

American Guild of Organists Blue Ridge Chapter



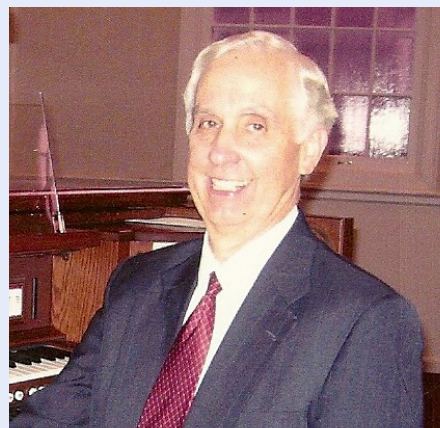
December 2023

www.blueridgeago.org

From the Dean

We are in that season where organists look hard for breathing room and focus on the immediate demands. But when you come up for air, take in the view ahead--rich with possibilities beyond the next rehearsal and performance. We especially call attention to the choral reading session featured in this newsletter, sponsored by our AGO chapter and an annual tradition with our best attendance. Come prepared to sing!

Until then, all the best of joyful Christmas spirit and bright hope for the New Year!



Vance Yoder, Dean

Calling All Singers!
New Music · Old Favorites · Free and Open to the Public

Choral Reading Session

Led by Mr. Frank Boles

February 24, 2024 · 11:00 am

Grace Lutheran Church,
1245 6th Avenue West, Hendersonville, NC

Hosted by the Blue Ridge Chapter of the American Guild of Organists

www.blueridgeago.org

Concerts and Events

Advent Lessons and Carols **St. James Episcopal, Hendersonville** **December 2 and 3, 5:00pm**
Advent Lessons and Carols with the St. James Choir and Montreat Scottish Pipes and Drums. Saturday December 2 and Sunday December 3, 5:00pm. Doors open at 4, and pre-service music begins at 4:45. \$10 suggested donation to support St. James Music Ministry. 766 N. Main St, Hendersonville NC. Contact 828 693-7458 or Brad (at) stjamesepiscopal.com for more information.

Carolina Bronze Handbell **Brevard Davidson River Presbyterian** **December 3, 3:00pm**
Carolina Bronze Handbell Ensemble located in Greensborough, South Carolina will be presenting a concert of music for the holiday season. This community based Ensemble is made up of advanced ringers and handbell directors who are seeking a challenging ringing experience. The group plays on five octaves of handbells and seven octaves of handchimes as well as additional instruments and percussion. Their program will consist of sacred and secular music for the Christmas season and will include such tunes as "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing," "Sleigh Ride," "The Little Drummer Boy," "Do You Hear What I Hear?" and many more. Get into the Christmas spirit by enjoying this outstanding handbell ensemble under the direction of Alan Lohr. Be sure to bring a friend to this fun concert! Free and open to the public.

Christmas Organ Recital Series **Brevard First United Methodist** **December 8 and 15, 12:30pm**
December 8: Tate Addis, December 15: Sarah Wannamaker

Carols Old Yet New **Brevard Davidson River Presbyterian** **December 10, 11:00am**
Brevard-Davidson River's Chancel Choir will offer a program entitled "Carols Old Yet New." The program will include familiar Christmas texts that have been set to new tunes by such composers as Neil Harmon, Joan Pinkston and Michael Helman. The Choir will be joined by a flute, oboe and cello. Be sure to attend this special Advent worship service and bring a friend!

Advent Lessons and Carols **St. Mary's Episcopal, Asheville** **December 10, 5:00pm**
Advent Lessons & Carols (the lesser-known sister of the Christmas service) is a service of prophecy and music to prepare the heart for Christ's coming. Readings from the prophets are combined with choral gems by the Asheville Vocal Ensemble (formerly Pastyme) and congregational hymns. A champagne reception will follow.

Recital **Trinity Episcopal, Asheville** **December 13, 12:00pm**
Organist and pianist Gray Pearson will present a recital of works by J.S. Bach in partnership with the Music for Advent Series at Trinity Episcopal Church in Asheville, NC. The program will feature selected fugues from the Well Tempered Clavier, as well as several chorale preludes performed on Trinity's Austin organ and Steinway Grand piano. Lunch will be offered for a donation of \$7 following the concert.

An English Carol Christmas **Basilica of Saint Lawrence, Asheville** **December 16, 7:00pm**
Join us as Chicora Voices opens its second season with a concert celebrating the humble Christmas carol — beloved classics performed by a top notch ensemble. \$10/\$20, www.chicoravoices.org

Special Event **Brevard First United Methodist** **December 21, 7:00pm**
Organist Mark Hall presents Olivier Messiaen's *La Nativité du Seigneur* (The Nativity of the Saviour) 7:00 pre-concert talk: Mr. Hall will discuss the musical language and background of Messiaen and the nine music meditations in the work. 7:30 Concert, will include poetry

Ceremony of Carols **St. Mary's Episcopal, Asheville** **December 28, 7:00pm**
Benjamin Britten's Ceremony of Carols will be presented in the context of a choral evensong for the Feast of the Holy Innocents. This juxtaposition of sorrow and joy captures the experience of the Kingdom of God breaking into our world. Featuring harpist Jessica Metz; Champagne reception to follow.

Winter Organ Festival

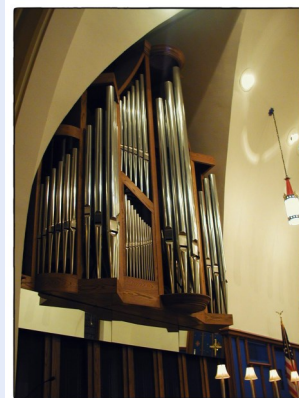
The Tryon Concert Association, based down the mountain in Tryon, NC is holding a Winter Organ Festival as part of its 2023-24 concert series. Every other Friday at 7:30 p.m. in January and early February, three world class performers will be giving recital at Holy Cross Episcopal Church in Tryon, which boasts a IV/44 instrument installed by John Dower in 1994-95. It is a thrilling organ which truly makes all kinds of music come to life. The performers are as follows:

January 5th - Paul Jacobs, Julliard School of Music

January 19th – Martin Jean, Yale University (reception to follow for members of local AGO chapters)

February 2nd – Felix Hell, independent concert organist

All recitals are free for AGO members. However, anyone interested in attending must contact Brennan Szafron to reserve tickets for each recital. He can be reached at 828-859-9741 or bszafron@holycrosstryon.org.



Upcoming Events at the Porter Center

Save the date for these events at Brevard College!

Service of Lessons and Carols	December 9	7:30pm
Transylvania Choral Society	December 14	7:30pm
Music of the Jewish Year	January 21	3:00pm
Organ and Trumpet Recital	April 7	7:30pm
Brevard Choral Concert	May 3	7:30pm



Benjamin Britten's

A CEREMONY OF CAROLS

December 28, 2023 · 7:00pm

The Choir of St. Mary's Episcopal Church
Daniel Gainey, director · Jessica Metz, harp

St. Mary's Episcopal Church
337 Charlotte Street · Asheville, NC

Free and open to the public
Champagne reception to follow



Joining Our Voices: Advent Service of Lessons and Carols will Feature Choir and Bagpipes

The soul-stirring sounds of the St. James Choir and Montreat Scottish Pipes and Drums will once again fill the nave at St. James Episcopal Church for our annual Advent Service of Lessons and Carols, one of the parish's signature choral services that draws attendees from across the area. The service will be held Saturday, December 2nd and Sunday, December 3rd at 5:00 p.m., with doors opening at 4:00 p.m.

Once again this year, following the earliest traditions of the service that originated in Cambridge, England over a century ago, local officials representing areas of community life will read lessons at the Sunday service.

"This service is one of extraordinary beauty and transcendence, and it's a real gift to the community offered by our choir and music director Brad Gee," said The Rev. David Henson, rector of the parish. "By inviting leaders to participate in this extraordinary service, we hope to share this gift more broadly and for it to be a true celebration of the goodness of our community here in Hendersonville. We pray this symbolic joining of hands can serve as a shining example of unity in our deeply divided world."

The St. James Choir, led by Gee, will be singing carols and anthems of the Advent season, and they will be joined by instrumentalists on trumpet and flute as well as bagpipes and drums. "There is something special about this service, each and every year," Gee said. "Our beautiful neo-Gothic church is decorated with greens, candles twinkle in the windows, and the church fills up and the beautiful sound of choral music moves people deeply, some even to tears." So definitely come early, maybe bring a Kleenex, and prepare to be dazzled.

Carols and anthems to be featured this year include the beautiful *Matin Responsory* by David Ashley White, June Nixon's frolicking arrangement of *The Holly and the Ivy*, Bruce Neswick's setting of *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*, and other music by George Guest, Barry Ferguson, and Paul Manz. Pre-service music will include the first movement of Vivaldi's *Concerto for Two Trumpets* featuring Bryan and Michelle Kraak, and Paul Doebler playing *Three Carols for Flute and Organ* by Michael Barker. Howard Bakken will be the organist for the pre-service music, and Timothy Wissler will be the organist for the service.

While no tickets are required, contributions of any amount are welcomed and appreciated in support of the music ministry of St. James. A donation of \$10 per person is suggested. Plan now to attend these glorious services which are welcome to all. Doors will open at 4:00 p.m. for the 5:00 p.m. services. The church address is 766 North Main Street, Hendersonville, North Carolina.

--Brad Gee, Director of Music
St. James Episcopal Church, 828-694-6925





chicora voices
PROFESSIONAL CHORAL ENSEMBLE

7 pm | Friday, December 15
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church
Greenville, SC




7 pm | Saturday, December 16
Basilica of Saint Lawrence
Asheville, NC

AN ENGLISH CAROL CHRISTMAS

Britten: A Ceremony of Carols
and other Christmas favorites

Scan or visit our website
for tickets and information.



-  chicoravoices.org
-  [chicora_voices](https://www.instagram.com/chicora_voices)
-  [/chicoravoices](https://www.facebook.com/chicoravoices)

Join us as Chicora Voices opens its second season with a concert celebrating the humble Christmas carol – beloved classics performed by a top notch ensemble.





THE ASHEVILLE SCHOOL
HANDBELL ENSEMBLE PRESENTS

Ring
NOEL

DECEMBER 5TH | 7:30 PM
BASILICA OF ST. LAWRENCE
97 HAYWOOD ST.
ASHEVILLE, NC 28801

DECEMBER 6TH | 7:30 PM
GIVENS HIGHLAND FARMS
200 TABERNACLE RD.
BLACK MOUNTAIN, NC 28711

DECEMBER 7TH | 7:30 PM
ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
337 CHARLOTTE ST.
ASHEVILLE, NC 28801

A program of seasonal readings & handbell music
under the direction of John R. Crawley.
All are welcome. Admission is free of charge.

Women Theatre Organists

From the AGO Task Force for Gender Equity: Very few women had joined the early ranks of cinema organists, but that doesn't mean they didn't exist. A delve into the records shows that a number of women decided to defy convention and enter what was then an exciting new world, including Florence B. Price. Learn more about some of these women and their role as theater organists here:

www.pipelinepress.com/ladies-at-the-console.html



OREGON **BACH FESTIVAL**

Organ Institute

10th Anniversary Season, July 8 - 13, 2024

Audition Deadline: March 4, 2024

Free Tuition, Room, and Board • Auditor Programs Available

Workshops with Paul Jacobs

Daily Masterclasses

Featuring a co-commission of Lowell Liebermann's Organ Concerto

OregonBachFestival.org/Organ-Institute

Pogorzelski-Yankee Competition Winner Announced



Christopher Enloe, a doctoral candidate in composition at the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, is the winner of the 2025 Pogorzelski-Yankee Annual Competition in Organ Composition. The director of music ministry for Baltimore Bible Church and Valley Presbyterian Church, Enloe also works remotely as an assistant to award-winning film composer Grant Fonda, providing music to clients including Paramount+, FOX Sports, and Amazon.

The competition honors Ronald G. Pogorzelski and Lester D. Yankee, and calls for an original composition for their R.J. Brunner & Co. tracker organ, now installed at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. As the winner, Enloe will receive a \$10,000 cash award and gala premiere of his work in 2025.

AGO on Social Media

Discover new music on Facebook! After the pandemic closed many churches, organists and composers moved to YouTube and social media to share their latest performances and compositions. You are invited to join the lively conversations on Facebook and other social media channels. AGO Organ Forum is a moderated group and subject to approval (to prevent spam and scammers). AGO membership is not a requirement to join the group.

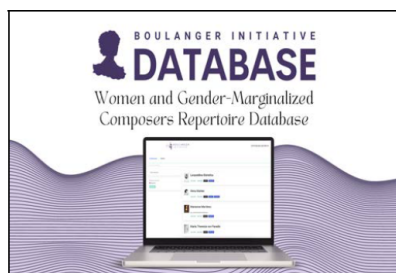


A Christmas Fantasia

Snow flakes faintly falling as carolers sing Distler motets in the narrow cobblestone streets. Candlelight flickering in the frosty windows. The harmonium groans with beloved carols of yore; a peacock pie perches proudly on the table while the vicar ignites a ponderous, plump pudding and the precentor bedecks the *en chamade* with a gay garland; what could make this resplendent, effulgent Yuletide scene complete?

That's right: a copy of the newest **Blue Ridge AGO Newsletter under the tree with your next event** in its majestic pages! There's no better time than now to send your concerts, community announcements, position descriptions, and sugarplum-wanted ads to the editorial department: cantordavid@stmarkslutheran.net

Boulanger Initiative Database

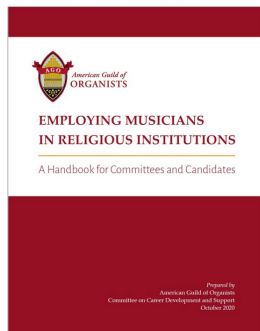


The Women and Gender Marginalized Composers Repertoire Database (BID) is now publicly available, following years of researching archives, compiling data, and beta testing. The database offers freely available information on over 8,000 works by 1,200 BIPOC, women, and marginalized composers in classical music.

www.boulangerinitiative.org/database

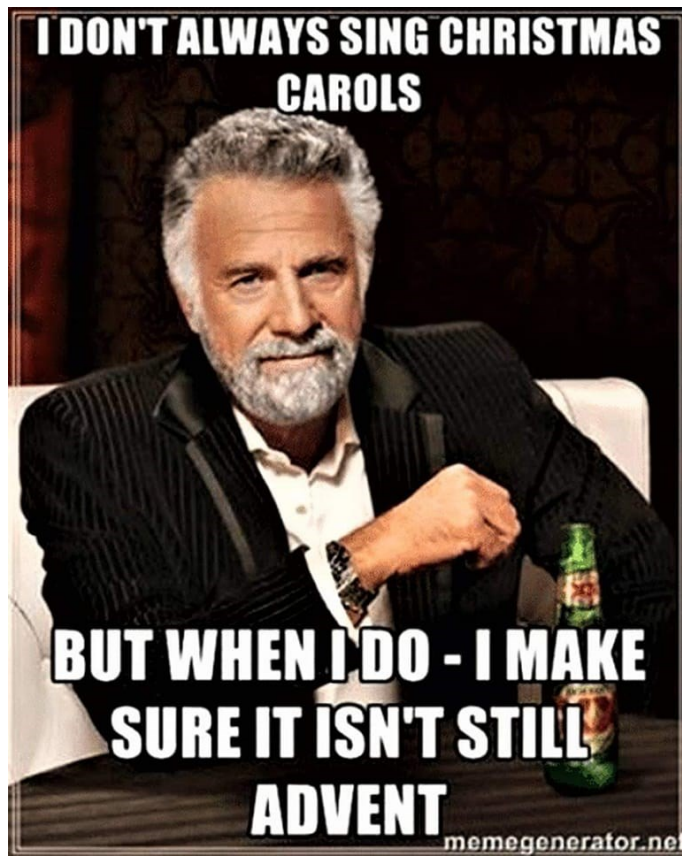
Know Your Value!

The Association of Church Musicians and AGO have cooperated in developing a new booklet "Employing Musicians in Religious Organizations." Please visit www.agohq.org/employment-handbook/ to download this resource, and to watch a moderated panel discussion.



Learn Beginning Organ Improvisation

Two winners of the National Competition in Organ Improvisation, Kalle Toivio (2018) and Ivan Bosnar (2020), recently completed instructional videos designed for organists who are just beginning to explore the art of improvisation. The videos were filmed at Syracuse University's Setnor School of Music on the historic Holtkamp organ in Crouse Hall. Frederick Hohman produced the videos, and both are now available on the AGO YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/@GuildofOrganists



Open Positions

Warren Wilson Presbyterian is seeking a part time Director of Music Ministry to lead our music program as we continue to grow and prayerfully follow where God is leading us. We are a casual, warm, and friendly congregation, who values the Sacred worth and dignity of each person. We are an open and affirming congregation, committed to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for all. As Director of Music Ministry, you will be responsible for leading our choir and providing musical accompaniment on organ and/or piano for our worship services.



You will be essential, incorporating your own gifts and creativity. This position is for 16 hours per week, with a salary of \$20,157 - \$21,657 including paid vacation and sick leave. Applications are being accepted now. A job description is posted on our website: warrenwilsonchurch.org Interested applicants please submit a CV, or resume, and three references to: [info \(at\) warrenwilsonchurch.org](mailto:info@warrenwilsonchurch.org)

Fletcher United Methodist Church, Fletcher NC is seeking a part-time Organist/Pianist. Under the direction of the Director of Music and the Pastor, this person is responsible for the planning and participation of organ and piano music in support of the worship services and programs of the church. He/she ensures that the music is presented in a manner that preaches the Gospel of Jesus Christ, provides glory to God, and inspires holy worship at all worship services. The Organist/Pianist will accompany rehearsals of the Chancel Choir one weekday evening per week (from early September through early June) and provide a year-round musical component for both Sunday worship services (8:30 and 11:00), as well as special worship services throughout the year (i.e. Good Friday, Christmas Eve, etc.) Occasional assistance may also be needed for our Anticipate Ancient-Modern services, which occur on Wednesday evenings during Advent and Lent. A degree in organ and previous church-related music experience is preferred. For more information, email Blaine Russell, Director of Music: [blaine \(at\) fletcherumc.org](mailto:blaine@fletcherumc.org)

First Baptist Church, Weaverville, NC is seeking a part-time organist. Qualifications: be a person feeling called by God and showing a love for Church music. 4 year college music degree preferred. Experience at the keyboard to help guide the church in worship. Comfortable with a wide variety of musical styles, possess good interpersonal skills. Duties: In cooperation with the Minister of Music, Pastor and the Music committee, be responsible for providing music for and accompanying choirs in all the regular services of the church (currently Sunday AM), special services and funerals (as schedule allows). Accompany the Adult Choir rehearsals (currently Wednesday evenings) and other Choirs as needed. Assist the Minister of Music and others in places of responsibility to carry out the ministry of the church. Advise and work with the Minister of Music on instrument maintenance: tunings and repairs. Benefits: Receive 2 Wednesdays and 2 Sundays paid vacation after the first six months of employment. Be allowed to attend conventions, conferences, and music meetings as the budget allows. Receive a salary and benefit review annually. Typical considerations will include cost of living, job performance, years of service. (Currently position - \$250 weekly approx. 15-20 hrs a week) Be treated with love and respect in keeping with the high calling as a minister of God in this chosen field. Further information about our church can be discovered at the website: www.fbcwvl.org/ Please send inquires and/or resumes to position (at) fbcwvl.org, (828) 645-6720

Grace Church in the Mountains, Waynesville NC is seeking a Director of Music Ministries, Part-time or Full-time. Grace an Episcopal Church in Waynesville, near Asheville and Smoky Mountain National Park. Grace Church welcomes all people, including all races, gender identities, and sexual orientations. Our active membership is about 375 people, 120 of whom typically worship on a Sunday. Our worship style is broad, drawing on contemporary and traditional hymnody and generally using Rite II or Enriching Our Worship. The Music Director position is part-time, including playing organ for all services, conducting Adult choir and chime choir, and playing and providing staff leadership for monthly Taizé services, but can be combined with program leadership or administrative support to become a full-time role, depending on the skill, interest and time of the candidate. Applications are being accepted now, and interviews will take place beginning August 15. Resumé and cover letter may be sent to our Senior Warden, Laura Armour: [lauraarmour4567 \(at\) gmail.com](mailto:lauraarmour4567@gmail.com) Full job description at https://www.gracewaynesville.com/uploads/1/1/3/1/113184205/final_job_desc_for_website.pdf



Montmorenci United Methodist Church, Candler NC is seeking a part-time Music Director/Organist for our church in Candler, NC. We are a loving congregation nestled in the mountains west of Asheville. We are known for our warm and inclusive spirit, where everyone is treated like family! The position is 8-10 hours a week with a salary of 12,000. Benefits include 2 weeks paid vacation. Primary job responsibilities include selection of music, Sunday morning worship, adult choir rehearsals, and special services. A more detailed description of duties can be obtained by contacting us. We have a three manual Johannus. If you have a passion for traditional music with a few twists, a heart for service, and a desire to be part of a warm and caring church family, we invite you to apply for this position. Inquires and resumes can be sent to Glenda Patterson at [allie100 \(at\) currently.com](mailto:allie100@currently.com)

First Baptist Church, Burnsville, NC, affiliated with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, is looking to fill the part-time position of “Pianist”. FBC Burnsville appreciates a blended music program that includes choral, hand bell, brass, small ensemble, and solo work. More information about First Baptist can be found on Facebook, [FBCBurnsville](https://www.facebook.com/FBCBurnsville), or our web site: fbcburnsville.com. Applicants should email a resume to: [fbcburnsville \(at\) gmail.com](mailto:fbcburnsville@gmail.com). Applications accepted until position is filled. Salary commensurate with experience. Call 828-682-2288 for more information.

St. John's Church, Marion NC



Organist/Church Musician (Part Time) Church musician will provide music and musical leadership at the regular Sunday services of the Parish, and for Holy Week, Christmas, and additional services. Musician will assist the Rector in the selection of hymns, anthems, and service music. Provide music for other occasions as requested. The ideal candidate will provide direction for a seasonal choir, handbells and other musical groups as needed and work to develop, and encourage, small ensembles, soloists and other talented musicians within the congregation. St. John's has a 2007, three manual Rodgers Allegiant digital organ. Qualifications: Knowledge of church music and organ repertoire for church services. Experience within the Episcopal/Anglican tradition preferred or willingness to learn. Proficiency in organ and piano. Experience directing a choir or ensemble (ideal) Self-motivated with a collegial style of leadership Part time salaried position requiring an average of 9-12 hours per week. Additional hours required for special services. Salary is \$805 per month (\$10,200 per year) 4 Sundays off per year \$250 towards continuing education per year. To apply send cover letter and resume via email to Rev. Erin Kirby, stjohnsmarionclergy@gmail.com, or as a hardcopy to St. John's Church, Attention Rev. Kirby, P.O. Box 968, Marion, NC 28752. Position open until filled

Black Mountain Presbyterian, Black Mountain NC

Black Mountain Presbyterian Church, a vibrant and progressive community of faith in Black Mountain, NC, is seeking a classically trained organist. This individual would support worship services that elevate the rich heritage of sacred choral and organ music found in the Presbyterian (PCUSA) liturgy. The organist will serve an integral part-time role, joining an energetic and collegial staff. The Organist will report to the Director of Music and assist in the development and implementation of a comprehensive music ministry plan congruent with the vision and mission of Black Mountain Presbyterian Church. Bachelor's degree in music or related field preferred (equivalent experience will be considered).

Since this is a part-time position, benefits are not included. Salary is negotiable and will be dependent upon experience level. For more information about Black Mountain Presbyterian Church: bmpcnc.org Interested candidates should submit a resume and cover letter to Aaron Price, Director of Music and Worship Arts, at "aaron (@) bmpcnc.org". Candidates are encouraged to include links to audio and/or video recordings of past performances. For more information, contact Aaron Price at 828-669-2725.



Lutheran Chapel Church, Gastonia NC

Lutheran Chapel Church seeks an Organist/Assistant to the Director of Music. Position Objective: To coordinate and assist with the music programs primarily through accompaniment on the organ and piano while reflecting the church mission and theology. Part-time position, 4-5 hours/week average. Salary Range: \$10,400 - \$13,400 Responsibilities: Collaborate with the Pastor, Director of Music and Worship and Music committee in preparation for worship services and any special music requests. Enthusiastically accompany and assist with Music Ministry programs that facilitate cross-generational spiritual growth and enhance the worship experience. Be an active participant in weekly and seasonal worship services. Provide accompaniment for funerals as needed and as available. Necessary Qualifications: Must love music! Highly skilled accompanist. Proficient in most styles of playing piano. Proficient organist preferred, but not required. Must have a desire to learn. Competent music director. Experience working with children. Bachelors or Associate degree in music or equivalent training/work experience. If you are interested in applying for this position, please send your professional cover letter and resume to: Lutheran Chapel Church, Attn: Organist/Assistant to Music Director Search Committee, 702 N. New Hope Road, Gastonia, NC 28054 or by emailing [churchoffice \(at\) lutheranchapelchurch.org](mailto:churchoffice@lutheranchapelchurch.org)



First Presbyterian Church, Albemarle NC

First Presbyterian Church of Albemarle, NC seeks an organist for Sunday morning worship, adult choir rehearsals, and special services. Past worship services can be viewed on YouTube. Worship occurs on Sundays at 11:00. Applicants for this position should contact Ann Crutchfield, 704 985 2050 or ann.benson.crutchfield@gmail.com to arrange an interview and audition opportunity. Applicants will be expected to play traditional hymns for singing, a prelude, offertory, and postlude. The applicant may be requested to accompany a vocal and/or instrumental soloist during the audition. Piano proficiency is expected in playing open score during adult

choir rehearsals. Salary: \$18,000 – 24,000. Vacation: 3 weeks. Degree in Church music or Organ performance preferred. Organ: Orgues Letourneau – Opus 105 2007, 2 manuals, 30 ranks, 22 stops

Blue Ridge AGO Chapter

www.blueridgeago.org

Founded
August 15, 2013

OFFICERS

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American Guild of Organists
National Office:
475 Riverside Drive
Suite 1260
New York, NY 10115
www.agohq.org



About Us

Our mission is to enrich lives through organ and choral music. To achieve this, we encourage excellence in the performance of organ and choral music; inspire, educate, and offer certification for organists and choral conductors; provide networking, fellowship, and mutual support; nurture future generations of organists; promote the organ in its historic and evolving roles; and engage wider audiences with organ and choral music.

Area Organs

St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Asheville
Martin Ott Pipe Organ Co. (Opus 85, 1997)



27 ranks · 1,396 pipes · 2 manuals · 21 stops

