September Program

Introducing Children to the Organ: Methods and Practice

A Presentation by Wayne Leupold of Leupold Music Publishers

Saturday September 21, 2019:
9:00 AM Coffee and pastries
9:30 AM Workshop

Christ Lutheran Church
4519 Providence Road
Charlotte, NC 28226

Wayne Leupold, of Leupold Music Publishers, will present his organ methods for introducing the organ to young children, as well as to students of all ages. We will have an opportunity to purchase his materials.

"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."
Nancy Watson,  
Charlotte Chapter Dean  

E-mail: watsonndh@gmail.com  
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From the Dean’s Corner  

Have you ever taught piano lessons? If you have OR if you haven’t, you can teach organ! You need to come to our Saturday morning September 21st AGO program. Wayne Leupold, founder and owner of Leupold Music Publishers, will be with us to show us his novel approach to teaching people of all ages—including even something for pre-schoolers. These books are designed for children in Preschool and lower elementary to introduce them to the organ.

*The Adventures of Melodia and Major Octave, Volume 1: A Leak in the Reservoir!*

*The Adventures of Melodia and Major Octave, Volume 2: A Sticky Tracker*

“Organ Activity-Educators are wonderful materials to introduce the organ to children in junior choir curriculums; summer vacation Bible schools; at Pipes, Pedals, and Pizza; POEs; and other similar events sponsored by AGO chapters.” Leupold Publishers website.

*The Adventures of Melodia and Major Octave: Playing with Colors and Sounds, by Kitty Fischer*

“A series of coloring books in story form that deal with all aspects of the organ, including many types, locations, and uses. Short programmatic musical miniatures by Alfred V. Fedak enhance each drawing of the story.” Leupold Publishers website.

It seems all churches have pre-schools these days. Why not have the class visit you at the organ for an introduction to the instrument they may hear in church every Sunday!

I have used some of Wayne’s materials in my own teaching. When POE was begun, Wayne got his composer friends together and asked them to write music to teach an organ skill, which would be easy enough for intermediate piano students to play. After several editions, First Organ Book is a go-to book for teaching organ skills to intermediate piano students. Since I have a 2 manual pipe organ in my home, I have eventually put all my piano students on the organ with this book, and interest is sparked! They love the pistons, various sounds at many pitch levels, & combinations of sounds!

And there is more, including materials I need to learn about! Please come and join us. See the details in this issue, and invite piano & organ teachers who are not necessarily AGO members! You will have the opportunity to purchase materials at this workshop.

See you there!
Your Board at work . . . .

The board of the Charlotte AGO Chapter met on Monday, August 5. Highlights of the meeting were:

- Discussed and approved a budget for the upcoming year
- Discussed programming for 19-20 and 20-21
- Discussed logistics for creating and printing the Yearbook for 19-20

ONCARD Renewal and Personal Information

Remember to update your personal information when you renew your AGO membership. Please check that your employment and personal information is up-to-date for the next chapter yearbook. To do this, log into ONCARD and click on “Update Personal Information.” (This page is also the second screen of the renewal process and can be updated when you renew.) Click on “View/Edit Address Information.” (It’s a green button.) Need help? Call 212-870-2310.

Welcome New Members

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AGO Programs for 2019-2020

Saturday September 21, 2019:  9:00 AM Coffee and pastries.  9:30 AM Workshop
- Christ Lutheran Church, 4519 Providence Rd, Charlotte, NC 28226
- Wayne Leupold, of Leupold Music Publishers, will present his organ methods for introducing the organ to young children, as well as to students of all ages. We will have an opportunity to purchase his materials.

Monday, October 14, 2019: 6:30/7:30 PM
- St. Stephen United Methodist Church, 6800 Sardis Rd., Charlotte, NC 28204
- Dinner and Business meeting, with a professionally made video of the beginnings of our Charlotte Chapter. Our historian, John Apple will be available to answer question.

Saturday November 23, 2019: 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM
- Morning Star Lutheran Church, 12509 Idlewild Rd, Matthews, NC 28105
- Barbara Lister-Sink of Salem College will present a program on Preventing Injury, or “Artistry Through Understanding Core Body Principles”. Please invite organ and piano students and teachers.

December 2019: No meeting

Friday January 10, 2020 6:30 PM
- The Cypress Retirement Community, 3442 Cypress Club Dr, Charlotte, NC 28210
- Annual Epiphany Dinner

Saturday and Sunday February 8-9, 2020:
- Covenant Presbyterian Church, 1000 E Morehead St, Charlotte, NC 28204
- Peek Weekend
- Robert Hobby, guest clinician
- Saturday workshop from 10:00 to Noon, on Service Playing
- Sunday Hymn Sing at 3:00 PM

Monday March 9, 2020: 7:30 PM
- Providence Baptist Church, 4921 Randolph Rd, Charlotte, NC 2821
- Introducing our new Orgelkidz Kit, which demonstrated the inner workings of the organ. We will be able to see and explore this instrument for teaching anyone, young and old, about the organ.

April 2020: No meeting

Monday May 18, 2020: 6:30/7:15 PM
- Myers Park Baptist Church, 1900 Queens Rd, Charlotte, NC 28207
- Dinner (6:30) and Installation Service (7:15)
Featured AGO Charlotte Chapter Member: Matthew Brown
Interviewed by Elizabeth Harrison

Elizabeth Harrison (EH): Tell us about your background. What attracted you to the organ? Why did you decide to study organ?

Matthew Brown (MB): As a young child, I frequently ventured into the church fellowship hall following Sunday service and began playing, by ear, what I had just heard on the piano. At age 10, the local church organist drove me to a workshop sponsored by the Greensboro AGO titled “You Too Can Play the Organ.” Longtime AGO members Loretta Gordon James, Judith Millar, and Wayne Leupold led the event. Following their presentation, 3 free organ lessons were offered to each participant. I was assigned to Wayne Leupold. His commitment to me as his student is what ultimately set me on the path to becoming a professional organist. I studied with Wayne for eight years before entering college.

I would be remiss if I did not mention another meaningful experience during my childhood. At the beginning of my organ studies, I also had the great fortune to hear the legendary Marie-Madeleine Duruflé perform a standing-room only recital in Burlington, NC, my hometown. The concert was hosted by Robert Burns King, organist-choirmaster at First Presbyterian Church. Her playing was nothing I ever thought humanly possible: thrilling, electrifying, and incredibly virtuosic. After hearing her performance of Dupré’s “Variations”, I decided this is what I wanted to be in life – an organist. While I never officially studied with him, I credit so much of my early musical aspirations to the late Bobby King.

Following high school, I was accepted into the studio of Jack Mitchener on full scholarship to the North Carolina School of the Arts. These were undoubtedly four of the happiest years of my life. I vividly recall taking part in a diversity of music, including opera, chamber music, accompanying singers, baroque dance, and so much more. It was at this meaningful place where I found my authentic self and many treasured friends and colleagues.

Following graduation from NCSA, I entered the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY, as a student of David Higgs. While at Eastman, I accompanied the Eastman Chorale and Eastman-Rochester Chorus, and served as Assistant Organist to Peter DuBois at Third Presbyterian Church. It was a challenging time in my life, as it was my first time far away from home. While the brutal Rochester winters certainly didn’t help matters, I would not trade the education and professional relationships fostered during those two years for anything.
Following graduation, I moved to New York City where I served on the music staff of historic Grace Church, an Episcopal parish at Broadway at 10th. I never thought I would have the courage to live in New York, but the experience taught me so much about humanity and navigating life’s unexpected challenges. I found myself wishing to collaborate more and more with great musicians, particularly opera singers. On Mondays and Fridays, I ventured up to the Ansonia Hotel near Lincoln Center, where I spent hours accompanying the voice studio of Rita Shane, legendary dramatic coloratura soprano of the Metropolitan Opera. I was a sponge for learning as much as possible about the voice – how singers breathe – how the voice resonates in large houses – how to gracefully turn a beautiful phrase in the arias of Mozart, Bellini, or Donizetti. All of this information transferred into my work training choirs (both children and adults). It also proved beneficial to my organ playing, particularly shaping the melodic lines of Bach chorale preludes and rubato in the music of Franck, and more.

While in New York, I received a grant from the Robert Carwithen Foundation to pursue my dream of continuing my organ studies with Dame Gillian Weir. I first met Gillian in 2004 during a master class for which I played Franck’s Choral in B minor. Gillian was, and still is, life giving and an inspiration in so many ways.

At our first session, I remember arriving with a stack of music accompanied by a typed repertoire list for her consideration. Much to my surprise, she made time to hear every piece! Lessons would go on and on for hours, as she never tired of teaching and sharing all she had to give. I studied a wide array of repertoire with her, but spent considerable time on music from the French baroque, Bach, Franck, and Messiaen. Following graduate school, I did not feel as though I was really making music at the organ, but demonstrating more of what I was reading in the nauseating performance treatises by Nivers, Diruta, Hottetarre, and Quantz. I had lost my natural love for the instrument and felt imprisoned by the pressures of always worrying about “Which finger do I use?” – “Which heel shouldn’t I use? – “How to program the most boring, academic, chronological recital?” and the list goes on.

What Gillian inspired was so much beyond the music. While playing DeGrigny or Couperin, it was like living in a time machine with imagery going back to the court of Louis XIV and the entertaining diaries of Madame de Pampadour. We spent a considerable amount of time on Bach, as she once told me I played the first setting of Nun komm from the Leipzig Chorales as
if I had a wooden leg! She heard music not as an organist – but as a musician. For her, it was about using touch and subtle nuances of rhythm to make the music literally jump off the page. She often said, “Come off the keys!” to let me know music needs to breathe and have personality. Much to my chagrin, she would also often ask, “Would you sing it that way?” or “Would a violinist play it that way?” or “Why use only 2 fingers?”

**EH:** You have served in several leadership roles for the Charlotte Chapter, including Dean. Tell us about your involvement in the AGO and in particular the Charlotte Chapter.

**MB:** I joined the Charlotte AGO in 2008 following my appointment as Director of Music & Organist at First United Methodist Church of Salisbury. I served multiple years on the Executive Board, 2 years as Sub-Dean, and three years as Dean. Alongside Dr. Matthew Manwarren, I co-chaired the programming committee for the Chapter's 2015 Regional Convention and have also enjoyed playing several recitals on the Chapter’s annual summer recital series.

**EH:** If money were no problem, what would you like to see the Charlotte AGO accomplish in the next five years?

**MB:** Thankfully, money is not really a problem for the Charlotte AGO. The Charlotte Chapter is very fortunate to be in a financially stable situation, thanks to the responsibility of recent boards and the ongoing generosity of donors and Chapter members. As for the immediate future, I've been wondering what would it look like for the Chapter to develop a bi-annual Carolinas Organ Festival? How could this be similar to the Southeastern Piano Festival in Columbia, SC, the Three Choirs Festival in England, or the International Organ Academy in Haarlem? This bi-annual festival could result in a 3-day event of recitals, chamber music using the organ, organ crawls, and other collaborative endeavors. The festival could be held in selected cities or designated geographic areas throughout the Carolinas.

**EH:** How do you think we can keep the AGO relevant for churches and for organists? What programs do we need to keep and where do we need to change or add?

**MB:** I see merit in the Charlotte AGO building harmony with other artistic professional organizations such as America Choral Director’s Association, Pastoral Association of Musicians, and the Royal School of Church Music in America. All of these organizations have much to offer, and I believe opportunities for intentional collaborations would be mutually beneficial.

I also believe any of us in leadership roles frequently benefit from seminars offered by professionals not actually in our profession. I recently attended a seminar on building children’s choirs at the Anglican Association of Musicians conference in Boston. While several
superbly talented colleagues were on the panel, I was particularly enlightened by the words of wisdom imparted by a renowned child psychologist. I find it beneficial to learn as much as possible about working with others and growing professionally from those outside our immediate professional circles.

EH: Aside from music, what do you like to do in your leisure time?

MB: Unfortunately, I do not often have much time for personal leisure; however, I do enjoy what little spare I have with my dear family and frequent visits with “Honey”, a beautiful labradoodle owned by two treasured friends in Salisbury. I also take delight in re-watching episodes of *The Andy Griffith Show*, which reminds me how simplistic life use to be!

EH: What about yourself do you think our members would find most interesting?

MB: In addition to my fulfilling life as a full-time church musician, I enjoy giving back to my community by serving on the Board of Directors for Rowan Helping Ministries (our homeless shelter), the Salisbury Symphony, Food for Thought, Family Crisis Council, and volunteering with other local non-profit organizations. I am grateful for the beautiful, philanthropic-minded community of Salisbury for helping me raise over $150,000 for benevolent organizations such as shelters for domestic violence, AIDS care service, and programs for food-insecure children.

EH: Is there anything else you would like to add?

MB: The Charlotte AGO is a tremendous and important organization, and I consider myself fortunate to have known it intimately as a member and leader. I am particularly grateful for the extraordinary support of Dr. Gay Pappin and Dr. Matthew Manwarren. Both of these fine individuals have sustained me many years by providing meaningful support and encouragement. I am honored to count them as two of the finest colleagues I have ever known.

EH: Thank you for your time and for your dedication to our chapter. We are very grateful for everything you have done for the Charlotte AGO.
Concerts and More

Sunday, September 8 at 5:30 PM, Clara Gerdes, organist, performs a concert celebrating the 52nd anniversary of the M. P. Moeller Opus 10260. First United Methodist Church, 501 N. Tryon Street, Charlotte. Free admission. This concert is sponsored by the Kathryn Stephenson Pipe Organ Endowment Foundation.

Monday, September 16 at 7:30 PM, Andrew Scanlon, Professor of Sacred Music and Organ Performance at East Carolina University, performs an organ recital, Davidson College Presbyterian Church Sanctuary, 100 North Main Street, Davidson, NC. Free admission; Freewill offering received. For more information, visit www.dcpc.org.

Sunday, September 29 at 4:00 PM, Stephen Distad, Organ, and Justin Langham, Trumpet, perform the Dedicatory Recital for the new Daffler organ, Catawba College Chapel, 2300 West Innes Street, Salisbury, NC. Free Admission; Reception following.

Friday, October 18 at 7:00 PM, Silent Film event entitled, "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" (1923), accompanied by Scott Foppiano on the 1967 Opus 10260 Moller organ, sponsored by the Kathryn Stephenson Pipe Organ Endowment Foundation, First United Methodist Church, Charlotte, 501 N. Tryon Street. Free garage parking at 525 N. Tryon Street. $10 donation suggested.

Sunday, October 20 at 7:00 PM, the Pfeiffer University Singers perform their annual Fall Concert, Henry Pfeiffer Chapel on the Misenheimer campus of Pfeiffer University. Free Admission.

The Charlotte Chapter AGO expresses sympathy to Kevin Haney and his family on the passing of his Father, Willard Haney

April 6, 1932 – August 12, 2019.
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