

THE WINDCHEST

OMAHA CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS



DECEMBER 2022

FROM THE DEAN

Greetings, as we begin the December journey through the holidays. As another December beams on the horizon, we start that annual countdown. Interestingly, the advertisers would have us believe the “12 days of Christmas” lead up to the 25th, but those of us who “really” know realize the “12 days of Christmas” start on Christmas and extend the season until January 6. Among the hecticness of the season, I wish for all of us a joyous month and a chance to “recuperate” somewhat on the real “12 days of Christmas.”

As a retiree, I have been doing a lot of substitute playing lately. What I am realizing over and over again is that God’s people seem to really appreciate hymns well played for them to sing. That involves steady and appropriate tempos, appropriate registrations to support them without overwhelming them, harmonizations (whether from their hymnal or otherwise) that allow them to sing with gusto, and introductions that fit their worship style and space. I have come to believe that substituting is not a time for showy virtuosity, but a time for humble service to God’s people who have asked me to help them worship. I hope these comments are helpful to others as they prepare to support God’s people in worship.

As we look to next Spring, your board has made a change for the April program. We had originally envisioned it as a “Hymn Festival” with a mass choir and many of us leading favorite hymns. However, we have decided to change it into a “Member’s Favorite Piece Recital.” In other words, about a dozen of us are requested to play our “5 minute” favorite, our go to piece when we need something, our fall back when everything fails selection. Think about yours. Reggie Pifer will be coordinating the revised event, and watch for more details later, but begin to think about what short selection is your fall-back favorite, which you would love to play for your fellow AGO members. This will be another event in which we can informally applaud and celebrate each other.

Be sure to put our January program date on your calendar: January 14, 10:00 a.m., “Adapting Pianistic accompaniments and lead sheets for the organ.” Presenter: Dr. Elizabeth Grimpo, Concordia Seward faculty, Location: Covenant Presbyterian Church.

Stephen Bartelt, Dean

AGO CERTIFICATION UPDATE

Hello! My name is Jeremy Owens, and I received a surprise call back in September to take over as the Chair of the Certification after Sister Claudette became ill. These are rather large shoes to fill and I will do my best to try to fill them.

For those who are interested in taking one of the certification exams, the dates are as follows:

Service Playing Examination: Oct. 1 2022 through March 31, 2023 (application due between Sept. 1 2022 and Feb. 1, 2023)

Colleague Examination: May 12, 2023 (application due by Mar. 1, 2023); and Nov. 17, 2023 (application due by Sept. 15, 2023)

Choir Master Examination: May 31, 2023 (application due by Apr. 1, 2023)

Associate Examination: June 1 and 2, 2023 (application due by Apr. 1, 2023)

Fellowship Examination: June 1 and 2, 2023 (application due by Apr. 1, 2023)

While most of the examination expectations remain the same such as exam dates and locations for the Colleague, Choir Master, Associate, and Fellowship exams, there have been some changes. There is a new Revised Hymn Booklet for 2023 (updated from the 2013) and an updated required repertoire list for each of the certifications. Finally, to become more diverse in the repertoire, a New Composer Diversity for 2021 alternative list is also available. All of these are available at the AGO website which is:

<https://www.agohq.org/certification/>.

The new exam locations for 2023 will be posted on the website in January.

The time I spent working on my SPC, CAGO, and AAGO certifications I consider some of the most productive time I spent in my life after my doctorate. I hope there will be some of the members of the Omaha AGO or their students who will consider taking one of the certifications. I look forward to hearing from you!

Jeremy Owens, DMA, AAGO
Jeremy.owens@briarcliff.edu

HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS OF INTEREST TO OMAHA AGO

Lincoln Choral Artists, directed by member Jason Horner, presents a Holiday Concert, Thursday, December 8, 7:00 p.m. at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Lincoln. More information at www.lincolnchoralartists.org/tickets-support.html

Nebraska Brass presents "A Nebraska Brass Christmas" at All Saints Episcopal Church, 9302 Blondo St., Friday, December 9th at 7:00 p.m. Admission is \$18, \$15 for seniors, and free for children and students. This is a wonderful opportunity to hear exceptional music and celebrate the holiday season.

Zachariah Hastings, Organist and Director of Music at Pacific Hills Lutheran Church presents an Advent recital on Sunday, December 11th at 3:00 p.m. at the church, 90th and Pacific, Omaha.

Pray the Church's beautiful and ancient prayer, Advent Vespers, with the St. Cecilia Cathedral Choir and member Dr. Marie Rubis Bauer in preparation for the celebration of the birth of Christ. St. Cecilia Cathedral, Sunday, December 18, 3:00 p.m.

Member Jason Horner is organist for "Listen," an Advent service of music, worship, lessons, and carols. St. Thomas Lutheran Church, 17007 Q St., Wednesday, December 21, 7:00 p.m. Features the traditional "Festival of Lessons and Carols," and includes handbells and harp.

2023 CHAPTER PROGRAMS

Saturday, January 14 -- 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. -- How organists can adapt pianistic accompaniments and lead sheets for the organ led by Dr. Elizabeth Grimpo, music faculty, Concordia University, Seward. Location: Covenant Presbyterian Church, 15005 Blondo.

Saturday, February 11 -- 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. -- "Beyond the Console" Presentation on the inner workings of pipe organs. Ryan Luckey from Bedient Organ in Lincoln. Location: St. Cecilia Cathedral, 701 N. 40th St.

Saturday, March 11 -- 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. -- "Breaking and Entering" Challenges when beginning, ending, retiring, subbing. Panel discussion headed by Jean Johnson. Location Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church, 2650 Farnam St.

Sunday, April 23 – Informal member’s favorite piece recital. Play your favorite (short 3-5 minute) all time “go to” piece for your fellow members. Location: Countryside Community Church, 13130 Faith Plz. Coordinator: Reggie Pifer. A fun time to celebrate each other.

Monday, May 22 -- End of season dinner/fellowship, 6:00 p.m. catered dinner, installation of officers. Feature certification achievers. Installation of officers. Location: St. John Lutheran, 633 Willow Ave., Council Bluffs.

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

We are pleased to announce that with the contributions and memorials recently received, we will again be open to applications for \$300 scholarships for new organ students. What we can do to encourage young organists will bear fruit in years to come as these young people move into serving churches and other organ positions. During the past two years, the chapter awarded six scholarships to students taking lessons from any of our chapter members. Details including eligibility requirements and the form for applying for scholarships are on the chapter website.

A REQUEST FROM A FORMER DEAN . . .

We thought you’d like to know that two books by Past Dean and Author Donna Miesbach were published this year, one in April, the other in November.

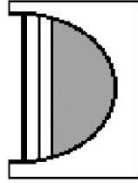
Insights, Inspiration for Daily Living, is a collection drawn from her Thought for the Week series which she has been sending to her network for over 20 years. The book contains over 200 “Thoughts” for the reader to consider. Included is a subject index for the reader’s convenience.

The Golden Hour, Selected Spontaneous Poems, is a definitive collection of inspired poetry written over the course of 35 years. This book has six sections: Nature Speaks, Devotion & Prayer, Family & Friends, When Life Draws to a Close, Day by Day, and Just for Fun. Included is a History section at the back of the book, giving date written, where published, and in some instances, the backstory to the poem. Some of these poems have been set to music, including *Four Short Motets* by Michael McCabe which should be available early next year. This information is included in the History section.

All of Donna’s books are available on [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

Donna has also been collaborating with member Michael McCabe about some soon to be published motets.

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