

THE COUPLER

The Dean's Message



Dear Members,

I read, a lot. At any given time, there are at least six or so books on my coffee table waiting for me to read them. About three years ago, I made the decision to "cut the cord" and canceled my cable and Internet service. My

"couch potato" days are no more. Instead of watching copious amounts of television and wasting time browsing the Internet, I read a lot of books and I practice a lot of music. This old-fashioned way of life

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Come for our annual Tri-Chapter Twelfth Night Service and catered dinner on Monday, January 4.

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Mark your calendar for Saturday, January 23 for a very informative workshop on AGO certification.

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Start making plans to start your summer at the AGO National Convention in Houston, June 19-23.

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Music @ the Monastery continues with a recital by member Sarah Bereza.

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Twelfth Night Service and Dinner

Tri-Chapter Event

Sponsored by DC, Potomac, and Northern Virginia Chapters

Monday, January 4, 2016, 6:30 p.m.

All Saints Episcopal Church, Chevy Chase

Details on page 5

2015-2016 DC AGO Chapter Schedule of Events

Monday, September 21, 2015, 7:00 p.m.
Organ Recital and Installation of Officers
Mary Beth Bennett, Organist
First Congregational United Church of Christ

Sunday, October 4, 2015, 5:15 p.m.
Tri-Chapter Pipes Spectacular
Renée Anne Louprette, Organist
Washington National Cathedral

Saturday, November 7, 2015, 10:00 a.m.
Pedals, Pipes, and Pizza
National City Christian Church

Monday, January 4, 2016, 6:30 p.m.
Annual Twelfth-Night Dinner and Service
(with Northern Virginia and Potomac Chapters)
All Saints Episcopal Church, Chevy Chase

Saturday, January 23, 2016
AGO Certification Workshop
Jeremy Filsell, Clinician

Monday, February 15, 2016
Presidents' Day Road Trip
Atlantic City Boardwalk Hall
Steven Ball, Host

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DC AGO Board of Directors



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The Coupler

A monthly newsletter
published by the District
of Columbia Chapter,
American Guild of
Organists

J. Michael McMahon,
Editor

To contact the DC AGO
or for newsletter
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Wednesday, March 2, 2016

DC AGO Members' Evensong and Happy Hour
Church of the Epiphany

Friday, March 18, 2016, 7:00 p.m.

Silent Movie with Organ

La vie et la passion de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ

Thomas Ospital, Organist (co-titulair of St. Eustache, Paris)

Saint Jane Frances de Chantal Church, Bethesda

April (Date and Time TBD)

Theater Organ Concert

(Joint event with Northern Virginia and Potomac Chapters)

Jack Hardman Residence, Potomac, Virginia

Monday, May 23, 2016, 7:00 p.m.

Potomac Organ Institute Student Recital

All Saints Episcopal Church, Chevy Chase



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Your Sound...Our Passion

*Dean's Message**Continued from page 1*

may frustrate my family and friends who come to visit, but I have been perfectly content. If I need Internet, I have my phone. If I need to watch a TV show, I can go to the gym and watch it while on the treadmill.

I don't feel like I have lost anything in my newfound lifestyle, but I can confidently say that I have gained a lot of knowledge. We are never too old to learn. I'm fascinated by a variety of subjects, from national history to the latest NY Times fiction bestseller. We should yearn for knowledge and strive to absorb as much as we can. You only have one life to live, so live it to the fullest!

One of the greatest benefits of AGO membership is the educational programming that the Guild offers to its members. From yearly conferences and conventions to practical certification, we

have many opportunities to increase our knowledge. In this month's issue of *The Coupler*, I wish to draw your attention to Dr. Jeremy Filsell's article on AGO certification (page 6). Jeremy will lead the January chapter event, which will be a workshop on all levels of AGO certification. I encourage you to read the article and I hope to see you at the workshop!

I wish you and yours the happiest of all holidays. I am very thankful to be the Dean of a chapter filled with such wonderfully talented members. I will be keeping all of you in my thoughts during this month. Just remember that the music we share means so much to those who listen. We possess a powerful ability.

Your #1 fan,

Russ Weismann



AGO National Convention

Houston, Texas • June 19-23, 2016

The 2016 AGO National Convention will showcase vibrant performances, world-class instruments, enlightening workshops, creative new music, and inspiring worship. There will be many opportunities to meet fellow musicians and create dynamic connections. Come and experience a warm welcome at the Hilton Americas-Houston, at the various convention venues, and throughout this exciting city. This is a convention you won't want to miss! Registration and information at <http://www.agohouston2016.com>

Twelfth Night Service and Catered Dinner

Monday, January 4, 2016, 6:30 p.m.

**All Saints Episcopal Church
3 Chevy Chase Circle
Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815
(Ample parking available)**

Cost: \$20 per person

RSVP to dcagochapter@gmail.com or visit www.dcago.org

Join members of the Potomac and Northern Virginia Chapters for this beloved Epiphany tradition!

The menu for dinner includes hot crab dip with crostini, artisanal cheese platter with nuts and dried fruit, Chicken Marbella, garlic roasted potatoes, parmesan crusted cod, couscous with raisins, mixed greens salad with assorted dressings, oven roasted brussel sprouts with browned butter, rustic bread and butter, and chocolate mousse cake.



AGO Certification Workshop

Saturday, January 23, 2016, 10:00 a.m.

**Church of the Epiphany
1317 G St., NW
Washington, DC 20005**

Dr. Jeremy Filsell, clinician



Why AGO Certification Matters

Jeremy Filsell

In my capacity as Education Officer, your Dean, Russell, asked if I might highlight the certification offered by the AGO. The AGO was chartered in 1896 to administer a comprehensive series of examinations for professional certification, and it did so, following closely the precedent set by the Royal College of Organists in England, for whom examinations had been central since its founding in 1864. Ever since the late 19th century then, both institutions, either side of the Atlantic, have aimed to promote the highest standards of the artistic practice of organ playing and choral directing through their examinations.

In the UK, the RCO's diplomas remain as highly prized now as they were more than a century ago, principally because they

continue to demand a level of technical and interpretative skill combined with stylistic, analytical and historical understanding; attributes which mark the accomplished musician. All young organists in the UK see obtaining the ARCO and FRCO diplomas as career benchmarks - they are highly regarded qualifications and virtually all aspiring organists obtain the Associateship during college years, and the Fellowship soon after. There is no doubt that these examinations' demands are more easily assimilated during one's formative study years than when one is midst profession. However, the advantage for any of us undertaking such a challenge during

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Why AGO Certification Matters
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professional years grants a highly appropriate level of 'in-service training'.

Here in the US, the AGO certification is arguably more varied and extensive than the RCO's with certification available for differing levels of accomplishment. The Service Playing and Colleague certificates are less demanding, but remain good preparation for AAGO and FAGO. The Choirmaster certificate, while offering non-organist certification, still expects keyboard skills to the degree that a rehearsal can be accompanied at the piano. Service playing and Colleague examinations can be submitted by recording and there is no paperwork or aural component. Associateship, Fellowship and Choirmaster involve 'live' examination at local centers, overseen by local AGO-appointed examiners. At present, our local examination center is in Baltimore.

Through the AGO's examinations, all-round musicianship is developed – at the keyboard, the skills of interpretation, sight-reading, transposition, score-reading, figured bass, harmonization and Improvisation are core, alongside aural dictation and paperwork requirements (the writing of a fugal exposition, analysis, the completion of a tonal organ composition, and for Fellowship, history and a rudimentary knowledge of orchestration). This list of demands might seem daunting, but the aim is always to encourage and nurture candidates towards success as much as possible. All the AGO's qualifications are structured in a modular fashion so that they can be gained cumulatively.

Ultimately, and beyond the clear musical benefits to developing one's skill base, AGO certification grants leverage within the job market. Those with AGO certification can legitimately press for salary scales recommended by the Guild (available on the AGO website) and while Masters or Doctoral level achievers can qualify for salary scales in similar fashion, it can be argued that the range of skills developed through AGO certification sometimes exceeds those of graduate qualifications. Were it within my jurisdiction, I would recommend AGO certification as mandatory for all graduate organ students during the time of their formal university studies!

If you are interested in finding out what is required, do consider coming to our DC AGO Certification Study Day in January. We will look at the requirements of the examinations, discuss repertoire and try some practical hands-on work with the keyboard tests. Do peruse the AGO website for more information: A skeleton outline of the requirements is here:

<https://www.agohq.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/TAO-Certification-update-cropped.pdf>

and further details:

<https://www.agohq.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/2016-Certification-Req.pdf> .

Lastly, I might offer that, since past written and organ test papers are readily available from the AGO, the most vital and valuable part of this certification process is one's preparation and study *before* the examination. Have a go!

Members' Events

Friday, December 4, 12:15 p.m.

Friday Music at Midday
National City Christian Church
Marco Lo Muscio, organist

Sunday, December 6, 4:00 p.m.

Christmas Concert
Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church
"Carols and Lullabies," seasonal music

Sunday, December 6, 5:00 p.m.

Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols
Christ Church Episcopal, Alexandria
Daniel Aune, organist, and brass quintet

Friday, December 11, 12:15 p.m.

Friday Music at Midday: *Nutcracker Suite*
National City Christian Church
Carol Feather Martin, organist

Sunday, December 13, 4:00 p.m.

Organ Recital
Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land
Sarah Bareza, organist

Friday, December 18, 12:15 p.m.

Friday Music at Midday
National City Christian Church
Christopher Henley, organist

Thursday, December 31, 6:00 p.m.

New Year's Eve Concert
St. Columba's Episcopal Church
John Hurd and guest organists

Members are encouraged to submit recitals and concerts for public listing on the DC AGO website. Submit your event for web or newsletter listing to dcagochapter@gmail.com

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Organ Media Foundation

There is yet another way to experience great organ music online. The Organ Media Foundation has rolled out its third Internet streaming audio station, The Organ Experience. This station broadcasts classical organ music 24 hours a day via its website at www.organexperience.com. A built-in web player automatically handles connecting listeners to the stream, and complete information about each work being played is displayed on the site.

This station is automated, and generates its own creative playlists. The music is grouped into 30-minute, 1 hour, or 2 hour blocks. The music of each block is chosen based on a specific theme. To give you an idea, a few randomly chosen themes one might hear are:

- German Music on French Organs
- Music from Canada
- Baroque Music
- American Music on Aeolian-Skinner Organs
- Organs by Casavant
- French Music on North American Organs
- Music of Dieterich Buxtehude
- Romantic French Music on Cavaillé-Coll organs
- Recordings from the Pro Organo Label

Some themes are broad, others very specific, there are currently more than 80 different themes up for selection. The information about each block of music can be found on the website, as well as a listing of upcoming blocks.

For each work, the listener is presented with the work title, the composer and dates with a link to the composer's biography, the performer with a link to his or her biography, the length of the work, the organ being played and a link to its specification, the album title and artwork, label and catalog, and links to purchase the album online either as a CD or as MP3 if available. In addition, there are frequently links to purchase the sheet music of the work, and often a link to a free PDF score if the work is public domain.

All of the music heard is from the ever growing broadcast library of the Organ Media Foundation, which currently holds just shy of 20,000 tracks from more than 1500 albums. The Organ Media Foundation is a listener-support non-profit 501(c)3 organization. All of its broadcasts are free to hear, and are commercial-free.

This newest station joins the Organ Media Foundation's other two outlets, Organlive.com and PositivelyBaroque.com. All of these stations have their own web players, but are also available on internet radio devices, AppleTV, Roku, Iphone, Ipad, and Android devices. For more information about the Foundation and it's projects, visit organmedia.org, and to tune in to The Organ Experience, visit organexperience.org.

Music @ the Monastery



Located on forty-four acres of beautifully landscaped gardens, the Franciscan Monastery (Mount St. Sepulchre Franciscan Monastery) is a beautiful architectural gem hidden in the northeast corner of Washington, D.C. Built in 1899 in the shape of a Jerusalem Cross in neo-Byzantine architectural style, the Monastery includes gardens, replicas of various shrines throughout Israel, a replica of the catacombs in Rome, an archive, a library, as well as bones of Saint Benignus of Armagh, brought from the Roman Catacombs and originally in the Cathedral of Narni, Italy. The Monastery's Lively-Fulcher pipe organ was built in 1998 and contains forty ranks of pipes over three manuals and pedal.

Together with the Franciscan Monastery, the DC AGO is proud to support a series of community outreach musical events titled, "Music @ the Monastery". These events are free of charge and take place on the second Sunday of every month at 4pm, followed by a reception. All are welcome!

2015-2016 Recitalists

October 11: Russell Weismann (St. Jane Frances de Chantal, Bethesda)

November 8: David Houston (St. Andrew's Episcopal, College Park)

December 13: Sarah Bereza (Trinity Lutheran, Bethesda)

January 10: Ronald Butts-Boehmer

February 14: Russell Weismann (St. Jane Frances de Chantal, Bethesda)

March 13: Brass and Organ (Brass of Peace Ensemble with Lisa Galoci, Organist)

April 10: Carolyn Booth

May 8: Dr. J. Thomas Mitts (Shenandoah Conservatory and Augustana Lutheran Church)



THE COUPLER

District of Columbia Chapter
The American Guild of Organists

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