

# Chiff Chat

The Newsletter of the Lincoln Chapter of the American Guild of Organists

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October 2009

## From the Dean

by James J. Lytton, ChM, Dean

To organ or not to organ?

I watch the church shows on cable channel 13 from time to time. I like to see what is going on in the various churches. And one trend seems to be that the piano is used more often. Why? That is a good question. As a church musician who "grew up" in the time before there were pianos in churches, I do ask why. I have adapted many accompaniments and other things to the organ. It is not really that hard. Aren't we concerned about the organ losing its place in the church? Then it should be used more often, in my opinion. Remember the movie *Sister Act*? They used the piano and I really wonder if that would have been the case in reality. And wouldn't it have been a great shot-in-the-arm for the pipe organ world if they had used the organ for those singing pieces? If we are serious about our profession, then we should try to be an advocate for the instrument. I would also like to include a quote from the latest TAO: "At this point in history, the Roman Catholic Church in America, like other denominations, can succumb to the trends of the times and dumb down our congregations' musical taste and repertoire, making for less than transcendent experiences at worship. I am a firm believer of the post-Vatican II embrace of various musical instruments, styles, and forms of composition within the liturgy. But there should always be quality; and always an organ. We owe it to our children and our children's children to protect and carefully pass on the rich tradition of liturgical music that has been handed down to us." Thus says the Rev. Charles Conley, on receiving a new Schantz organ in his parish.

We welcome three more new members: Roger Bailey who lives in McCool Junction (near York) and has a pipe organ in his home, Anna Toner, a student in Grand Island who attended the Pipe Organ Encounter in Kansas City along with Nolan and Cole, and Paul Bouffard, who has been a long-time friend of the chapter. All three of the students from the POE (Anna, Nolan and Cole) receive their dues as a student in the Lincoln Chapter for the next year through the POE program. Welcome Roger, Anna and Paul!

## Vivian Lytton Memorial Recital

by James J. Lytton, ChM, Dean

Three alumni from the world's first-ever Pipe Organ Encounter Advanced will be playing a recital on Sunday, **October 11**, beginning at 3:00 p.m. at Saint Paul United Methodist Church in downtown Lincoln. The students are: Bryan Anderson, Chris Keenan and Kevin Neel. All three have done some wonderful things since they left Lincoln: Bryan won the Albert Schweitzer Organ Competition in Connecticut last weekend, Chris is in his sophomore year at Peabody Conservatory where he is a student of John Walker, and Kevin is in his sophomore year at Indiana University where he is a student of Jeannette Fishell. All three are excellent players and this should be a great program. A reception will follow the recital. If you heard them at the end of the Pipe Organ Encounter Advanced, you know what superb players they are. And if not, come and find out!

The October program is one which is very exciting. We will be bringing in three of the alumni from the world's first Pipe Organ

Encounter Advanced which was held in Lincoln in July 2008. These students will play a recital at Saint Paul United Methodist Church on Sunday, **October 11**, 2009. The money for the recital will be coming from my mother's estate and will be the Vivian Lytton Memorial Recital. My mother was a pianist who started studying the organ in her 60s and did some substituting in the Kansas City area before moving the Nebraska. She taught music in schools and accompanied the Glee Club in my high school. She would have loved this program and would have attended. I hope to see you there, too.



James Lytton

And in November, we will have a member's recital at Redeemer Lutheran Church. What piece will you play on the recital?

And it is not too early to think about the National Convention which will be held in Washington, DC, next summer. Our own Michael Emmerich will be playing a recital as a "Rising Star" and it would be nice to have some chapter members there to support him. I do plan on attending and I will have attended every National Convention from 2990 to 2010. And that might be enough. If you need more information, go to [www.agohq.org](http://www.agohq.org) and click on Conventions. There is a good discount (\$70 off) if you sign up early.

There is a lot going on!

## Worship Festival at Southwood Lutheran

by Denise Makinson, Director of Worship and Music Ministries, Southwood Lutheran Church

Sunday, **October 11**, 2009 (8:30, 9:45 and 11 a.m.)  
Southwood Lutheran Church  
9300 S. 40th St., Lincoln

We are excited to have John Helgen return to Southwood Lutheran Church as our guest artist again this year for our worship festival. John is a musician and composer from Minneapolis, Minnesota and is making his third visit to Southwood. John and the Southwood choirs will lead in worship on Sunday, October 11 including an anthem especially written for our men's chorus. He currently serves as the Director of Music Ministry at Roseville Lutheran Church. He graduated from St. Olaf College in Northfield, where he studied with Dr. Charles Forsberg and received a B.A. in Music Theory/Composition. He also sang in the St. Olaf Choir and studied conducting with Dr. Kenneth Jennings. His choral anthems have been published by various publishing companies including Augsburg Fortress, MorningStar, KJOS and Chorister's Guild. For more information contact Denise Witfoth Makinson, Director of Music Ministries (423-5511 or [dmakinson@southwoodlutheran.org](mailto:dmakinson@southwoodlutheran.org)).

## Organ Workshop

by John Cooper, Director of Worship and Music,  
Salem Lutheran Church, Fremont

Salem Lutheran Church, located in Fremont, will be hosting a half-day organ workshop the morning of November 14th. Our clinician will be Jeremy Bankson, Associate Minister of Music, First Plymouth Congregational Church in Lincoln, home of the famous Schoenstein organ. The cost of the workshop is \$20, and will focus on congregational playing, prelude/postlude repertoire, registrations, improvisation, and an additional Q and A session.

Salem Lutheran is located in the heart of Fremont, at 401 East Military, in downtown. Our organ was built in 1925, and has just been slated for a major renovation to begin in the summer of 2010. We at Salem hope you can join us. At this time we do not have a definite time set for the workshop, but it will be in the morning. If you could please respond as to whether you can join us, we would be happy to receive your reply. We are looking forward to meeting you soon.

## Lincoln Organ Showcase 2009-2010 Season

By now, hopefully you have sent in your dues for the coming year and have reserved your tickets for the concert season of the Lincoln Organ Showcase. However, if you have not sent in your ticket order form, there is still time to do so. Regular season tickets are \$50, senior/student season tickets are \$30 and children under 12 are free! Single tickets to each of the concerts if you buy them separately are \$15 (regular) and \$10 (senior/student) and are available at the door. Here is a rundown of the 2009-2010 concert season:

<u>Date/Time</u>	<u>Artist</u>	<u>Location</u>
Sunday, <b>November 1</b> , 2009 3 p.m.	Jan Kraybill	First United Methodist Church (2723 N. 50th Street, Lincoln)
Friday, <b>November 20</b> , 2009 7 p.m.	John Scott	Westminster Presbyterian Church (2110 Sheridan Blvd., Lincoln)
Sunday, <b>February 7</b> , 2010 3 p.m.	Ahreum Han	First Presbyterian Church (840 S. 17th Street, Lincoln)
Saturday, <b>March 6</b> , 2010 7 p.m.	Aaron David Miller	Concordia University Music Center Recital Hall (800 N. Columbia, Seward)
Sunday, <b>May 2</b> , 2010 3 p.m.	Jean-Baptiste Robin	Saint Paul UMC (1144 M Street, Lincoln)

## Lincoln AGO Chapter Programs 2009-2010

If you can't make it to the October chapter program meeting, listed below are the other programs for the 2009-2010 season. We would love to see you there! Have you been thinking what piece will you be play for the member's recital? All programs will be preceded by a potluck supper at 6 p.m. except for the October/April meetings.

<u>Date/Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>
Monday, <b>November 2</b> , 2009 7 p.m.	Member's Recital	Redeemer Lutheran Church (510 S. 33rd Street, Lincoln)
Sunday, <b>January 4</b> , 2010 7 p.m.	Organ Workshop	Christopher Marks, organist First-Plymouth Congregational Church (20th and D streets)
Monday, <b>February 1</b> , 2010 7 p.m.	Annual Student Recital	First Presbyterian Church (840 S. 17th Street, Lincoln)
Monday, <b>March 1</b> , 2010 7 p.m.	Choral Workshop	Kurt von Kampen, clinician Grace Lutheran Church (22nd and Washington streets, Lincoln)
April, 2010 TBA	Fremont Organ Crawl with Omaha Chapter	Fremont, Nebraska
Sunday, <b>May 3</b> , 2010 7 p.m.	The Phoenix Electronic Organ	Mark Miller, organist First Christian Church (16th and K streets, Lincoln)

## Trenney Begins Abendmusik: Lincoln Season With Bang!

by Michael Bennett, Editor of  
*Chiff Chat and Publications*  
Editor, Saint Paul United  
Methodist Church

For those of you that were not able to be at the opening concert of the 2009-2010 season of Abendmusik: Lincoln Sunday (September 20) afternoon, you missed quite a performance. In his first recital as Minister of Music of First-Plymouth Congregational Church, Trenney didn't disappoint.

As I entered the spacious beauty and eloquent space of the sanctuary at First-Plymouth, I of course wanted to find a spot that I could hear well. I had thought of some places to sit, but I thought, "It might be more beneficial to sit where I can see," and I was glad that I picked a spot where I could see.

I finally settled four or so pews from the front, finding myself by fellow Lincoln AGO board member Dick Morris, who previously served at First-Plymouth as organist until 1972.

Trenney began the program with Vierne's *Carillon de Westminster*. I had never heard this piece on the Schoenstein organ - and it was incredible. Trenney included in the first half compositions by Dudley Buck, and then an improvisation on poems by Shel Silverstein. He closed the first half of the program with the *Passacaglia and Fugue in C Minor* by J.S. Bach. Trenney received two rounds of applause from the people in attendance for an exquisite first half.

Following an intermission, Trenney opened the second half with Charles Ives *Variations on "America"*. Following the Ives piece, Maurice Duruflé's *Scherzo, Op. 2* which was just stunning.

Then all in attendance were asked to stand and sing the Charles Villiers Stanford setting of *When In Our Music God Is Glorified* (ENGELBERG). After singing four verses of the hymn, and if the harmonization wasn't superb and delightful, Trenney whipped up his own *Improvisation on Engelberg*.

This is where the meat and potatoes really came together. With only a hymnal in front of him at the console, Trenney went through six different improvisations based on the hymn, each one different from another, but each showing different stops and capabilities of the Lied Organ. After Trenney completed the improvisations, those in attendance stood and cheered and he offered an encore, the *Irish air from Country Derry* arrangement by Edwin H. Lemare.

With myself not reading music, but being able to play by ear, I was amazed at Trenney's skill and ability. He is an outstanding, first-class organist with the ability for concert-goers to continually ask for more. Indeed, with Tom Trenney at First-Plymouth, they have secured a winner for years to come.

## Visionary Organist Workshops in Nebraska

by J. Gordon Christensen, Director of Music/Organist, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Council Bluffs, Iowa

*Editor's note: This article was submitted before the September newsletter went out and there wasn't room to include in September's edition - so here is the article.*

At the July meeting of the Lincoln Chapter of the AGO, discussion regarding outreach to organists and church musicians across Nebraska emerged. Included in the discussion was the development of a series of workshops developed through the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension Department under the supervision of Orvid Owens. When the University discontinued these workshops, Zion Lutheran Church in Imperial, Nebraska developed a series of highly successful workshops offered on the second week-end of October in even numbered years. Included in the week-end was a hymn festival on a specific theme, played by the guest clinician. Clinicians included Joyce Shupe Kull; Stephen Hofmann; Drs. Mary Murrell and Quentin Faulkner; and Jeffrey Bleresch. In recent years, a published theologian was present who offered workshops to pastors and laymen regarding the importance of appropriate music in worship. These workshops had an attendance ranging up to 60 registrants. Dietze Music House on "O" Street in Lincoln sent its entire organ inventory to Imperial, selling up to \$1400.00 worth of organ music in one day.

Dean Lytton and the board appointed me to develop a series of workshops that would be comprehensive across Nebraska. At the August meeting, an informal proposal was submitted, including the presentation of workshops in Wayne; Hastings; North Platte; Scotts Bluff/Gering; and Chadron during the early fall of 2010. Grace Lutheran Church in Wayne will host the first of these workshops in September. The Department of Music at Hastings College has agreed to sponsor a workshop in Hastings, presented at First Presbyterian Church in Hastings. Communications are under way with Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in North Platte, First Presbyterian Church in Scottsbluff, and the Catholic Church in Chadron, asking for use of their facilities to host a workshop. Dietze Music House has agreed to send its inventory to the workshops with music for sale. Dietze will send store clerks to Wayne and Hastings with the display.

The full day workshop proposal includes four sessions, browsing time, and lunch on the premises with a registration fee of \$35.00 with reduced registration if two or more registrants are from the same church. Of the four sessions, the first would focus on theology in sacred music; the second on repertoire (emphasizing good music available for musicians with limited technical skills, preparation time, and instruments); the third session addresses music for weddings, funerals, and music for special festivals that would include instrumental ensembles; and a fourth session on leadership in hymn playing, including basic registration, tempo, interpretation. A concurrent session for choral directors should be offered with the organ repertoire session.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Council Bluffs, has offered to print and mail all brochures, with reimbursement from the registration fees. I have offered to be the clinician for the music sessions, recruiting a pastor or priest whose knowledge of the theology of hymnody and the liturgy is evident to present the theology sections. (For the upcoming Grace Lutheran Church, Wayne workshop, Rev. Nathan A. Sherrill, pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Council Bluffs, is the theologian. Our newly appointed chaplain, Father Jerrold Thompson of St. Mark's Episcopal Church on the Campus is a very likely candidate for these sessions as well).

This project has great and far-reaching potential. With the support of the Lincoln Chapter of the AGO, the chapter can have far-reaching and positive influence on the quality of sacred music across the great state of Nebraska.

Questions? Please ask them. I can be reached at [mrc@chase3000.com](mailto:mrc@chase3000.com).

## Submitting Articles

If you have articles for future editions of *Chiff Chat*, please address them to Michael Bennett, Publications Editor, Saint Paul United Methodist Church, 1144 M Street, Lincoln, NE 68508. If you would prefer to e-mail them, you can send them to ([mbennett@SaintPaulUMC.org](mailto:mbennett@SaintPaulUMC.org)). Please refer to the calendar for deadlines.

## Happenings at August Lincoln AGO Chapter Board Meeting

by James J. Lytton, ChM, Dean

At its meeting on August 24, the Lincoln AGO Chapter Board:

--Discussed the chapter's financial situation, which is good, and authorized the Chapter Financial Committee to work with Scott Howerter to improve the investments.

--Discussed members who have not renewed their membership for the coming year. Renewals are coming along well.

--Discussed upcoming programs - Leo Abbott, the September 21 video, and discussed about the possibility of a clergy-organist picnic in June.

--Approved the appointment of the Rev. Jerrold Thompson as the Chapter Chaplain and Michael Bennett as the Chiff Chat editor.

--Discussed the new AmiGos program from National which will help chapters to identify potential donors.

The next board meeting will take place Monday, **November 9**, at 7 p.m. at the Cathedral of the Risen Christ. These meetings are open to all members.

## First Friday Concert Series

by Michael Bennett, Editor of *Chiff Chat* and Publications Editor, Saint Paul United Methodist Church

Exciting things are happening in the First Friday Concert Series at Saint Paul United Methodist Church.

Dr. John C. Friesen, organist at Saint Paul, will be presenting *Eight Little Preludes and Fugues* by The Bach Circle Friday, **October 2**, at 12:10 p.m. in the sanctuary at Saint Paul.

Here's the complete First Friday line up:

\*Friday, **November 6** - Willa Foster Jones, organ and Lily Spader, piano

\*Friday, **December 4** - Dr. John C. Friesen, organ

\*Friday, **January 8**, 2010 - Dr. Mark Merrill, organ

\*Friday, **February 5**, 2010 - Dr. Jeffrey Bleresch, organ

\*Friday, **March 5**, 2010 - Dr. John C. Friesen, organ

In addition to these concerts, there is a bonus concert happening Friday, **June 18**, 2010. The Nebraska Wesleyan University Children's Choir Camp will be presenting a concert in the sanctuary.



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# Calendar of Events - Lincoln Chapter of the AGO

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
<b>Friday, October 2</b>	12:10 p.m. First Friday Concert featuring Dr. John C. Friesen.....	Saint Paul UMC
<b>Sunday, October 11</b>	3:00 p.m. Lincoln AGO Vivian Lytton Memorial Recital .....Saint Paul UMC (12th and M Streets) 4:00 p.m. Abendmusik: Lincoln .....First-Plymouth Church Crossroads Barbershop Quartet contact (402) 476-9933 for ticket info	
<b>Thursday, October 15 - <i>ARTICLE DEADLINE FOR NOVEMBER CHIFF CHAT</i></b>		
<b>Sunday, October 18</b>	3:00 p.m. Pamela Ruiten-Feenstra, organist Saint Cecilia Cathedral, 701 N. 40th Street, Omaha	
<b>Sunday, November 1</b>	3:00 p.m. Lincoln Organ Showcase: Jan Kraybill .....First UMC, 50th and Saint Paul	
<b>Monday, November 2</b>	6:00 p.m. Lincoln AGO Potluck Supper .....Redeemer Lutheran Church (510 S. 33rd) 7:00 p.m. Lincoln AGO Member's Recital .....Redeemer Lutheran Church (510 S. 33rd)	
<b>Friday, November 6</b>	12:10 p.m. First Friday Concert.....	Saint Paul UMC featuring Willa Foster Jones and Lily Spader

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
<b>Monday, November 15</b>	<b><i>ARTICLE DEADLINE FOR DECEMBER CHIFF CHAT</i></b>	
<b>Friday, November 20</b>	7:00 p.m. Lincoln Organ Showcase: John Scott Westminster Presbyterian (2110 Sheridan Blvd)	
<b>Friday, December 4</b>	12:10 p.m. First Friday Concert.....	Saint Paul UMC featuring Dr. John C. Friesen
<b>Tuesday, December 15</b>	<b><i>ARTICLE DEADLINE FOR JANUARY CHIFF CHAT</i></b>	
<b>Sunday, December 20</b>	4:00 p.m. Abendmusik: Lincoln .....First-Plymouth Church Let Every Heart Prepare Him Room	
<b>Friday, December 25</b>	<b><i>MERRY CHRISTMAS!</i></b>	
<b>Friday, January 1, 2010</b>	<b><i>HAPPY NEW YEAR!</i></b>	
<b>Sunday, January 4, 2010</b>	7:00 p.m. Lincoln AGO Organ Workshop featuring Dr. Christopher Marks .....First-Plymouth Church (20th and D streets)	