

THE WINDCHEST



OMAHA CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS

FEBRUARY 2021

Inside this Issue:

- 1 From the Dean
- 2 January Meeting
- 3 December Board Meeting Highlights
- 3 Winter & Spring 2021 Programs
- 5 Supporters

facebook

Please like the Omaha Chapter Facebook page. Information is posted regularly! Our page name is: Omaha Chapter of the American Guild of Organists.

FROM THE DEAN

Driving around Omaha I have noticed several churches doing some major remodeling or renovation work. While I am sure this was planned way in advance of the Pandemic, it seems a good time for it to be happening as most churches are not worshiping in person. Livestreaming has been important for churches to have a sense of togetherness, while apart. I belong to Kountze Memorial Lutheran downtown. Perhaps you saw the article in the paper this week about our two largest and one smaller stained glass windows being removed for repair to the glass and lead. They will be prepared for the next 100 years. In their place are very large openings which are covered with boards. Not beautiful, stopping the light rather than letting it in - for 5 months.

It strikes me that all this is sort of like our lives these days. Many of you work, some are playing, some retired, some have been ill, many are concerned for ones who are ill. We do what we can to get through our days, but sometimes it feels like our circumstances are all torn up and not getting any light. We are told the end of the Pandemic is in sight, but then, our turn to get there is not coming soon. I work at 2 food pantries every week and I can tell you the food insecurity is still overwhelming.

The time is here for us to reach inside ourselves to bring forth the faith we have - to take care of ourselves. And then to seek out ways to care for others, notes, calls, prayers, finding a way to be a light. We all need the help. We all feel the need to be cared for. We all pray for the day, when we can be together, to be soon. Usually there is lots of planning for choirs, handbells, soloists all getting ready for Easter. In truth, we plan for what we can, what will bring the season of Lent and Easter to folks at home.

I am anxious to hear Laura Scow talk about the spirituality of Handel on February 27. Reminded me of a book I received from a student about the great composers. Mozart, at the end of his life, is usually portrayed as being depressed and ill. Yet, he writes this: "I wish for all

THE SPIRITUALITY OF GEORGE FREDERIC HANDEL

Join Laura Scow as
we explore the
spirituality of
George Frederic
Handel on
February 27th at
11:00 a.m.

This will be a
virtual meeting.
Check your email
for the Zoom link
as the date draws
near.

the blessing of a cheerful and hopeful attitude, even in the face of frail health or poverty or an uncertain future." A blessing beyond himself. I wish this blessing for all of us.

Blessings,
Jean Johnson, Dean

THE SPIRITUALITY OF GEORGE FREDERIC HANDEL

George Frederic Handel is most famously remembered as the composer of the oratorio Messiah. He was also a deeply spiritual man. Handel was born into a family of devout Protestants and from early childhood, he became well-acquainted with Lutheran chorales and theology. His first and only music teacher was the organist of the parish church in Halle, Friedrich Wilhelm Zachow. Handel's musical career began as a church musician and organist.

When Handel moved to London, he joined the church community of St. George's Hanover Square. He attended worship regularly and even had a favorite pew where he sat. There are very few surviving details of Handel's personal life, but through his music and the written accounts of friends, we have a glimpse into his spirituality. Sir John Hawkins, personal friend of Handel and his first biography, wrote:

He was a man of blameless morals, and throughout his life manifested a deep sense of religion. In conversation he would frequently declare the pleasure he felt in setting the Scriptures to music; and how much the contemplating the many sublime passages in the Psalms had contributed to his edification; and now that he found himself near his end, these sentiments were improved into solid and rational piety, attended with a calm and even temper of mind. For the last two or three years of his life he was used to attend divine service in his own parish church of St. George, Hanover-square, where, during the prayers, the eyes that at this instant are employed in a faint portrait of his excellencies, have seen him on his knees, expressing by his looks and gesticulations the utmost fervour of devotion.

RESOURCES

The American Guild of Organists national website has numerous resources for members.

Under the Membership Tab drop-down menu, you can access upcoming recitals and workshops:

<https://www.agohq.org/online-programming-for-chapters/>

.This page will continually be updated as new information is received. There is also a page that shares links to past leadership webinars:

<https://www.agohq.org/leadership-webinars/>

Past webinars with supporting documents can also be viewed:

<https://www.agohq.org/ago-webinars-and-supporting-documents>

OMAHA JANUARY CHAPTER VIRTUAL MEETING

12 people gathered for the zoom presentation about AGO Certification on January 16 with good conversation and comments.

- Deadline for application for Service Playing is Feb. 1. The exam must be taken by March 31.
- Deadline for application for Colleague is March 1 and must be taken on May 7.
- Deadline for application for Choir Master, Associateship and Fellowship is April 1 and must be taken on June 2 (ChM) or June 3 and 4 (AAGO, FAGO).
- This information is in the July 2020 issue of The American Organist (TAO) and on the agohq.org

If you are not applying for certification this year, it is not too early to start preparing for next year. Requirements, deadlines for application and dates for taking the exams are all listed under the Education tab of the agohq.org and then listed under Certification. Everything that you need to prepare for an exam is located there. If you have questions or would like to talk about certification, please contact me.

I encourage you to pursue this tool for professional development. You might have more time in this COVID season than you would have in "ordinary" time. Preparing for an exam does take time, discipline, practice, and study but is very worthwhile.

Sr. Claudette Schiratti, RSM, AAGO
Certification Chair for the Omaha AGO Chapter

JANUARY BOARD MEETING

This was held via Zoom on January 12. The chapter finances are in good shape. Steve Bartelt gave programming updates. For monthly meetings held on Zoom, you will be emailed the link before the meeting date.

Scholarship opportunity: a reminder that the chapter has scholarship money available. Information and a form is on the website. The Board is considering a mentorship program which is being drawn up and information will be coming in the next couple of months. It was brought to the board's attention, and this has been announced on KVNO, that students selected as "Classical Kids" are now to receive a \$300 scholarship as part of the award.

OMAHA CHAPTER COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Education / Certification

Sr. Claudette Schiratti

Historian

David McCain

Membership

Laura Rau

Publicity

Windchest

Jeff Hoffman

Professional Concerns

Jerry Brabec

Programs

Stephen Bartelt

Young Organists

Zach Hastings

MISSION

The mission of the American Guild of Organists is to foster a thriving community of musicians who share their knowledge and inspire passion for the organ.

Membership: Rick Darrow, Gavin Nielsen and Adriana Hawkins have moved. Addresses on the website. James Tews has renewed and is added to the Directory. Kimberly Pearce's email in the Directory is lacking one letter. The correct address is singercyclor@gmail.com.

Thanks to our Board members Steve, Greg, David, Laura, Jeff, Sr. Claudette and Dr. C.

WINTER & SPRING 2021 OMAHA AGO PROGRAMMING

February 12 (Friday). A fascinating webinar "Wanamaker Organ Crawl." This will be live on the AGOYO tab at 11 a.m. and available later on Youtube. Should be interesting to see the inner workings of this famous instrument in of all places a department store in Philadelphia.

February 27 (Saturday) 11 a.m. Zoom presentation by our chapter member Dr. Laura Scow on "The Spirituality of Handel." This is one of three presentations Laura originally prepared for her choirs at All Saints. She is graciously re-presenting it for our chapter on Zoom.

Zoom access information will be furnished before the event. To whet your appetite, did you know that Handel's father was a clergyman?

March 21 (Sunday) Happy Birthday Bach! At 3 p.m. our own chapter member Dr. Marie Rubis Bauer will celebrate Johann's birthday with a concert at St. Cecilia Cathedral, a Cathedral Arts Project event. The cathedral is a large space and social distancing should be possible. Masks are required.

April is the month in which we can put something of our own together. The goal is a virtual member organ recital. Find something somewhat short that you enjoy or enjoyed playing. We will be at the time of Lent/Holy Week/Easter/Passover then, so something should pop out at you. The goal is about an hour or a bit more than an hour total for the whole recital for all participating. Our Sub-dean, Stephen Bartelt, will be glad to learn of what you want to submit and about how long it is. (stephenbartelt@yahoo.com) Have a friend get out their phone or tablet and record you playing your selection. Our chapter member Zachary Zieschang will be handling the technical work of putting all our

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

Dean Jean Johnson
Jean.johnson.8@cox.net + 402-571-7945

Sub-Dean Stephen Bartelt
stephenbartelt@yahoo.com + 402-496-6140

Secretary Gregory Johnson
gj1814@earthlink.net + 402-719-1923

Treasurer David McCain
rohrbourdon@gmail.com + 712-343-2328

Immediate Past Dean
Dr. J. Gordon Christensen
drjgordonchristensen@gmail.com + 712-352-0298

Member-at-Large Jeff Hoffman - 2018/2019 - 2020/2021
omahaago@gmail.com + 402-317-8887

Member-at-Large
Laura Rau - 2018/2019 - 2019/2022
laura.m.rau@gmail.com + 620-870-9768

Member-at-Large
Sr. Claudette Schiratti - 2020/2021 - 2022/2023
cschiratti1@gmail.com 913-530-0960

submissions together. More details will follow as we get closer to April, including how to get your recording to Kantor Zieschang.

May 16 (Sunday) 3 p.m. the "crown jewel" of Spring programming. Our chapter in conjunction with the Cathedral Arts Project will be co-sponsoring a recital by Jan Kraybill at St. Cecilia Cathedral. By then, hopefully, things will be beginning to return to normal. This is a concert not to be missed. Additionally, the CAP is sponsoring a reception to honor our former Dean, Dr. J. Gordon Christensen, from 1 to 3 p.m. in the Sunderland Gallery adjacent to the cathedral. Our members are invited to thank Dr. Christensen for his years of leadership for our chapter and his service to the CAP. On display in the gallery will be Dr. Christensen's collection of paintings by Nebraska artists.

June 6 (Sunday). Hopefully, an in-person late afternoon gathering to install new officers and to greet one another after more than a year of pandemic. If possible, we will include a meal. If not, the event will be modified to reflect realities then in effect.

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR FELLOW MEMBERS

Rick Darrow

I have been playing for church services since 1964 as a high school freshman. I still play at 1st Congregational where I have been Music Director / Organist for 42 years. I am retiring the end of February. I still hope to sub occasionally. My main job since 1971 when I graduated from Morningside College has been tuning, servicing, rebuilding, and building pipe organs. Some major jobs were 1st Baptist Church of Johnston, IA, 1st Lutheran Church of S. Sioux City, NE, Sioux City Orpheum Wurlitzer, St. Patrick's of Esterville, IA, Sacred Heart of Spencer, IA, etc. I retired from that job in 2019 and turned the business over to my son Tom. I still help out occasionally but am glad to spend more time with my wife Lois.

We hope to do more traveling. Last year we spent a wonderful month touring Italy and had hoped to spend a month in Ireland this year but the Covid virus put a damper on that so maybe next year.

Some of our past musical experiences have included playing organ concerts around South Dakota, Nebraska, and Iowa. Even did one in

Mid-Week Organ Recitals

Jeff Hoffman has begun a recital series at St. Barnabas Church. The 30-minute organ recitals will be held each week in historic St. Barnabas Church. Doors open at Noon following 11:15 a.m. Mass. A free-will offering is encouraged to support the parish and the music program. The programs will consist of music of peace, hope, and joy to encourage you during a stressful time in our world. Masks are required and seating is safely socially distanced.

Visit our Facebook page at St. Barnabas Church – Omaha, Nebraska each Monday for program information.

Phoenix Arizona. I sing in a men's choir and we sang in a 1000 voice men's choir at Royal Albert Hall, London in 2000. My wife is the vocalist but I also sing and we have been in Master Chorale here in Sioux City through the years. I have occasionally played with the Sioux City Symphony as organist.

Our son Tom and wife Jennifer live about a block away and have 4 children, Morgan, Madison, Jake, and Zachary. Morgan teaches music in Des Moines, Madison works with Biolife, Jake is a guitarist and vocalist and will graduate high school this year, and Zach is our youngest grandchild. Our daughter Kerry teaches dental hygiene at Maricopa College in Phoenix. We try to get down to see her every winter but that was not possible this year so hope to get there soon.

Miss seeing AGO friends and hope to get to see all of you soon too.

Ann Spangler

I was enthralled with the varied sounds and colors of the pipe organ in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Clarinda, Iowa, where I grew up and fell in love with the church's great hymnody. Piano, choir, band and orchestra enriched my youth. However, I only started private organ study in midlife while working full-time for an insurance company. I have continuously served churches part-time since 1986 and First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Omaha, for the

past 25 years. I thank God for my many musical mentors who have shaped and continue to shape, enrich and inspire not only my musicianship, but also my faith and my very soul. Each of us is challenged to keep shining the light throughout this pandemic that the people of God may continue to find their voice.



Organ Concerts
 from
St. Cecilia Cathedral
 701 North 40th Street
Marie Rubis Bauer, Organist
 Fridays at Noon
 Music and prayer to inspire the soul during a time
 of pandemic

Beauty and Hope



**Quality Pipe Organ Building
 and Service since 1969**

bedient
 pipe organ company

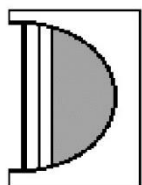
bedientorgan.com | 402.420.7662 | Lincoln, Nebraska

Gerald Oehring & Associates
 Classic Church Organs

RODGERS® **JOHANNUS**

2600 N. 48th Street
 Lincoln, NE 68504
 Studio Visits
 By Appointment Only

Gerald Oehring
 402-432-7126
 gerry@geraldoehring.com
 www.geraldoehring.com



Darrow Pipe Organ LLC
Sales - Service - Renovation
 Tom Darrow, owner (712) 301-5964
 e-mail: darrowpipeorgan@gmail.com
 website: www.darrowpipeorgan.com
 721 Pearl Street - Onawa, Iowa 51040-1428

Keyboard Kastle EST. 1977
 Midwest's Largest Selection @ Lowest Prices

Yamaha - World's first choice in Pianos & Keyboards

Greg Johnson Manager

7013 Dodge
Omaha, Ne 68132
402-593-9400
cell: 402-719-1923
Allen Church Organs

Clavinova * Avant Hybrid * Disklavier * CX Grands * Portable Keyboards