

UPCOMING EVENTS



**NICOLE
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JUNE 3 & 4

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Sforzando

VOLUME 12, ISSUE 10



JUNE 2023

Southwest Jersey Chapter American Guild of Organists



The Hope-Jones/Skinner Organ at the Great Auditorium in Ocean Grove. Photo taken by Gary Langel in 2013.

Dean's Message

-- by Jonathan Stark

What Moves You? – Part II

So, the bloom is off the rose? Being an organist or choir director isn't fun anymore? It got old, it's work, maybe even unpleasant? It can happen. A few years ago, I was driving to church to play my 42nd consecutive Christmas Eve service and suddenly the thought hit, "why the heck am I doing this anyway?"

Congregations can take you for granted. Musical instruments can be in bad shape, not maintained, or just weren't very good even when new. Clergy can be overbearing, impervious, or downright hostile. Being an organist or choir director is a high calling, and high callings aren't always easy roads to walk.

People can burn out, fall into a rut, or stop caring about results. Last month's column promised some ideas for finding yourself again when this happens. In no particular order, then:

....continued on page 13

Welcome, Summer!





"....Glenn Rodgers... will be taking over as editor, beginning with the September 2023 issue. MAJOR thank you!!"

Editor's Report -- by Marilyn Rabbai, CAGO

I took Larry's space this month to say: **We have great events – don't miss them!** Nicole Keller is with us this weekend, presenting a masterclass on Saturday, June 3 at 10am and a recital on Sunday, June 4 at 4pm at Haddonfield United Methodist Church (*see poster, page 8*)

Our Annual Meeting and Picnic will take place at 3pm on Sunday, June 25 at the home of Bill Mitchell, 631 Boundary Road in Pitman. (*see Cathy's message, below*) I am really looking forward to Bill's hospitality and these opportunities to be inspired, informed and rejuvenated. Hope to see you there!

This is my last issue as editor of the Sforzando, so I wanted to say thank you to everyone - starting with Glenn Rodgers, who will be taking over as editor, beginning with the September 2023 issue. MAJOR thank you!! Glenn and I collaborated on this issue.

It has been a great experience to be the person who disseminates information for the SouthWest Jersey AGO chapter. I started in 2014, when Charlene

Cranmer was our dean and I had just retired from teaching at West Deptford Middle School. After I figured out how to use (sometimes try to outwit) Microsoft Publisher, I got an overarching impression working on successive issues; we are a very fortunate chapter to have the resources, leadership, membership, and programs we have. It takes lots of effort and teamwork to bring our AGO mission statement to life. We need all hands on deck, so please be open to volunteer opportunities, especially when our Nominating Chair (Glenn) comes a-knocking. It has been a joy getting to know more people in our chapter through this work. Hearing from some of you so often that I have memorized your email address? Priceless. Thank you to ALL of you who have sent me photos, posters, monthly columns, convention reports, announcements, interviews, ballots, brochures, articles, humor, ideas, RSVPs, feedback, corrections, matters of note, notes of encouragement.....your contact, caring, and contributions have been - and will continue to be - a blessing.



Matters of Note



Hospitality:

Thank you to everyone who brought something to the reception after our members' recital. Before the workshop on Saturday June 3rd come a few minutes early to enjoy coffee and donuts and meet Nicole Keller. We are finally going back to some pre-pandemic traditions. The annual picnic will be at Bill Mitchell's home in Pitman at 3pm on Sunday June 25th. Sandwiches will be provided. Please bring appetizers, salads, veggies, chips, drinks, desserts, and fruit. Let me know what you are bringing so we don't have too much of one item and missing another. Thanks in advance. **Please bring chairs as well!** cmo125@aol.com or 856-214-1928 Cathy

Cares and Concerns:

A card was sent to Ethel Geist. I still send cards throughout the summer when requested so please do not hesitate to contact me at cmo125@aol.com or 856-214-1928.

Layla Joshy selected as finalist in NE Connecticut competition June 3: If you attended the May 21 members' recital, you heard her exciting performance of Bach's Fantasia in G major, BWV 572. Her other pieces are: Brahms Herzliebster Jesu, op. 122 and Hindemith Sonata 3 mvt. I. Congratulations and good luck, Layla!

Welcome, Katrina Wylie! Katrina has transferred from the New Hampshire Chapter. Please add her contact information to your directories:

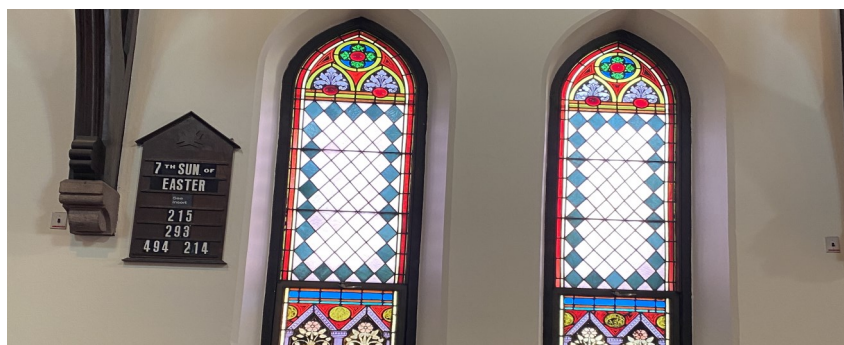
Katrina Wylie
3 Libra Lane
Sewell, NJ 08080
shopper561@comcast.net
856-217-9143



Gallery: Members' Recital



Photos by Joe Routon and Marilyn Rabbai
...more on page 12



Programs at a Glance

[See Sub-Dean's Report on page 2 for details]

Saturday & Sunday, June 3 & 4 2023:
Nicole Keller Masterclass - Saturday 6/3
at 10AM Haddonfield United Methodist
Church

Nicole Keller Recital - Sunday 6/4 at 4PM
Haddonfield United Methodist Church,
29 Warwick Road, Haddonfield NJ 08033



Sunday, June 25 2023 at 3PM:
Annual Picnic and Meeting
at the home of Bill Mitchell,
631 Boundary Road, Pitman



SouthWest Jersey Chapter Scholarship Program

-- by Lawrence DePasquale, CAGO

Our chapter's scholarship program exists to serve area congregations by increasing the number of capable organists and to insure the continuation of the classical church music profession.

As a reminder, the program is structured as 14 one-hour lessons scheduled at the mutual convenience of the instructor and student, ideally on the organ where the student practices, or at least one a month where the student practices. The lessons and public jury *must take place within 4 months*. The practice instrument must have a minimum of two 61-note keyboards and a concave, radiating 32-note pedalboard, with all keys functioning. The student must have legs long enough to reach the pedalboard and have intermediate piano skills (meaning and understanding of meter signatures, chords, key signatures, and the ability to read G and F clefs).

The audition for this program is on piano. Applicants will be asked to prepare and perform a simple Bach keyboard work, also one movement of a sonata by Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, Clementi, or Kuhnau, and also one hymn written in traditional four-part harmony. The applicant will be asked to sight-read two short pieces; one will be in common meter.

At the conclusion of the 14 one hour lessons, a jury is required with the teacher and at least two additional chapter members present. The jury will consist of the following:

Two of these three chorales: *Ein feste Burg*, *Lobe den Herren*, *Herzlich tut mir verlangen*

A hymn will be sight-read, pedaling not required

The tune *Old Hundredth* in any of its traditional forms, copy provided to the committee

One pedal alone passage of a chorale, minimum 15 measures

A trio chorale

A prelude or fugue from the collection [Eight Little Preludes and Fugues](#)

The instructor is appointed by the local chapter. Accepted applicants are responsible for securing a pair of Organmaster shoes and required music. Instruction may happen any time provided all activities are completed within four months. Candidates of all ages who meet the above criteria are welcome. Please contact Lawrence De Pasquale at ldorg59@yahoo.com with questions and to express interest.

Editor's note: See next page for the current brochure. Please feel free to print out and encourage qualified applicants to submit this form.

The Scholarship

The Organ Scholarship of the Southwest Jersey Chapter of the American Guild of Organists provides a term of 14 introductory organ lessons for qualified persons wishing to begin study of the organ.

Eligibility

All applicants must possess the following qualifications:

- ◆ Must reside in the Southwest Jersey geographical area.
- ◆ Must have received little or no previous formal classical organ training.
- ◆ Legs must be long enough to reach the pedalboard.
- ◆ At least an intermediate piano proficiency (*see audition requirements below*).
- ◆ Basic knowledge of theory, including G and F clefs, key signatures, meter signatures, and chords.
- ◆ Must have access to an organ on which to practice. The organ console must either 1) conform to AGO standards having at least two 61-note manuals and a full pedalboard, or 2) conform to historical mechanical action standards.
- ◆ Must commit to completing 14 lessons and the jury within four to six months.

Inquiries

Address questions or inquiries to:

Vernon Williams
email: vwilliams@trinitymoorestown.org
phone: 856-235-0811

Application Procedure

Send completed applications to:

Vernon Williams
Trinity Episcopal Church
207 West Main Street
Moorestown, NJ 08057

In addition to the application form, applicants are asked to include on a separate sheet a brief statement of their goals and objectives for study and a summary of their musical background and experience.

The Audition

The audition is scheduled once the application has been received... Auditions will be played on the piano. No memorization is required.

Prepared pieces

- ◆ Any Bach Two-Part Invention or one selection from the *Anna Magdalena Notebook*
- ◆ One movement from a sonatina by Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, Clementi, or Kuhnau
- ◆ One hymn written in traditional four-part harmony

Sight-reading

- ◆ Two short pieces: one in common time, the other in another meter

The Lessons

Lessons are arranged at the mutual convenience of the teacher and student, ideally on the organ where the student practices. In any event, at least one lesson per month will take place on the organ where the student practices.

Students will learn how to practice and will become acquainted with registration, articulation, and pedaling, through the practice and preparation of hymns, teaching pieces, and repertoire.

Students will be required to have appropriate shoes (as recommended by their teacher) before the second lesson.

Students will provide at their expense the necessary hymnal and books required by the teacher. (Generally hymnals may be borrowed from the student's church.) Photocopied music is illegal, contrary to the Guild's *Code of Ethics*, and may not be used.

The Jury

At the conclusion of the 14 weeks of study, the student will be required to play before a jury:

- ◆ Two of the following four-part hymns (at least one of the hymns must be played with pedal):

Nicaea *Lobe den Herren*
Ein feste Burg *Olivet*
Hymn to Joy
New Britain (Amazing Grace)
Herzlich tut mich verlangen
(Passion Chorale)

- ◆ The Doxology (*Old Hundredth*) in any of the standard forms
- ◆ One pedal-alone passage of a Bach chorale or from a method book, at least 16 measures long
- ◆ A trio exercise or a chorale trio
- ◆ A prelude or fugue from Bach's *Eight Little Preludes and Fugues*



Application

DATE _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

PHONE _____ BEST TIME TO CALL _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

Your Place of Practice

NAME OF PRACTICE LOCATION (Church, Temple, etc.) _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE _____

TYPE AND BUILDER OF ORGAN (if known) _____

Your Keyboard Background

YEARS OF PIANO STUDY _____

LIST ANY PREVIOUS CLASSICAL ORGAN STUDY _____

Your Goals and Musical Background

Please include on a separate sheet a brief statement of your goals and objectives for organ study and an outline of your musical background and experience.

Purpose

The organ scholarship awarded by the AGO is necessary in order:

1. To serve the congregations by increasing the roster of capable organists.
2. To foster an appreciation for sacred classical organ repertoire.
3. To encourage more musicians to meet the standards and ideals of the American Guild of Organists.
4. To ensure the continuation of the church music profession.

History

In the 1980's a decline in the number of qualified organists and in the number of new organ students became a concern for churches and Guild chapters across the country.

Inspired by an innovative "floating organ academy" begun in South Dakota and described in an article in *The American Organist*, AGO member Helen Taylor founded the Southwest Jersey Organ Scholarship program in 1988 as a way to help solve this problem. The first committee members were Marilyn Rabbai, Barbara Knight, Joyce Ann Routon, and Larry DePasquale.

Since its inception, more than two dozen organists have successfully completed the program. Many of these new organists have gone on to successful careers in area churches.

The Southwest Jersey Chapter is pleased to continue this tradition of service to its churches and to the art of organ playing.

AGO Code of Ethics

Approved by the AGO National Council January 27, 2017

Preamble/Preface

The American Guild of Organists encourages its members to embrace and practice the following values as core ideals that Guild members aspire to cultivate in their ethical and professional conduct.

Value 1. Responsible Conduct toward Those Whom We Serve (including but not limited to clergy, supervisors, congregants, choir members, students, children, et al.). Members shall:

- o Treat those whom they serve in a professional manner, with dignity, compassion, civility, and respect.
- o Show respect to those whom they serve, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, socio-economic status, disability, or medical condition.
- o Avoid any sort of abusive behavior, whether verbal, physical, sexual, psychological, emotional, or other.
- o Refrain from disclosing confidential or sensitive information about others obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose or is required by law.

Value 2. Respect for Our Professional Colleagues. Members shall:

- o Maintain a professional attitude and act with integrity in relationships with colleagues, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, socio-economic status, disability, or medical condition.
- o Respect the reputation and diversity of colleagues.

Value 3. Integrity in Our Professional Work. Members shall:

- o Honor and abide by the conditions and requirements of the job descriptions and work agreements to which they have knowingly agreed, so long as those provisions are in accord with all applicable federal, state and local laws.
- o Follow, as applicable, the principles of professional conduct that are expressed in the AGO Code of Professional Standards.
- o For the benefit of future generations of musicians and to preserve the instruments of our profession, use care to ensure that when playing an instrument, the institution's expected practices and requirements for the care of the instrument and its venue are met.

Organ Scholarship

for beginning students



presented by

The Southwest Jersey
Chapter

of

The American Guild of
Organists

SouthWest Jersey AGO Election Results

-- by Glenn L. Rodgers, AAGO

As Nominating Chair and Teller of the Election I applaud the eleven members who cast their votes by returning the ballot via electronic or posted mail unanimously affirming the slate of Chapter Officers. Congratulations to Jonathan Stark, Dean, Larry DePasquale, Sub-Dean, Chuck Gibson, Treasurer, Cathy O'Neill, Secretary, and Executive Board Members, Class of 2026, David Doan, Robert Gardner, Gail Gassaway, and Gary Langel. The terms of elected officers officially start on July 1 and a formal installation ceremony typically takes place at the Guild Service in the fall.

Respectfully submitted,
Glenn L. Rodgers, Teller of the Election

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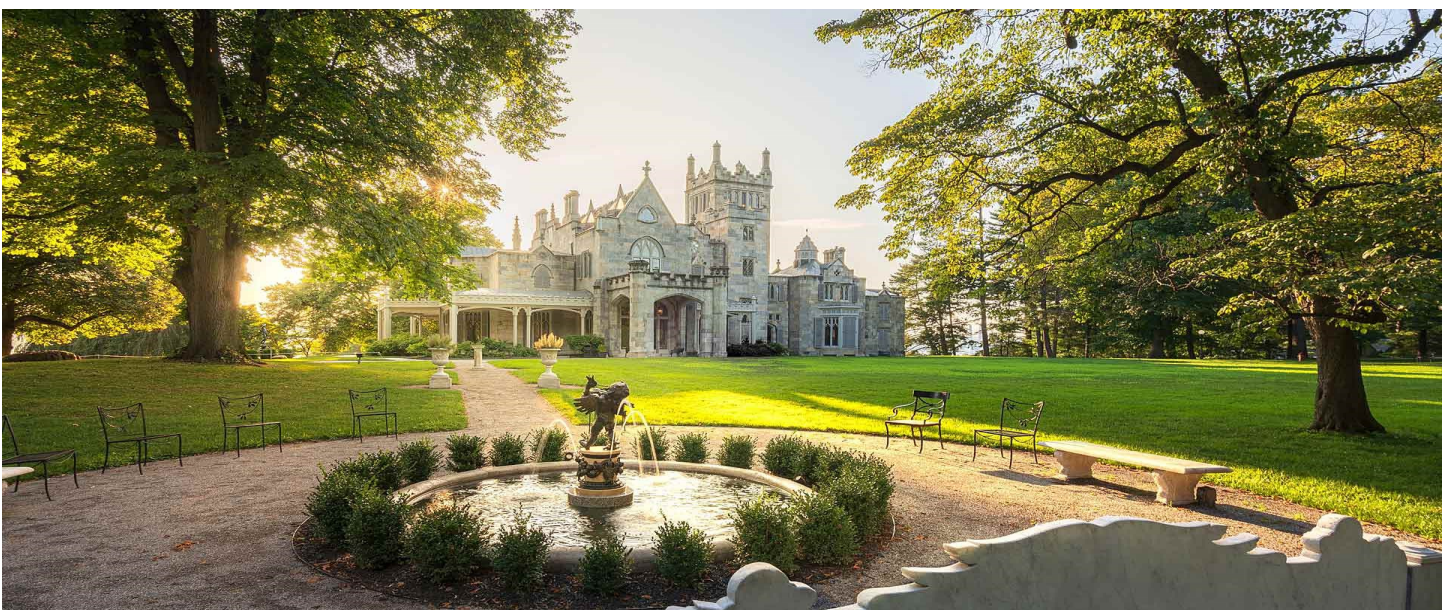
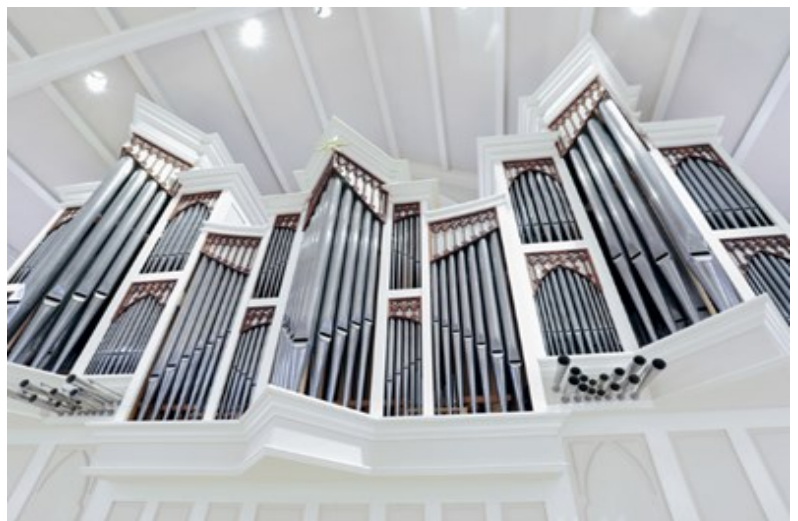
Amanda Mole

New Choral Society

Janet Yieh

[Full Schedule and Registration](#)

WHITE PLAINS BECKONS!



American Guild of Organists – Southwest Jersey Chapter presents

Organist Nicole Keller



June 4, 2023 – 4:00PM

Haddonfield United Methodist Church

29 Warwick Road, Haddonfield, NJ 08033

“... an aggressive player with outstanding technique and fine musical sensibilities...”

The concert is free and open to the public, a free-will offering will be received

Just For Fun!

Fear..... err, Ear Training at Heart College

by Jerry Attrick

Recently I was in a local university library engaged in my favorite pastime: enhancing my apprehension of all things related to the pipe organ. I pulled down a battered copy of George Ashdown Audsley's "*Temple of Tone*" (or "*The 50 Stops You **Must** Add to Your 200 Stop Organ*") and some tattered papers fell out. Upon examination these revealed themselves to be a handwritten manuscript on very old and brittle paper, smeared and near illegible in places. Thinking quickly I gently separated the pages, whipped out my Brownie Hawkeye camera, and sacrificed an entire roll of 620 film (that stuff is hard to get nowadays!) photographing the manuscript. Just as well: a moment later the air conditioning came on and the resulting blast of refreshing cool air disintegrated the manuscript into tiny pieces!

Later, examining the photos, it seemed the manuscript was written by a music conservatory student at "Heart College" (a little hard to read that line... I think it's in Connecticut?) about an instructional activity called "Fear Training" (rather blurry right there, it might have been Ear Training??).

At last! The end of sophomore year is in sight. When it ends, we get to turn our backs on Ear Training forever, oh joy! (Unless Miss Kong flunks us and we have to repeat next semester.)

Miss Kong. Ismelda Kong. Where to start? Ismelda Kong is three feet tall, has red eyes that glow in the dark, and is a close colleague of Heart College's President Emeritus and Grand Kazoo, Muche Paranoid. Since Dr Paranoid is well known to be 1000 years old, we figure Miss Kong is at least 900. It's rumored that she also has wings and can fly like bat..... but perhaps only at night, I can't vouch for that one. She dresses in gowns that were last fashionable in the 17th century. Fortunately she adorns(?) herself with a great deal of jewelry of the ostentatious and jangly kind, so we can hear her coming in the hallways and hide.

Miss Ismelda Kong is Heart College's principle ear training instructor. (We've heard that when she's not teaching Ear Training, she also terrorizes the Voice Department... but that's on the fourth floor, and we keyboard majors aren't welcome up there.) Long ago, in the pure and innocent ardor of first-semester freshmen, we thought it was really cool that such an experienced instructor would be our Ear Training professor. Boy, were we dumb!

Miss Kong is not an adherent of modern instructional theories. No, she believes Pain is the best motivator of academic achievement. But physical pain is not fiendishly unrelenting enough for her. No, Ismelda Kong is the

world's foremost proponent of Ear Training as psychological torture!

It didn't seem too bad at first. Our required text was Hindemith's "Elementary Training for Musicians". Innocuous title, right? Well, this is the world's most misleading book title. The exercises in Hindemith's book quickly progress from *Challenging* to *Difficult* to *Grueling* to *Seriously, Dude??* To our dismay, Miss Kong, having sold her soul to the Devil (she got the better end of that bargain), can flawlessly execute every exercise in Hindemith, straight through to the very last page. (Reportedly the Devil is suing Miss Kong for fraud as she apparently never had a soul to sell in the first place.)

By the fourth semester, Ear Training has become living hell. Miss Kong, ever refining the excruciating precision of her tortures, has invented different tasks for different performing area majors. Voice majors are now required to sight-read 8-part open score at the piano, each part in a different clef including G clef, F clef, all the C clefs, and of course the Z clef. (Betcha didn't know about Z clef!) Keyboard majors are required to sight-sing extended passages from Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire backwards*, in presto tempo. (It actually sounds surprisingly similar to more conventional renditions of *Pierrot Lunaire*.) Dictation now consists of chords replete with diminished or augmented 7ths, 9ths, 11ths, and 13ths, played staccato either *pppp* or *ffff* at one or the other extreme ends of the keyboard. And all these activities are constantly accompanied by admonitions from behind the piano (she's only 3 feet tall, you can't actually see her back there) that *real* professional musicians should be able to do these things flawlessly as easy as breathing.

What's this? Grades are posted?? And..... we've all passed Ear Training with a C Minus Minus, Heart College's minimum acceptable passing grade!

Now we can all go on to really important activities as juniors, such as learning the difference between Kirnberger II and Werckmeister 3 ½ temperaments, memorizing the middle names of all of Franz Liszt's mistresses, and analyzing all the principle thematic material is Augustus Theophilus Klingklangel's 221 sonatas for solo Sarrusophone!

Having played my part in its preservation, I'll let this important piece of socio-musical writing stand on its own merits! J.A.

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— David Kim, Concertmaster of The Philadelphia Orchestra



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Positions Available/Substitute List -- by Peter Homon

Editor's Note: We are updating and hoping to expand our Substitute List. If you are available to substitute, please contact Peter Homon, our Referral/Position Coordinator. Please forward or refer any items concerning positions available or substitute needs to Peter at lapajar@yahoo.com or call 856-952-5132.

Positions Available:

St. Stephens Evangelical Lutheran Church, Feasterville - Organist, 2M, 12 R Schantz, 9:30 service, Thursday 7:30 rehearsal, Contact ststephensfeasterville@yahoo.com. (9/22)

St. Peter Church, Merchantville (Catholic) - O, I mass (11:30 AM) with choir, Sept.-June. Choir rehearsal Thursday evening 7:30 PM. Extra masses throughout the year. 3-manual pipe organ, no piano or keyboard. Salary negotiable. Please send resume with education, experience and salary requirements to: Choir Director spcmchoir@gmail.com. (8/22)

Pittsgrove Presbyterian Church, Pittsgrove - DOM, Duties include weekly choir rehearsals, praise band and managing sound system. Knowledge of contemporary and traditional church music essential. Salary range \$8,000 - \$12,000 contingent upon experience. Email ppclerk1741@gmail.com. (8/22)

Richardson Park United Methodist Church, DE - O/D or split position, handbell and adult vocal choir rehearsals on same evening, 10:30 service, recently installed 3 manual Rogers with 20 ranks of pipes. Contact Sherlynn Aurelio at 302-893-5129. Resume can be sent to staffing@rpumchurch.org. (3/30/22)

Holy Trinity Episcopal, South River - O/D, piano skills also helpful, speaking Spanish helpful as well, comfortable using several congregational resources for singing, Rev. Gregory Bezilla, 732-254-1734. (3/22)

Martin Luther Chapel (Missouri Synod), Pennsauken - organist/pianist, pipe organ, baby grand, possibility to begin a choir, 10:00 svc. Contact John Doose at jdoose@hotmail.com. (2/23)

Luther Memorial Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod), Blackwood - O/D, no choir but would like to begin one, 3 manual Allen Renaissance, 9 a.m. svc. Contact Carlo Danesi 609-832-9702 or cpdanesi@yahoo.com. (3/21)

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal, Cherry Hill - Interim Organist, 3 manual Allen Digital, 10:00 svc with a possible change to 10:30, \$150.00 per service. Congregation uses 1982 Hymnal, LEVAS, and Praise Songs. Contact Fred Astmann at 856-424-3820. (11/22)

These musicians are available on Sundays and also for weddings and funerals other days:

Mary Johnson 856-332-8869 (Pine Hill) mebayj47@yahoo.com

Joanne Owen 856-769-3212 (Woodstown area) lbjkowen1982@comcast.net

Irina Nenartovich 856-321-3465 (Medford) irinanenartovich@gmail.com (after 10:30AM on Sundays)

These substitutes are available for weddings and funerals or Saturday work only:

Misty Fiske, 302-535-6398 (Greenwich) mistypenguins@gmail.com

Evelyn Larter, CAGO 856-358-1112 (Elmer) ERLarter@juno.com

Cathy O'Neill, 856-589-0192 (Sewell, NJ) cmo125@aol.com

Marilyn Rabbai, CAGO 856-589-3901 (Pitman) mwrabbai@verizon.net

Matthew Smith, 630-800-8967 (Philadelphia) matt.smith2011@att.net

CHAPTER EMERGENCY FUND

Our Chapter has begun the sponsorship of a fund to provide short-term emergency aid to Chapter members who find themselves temporarily in need of assistance. No dues money will be used for this aid, but tax-deductible contributions will be welcome at any time. A committee of three, consisting of the Dean, the Chair of Professional Concerns, and another member of that committee, will award aid as the need arises. Any Chapter member may recommend a member in good standing who, for reasons such as illness or unemployment, deserves our help, by contacting the Dean or the Chair of Professional Concerns. All cases of course will be confidential. If you would like to contribute to this cause, please send your tax-deductible donation (made out to SWJersey Chapter AGO) to our Treasurer Chuck Gibson, marked for "Musicians' Emergency Fund." Mail to: 691 Willow Grove Road, Monroeville, NJ 08343-4529.



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Finch, Gae

Fink, Ruth

Gardener, Robert

Gassaway, Gail

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Nichols, Victoria

Rabbai, Marilyn

Rhody, David

Robinson, Christine

Rodgers, Glenn

Scara, Robert

Stokking-Perry, Nancy

White, Kathleen

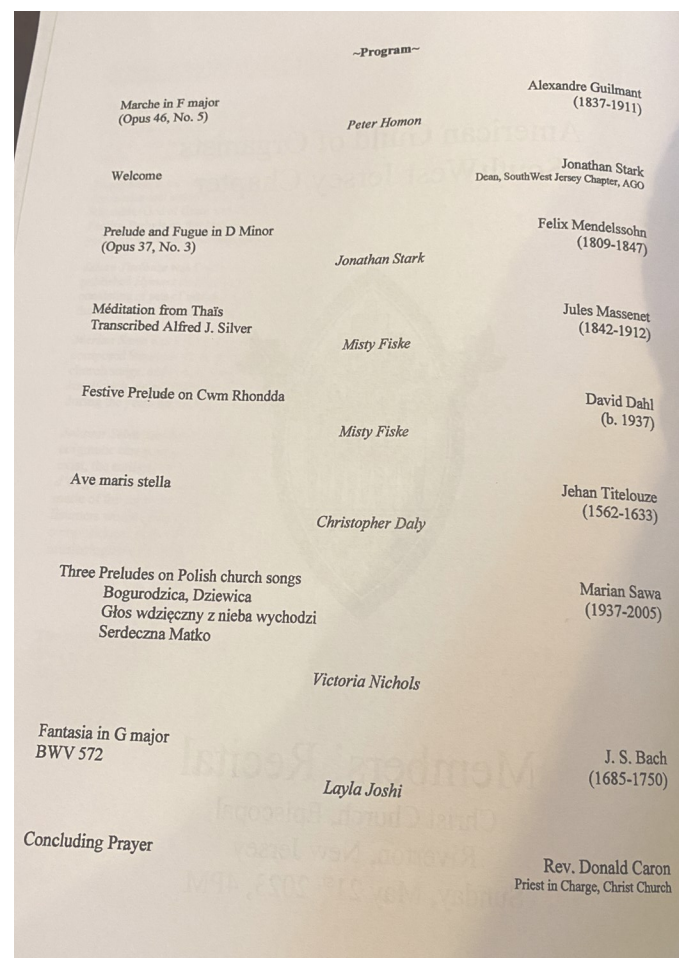
For more information on Professional Certification requirements, procedures, materials and deadlines, visit the website of AGO National Headquarters: www.agohq.org

Thank you,

Patrons, Contributors and Advertisers

Our next issue will be September 2023.

Deadline for articles, announcements, pictures and reports will be Sunday, August 20.



Sforzando is the official publication of the SouthWest Jersey Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. The AGO is a multi-denominational, non-profit organization chartered by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York in 1896.

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SUB-DEAN: Deacon Lawrence DePasquale, ldorg59@yahoo.com

TREASURER/REGISTRAR: Chuck Gibson, gibsonorgntnr@aol.com

SECRETARY: Cathy O'Neill, cmo125@aol.com

WEBSITE: www.agohq.org/chapters/southwestjersey

Dean's Message

-- continued from page 1

Take a course or attend a conference (the March issue of *Diapason* and April issue of *TAO* contain comprehensive lists of summer courses and conferences)

Attend a convention (registration is still open for the AGO Mid-Atlantic regional convention)

Try arranging or writing music (if you're not a trained composer, this can be both frustrating and enjoyable)

Teach a beginner

Find a church service not on Sunday morning and attend (we play too many church services and attend too few. Listening to *someone else* play the service can be immensely enjoyable!)

Go to a concert that's not organ or choral (find an orchestra concert... or somebody's senior tuba recital!)

Watch motorcycle races (what does high performance motorcycle riding have to do with musical performance?

hint: it involves getting the mind out of the body's way)

Go to an organ recital. Go to lots of recitals. (Enjoy someone else's different interpretation. Or be annoyed and challenged by their different interpretation!)

Take all your vacation Sundays (Obviously!)

Sing in a community choir

Take organ lessons (Been a while since you were under a teacher's discipline? Maybe you've picked up some less-than-optimal playing habits?)

Take voice lessons (If you're not a trained singer.... but maybe you conduct singers?)

Learn to play a new instrument

Find a composer you've never played on IMSLP, download and learn their music

Accompany a vocal solo recital (collaborative piano stretches your musical horizons)

Write an article for *Sforzando*

Introduce young children to the organ (There's no purer joy than seating a child at the organ for the first time, then watching them realize that all those controls *do something*.....!!!!!!)

Take a yoga class (We play music via our bodies; do you really critically focus on how your body moves?)

Herd cats (think directing choir members is hard?)

And finally:

1. Change jobs. Seriously. In 2019 I left a parish musician job I'd held for 17 years. I loved the people at that church, they liked me, the pipe organ was small but beautiful, and the liturgy suited me. After 17 years I simply wasn't doing anything new. It was time to strike out in a different direction, and time for the parish to experience a fresh approach from their musician.

2. Quit. Seriously. At least for a while. Life is too short to do something that doesn't motivate you. Earlier in my career, I took three years from music to serve my church in a different capacity. I thought I wouldn't be playing much. But word of mouth spread that a substitute organist was available, and I ended up playing a lot those three years.

And talk to your friends and colleagues. There's nothing to be ashamed about if you're in a rut or a dry spell. You'd be surprised how many of us have experienced the same thing.

Soli Deo Gloria