace, and joy. Merry Christmas!

Dr. Christensen, Dean



Tip of the Month

Share Advent and Christmas



Certification



Tip of the Month

Advent! Christmas! Epiphany! All seasons of the church year that offer opportunities for organists and choral directors to prepare a considerable lot of repertoire for worship and festival services, especially for Christmas. The December “Tip of the Month” suggests an additional opportunity to share Advent and Christmas music with residents of long-term care facilities and nursing homes, especially during the “Twelve days of Christmas” beginning with Christmas Day.

During the weeks leading up to Christmas Day, many groups and individuals from schools and community offer and present a variety of music programs for long-term care and nursing home facilities. Then what happens in the two weeks following Christmas Day? Almost nothing! No programs, few visitors, leading to loneliness, sadness and tears.

Tip-of-the Month? Contact the activities director of a long-term care center in your neighborhood, or a facility where someone from your church, neighborhood or friend is a resident. Offer to play/sing Christmas Carols and other music for 30-40 minutes, followed by greeting each resident with a handshake, smile and brief conversation. Activities directors eagerly welcome music programs in the days following Christmas Day to help residents maintain a seasonal, positive attitude.

Residents are appreciative beyond description, especially for the personal greeting and handshake following the program. It takes only 60-90 minutes, and you, as the presenter or facilitator will be filled with the most joy of all!

CERTIFICATION CLASS OFF AND RUNNING!

The chapter’s certification class is off to a good start. Eight members registered, including five preparing to take the SPC, two the CAGO, and one FAGO. The first session covered listed requirements, including time-lines, choice of repertoire, and transposition. Sample copies of the required choir octavo scores were available for review.

Transposition at sight is clearly a challenge to many keyboard musicians. National publishes SERVICE PLAYING CERTIFICATE Study Guide that includes a chapter on transposition. The chapter assumes the SPC candidate has little or no theory background. It outlines a step-by-step procedure to learn transposition, a procedure that has a history of working well for SPC candidates. The SPC Study Guide is available through National AGO.

The class sessions offer opportunities for candidates to play perform required repertoire for one another, offering constructive, positive feed-back from members of the class. In addition, class sessions offer question/answer opportunities, as well as opportunity to exchange ideas and share concerns.

The next class session meets on at Saint John Lutheran Church, 633 Willow Ave., Council Bluffs on Saturday, December 17 at 10:00 A. M. The topic will be transposition. Choral octavo scores will be available for review.

Members and non-members are welcome to join the class. Those planning to join the class should contact Dr. Christensen (mrc@chase3000.com) so materials are available.

2016-2017 AGO Season

RIVER CITY, AGO CHRISTMAS SOCIAL SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4, at 3:00 p.m.

Program & potluck with the RCTOS
(RIVER CITY THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY)
Robert Markworth residence
13535 N 73rd Plaza Omaha

Host: Robert Markworth. AGO host, Greg Johnson

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
O'Donnell Lecture Hall
3900 Webster Street, Omaha

Members and Guests invited to this choral program
Host: Marie Rubis Bauer

PETER LATONA, ORGAN RECITAL/ WORKSHOP FRIDAY AND SATURDAY, JANUARY 20 – 21

RECITAL FRIDAY, JANUARY 20, at 7:30 p.m.

Saint Cecilia Cathedral
701 North 40th Street, Omaha

WORKSHOP, SATURDAY

JANUARY 21, at 9:00 am- noon

Mid-Winter Church Music Workshop

Saint Cecilia Institute, Msgr.
Graham Building, Room 201
3900 Webster Street, Omaha

Co-sponsors are Cathedral Arts Project
and the Archdiocese of Omaha

Host: Marie Rubis Bauer

THE ORGAN IN JEWISH REFORMED 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

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

YOUNG ORGANISTS RECITAL SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18th at 2:00 p.m.

Morning Star Lutheran Church
331 S 85th Ave, Omaha
Host: Bev McCollum.



Pedaling around Omaha



TO BE ANNOUNCED BY OMAHA AGO

February 19 - Hymn Festival, David Schack,
Sinai Lutheran Church, Fremont

March 19 - All-Bach Organ Recital, Marie Rubis Bauer,
St. Cecilia Cathedral, Omaha

REGIONAL CONVENTION

Now is the time to mark June 19-22 to attend the North Central Regional convention, hosted by the River City Valley Chapter. The convention will be held in the Iowa City/Cedar Rapids area of Eastern Iowa.

The slogan for the convention is "YES, WE'LL GATHER AT THE RIVERS." Ten organs will be featured in concert as well as the presentation of several workshops and seminars. Among the performers is Omaha's very own MARIE RUBIS BAUER.

Watch for registration information, which is to be posted soon.



MERCY KNOWS NO END

You are invited to join the Saint Cecilia Cathedral Choir as they give thanks upon their return from Rome, Italy and the closing of the Year of Mercy

Choral Vespers and Concert
Sunday, December 11, 2016
7:00 p.m.
Saint Cecilia Cathedral
701 North 40th Street
Omaha, Nebraska 68131

MERCY KNOWS NO END. Sunday December 11 AT 7:00 p.m. the Saint Cecilia Cathedral Choir will sing Vespers and a Homecoming Concert in celebration of their recent pilgrimage to Rome. Music and prayer will be offered especially in thanksgiving for all benefactors who joined in support for choristers on their Journey to Mercy. Music will include special selections featured in their liturgies and concerts at St. Peter's and St. Cecilia Basilicas and St. Agnes And St Paul's Inside-the-walls churches in Rome - and the choir will sing the new motet by J. Michael McCabe, Hymn to St. Cecilia. CDs of the choir

Sinai Lutheran Church announces the following dedicatory events for the new Juget-Sinclair organ, Op. 46:



Sinai Lutheran Church, 950 E. 8th in Fremont, will be dedicating a new Juget-Sinclair organ, Op. 46, with a series of events this year. The congregation is looking forward to sharing this beautiful instrument with the community!

December 9, 7:00 pm - Recital, Claire Bushong
December 11, 3:00 pm - Service celebrating the congregation's 125th anniversary and dedication of the organ

February 19, 3:00 pm - Hymn Festival with David Schack and Paul Westermeyer

May 7, 3:00 pm - Recital, Michael Bauer



Short Box...



Prairie Voices

*A
Musforum
Conference*

Prairie Voices

A Musforum Conference

Prairie Voices - A Musforum Conference will be held in Omaha June 8 - 9, 2016. Musforum celebrates the accomplishments and wide-ranging interests of women organists. They are advocates for women organists in liturgical music and higher education, and aim to support colleagues in reaching their professional goals and aspirations.

The first Musforum Conference was held in New York City in 2015 and now comes to Omaha! Look forward to hearing organ concerts, making new friends, and gleaned knowledge from the experiences offered. Pre and post conference opportunities will also be offered. All presenters are women, but men are invited to be part of the conference. Specific information and registration opportunity will be offered soon in *The Windchest* and *The American Organist*.

Organizers are Gail Archer, Marie Rubis Bauer, Marty Wheeler Burnett, Ann Marie Rigler, Louise Mundinger, Mayumi Naramura, Jean Johnson.



AGO Board
Members

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*Dean's
Ciphers*



News from:
Trinity Episcopal

St. Mark's
Episcopal

St. Matthew's
Episcopal



Dean's Ciphers...

Member ADRIANA CARLSON is at home in Omaha. Adriana is available for substituting as an organist, and is looking for a part-time church position. She is looking forward to becoming active in AGO. Add her name to the substitute list in our directory. Adriana's telephone: (402) 206-8071. Email: ajcarlson77@yahoo.com.

Member TIMOTHY SCHREIBER successfully auditioned to participate in the Nebraska Music Educators Conference "All-State Choir," performing in the Lied Center on the UN-L campus Friday, November 18 at 4:30. Tickets required.

VOCAL STUDIO INSTRUCTOR OPPORTUNITY. St. Paul's Lutheran Music Conservatory is looking for a vocal studio instructor. Preferably holding a Bachelor's degree including vocal training, and experience in vocal studio teaching. Inquiries to Dr. Christensen at (712) 322-4729 or mrc@chase3000.com.

UPPER STRINGS INSTRUCTOR OPPORTUNITY. St. Paul's Lutheran Music Conservatory is looking for an upper strings studio instructor. Preferably holding a Bachelor's degree or higher with an emphasis in upper strings education, and experience in performance and studio teaching. Inquiries to Dr. Christensen at (712) 322-4729 or mrc@chase3000.com.

Advent Lessons and Carols
Trinity Episcopal Cathedral Choir
Marty Wheeler Burnett, conductor
Michael McCabe, organist

Sunday, December 4, 10:30 a.m.
Trinity Episcopal Cathedral
113 N 18th Street
Omaha

Sunday, December 11, 10:00 a.m.
St. Mark's Episcopal Pro-Cathedral
422 N Burlington Avenue
Hastings

Sunday, December 11, 4:00 p.m.
St. Matthew's Episcopal Church
2325 S 24th Street
Lincoln



Christmas Eve at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral
113 N 18th Street, Omaha
Marty Wheeler Burnett, Canon Precentor
David Schack, organ
Kathleen Wychulis, harp

4:30 p.m. Holy Eucharist with Children's Choirs and Pageant

7:00 p.m. Prelude music: Cathedral Choir and harp

7:30 p.m. Festival Choral Eucharist

10:00 p.m. Prelude music: Cathedral Choir and brass quintet

10:30 p.m. Festival Choral Eucharist

For more information, visit <http://trinityepiscopal.org>

Meet
AGO
Member
Rick Darrow



Meet
AGO
Member

Jodi Korth



"Hello, OmAGO calling...."



Rick Darrow

An AGO member since his college days.....

Rick Darrow, owner of Darrow Pipe Organ, is an accomplished organist and organ builder. Rick received his bachelor of music degree in organ performance at Morningside College, Sioux City, Ia, and has given many concerts throughout the Midwest. With over 40 years of experience as a church organist and approximately 40 years in organ building, he is very knowledgeable at the keyboard as well as in the organ chambers. Rick's

passion for the organ and dedication to quality has built a company that services organs throughout Iowa and Nebraska, South Dakota, Minnesota and Arizona. Rick was an active member of the Sioux City IA AGO chapter for many years before joining our OmAGO chapter. Rick enjoys the "exchange of ideas" when working with fellow musicians. His reasons for enjoying what he does? Being an organist and an organ builder allows him to share his



Jodi Korth

Jodi Korth is currently the Music Director for Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Gretna. Her responsibilities include 3 weekly services (2 Sunday morning and 1 Wednesday evening), directing the choir, working with soloists and small groups, and teaching grades 3-8 during Midweek Music and Arts (an evening program).

Jodi's first association with AGO was the scholarship she received for two years while in high school which paid for her organ lessons. She had started piano lessons at age 6 and, when she was 14, she was asked to play for a Christmas Eve serviceon the organ, please. She immediately was drawn to the organ, particularly being able to apply what she was learning to church services.

The pipe organ Jodi fondly recalls is the Brombaugh Organ in the Martha-Ellen Tye Recital Hall on the campus of Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. She played her senior recital on this organ. She received her Bachelor's degree in Journalism/Mass Communications, Public Relations emphasis with a Music Minor in organ performance. While at Iowa State, she also played clarinet in ISU's Wind Ensemble. She is currently working on her Master's of Public Administration, with a concentration in nonprofit management through the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Upon graduation, she hopes to work in a music or faith-based nonprofit organization.

Jodi is married to Nick Korth and is the proud new mommy to a 3 month old little boy named Cooper. Nick works for Nebraska Machinery (NMC). They reside in Elkhorn. Little Cooper quietly napped while Jodi was interviewed on the phone by the newsletter co-editor. Thank you, Cooper.

*Alleluia Singers Chamber Singers and Credo Choir
with Soloists & Orchestra*

present

This Little Babe



Sunday, December 11

9:00 & 11:10

Featuring selections from

"Gloria" by Antonio Vivaldi

"A Ceremony of Carols" by Benjamin Britten

Join the choirs of Presbyterian Church of the Cross, along with soloists and professional orchestra, for "This Little Babe" on Sunday, December 11, at 9:00 a.m. & 11:10 a.m. Music includes selections from Antonio Vivaldi's "Gloria," Benjamin Britten's "A Ceremony of Carols," and an arrangement of the Christmas hymn "See, Amid the Winter's Snow" by Dan Forrest. Sing Advent and Christmas hymns with the choir, organ, orchestra, and congregation.

Presbyterian Church of the Cross is located at 1517 S. 114 St., Omaha.