



The official publication of the St. Louis American Guild of Organists

A WORD FROM DR. SARAH BEREZA

Dear Colleagues:

We are in an unprecedented time. We've had to cancel services before for bad weather, and we've had to stay home ourselves due to illness. But we've never experienced mass cancellations of in-person worship for an unknown length of time. As I write this on March 21st, a "stay at home" order has just been issued for St. Louis City and County, yet another step away from normalcy in our personal and professional lives. In leading the people in our care, and taking care of ourselves as well, we must all lean into a core truth: our congregations believe in worshipping "in spirit and in truth" – in following God with their whole hearts – regardless of their physical location. If we are leading in a LIVE stream, if we're using prerecorded music, people can still worship and they can still follow God. And we, regardless of our personal faith, can still lead and care for the people around us.

To support our care, three considerations:

First, we should lower our expectations, and be gentle with ourselves. We are all coping with the stress and disorientation that new realities bring. While we strive to do our best and make excellent music, now is the time to be kind with ourselves and know that the best we can do *right now* is probably not the same as our usual.

(continued on page 6)



Dr. Sarah Bereza
Director of Music
First Congregational Church of St. Louis



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February Flourish RECAP:



January Jubilee 2018 was South; February Flourish 2019 was West Central. This year was the time for February Flourish North.” The St. Louis Chapter’s **February Flourish 2020** gave evidence of what can develop over time. What a rich, solid, and varied event it was! From the morning gathering to the closing hymn, a spirit of generosity and loving-kindness undergirded the learning that occurred. It was interesting to be at First Presbyterian church and St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church, to hear their unique pipe organs, and to spend the day at two neighboring churches in Ferguson. This year was noteworthy for the collaboration of the St. Louis AGO Chapter with the local chapters of the Association of Pastoral Musicians (APM) and the Handbell Association of Greater St. Louis.

February Flourish Director Dawn Riske, Sub-Dean Cathy Cassy, and host Dr. Bill Wade began the day with a welcome, introductions, and words of inspiration. Heather Martin Cooper played the Bach Fugue in Eb Major on the Casavant at First Presbyterian. Dr. Jim Henry, Director of Choral Studies at the University of Missouri – St. Louis, presented a keynote address which addressed foundation elements of choral singing while setting a positive tone for the day. Organ workshops were offered with entry-level and advanced topics, from “Help! I’m a Pianist and They Want Me to Play the Organ!” to “Improving Your Improvisation I and II.” Choral and vocal workshops included kinesthetic approaches to choral techniques, working with children’s choirs, and a chant workshop. Three Handbell workshops were led by members of the Handbell Association of Greater St. Louis. Finale music software and hymn harmonization sessions were offered by Kevin Uppercue, Managing Editor for ECS Publishing Group. As the day ended, David Sinden, Organist and Director of Music at St. Peter’s Episcopal Church (Ladue), improvised an introduction and accompanied the singing of “O Praise Ye the Lord” (*Laudate Dominum*) on the Wick’s organ at St. Stephen’s Episcopal. Exhibitors from Concordia Publishing House (CPH) and ECS Publishing/MorningStar Music provided valuable resources for browsing and purchase. Over lunch, the chapter registrar and new member coordinators opened the floor for introductions, including non-AGO members. AGO North Central Regional Councillor Dr. Karen Black gave a brief update on current initiatives at the national level. AND – there were door prizes!

76 people attended the conference, including 28 non-member registrants. Our chapter can now count on its rolls, nine new Guild members who accepted the complimentary six-month membership offered by National. Photographs and videos of the day can be viewed on the February Flourish page of our website. www.agostlouis.org

Offering an annual event like a February Flourish would not be possible without the administrative and financial support of the local and larger organization, as well as a committed and competent planning team of 16 individuals. Plans are in the works for next years Flourish set for February 13, 2021 at Peace Lutheran Church in Mehlville, MO.

Dawn Riske (CAGO)
February Flourish Director



Con Spirito

2019-2020 Season
CONCERT SERIES

2019

Oct. 20 Sunday @ 3:00

Hymn Festival:
Let All the Earth Rejoice
Aaron David Miller,
leader and organist



Nov. 10 Sunday @ 3:00

Women's HOPE Chorale
of St. Louis: *Illumination*

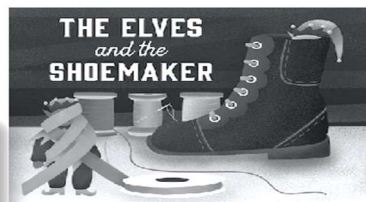


Dec. 8 Sunday @ 2:00

Imaginary Theatre Company:
The Elves & The Shoemaker

Dec. 15 Sunday @ 4:00

Chancel Choir & Orchestra
Christmas Concert



2020



French Friday Organ Series

Check for recital dates



Jan. 26 Sunday @ 3:00

Equinox Chamber
Players

April 19 Sunday @ 3:00

Jupiter String
Quartet

May 4 Monday @ 7:00
Annual Organ Dedication
Anniversary Recital
Bill Stein and Travis Evans



Join us for our
Tree of Life Chapel
Lenten Recital Series
each Friday @ noon from
February 28 through April 10



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF KIRKWOOD
100 East Adams, Kirkwood, MO 63122
conspirito@kirkwoodpres.org



BURNELL HACKMAN
DEAN
ST. LOUIS CHAPTER

Dear Fellow AGO Members:

What an uncertain time we are living in. As I write this letter, Illinois just closed all dine-in restaurants, Missouri may follow suit. My own church is considering suspending all activities other than Sunday morning worship. What? No special music for Holy Week and Easter? Who could have imagined such a thing even a month ago? All I can offer are words of encouragement to those who are faced with these problems. My heart goes out to those who are paid on a per service basis.

After a hiccup, I was forced to stop our on-line election process and go back to the old-fashioned paper ballot. I hope you received yours in the mail and will remember they must be postmarked by April 5, 2020.

We are looking into some live-streaming events on how musicians can support our congregations at this time.

Who knows if our May Annual Meeting will happen? Please check our web-site and watch for e-mail to keep you posted on events affecting our Chapter.

My prayer is that we all remain safe and calm while we weather this storm.

May God Bless.

Burnell Hackman, Dean
St. Louis AGO Chapter



CATHY CASSY
SUB-DEAN
ST. LOUIS CHAPTER

A sincere THANK YOU to Dr. Lynn Trapp for an outstanding presentation on leadership from the keys. His talents are many and reach far beyond the keyboard, as those in attendance can attest to a most enjoyable and informative evening.

Our year is rapidly drawing to a close, with our elections in progress. You each should have received a mailing containing detailed bios of the candidates and a postcard ballot to return with a postmark date of no later than April 5, 2020. PLEASE VOTE!!

Our **FINAL** event for the chapter year is scheduled for May 18, 2020 and will be held at Faith-Des Peres Presbyterian Church. It's our yearly banquet meeting to install officers and present awards.

At this point, we are proceeding with plans for this event. Should there be any changes, we will notify you. Please stay safe and well.

Greetings and Blessings for a Joyful Easter!

Cathy Cassy, Sub-Dean
St. Louis AGO Chapter



EVERY SUNDAY EVENING AT 6PM
HOSTED BY:



Brent Johnson Bill Stein Mark Scholtz

The King of Instruments program can be heard every Sunday evening at 6pm on Classic 107.3 FM, 63.3 HD2 or streaming from Classic1073.org You can also hear it on kingofinstruments.show

The King of Instruments is presented by the St. Louis AGO and the Organ Media Foundation.

Episodes in APRIL:

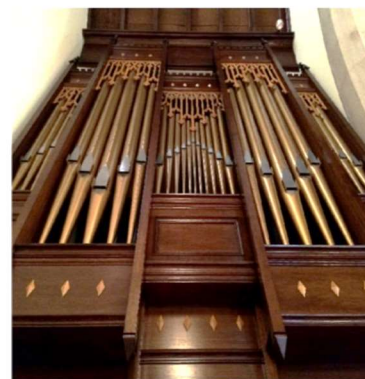
- 5 New Music
- 12 Nordic Niceities
- 19 "N" Composers
- 26 A Little Night Music

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COMMUNITY CONCERT CALENDAR

2019-2020

APRIL

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		2020

With events being cancelled and venues limiting the number of people being present in assembly, calendar events will not be listed this month. PLEASE check the AGO website (www.agostlouis.org) for updates and cancellations and be sure to double check with venues to see if events have been cancelled.

Check out other websites for LIVE streaming of worship services if your church has cancelled services.

(continued from cover page)

Second, let's keep in sight what *we can* do, even in the midst of our grief and loss. We can stay in contact with our communities by calling people in our music ensembles and hosting online meet-ups (such as through Zoom or Facebook). We can produce smaller scale music, such as by recording accompaniments and then sending them to a vocalist for them to record their part. And we can support each other, our colleagues, through this unsettling time.

Finally, what can we learn? I don't mean some cosmic lessons from a global pandemic – let's save those lessons for when this pandemic is in the rearview mirror! But I do mean, what can we actually, pragmatically learn right now that will help us lead our congregations in remote worship? We each have different capacities for learning technologies that are new to us. Having a large dose of willingness to learn, coupled with a dash of pragmatism, will go a long way. To that end, Brent Johnson and I have produced several video guides to audio-visual technologies that are now on our chapter's Facebook page:

(www.facebook.com/agostlouis), and I have posted multiple resources for church musicians to use in this strange time (www.sarah-bereza.com).

I pray we all stay in good health, and that the next OPUS finds us all in at least somewhat more normal conditions.

Dr. Sarah Bereza
Director of Music
First Congregational Church of St. Louis

Pictures from the February Flourish Conference

See more on our website (Photos courtesy of Rene Zajner)



February Flourish Clinicians



Handbell Workshop

2020 AGO POE+ Event

The Rockford Chapter of the American Build of Organists is pleased to announce that it is hosting its fifth *Pipe Organ Encounter for Adults* from June 14-19, 2020.

Dr. Isabelle Demers from Baylor University will present the opening concert on Trinity Lutheran church's Casavant organ. Workshops will be presented Monday through Thursday mornings, and be joined by additional faculty in the afternoons.

Registration is available at www.agohq.org/education/poe/poe-plus. Payment can be made online at www.rockfordago.org/poe or by mailing a check made payable to Rockford AGO POE+2020 to Tim Anderson (4956 Markell Lane, Cherry Valley IL 61016). Early bird registration fee is \$250 by April 14. Full price registration of \$275 is available from April 15 until May 14. Fees include all POE+ concerts, classes, private lessons as well as a catered lunch Monday through Friday.

Discounted lodging (\$109.95/night plus tax) is available at Staybridge Suites, Bell School Road, Rockford. Lodging must be booked by May 14 to qualify for the discounted rate and should be arranged by phone (815-397-0200), please request the AGO POE+ rate.

For further information, please event co-chairs: Jean Anderson (jeancec@yahoo.com) – 815-299-9686 or Trish Ronney (tearooney@charter.net) – 815-985-0143

Pictures from Dr. Lynn Trapps Event in March



L to R: Dr. Steven Ball, Tim Jansen, Cathy Cassy, (Sub-Dean), Burnell Hackman (Dean), Dr. Lynn Trapp

THE OPUS

American Guild of Organists

St. Louis Chapter

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