



Pipeline

American Guild of Organists—Red River Valley Chapter

Volume 34, Number 3

Jul/Aug/Sep
2020

Message From the Dean

There are a couple of things that have come from the national AGO which we all need to read and hear. First of all, with the cancellation of the national AGO convention in early July in Atlanta, there will be some evening recitals coming up in July. “Read all about it” elsewhere in this *Pipeline*, and take advantage of these recitals. If you’ve not attended an AGO convention before, and even if you have, the recitals are one of the great highlights of the convention—hearing wonderful organists make music on some incredible instruments and hearing some fantastic music (new commissions as well as old favorites).

There is a letter from our national AGO president, Michael Bedford, elsewhere in this *Pipeline* that you will definitely want to read as well. The AGO is not standing idly by during the pandemic and other national events (protests and the like).

Also, make sure that you read the article concerning the upcoming Diamond Anniversary celebration of the Red River Valley Chapter AGO. You will not want to miss any of these events.

It is my sincere hope and wish that all of you are, and remain, safe and healthy. We need the support of family and friends—including our AGO family—now more than ever.

Musically and sincerely,
Michael Olson, Dean

Message From the Sub-Dean

Greetings, fellow AGO members!

I wanted to take the opportunity to thank you for electing me as your Sub-Dean for the 2020-2021 term. I’m truly honored and humbled by your support. This brief message contains some news in the programming area of our chapter as well as some information on the projects being worked on by our Diamond Anniversary Committee and myself.

First and foremost, it was decided during our May anniversary committee meeting that the celebration of our chapter’s 75th Anniversary would be postponed from the 2020-2021 program year to the 2021-2022 program year. This decision was not made light-heartedly, but rather after thoughtful discernment and discussion by the committee. Continue to tune into our Facebook Page (Red River Valley Chapter of the American Guild of Organists) or @RRVAGO for hymns, mini-organ concerts and other content as we gear up for our Anniversary kickoff in September 2021.

Another bit of information I wanted to share is about an independent study I am currently doing through the Music History and Church Music programs at Concordia College. This summer I’ve taken the opportunity to study Organ Literature in the Liturgical Context. After completing a broad survey of organ music by national school and historical context, I’ve begun writing a thesis on how to use organ repertoire practically and appropriately within the liturgy. I’m hoping this thesis paper (which is turning into something more at book length) will serve as a guide for church organists choosing repertoire

for liturgies. It examines the historical context and original purpose for said literature and instructs practical use for it within the Revised Common Lectionary. I look forward to sharing it with you all upon its completion in August.

Best,

Dillon J. Swanson

First Friday Luncheon

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic and for the health and safety of all, the First Friday Luncheons have been indefinitely suspended until further notice. The Fryn’ Pan restaurant on Main Avenue in Fargo remains closed. We will re-evaluate going forward and make a decision as to the resumption of this monthly gathering when we see there is more clear resolution of the COVID-19 pandemic and such time as it seems appropriate to begin meeting again.

Chapter Officers

Dean: Michael Olson,
dean@rrvago.org

Sub-dean: Dillon Swanson,
sub-dean@rrvago.org

Secretary: Bradley Steen,
secretary@rrvago.org

Treasurer: Alex Swanson,
treasurer@rrvago.org

RRVAGO Treasurer's Report

Financial Status of the Red River Valley Chapter of the American Guild of Organists Bell Bank Checking Account for the period of March 31, 2020—June 30, 2020

BEGINNING BALANCE **\$5,552.68**

INCOME:

Date	Description	Amount
4/6	Membership dues transfer for Christian Stromley	\$9.00
4/7	Account verification from PayPal	0.19
4/7	Account verification from PayPal	0.16
5/13	Nat'l. membership - Mark Frisco	41.00
6/1	Orlee Howell Pipe Organ Fund grant disbursement	1,620.90
6/16	Nat'l. AGO membership dues	148.00
6/22	Memorial for Bill Tweten's mother, June Tweten	<u>15.00</u>
	TOTAL INCOME	\$1,834.25

EXPENSES:

Date	Check #	Payable To	Amount
4/3	1001	Under-payment. to MN Secretary of State	\$15.00
4/7	Paypal	Acct. verification from Paypal	0.35
6/1	Transfer	Johnson Organ Co. - Portative organ repair	1,597.00
6/1	1002	Crown Trophy for portative organ plaque	<u>25.67</u>
		TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,638.02

ENDING BALANCE: **\$5,748.91**

A.P. Swanson, Treasurer

RRVAGO Annual Report for Fiscal Year ending June 31, 2020

Balance on hand July 1, 2019 **\$5,222.68**

INCOME:

Membership dues	\$673.00
Grant disbursements	1,620.90
Memorials	45.00
Bank acct. PayPal verification	<u>0.35</u>
TOTAL INCOME	2,339.25

EXPENDITURES:

P.O. Box rental	\$80.00
Sec. of State filing fees	60.00
Portative organ repair	1,622.67
AGO	50.00
Bank acct. PayPal verification	<u>0.35</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	1,813.02

Profit (Loss)

Balance on hand June 30, 2020 **526.23**
\$5,748.91

A.P. Swanson, Treasurer

Chapter Election Results

Congratulations to the incoming chapter officers who were elected in April, and have taken office as of July 1st! They are Michael Olson, Dean; Dillon Swanson, Sub-Dean; Bradley Steen, Secretary; and Alex Swanson, Treasurer. Thank you to the officers who served during the 2019-20 year (Michael Olson, Dean; Robyn Vinje, Sub-Dean; Bradley Steen, Secretary; Bradley Steen, Treasurer (first half of the year). and Alex Swanson, Treasurer (second half of the year). Bradley Steen has also finished off a number of years as Chapter Administrator (person who maintains our chapter's online communication with AGO Headquarters).

New Facebook Page for RRVAGO

After several failed attempts to reclaim the chapter's old Facebook page, a new one was created on April 4, 2020. Please check it out, like, and follow it if you haven't already. Search for "Red River Valley Chapter of the American Guild of Organists" or "@RRVAGO". We have been, and will continue to post organ music videos to the page to keep our audience and members involved and active during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the page will also be used as a general chapter news outlet.

New Officer Email Addresses and Coming Soon...An RRVAGO Website!

During the past few months, chapter member Jean Hellner has been graciously donating time to create a chapter website, the completion of which will be announced in an upcoming issue of the *Pipeline* (thank you to Ryan Hardy who was consulted during the process). (Continued on Page 3)

(continued from Page 2) Through this new website, each chapter officer has received an office-specific email address which will be maintained from here on forward, so they may be used for contacting officers individually.

They are as follows:

Dean: **dean@rrvago.org**

Sub-Dean: **sub-dean@rrvago.org** (note the hyphen)

Secretary: **secretary@rrvago.org**

Treasurer: **treasure@rrvago.org**

Eventually, all notifications from the chapter secretary, such as First Friday Lunch notices, will be coming from the secretary's address listed above.

Please add all four of these email addresses to your contacts, or at least safe senders list.

Ruth Berge Honored



Some of you may have been aware that May 22, 2020 would have been the 100th birthday of our former Chapter Dean and Sub-Dean, Ruth Berge, who is fondly remembered by many as an organ instructor, very active chapter member, and friend.

Coincidentally, the chapter Diamond Anniversary Committee decided around the time of her birthday, that the anniversary history book will be dedicated to her memory. More information about Ruth and her musical accomplishments will be found in the book once it is published.

Membership Dues are Due

Now more than ever, there is a need for us to stand together and support each other. The mission of the American Guild of Organists is to foster a thriving community of musicians who share their knowledge

and inspire passion for the organ. The vision of the American Guild of Organists is to engage, support, and uplift every organist.

The AGO needs your support by renewing your AGO membership. Dues may be conveniently paid through ONCARD on the national AGO website. Your dues include membership in the national organization, your local chapter, and a one-year subscription to THE AMERICAN ORGANIST magazine (TAO), providing access to all of the Guild's programs, services, and member benefits.

All renewal notices are being sent by email. The quickest way to renew your membership is payment by credit card.

Instructions to renew on line by Credit Card are as follows:

1. Go to www.agohq.org
2. Click on Member Login (in top right hand corner)
3. Enter your username and password
4. Click on "Renew Dues and Subscriptions"
5. Follow the prompts

Instructions for payment by Credit Card over the Phone are as follows:

1. Please call AGO headquarters at (212) 870-2310 and they will be happy to assist you in renewing your membership.

When you renew your membership, please consider including a tax-deductible contribution to the AGO. The Guild relies on contributions from our members to support and sustain educational programs on both the local and national level. No gift is too small to make a difference.

We encourage you to review the information on the headquarters website regarding the resources for organists during the pandemic found at <https://www.agohq.org/responding-to-covid-19/>

Annual membership dues are due for the majority of chapter members this time of year, but I'm seeing most chapter members have already renewed them (great news!) You are all encouraged to invite a friend or friends to join our AGO chapter, regardless of which level of membership they choose.

Thank you for your continuing support by taking a moment to renew today.

RRVAGO Chapter Portative Organ is Restored

For many chapter members, our chapter's portative organ has been but a faint memory. Still somewhat of a newcomer to the chapter, I was only vaguely aware of the instrument until recently, and through my involvement with the anniversary committee, I decided to investigate what sounded to me like a real treasure to the chapter.

With the help of chapter members and old issues of the *Pipeline*, here is what I was able to discover about the instrument's origins. It was built through grant money by the Johnson Organ Company, Inc. of Moorhead (then of Fargo) in 1989. Throughout the years, it was used by the chapter as a demonstration instrument at various events, and it has been particularly useful in educating children of the sound and construction of the pipe organ.

Found on the instrument are 40 pipes (previously 35) and one manual, consisting of 2½ octaves of an 8' Principal rank, and one demonstration note (middle C) for each of the following ranks: Krummhorn, Oboe, Trumpet, Gedackt, Gemshorn, Salicional, and Mixture IV (4 pipes). The Salicional and Gemshorn are also tuned so they sound as a celeste when played together so as to demonstrate the celeste phenomenon.

At some point, the portative organ fell into disuse and it was most recently stored at First Presbyterian Church of Fargo until July, 2015 when Lance Johnson brought it to his shop in Moorhead. It rested there until this spring, when it was decided to pursue grant money which would be used to make the necessary repairs to the instrument.

A grant application was filled out and submitted, and grant money in the amount of \$1,620.90 was awarded to our chapter from the Orlee Howell Pipe Organ Fund at the F-M Area Foundation in Fargo.

Lance Johnson, President and Treasurer of the Johnson Organ Company firm, built the missing bottom five notes of the 2½-octave Principal 8' on the portative organ, constructing them out of wood and voicing them to match the metal pipes which make up the rest of the rank. A plaque was made which will be affixed to the instrument, which indicates the years of construction, builder, and owner of the instrument.

One of our newest chapter members, Mark Frisco, has generously offered to store the instrument at his church, Dilworth Presbyterian Church in Dilworth, to where it has now been moved. I look forward to seeing the chapter utilize this asset once again, and it will be especially useful to display and demonstrate as part of our upcoming 75th anniversary activities.

Alex Swanson



Front view



Back view

Getting to Know Your New Officers

DILLON J. SWANSON, Sub-Dean, of Fargo, North Dakota, is a third-year student at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota. At Concordia, he is majoring in Organ Performance while also working on a minor emphasis in Church Music.

His love for music began at a very young age as he would watch his aunt play both piano and organ. Once he started school, Dillon began piano lessons and later began playing the organ at age 8. Dillon has served as organist and music director in many churches in North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota. He has also performed as a touring concert organist on many instruments in South Dakota, North Dakota and Minnesota.

Dillon's current appointments include Chapel Musician and Director of the Concordia Schola at Concordia College in Moorhead, MN and Organist at Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Moorhead, MN. Dillon is also an active member of the Red River Valley Chapter of the America Guild of Organists where he serves on the events committee planning the 75th Anniversary Celebrations of the Chapter as chairman as well as Sub-Dean for the 2020-2021 program year. After finishing his studies at Concordia, Dillon hopes to continue his academic journey in organ performance and sacred music.



ALEX SWANSON, Treasurer. Greetings to you all, and for those of you who don't know me, allow me to tell you a bit about myself.



I was raised on a fifth-generation family farm north of Moorhead, MN in the Oak Mound Community near Kragnes. I attended the Oak Mound Congregational Church as a child and began playing for Sunday School around age 7 while still a Sunday School student. This included occasionally accompanying congregational hymns at Christmas and Children's Day programs.

My maternal grandmother, a lifelong church organist, gave me my first few organ lessons when I was 10 and it was then I began playing for parts of church services, playing for my first full service when I was 12. I was fortunate enough to become the organist at my beloved Oak Mound Church for one year before it closed in July, 2011. My family then joined North Buffalo Lutheran Church in Kragnes township where I have been a substitute organist since I was 12, and have also played for the choir and Sunday School over the years.

During high school, I began my present habit of subbing all over the F-M area and have enjoyed the musical variety it has brought. Most of my formal organ training has come from none other than our chapter Dean, Michael Olson, and I also took a few lessons from Gaylord Fagerland.

I had always been fascinated by the Mighty Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ at the Fargo Theatre, and joined the Red River Theatre Organ Society (RRTOS) at age 16, serving as a house organist from 2012-16. I have served as president, vice president, and am currently treasurer of the RRTOS. What little training I have in theatre organ has come from lessons with Lance Johnson and Tyler Engberg, consulting with friends, and watching many YouTube videos.

I purchased my great-grandparents' farm with my younger brother in 2017 (across the road from where we grew up), have lived there since, and I am employed as an intern funeral director at West Funeral Home in West Fargo.

Aside from music, my other biggest hobby is collecting and restoring old tractors and farm equipment, mostly two-cylinder John Deeres and a few Minneapolis-Molines. For those of you who know that I own about a half dozen organs (both reed and electronic), you would probably be more baffled to know that I also own ten tractors!

I had wanted to join our AGO chapter since I was a teenager, and finally did so in 2017, and have enjoyed the great music, long-lasting friendships which have been established.

RRVAGO Diamond Anniversary Committee—March 21, 2020

Due to the increased cancellation of public activities in response to the Covid-19 outbreak, the regular meeting of the RRVAGO Diamond Anniversary Committee that was to take place on March 24th has been postponed indefinitely by the decree of Dillon Swanson, Chairman.

It is the hope that the committee will be able to meet in person sometime in the near future and until then, committee and sub-committee members will continue to work on their tasks until such a rescheduled meeting takes place.

Alex Swanson, Committee Secretary

RRVAGO Diamond Anniversary Committee—April 9, 2020

A regular meeting of the RRVAGO Diamond Anniversary Committee was held via Zoom (live video conference) due to the Covid-19 pandemic quarantine restrictions. Those present included Dillon Swanson, Alex Swanson, Michael Olson, Jean Hellner, Ryan Hardy. Absent were Sue Clambey, Bradley Steen, Jim Gurney.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Dillon Swanson at 3:13 p.m.

Michael Olson moved to accept the secretary's report as printed in the *Pipeline*, seconded by Ryan Hardy; motion carried.

Committee Reports:

History & Archives: Jean Hellner will seek permission to gain access to the MSUM archives so the proper materials may be accessed to begin writing the history book. Alex Swanson is writing letters to former members asking them for memorabilia and stories they could contribute to the archives and history book project. An article asking for chapter memorabilia was published in the *Pipeline*.

Alex mentioned that the History & Archives Committee would like to dedicate the history book to Ruth Berge, a charter member and several-term chapter Dean, Sub-Dean, and overall long-time supporting member.

Programming & Advertising: Dillon Swanson reported on the hymn festival, as he has drafted a bulletin for the event. He suggested that the festival have a theme centering around our chapter's history, what our current mission is, and where we'd like to be in the future as an organization.

Jean mentioned that a string ensemble could be put together if needed during the program year.

Dillon asked for people to respond to the bulletin rough draft he sent out earlier, including which hymn they would like to play, and any other suggestions they might have.

Dillon has talked to Scott Mehlhaff at Holy Rosary Catholic Church in Detroit Lakes and he has confirmed the date for our French organ music recital.

Old Business:

The Hymn Festival location was discussed. St. Joseph Church holds a weekly Saturday Evening Mass which would likely constrain the festival schedule. Dillon has checked with Trinity Lutheran Church in Moorhead and they have approved of the date, though they are not officially scheduling that far ahead yet due to the pandemic.

Alex Swanson moved to change the hymn festival location to Trinity Lutheran Church in Moorhead, and to hold Rebecca Groom te Velde's workshop at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Moorhead, also changing the organ crawl date to match Rebecca's workshop date. This was seconded by Ryan Hardy; motion carried.

New Business:

Alex and Dillon have created a new Facebook page for the chapter (@RRVAGO) and it is already approaching 180 likes after a mere few days of existence. Eventually we may ask the national AGO if they could help us get the old Facebook page removed, as we have completely lost access to it.

Jean asked if we could get a website for our chapter. This was well-received and Alex mentioned that user domain www.rrvago.org is available. It was decided that Jean and Alex will look into creating the chapter website, using the address rrvago.org. Ryan Hardy will be consulted for advice. He has suggested going through Wix and not using Weebly.

Alex mentioned that we have a new member, Chris Strombley, who has transferred to our chapter from the Twin Cities Chapter. A welcome letter has been sent to him. (continued on Page 7)

(continued from Page 6) It was mentioned that today is the actual 75th anniversary of the chapter as it was founded on April 9, 1945.

Dillon has been put in charge of the Evensong event at Gethsemane Cathedral, which will take place in November. He will send out a list of what would need to be played by our members for the British organ music we will be providing for the event.

Alex mentioned that he has created a chapter letterhead and thinks that the Programming & Advertising Committee could send out invitations to former members and other interested parties for the anniversary year festivities. Many sources containing membership records exist. Alex and the committee will work on this.

The next meeting date of the Diamond Anniversary Committee will be on Tuesday May 5, 2020 at 7:00 p.m., likely via Zoom.

Dillon suggested that we post musical videos of chapter members' performances to our Facebook page to keep people engaged in our chapter's activities, especially during the pandemic. This was agreed upon and Dillon and Ryan will work on this.

Ryan suggested moving the Pedals, Pipes, and Pizza event minus the Evolution of Movie Music Concert to March, 2021. This has been decided tentatively.

Michael volunteered to allow us to stream his Wednesday concerts to the chapter Facebook page. He will also line up the October piano-organ duo.

There being no further business, Alex Swanson moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Dillon Swanson. The motion carried and meeting adjourned at 4:06 p.m.

Alex Swanson, Secretary

RRVAGO Diamond Anniversary Committee—June 9, 2020

A regular meeting of the RRVAGO Diamond Anniversary Committee was held in Dillon Swanson's new apartment on the above date. Members present via in-person and virtually through Zoom included Alex Swanson, Dillon Swanson, Ryan Hardy, Michael Olson, Jean Hellner and Bradley Steen. Absent were Jim Gurney and Sue Clambey.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Dillon Swanson at 7:16 p.m. Alex Swanson moved to approve the agenda as printed, seconded by Michael Olson; motion carried. The chairman's report was given by Dillon Swanson. The secretary's report was given by Alex Swanson. Ryan Hardy moved to approve both reports as read, seconded by Jean Hellner; motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Archives & History—Jean Hellner visited with Peter Nygaard, and he does not have any program bulletins, but there are many in the chapter archives. He provided a lot of information on Ruth Berge and Roy Stahl. Peter would like to proof-read the articles before they are printed.

Alex Swanson added that he and Jean have started the chapter history book. Dillon Swanson mentioned that Judy Sanders could also contribute to the history book.

Jean is sending a letter to Kevin Wallevand of WDAY about the possibility of creating a documentary on the chapter's 75th anniversary and the pipe organs of the Red River Valley. Dillon added that some of the significant instruments of the area and their current and former organists could be featured in such a documentary.

Programming & Advertising—Dillon Swanson is currently contacting venues where we were scheduled for and asking to move our events back a year into 2021, with some difficulty. The adopted programming schedule for the anniversary year will be adapted to fit 2021-22.

Dillon is also going to meet with the planning committee for the Christmas Carol Ring and Sing to help introduce more organ involvement with the program.

Bradley Steen moved that the committee reports be accepted, seconded by Dillon Swanson; motion carried.

Old Business:

None. (continued on page 8)

(continued from Page 7)

NEW BUSINESS:

A discussion was held on what content our chapter will be presenting to the public to maintain our public presence throughout the remainder of the pandemic. So far, a hymn-sing and piano-organ duets have been streamed on the chapter's Facebook page. Ryan Hardy volunteered to provide equipment and expertise in setting up live-streaming equipment for our summer content. Andrew Steinberg would like our chapter organists to be involved with his Halloween Spooktacular at Trinity Church this October. Michael Olson's Wednesday noon recitals could be streamed as well, and more hymn-sings and piano-organ duets would be featured.

Jean suggested that we create a document on Google Drive, on which to brainstorm our upcoming programming ideas. Alex moved to approve the programming plan as described above, seconded by Michael Olson; motion carried.

The next meeting of the diamond anniversary committee will be Tuesday, August 11, 2020 at 7:00 p.m., location to be determined, with a Zoom option available.

There being no further business, Alex Swanson moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Jean Hellner. Motion carried and meeting adjourned 8:08 p.m.

Alex Swanson, Secretary

Open Position for Director of Worship Ministries

Dilworth Lutheran Church seeks a faithful leader to serve as their first Director of Worship Ministries. The Director of Worship Ministries will provide innovative leadership and oversight to the music ministry programs at Dilworth Lutheran (ELCA); engaging new leadership and providing faith formation through music ministries.

Some responsibilities would include participating in staff meetings and Worship & Music committee meetings, networking in the community and with other churches to develop and share resources and provide for community music opportunities. Minimum qualifications are a High School Diploma or equivalent, 3 years of music ministry experience or equivalent education, and demonstrated communication and leadership experience.

Dilworth Lutheran is a growing congregation, focused on sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ through discipleship and stewardship. Inquiries, resumé and cover letter should be sent to Pastor Elizabeth Hiller at pastorelizab@dilworthlutheran.org.

For a complete and detailed job description go to <https://www.dilworthlutheran.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Director-of-Worship-Ministries.pdf>.



News From AGO National Headquarters

2020 National Election Results

NATIONAL OFFICERS and NATIONAL COUNCILLORS

President: Michael Bedford, AAGO, ChM

Vice President/Councillor for Competitions and New Music: Jonathan Ryan, FAGO, ChM

Secretary/Councillor for Communications: Leslie Wolf Robb, CAGO

Treasurer/Councillor for Finance and Development: John S. Dixon, CAGO

Councillor for Education: Vincent Carr, AAGO, ChM

Councillor for Conventions: Nicole Marane

Councillor for Young Organists: Jillian Gardner

REGIONAL COUNCILLORS

Great Lakes Region: Caron Farmer, AAGO

Mid-Atlantic Region: Wayne L. Wold, AAGO

North Central Region: Karen Black

Northeast Region: Leslie C. Smith, CAGO

Southeast Region: Sue Mitchell-Wallace, FAGO

Southwest Region: Sheryl Sebo, AAGO

West Region: Skye Hart

The newly elected 2020-22 National Council will look very different from the 2018-20 Council, as a majority of the members will be serving their first terms in positions they have never previously held. Only two of the eight nationally elected members of the 2018-20 AGO National Council were eligible to be renominated. AGO President Michael Bedford, reelected to serve a third term, is the only incumbent returning to the same office.

The AGO membership overwhelmingly approved a bylaws amendment to appoint an AGOYO member to the National Council as Councillor for Young Organists, increasing the number of voting members on Council to nine. Jillian Gardner who served as a nonvoting AGOYO representative to both the NC and the BRC this past term, was elected to the new position and will now serve with both voice and vote.

Total vote counts and election statistics will be published in the July issue of *The American Organist*.

From AGO President, Michael Bedford

The American Guild of Organists recognizes and affirms that Black Lives Matter. We call upon every chapter and all of our members to speak out against racial bias and take action to make the world a better, safer, and more secure place for the members of the Black community.

Now is the time for us to search our souls for ways to be more caring, to be better brothers and sisters to our Black colleagues, and to demonstrate our unwavering support for their professional advancement and success.

The tragic murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis on May 25, the equally senseless killing of Rayshard Brooks in Atlanta on June 12, and the death and injury of so many others are heartbreaking and inexcusable. We extend our condolences to their families and friends, and we stand in solidarity with the countless thousands of people around the world who have marched to protest systemic racism against the African-American community.

It is our turn to step up to the challenge. We must listen to diverse voices in crafting solutions to our problems. We must reach out to find new partners to help us chart the best path forward. We must engage.

Sincerely yours,

Michael Bedford, AAGO, ChM

President

From Elizabeth George at AGO Headquarters

As I write this newsletter, I cannot ignore the violence and unrest that is happening throughout our world. Many are marching, kneeling, laying down on streets and on highways in support of those who continue to encounter prejudice, inequality, and racism. We cannot stand by silently while acts of violence explode throughout our nation. I believe that we are our brother's keeper and that we must act with compassion and care to support the dignity of everyone in our society. In the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, "Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that." Together, let us use the collective power of our music to help heal the divisiveness, eliminate the fear and eradicate the injustice that pervades our communities.

Elizabeth George, CMM

Director of Member Engagement and Chapter Development

AGO



The American Guild of Organists is thrilled to announce the first online **OrganFest**, which will take place July 20-24. Each evening's broadcast will premiere a new work which had been commissioned for the 2020 National Convention in Atlanta, accompanied by interviews with the composers.

Featured performers will be Jens Korndörfer, Amanda Mole, Alan Morrison, Thomas Ospital, and Catherine Rodland. Additional recorded performances by recent international organ competition winners will be presented, and short presentations will share exciting news and updates from the AGO.

The daily YouTube premiere (8pm Eastern) and accompanying Festival website will be available at no charge.

OrganFest 2020 promises to be an exciting way to showcase our beloved instrument and the great work of the AGO. Please share this information widely with your music-loving friends.

While we are saddened by the cancellation of many musical events this spring and summer, including our National Convention in Atlanta, we look forward to celebrating the future of organ music together online this month.

F. Anthony Thurman, DMA

Director of Development and Communications



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Publication Title: *Pipeline*
Issue Date: Jul/Aug/Sep 2020
Statement of Frequency: Quarterly
Editor: Ruth Discher

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