



CHIFF CHAT—JANUARY 2021

THE LINCOLN CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS

A tale of organists making a difference...”a light in the darkness”

One of our talented, long-time members, Dr. Louis Reith, reached out to me a couple months ago. Though I have not had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Reith, I have heard how much the congregations of St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church and St. John’s Lutheran churches in Seward love his organ playing. He wrote to me to share a few stories and most importantly to share how much he enjoyed the beautiful music and playing of one of our new members, Dr. Carol McDaniel. Carol studied at both Concordia University and University of Nebraska-Lincoln. I quickly tuned into the livestream from the service at St. John’s church, where she had been subbing for the amazing Paul Soulek. Tears filled my eyes as I worshipped online with the congregation and I felt the power and inspiration in Dr. McDaniel’s beautiful playing!

Not that long before this, I had a wonderful conversation with another longtime member, Art Fliege who has been beloved by countless band students over the years! He recounted many memories to me and said, “Do you ever get the chance to hear Marcia Wiebers at St. Mark’s play? We worked together and she is amazingly talented!” During one of my first years in Lincoln, I got to attend a Christmas service at St. Mark’s UMC and remember the joy and energy in Marcia’s playing as the congregation worshipped!

A retired pastor at Eastridge Presbyterian was visiting me about a month before that and said, “We are so blessed to have so many talented organists in our Presbyterian churches in town! Have you had the chance to hear the organist at Heritage Presbyterian yet?” He was speaking of flautist, pianist, organist and music teacher Pris Kliewer, beloved by that congregation for her creativity in worship!

A few years ago, I had a parishioner from Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church come to me for a few piano lessons. I believe he was related to one of my other piano students. The parishioner just wanted a few so he could hopefully play his grandmother’s favorite hymn. During the lesson, when he learned I played organ, said “Oh you have to hear our organist, Dr. Bill McClung sometime! I always feel so calm and centered as I come to mass listening to his music! When he plays a loud postlude, like on Christmas or Easter, it’s amazing!”

A student of mine who attends University of Nebraska-Lincoln, when I asked what made him want to take organ lessons, shared how he had wandered into St. Mark’s on the Campus Episcopal Church one Sunday and had heard the amazing Jessica Freeman leading the liturgy from their beautiful organ when she served as Music Director there. He still remembered how thrilling the closing voluntary was and gave him joy as he left the sanctuary!

God bless you and thank you for being a blessing,

-Brent Shaw

LINCOLN AGO: A LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS



Thank you Lincoln AGO for rising above!
Livestreaming, playing various instruments, tuning,
maintaining and repairing organs, recording, and
doing whatever you can to make music, masses,
online recitals and worship services happen!

Some of our members:

Heritage Presbyterian, Pris Kliewer

Saint Francis Catholic Church, Dan Ahlin and Elizabeth Lemme

Rotate Mass, Cathedral of the Risen Christ, David Schmidt

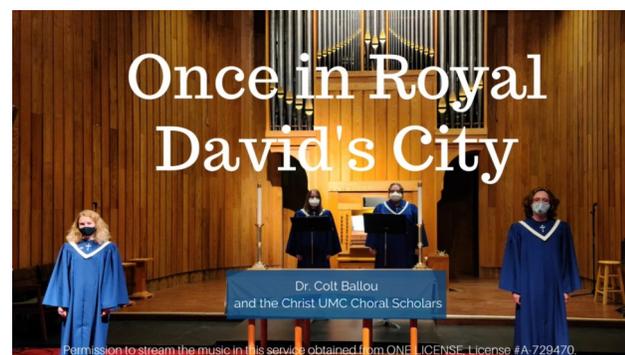
First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Lincoln, Mark Miller, AGO subdean

Southwood Lutheran, Denise Makinson

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Loretta Love

Christ United Methodist, Colt Ballou, immediate past dean

St. Mark's United Methodist, Marcia Wiebers



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FROM THE CHAPLAIN...

“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who lived in a land of gloom a light has shone.” (Isaiah 9:1 – New American Bible)

Some might say that the most recently passed year was a year filled with many different types of “gloom”. It has always fascinated me how humanity so often gets fixated and stuck on all the different ways life has been difficult. I invite you to reflect on what percent of your conversations and what percent of time with friends/family you have found yourself speaking about what is wrong or a struggle in life, in the community, in the nation and in the world. If we are honest, it is probably more than we may initially have thought. And yet, what is wonderful, is that in our current edition of Chiff Chat we encounter some amazing people highlighted for the amazing things they are doing to bring light into the darkness and joy to the gloom. As organists or supporters, our passion is one that can be a beacon of light in the darkness to call people to the simple truth that God’s graces are present here and now. As Christ was born in a stable so long ago in a world filled with darkness, so now, through your efforts in organ music you can be the gently shining star to connect people to the Christ child who brings people back to true sanity, tranquility and joy. May your music illuminate hearts and bring about an encounter with the one whose birth we so recently celebrated. Do we live in a land of gloom? I think not. May your work at the organ keyboard remind people that we live in the light.

Have a great month!

Fr. Troy Schweiger



MEET SOME OF OUR NEW MEMBERS!

Dr. Keith Riese, retired professor of engineering at Union College in Lincoln, NE and one of the several long-time organists at College View Seventh-Day Adventist Church.

Keith has served as a substitute or interim organist at multiple churches in town so you may recognize him! Keith is extremely supportive of the organ students at Union College. Thanks Keith!



Mike Zeleny, Director of Music/Organist at St. Joseph's Catholic Church and Chief of Staff/Associate to the Chancellor at University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Mike oversees a diverse music program of choirs from children and youth to adults. He helped oversee the new organ installed by Bedient Pipe Organ Co. in 2014.



Jacob Mason is a Nebraska Wesleyan Student where he studies organ with Dr. Masako Bacon. He also sings in the church choir at First-Plymouth Church in Lincoln and plays the carillon (bell tower). Jacob was one of the featured carillon performers as part of the "Love looks like this" drive-by nativity at First-Plymouth Church.



Kurtis Bomar, co-owner of the Stem Gallery, which is familiar to many organists! He has provided wonderful flower arrangements for funerals, weddings and more.

Kurtis is an organist himself and served as one of the assistant organists at the Cathedral for many years and often has been heard playing organ at the Newman

Center on Christmas Eve. An annual beloved tradition was the late Joan Smyth and Kurtis sharing piano/organ duets at the Newman Center next to UNL on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.



Dr. Carol McDaniel, who studied at Concordia University, Seward and at University of Nebraska-Lincoln with Quentin Faulkner. Dr. McDaniel has served as a professor of organ and church music at Concordia University Irvine where she currently teaches organ students remotely and has been organist and Director of Music at many churches, including many decades at Bethany Lutheran Church in Long Beach, California. She and her husband recently moved back to Seward where he was appointed to a vice president job at Concordia University. Dr. McDaniel's masterful organ playing can be heard on the Sunday, December 13 livestream from St. John's Lutheran Church (LCMS) where she subbed for the talented Paul Soulek, cantor.



CONGRATULATIONS ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH BEATRICE (ELCA)
on the 50th anniversary and rededication of their organ!

Wicks Organ Co., 1971. 40 ranks, 4 divisions, 3 manuals.

Director of Music Ministries: Erin Blake. Guest anniversary organist: Ben Meyer.

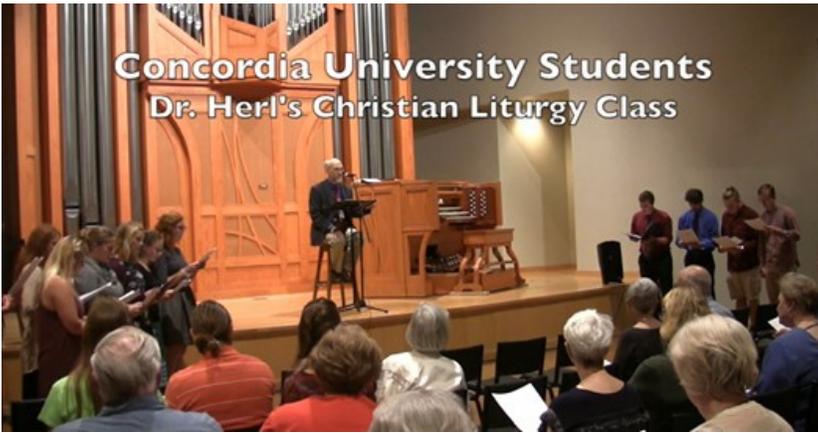
Erin Blake has been the coordinator and chief of music at St. John since 2018. The congregation feels so blessed to have a full time musician on staff and the wonderful music they enjoy is a testament to her hard work to make each week special. The church has historically had a thriving music ministry, commissioning special choral works for various occasions. Cindy serves as the assistant and accompanist. Erin is a diversely talented musician, also involved with the band for the church which had a successful widely publicized Christmas concert outreach again this year, and Erin also serves as a vice president for the Lincoln Music Teachers Association. The special anniversary service and rededication featured a special musical offering by high school freshman Ben Meyer and a video featuring past organists, including Stacie Lightener sharing memories and some music.

The Wicks Pipe organ of 40 ranks was dedicated on October 4, 1970. It is a baroque organ with a swell chamber under expression. It was significant that practically all of the pipes and air chests on the previous Reuter organ (installed in 1952) were reworked and integrated into the new organ at a cost of \$72,000. Dr. Paul Rosel of Concordia College, Seward, Nebraska, was the featured recitalist for the dedicatory recital.

Since its installation, there have been 2 renovation projects to maintain and improve the organ. These projects included adding an 8 foot Festival Trumpet with 61 pipes and a chest, adding digital pipes, rewiring the console, and adding presets.

After the second renovation in 2005, a service of Rededication and a Concert of Celebration was held on October 4, 2005. Dr. John Friesen, organ recitalist from Lincoln, Nebraska, performed six varied, classical selections on the organ. The selections featured the different capabilities of the organ. The 50th anniversary of the organ installation was celebrated by hosting guest organist Ben Meyer, Seward, Nebraska, on December 27, 2020. Ben is a 14 year old freshman who enjoys learning about the organ and has given recitals in southeast Nebraska.





**Concordia University Students
Dr. Herl's Christian Liturgy Class**

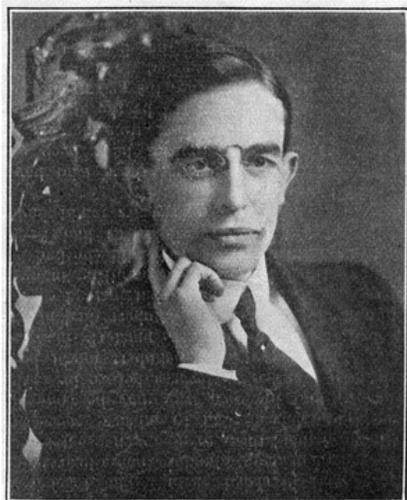
CONGRATULATIONS

Dr. Joseph Herl, published musicologist and composer and professor at Concordia University in Seward has been appointed associate director of the hymn project at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, which he will be able to do remotely while still residing and teaching in Seward, NE. Dr. Herl's book "Worship Wars in Early Lutheranism" is available from amazon and Oxford University Press.



**THANK YOU TO
DR. BRIAN LEW**

For Hosting an OUTDOOR DRIVE-IN ORGAN RECITAL! Multiple sign-up times were available at Eastridge Presbyterian Church with performances and rehearsals over two days for church members, family and friends, and times for the public in late December so people could attend in small groups and park close to the organ console in the parking lot. Several parents with young kids said they were glad to have an organ concert the kids could attend and be as noisy as they want inside their cars. During the nice weather on the Saturday, several people walked by and listened with their pets. Organists shared that they thought it was the first time they had applause in the form of barking dogs!



COMPOSER FOCUS

J. FRANK FRYSSINGER, Head of the Organ Department at University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1911

Thanks to Dr. John Casey for drawing attention to this composer whose works have been on several Lincoln Organ Showcase programs. Many of the composer's works are available free online at imslp.org. After studying in London, he returned to America and was organist of the Emmanuel Reformed Church at Hanover, PA and later was organist of the First Presbyterian Church of York, Pa. He also held the position of head of the school of music of the Woman's College at Frederick, Maryland before going to UNL.

UPCOMING EVENTS—PROGRAMS AND COMMUNITY CALENDAR

January 15—Due date for applications for the Regional Competition for Young Organists (RCYO).

February TBA—Church and Organ Tour at St. Patrick's Catholic Church with Fr. Troy Schweiger.

February TBA—Winner of Student Organ Composition Competition announced.

March 20—Presentation on Historic Instruments and their relation to present day organ stops organized by Lincoln AGO secretary and Executive Committee member Sinda Dux.

April 11—Regional Competition for Young Organists—Videos from our chapter's competitors will be shared online in some sort of recital-type format.

May TBA—video and presentation from the student organ composition competition winner

Spring Arts for the Soul Recitals

Friday, January 22 at 7p.m.—Free Virtual Concert with Yumi Kurosawa, Japanese Koto Virtuoso

Thursday, February 18 at 7:30pm with Lied Center-Free Virtual Concert Hannah Huston

Spring Abendmusik Events TBA—abendmusik.org

Lincoln Boys Choir—virtual performances on their website and YouTube

Lincolnboyschoir.org

Lincoln Symphony Orchestra

check their website lincolnsymphony.com for the latest information

Omaha AGO and Cathedral Arts Project

May 16 at 3p.m. Jan Kraybill, organist, at St. Cecilia Cathedral.

Reception honoring dual Omaha/Lincoln AGO member J. Gordon Christensen from 1 to 3pm

SPRING COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY PROGRAMS— any college programs involving student organists or student guild members that end up happening will be shared via email or on the guild facebook page, whether online or in-person.

SUMMER EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND POE+ and more. There are pipe organ encounter opportunities for all ages and abilities this summer! Check the national AGO website for more details! Of special note are the POE+ events for ages 19 and older for all levels: from pianists who have never played organ to advanced organists with years of experience. www.agohq.org.

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Pogorzelski-Yankee Memorial Scholarships—\$15,000—Offered through the national AGO The Ronald G. Pogorzelski and Lester D. Yankee Memorial Scholarships are intended to support the education of talented young organists who will make significant contributions to the fields of organ playing and organ studies. Applicants are expected to have existing talent and achievements in the field of organ playing and an expressed commitment to post-graduation teaching, performing, or other serious endeavor with respect to the organ. An entering college freshman scholarship will be awarded next March-April 2021. Applicants must also demonstrate financial need and have already completed a FAFSA application for the 2021-22 academic year. The next online application period will be January 1 to February 15, 2021. The AGO Committee on Continuing Professional Education will review the scholarship applications and determine the award recipient. The applicant's present performance ability is necessarily the starting point; however, applications are judged by the potential for future performance excellence at the organ, and whether financial support will make a crucial difference in the applicant's career as an organist. For other scholarship opportunities, see our online list of additional academic scholarships. www.agohq.org



JEANICE FAYE DEVRIES STAHLY.

THANKS BE TO GOD FOR THE LIFE, MUSIC, AND WITNESS OF A LONGTIME LINCOLN AGO MEMBER

September 14, 1935 - November 24, 2020

Jeanice Faye (DeVries) Stahly, 85, of Lincoln passed away on November 24, 2020. Born September 14, 1935 to Tunis and Bessie (Burr) DeVries of Hickman, NE. Married Arlo Stahly on February 19, 1954. Jeanice loved music. She was the organist at Northeast Community Church for over 60 years. She gave piano lessons in their home. While raising their 3 children, she received a bachelor's degree from the University of Nebraska and worked as a substitute music teacher. Along with her husband Arlo, Jeanice is survived by their children Judy (Carl) Peery, Patricia (Charles) Hruby, and William (Mary) Stahly, all of Lincoln; grandchildren Scott (Kaela) Peery and Jeremy Stahly of Lincoln, Nicole Peery of Bend, Oregon, and Kira Stahly of Shawnee, Kansas; great-grandsons Walter Peery and newborn Chase Peery. Public graveside service was 2:00p.m. Thursday, December 10, 2020 at Lincoln Memorial Park, 6700 S 14th St. Lincoln, NE.

Celebration of Life service will be held on a future date.

LINCOLN AGO IN THE NEWSPAPER!

Thanks to all organists who gave to the Lincoln Music Teachers Association Music Outreach fund as part of the Phantom of the Opera Silent Film fundraiser with Abendmusik and AGO member Tom Trenney for his music and hard work. The guild was mentioned in the neighborhood extra in gratefulness.



A special thanks to all AGO members past and present who have been involved in the Lincoln Music Teachers Association and their efforts to teach all children music including Ross Mosier, Marcia Wiebers, Marjorie Underwood, Brent Shaw, Erin Blake, Jessica Freeman, Pris Kliever, Willa Foster Jones, and many others!

https://journalstar.com/niche/neighborhood-extra/lmta-pays-goodwill-forward-to-holiday-of-trees/article_oaf9c0cd-8ee1-5ba7-b258-f4034cd24906.html

In October, Abendmusik, the Ross Media Arts Center and the American Guild of Organists (AGO) Lincoln Chapter joined together in a fundraiser for the Lincoln Music Teachers Association in support of its LMTA Music Outreach Program (LMTA-MOP).

The 1925 silent film, "The Phantom of the Opera," starring Lon Chaney, accompanied live on the 6,000-pipe Lied Organ by Tom Trenney, Abendmusik artistic director, was aired via Facebook Live and on Abendmusik's website. This event resulted in nearly \$1,500 of donations to the LMTA Music Outreach Program, which provides lessons with an LMTA teacher, instruments and free music books for up to 50 children of families who could not otherwise afford a musical education.

"The Phantom of the Opera" can still be viewed and donations made to LMTA-MOP at www.Aabendmusik.org.