

Chiff Chat

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

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September 2009

From the Dean

by James J. Lytton, ChM, Dean

Here we go again. Time for another "New Year" although the real new year is several months away. But it is the start-up time for schools and for those institutions who follow the academic year, such as churches. This is a good time to take stock and gear up for, hopefully, another great year.

We have some new faces to explain: Michael Bennett is our new newsletter editor. Michael does a great job with the publications at Saint Paul United Methodist Church and has agreed to be in charge of the newsletter for the Lincoln chapter. Welcome, Michael. And we have a new chaplain: The Rev. Jerrold Thompson! Fr. Jerry is the Rector of Saint Mark's On the Campus Episcopal Church which also offers outreach to students at UN-L. Look for a message from him in another part of the newsletter. Welcome Fr. Jerry.

Congratulations to Kurt Knecht who has finished his doctorate at UN-L. And welcome to Tom Trenney and Brent Shaw as they start at First-Plymouth Church and First Methodist Church, respectively. Tom will be playing a recital on the Schoenstein Organ on September 20. Welcome Tom and Brent. We also have a special treat early in September: Leo Abbott will be playing a recital at Saint Paul UMC as part of the First Friday series. It is on Labor Day weekend, but hopefully many folks will be able to attend. He is on his way to play an "unfinished" recital in Hastings at the First Presbyterian Church. When he came to play his recital last year, the organ malfunctioned. Leo is a fine organist - read about him elsewhere in the newsletter.

And our first chapter meeting takes place on Monday, **September 21**. We will have a pot luck dinner (the first of many), have some news about summer offerings, inspect the new Johannus organ at Our Saviour's Church, and view the wonderful video, "Apparition of the Church Eternal." A word about the summer offerings: we will have a report about Wichita, but I have decided

to include some other offerings as well, including a report from the Albuquerque Regional convention, the OHS convention, the Kansas City POE and the Hymn Society conference. AND, there will be a special surprise for all who attend!

For me, summer is a time to regenerate my energies (if I have any left!). I did attend the Wichita AGO convention as well as the NPM Convention in Chicago (National Pastoral Musicians) and the Hymn Society Conference at St. Olaf College in Minnesota. All three were very helpful in the regeneration process. I especially enjoyed the Hymn Society conference as I have never been to St. Olaf and I really enjoyed that. A special treat there was a Chime Tower which was a tall pagoda-like structure with over 20 sets of wind chimes installed in the top. I sat under the tower for about 30 minutes one morning and it was mesmerizing! Quite an experience. You can see pictures of the chime tower on my pictures site: picasaweb.google.com/jlytton. And four of the hymn festivals are available on the web from the St. Olaf web site: www.stolaf.edu. They broadcast their daily chapel services on the web also.

So, are you ready to start the year? Do you have some new music for the choir, or new music for preludes and postludes? New ideas for how to approach your tasks? These are the things that should come out of the summer. This should help us to do our jobs better and help our congregations to better worship God.



James Lytton

Boston Organist Makes Lincoln Debut

by Dan Ahlin, Lincoln Chapter AGO Board Member

Leo Abbott, Music Director and Organist of Boston's Cathedral of the Holy Cross, will make his Lincoln debut, Friday, **September 4**, at the noontime recital series at Saint Paul United Methodist Church, 1144 M Street, 12:10 pm. His recital will include works of Widor, Vierne, Sowerby and Messiaen.

Leo Abbott is a graduate of the Boston Archdiocesan Choir School, Cambridge, and the Chaloff School of Music, Boston. His teachers include Theodore Marier, George Faxon, Clarence Watters and Flor Peeters, in organ; Naji Hakim in improvisation, and Julius Chaloff in piano. He holds the Fellowship and Choir Master Certificates of the American Guild of Organists, has won first prize in several international and national competitions, and was a finalist at the "Grand Prix de Chartres" in 1984. In 1986, he was appointed Music Director and Organist of the Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Boston, which houses the 101-rank, E. and G. G. Hook and Hastings Organ, Opus 801, built in 1875. Mr. Abbott has performed throughout the United States, in France, Belgium and Ireland, and for conventions of the American Guild of Organists and the Organ Historical Society. He is an active member of the American Guild of Organists, the Organ Historical Society and the Conference of Roman Catholic Cathedral Musicians.

In 2010, Mr. Abbott will perform at Notre Dame Cathedral and the Church of St. Sulpice in Paris. Mr. Abbott will give a second recital at First Presbyterian Church, Hastings, Sunday, **September 6**, 5 p.m. as part of the Langenberg Organ Recital Series. He will perform works of Mendelssohn, Mozart, Liszt, Widor, Vierne and Messiaen. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend one or both recitals of this exciting, consummate artist.



Leo Abbott

A Review of the Saint Cecilia Cathedral Organ Festival by Michael Bennett, Publications Editor, Saint Paul UMC

While Dr. John C. Friesen, Organist at Saint Paul United Methodist Church was away on vacation during the month of July, Burns Davis graced the bench of Bedient Op. 70, and we were thrilled to have her excellent skills filling in the whole month at Saint Paul.

At the beginning of the month, Burns asked me if I wanted to go with her up to Saint Cecilia Cathedral up in Omaha to hear the concerts of the Saint Cecilia Organ Festival commemorating the first five years of the Martin Pasi, Op. 14 Dual-Temperament Pipe Organ. I informed her that I had to work the first two Sundays of July, but would join her the last two Sundays of the month.

As an organ enthusiast, I was thrilled to be able to attend. After a delicious lunch, we started our trek up I-80 to Omaha to hear the recital. When we stepped inside the great cathedral with its massive structure, I was simply blown away. As a United Methodist, I had never stepped foot inside a Catholic cathedral. WOW! What a great building inside and out. As we proceeded to make our way to our seats, I was a little bit skeptical if I was going to be able to hear the organ well enough or not. Wow, was I surprised! I was impressed from start to finish with both recitals. The recital on the third Sunday of July was played by Julia Brown, Director of Music and Organist at First United Methodist Church in Eugene, Oregon.

The fourth and concluding recital was played by Wolfgang Rüsband, Professor of Church Music and Organ at Northwestern University since 1974. While the third recital in the festival featured selections by various composers, the fourth recital featured the music of Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750). Professor Rüsband started off by playing Bach's Prelude and Fugue in C Minor, BWV 546, which was impressive.

Then Professor Rüsband played the first three works in the Schübler Chorales BWV 645-657 which included Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme which is known to us as "Sleepers, Wake." After playing a Polyphonic Improvisation of a Partita on a given hymn tune and a different set of chorales, he ended the recital with Bach's Toccata and Fugue in F Major, BWV 540.

Both of these recitals as well as the first two that I didn't get to hear were outstanding! Following the recitals, the audience members were able to meet Dr. Marie Rubis Bauer, Cathedral Organist at Saint Cecilia Cathedral at the staircase leading up to the organ to take a tour. The whole experience was outstanding and I recommend this Martin Pasi organ to anyone who hasn't heard it before. Being able to attend these recitals solidified for me that we have fantastic instruments in Lincoln and Omaha and the rest of Nebraska and that whenever we can, we should take advantage of the opportunities that are extended to us. Below, are more organ recitals that will be held up at Saint Cecilia Cathedral the rest of 2009 and 2010. Mark your calendars, and invite your friends to come and share the joy and beauty of the Martin Pasi, Op. 14 organ.

Sunday, **October 18**, 3 p.m.

Pamela Ruiter-Feenstra,
Ann, Arbor, MI — a program of
Literature and Improvisation

Friday, **February 5**, 2010, 7:30 p.m.

Paul Thornock, Columbus, Ohio

Sunday, **March 21**, 3 p.m.

Dr. Marie Rubis Bauer,
Cathedral Organist,
a Bach Birthday Celebration - music
of Johann Sebastian Bach and
composers who admired him

Sunday, **April 25**, 3 p.m.

Francesco Cera, Rome, Italy
International Organist and
ancient music specialist

Munchies, a Movie, and More! by Jim Hejduk, Sub-Dean

Join us for our season-opening AGO meeting on Monday, **September 21**, at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, 1200 South 40th Street (between C and Mohawk Streets) where Willa Foster-Jones, Director of Worship, Music and Arts will be our host. After a concert-laden year celebrating the International Year of the Organ, we will be returning to our more normal format beginning with, yes, a **POT LUCK SUPPER** beginning at 6 pm followed by our program at 7 pm.

And what a program it is! We'll have brief comments from members on a number of AGO Regional Conventions (see Jim Hejduk's write-up of the Wichita convention on our website), an open console "have at it" on Our Saviour's new Johanus organ and the movie Apparition of the Eternal Church produced by Paul Festa and presented by Jim Hejduk.

Cited as "mesmerizing," "stunning," "perhaps the finest film ever made," "genuinely sublime," and "spell-binding" by a host of critics across the country, "Apparition..." has also been called "One of the best art works I've encountered about what happens when we listen to music. It is a fearless, intelligent, and beautifully crafted essay on perception." Jim first read about this remarkable film and its accompanying book in The American Organist last spring in a review by Timothy Tikker and immediately thought "Aha, what a great chapter meeting!"

In a nutshell, Messiaen's "Apparition of the Eternal Church" is played for a wide range of various people totally (or largely) unfamiliar with the work and we are privy to their reactions. The listeners run the gamut from Albert Fuller, noted harpsichordist and Juilliard faculty member, his colleague Robert Mann (founding first violinist of the Juilliard Quartet), composers Ricky Ian Gordon and Richard Felciano, and Harold Bloom, legendary Yale literature professor to, well, people you've never heard of. These include artistically-inclined and just plain "man on the street" acquaintances of the film's creator. Premiered at St. Bartholomew's Church in New York in 2006, this is a film which gives us organists certain bragging rights as one of "our" pieces is unleashed upon a group of unsuspecting listeners. Their candid remarks are remarkably revealing.

Your homework? Perhaps play through or listen to a recording of Messiaen's 1932 masterpiece before September 21st. And don't forget the popcorn!



A program of music for the
king of instruments
Sundays at 8:30 p.m. —
KZUM 89.3 FM



Abendmusik: Lincoln

The 2009-2010 concert season of Abendmusik: Lincoln has already begun with a free community sing preview of Johannes Brahms's *Requiem*. This work will be featured on a later concert in the season, featuring the Abendmusik Chorus and the University Singers from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln with the Abendmusik Orchestra. You are invited to see and hear the newest member of the First-Plymouth Congregational Church music staff, Minister of Music Tom Trenney, at his debut on the majestic Lied Organ, Sunday, **September 20**, at 4 p.m. Hailed as "a leading representative of the younger generation of organists in America" by *The American Organist*, Mr. Trenney is a prize-winning performer whose improvisational skills are rarely matched. Tickets for this concert are only \$12 and can be purchased by calling the Abendmusik office at 476-9933. You won't want to miss this concert and to welcome the newest organist to the Lincoln community. What a wonderful way to begin the 2009-2010 year of the Lincoln Chapter of the American Guild of Organists! I hope to see you there!

Lincoln AGO Chapter Programs 2009-2010

In addition to the Tom Trenney recital the afternoon of Sunday, **September 20**, the Lincoln AGO Chapter Programs begin Monday, **September 21**. More details can be found in the article by Jim Hejduk on page 2 in this newsletter. If you can't make it to the September meeting, make plans now to attend the next Lincoln AGO Chapter Program, Sunday, **October 11**, at 3 p.m. featuring three organists Erik Fricke, Chris Keenan, and Kevin Neel in the sanctuary of Saint Paul United Methodist Church (1144 M Street). Listed below are the other programs for the 2009-2010 season:

<u>Date/Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>
Monday, November 2 , 2009 7 p.m.	Member's Recital	Redeemer Lutheran Church (510 S. 33rd Street, Lincoln)
Sunday, January 4 , 2010 7 p.m.	Organ Workshop	Christopher Marks, organist First-Plymouth Congregational Church (20th and D streets)
Monday, February 1 , 2010 7 p.m.	Annual Student Recital	First Presbyterian Church (840 S. 17th Street, Lincoln)
Monday, March 1 , 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, May 3 , 2010 7 p.m.	The Phoenix Electronic Organ	Mark Miller, organist First Christian Church (16th and K streets, Lincoln)

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

From the Chaplain by Fr. Jerry Thompson

Dear Friends,

I was delighted when Jim Lytton asked if I would serve as Chaplain to the AGO! I am one of those fuddy-duddies who actually prefer organ music to other types of instruments in worship, and I'm currently serving a congregation that shares that value - St. Mark's on the Campus Episcopal Church, where Dean Lytton belongs.

Let me tell you a bit about myself so that you know who's serving you. I grew up in a medium-size, probably small programmatic Disciples of Christ congregation. We had quite good preaching and decent music, although not what I have come to appreciate as an adult in the Episcopal Church.

Before becoming Episcopalian, I spent several years as an atheist, and I also worshipped in a large Roman Catholic Newman Center for a few years after returning to the church. I was ordained an Episcopal priest in 1991, and since then I have served several different parishes, including Trinity Episcopal Church, Bloomington, Indiana, where Marilyn Kaiser continues to serve as organist, and Christ Church (Episcopal) Cathedral, Indianapolis, where Fred Burgomaster served for many years. I am currently Rector of St. Mark's on the Campus. Some of you no doubt know Kurt Knecht, who has served as Director of Music with us while working on his DMA; Mary Murrell and Quentin Faulkner were with us before their retirement.

As you can see, I've had the pleasure of working with and learning from many fine musicians. One benefit of these relationships has been an ever-deepening love of music, and even more so, and ever-deepening love of God as mediated through the language of music. I hope that as your chaplain I can offer some enrichment to you, as I have been so wonderfully enriched by the gifts of so many like you. I look forward to getting to know all of you better, and serving God together as we are called. If you wish to contact me, my email is smoc.rector@stmarks-episcopal.org, and my office phone number is 474-1979. (I love coffee and would love to have a good cup with you!)

Peace,
Father Jerry Thompson

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). Please refer to the calendar for deadlines.

Calendar of Events - Lincoln Chapter of the AGO

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
Friday, September 4	12:10 p.m. First Friday Concert featuring Mr. Leo Abbott.....	Saint Paul UMC
Tuesday, September 15	DEADLINE FOR ARTICLES FOR OCTOBER CHIFF CHAT	
Sunday, September 20	4:00 p.m. Abendmusik - Tom Trenney Organ Concert (see article for ticket details)	First-Plymouth Church
Monday, September 21	6:00 p.m. Lincoln AGO Potluck supperOur Saviour's Lutheran Church (40th and C)	
	7:00 p.m. Lincoln AGO ProgramOur Saviour's Lutheran Church (40th and C)	
Friday, October 2	12:10 p.m. First Friday Concert featuring Dr. John C. Friesen.....	Saint Paul UMC
Sunday, October 11	3:00 p.m. Lincoln AGO Vivian Lytton Memorial Recital	Saint Paul UMC (12th and M Streets)
	4:00 p.m. Abendmusik: Lincoln Crossroads Barbershop Quartet contact (402) 476-9933 for ticket info	First-Plymouth Church
Thursday, October 15	ARTICLE DEADLINE FOR NOVEMBER CHIFF CHAT	

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
Sunday, October 18	3:00 p.m. Pamela Ruiter-Feenstra, organist Saint Cecilia Cathedral, 701 N. 40th Street, Omaha	
Sunday, November 1	3:00 p.m. Lincoln Organ Showcase: Jan Kraybill	First UMC, 50th and Saint Paul
Monday, November 2	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)
Friday, November 6	12:10 p.m. First Friday Concert.....	Saint Paul UMC featuring Willa Foster Jones and Lily Spader
Monday, November 15	ARTICLE DEADLINE FOR DECEMBER/JANUARY CHIFF CHAT	
Friday, November 20	7:00 p.m. Lincoln Organ Showcase: John Scott Westminster Presbyterian (2110 Sheridan Blvd)	
Friday, December 4	12:10 p.m. First Friday Concert.....	Saint Paul UMC featuring Dr. John C. Friesen
Sunday, December 20	4:00 p.m. Abendmusik: Lincoln.....	First-Plymouth Church Let Every Heart Prepare Him Room

Soli Deo Gloria! "To God be the Glory"

Chiff Chat is a monthly publication of the Lincoln Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. Editor: Michael Bennett - mbennett@SaintPaulUMC.org



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