

# THE AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS

— AND THE —

# Church Music Institute

BY CHARLOTTE KROEKER

The American Guild of Organists, by action of the AGO National Council on June 11, 2019, entered into a partnership with the Church Music Institute to provide discounted CMI membership rates for AGO members. Now the AGO's approximately 14,000 members will enjoy access to CMI Sacred Music Library holdings approaching 20,000 choral selections and 15,000 organ compositions. The partnership is the culmination of almost five years of study, a pilot project with members of Kansas City, Indianapolis, and Atlanta AGO chapters, and deliberation of various AGO committees, including the Task Force on Denominational Music Organizations comprised of representatives of Presbyterian (USA), Lutheran, Episcopal, Methodist, and Catholic denominations. The decision empowers the intersection of the musical professionalism of the AGO with the church music resources of CMI to greatest advantage for members of each organization and ultimately for the benefit of worshipping congregations.

## About the Church Music Institute

Began in 2006 by a group of musicians, clergy, and laypeople, CMI was founded as a nonprofit 501(c)(3) educational and resource entity to create a worthy future for the music of the church and to the glory of God. CMI is dedicated to the advancement and stewardship of the best sacred music for the use of worshipping congregations. Using proven practices, CMI trains new generations of clergy, musicians, and laypeople for leading worship through workshops, courses, conferences, and festivals across the U.S. CMI is a singular venue for addressing the music of worship in an ecumenical, noncommercial setting. Among its unique resources are the online Sacred Music Choral and

Organ Libraries containing thousands of curated pieces of music searchable on multiple criteria anywhere, anytime.

The Lilly Peer Learning Project in Worship and Music, housed at CMI, currently provides nine clergy/musician teams and their congregational representatives with opportunity to study the history and practice of worship and music and to apply time-honored principles in a current project in their congregations. This pilot project, funded by the Lilly Endowment Inc., includes academic coursework at the beginning and end of a year of monthly meetings with peer groups where learning materials are chosen by participants.

Creating a home for the best music of the church, CMI provides a place in which proven practices of good music-making in worship operate. This work proceeds in a theological context where music serves the liturgy and aids congregational worship. At CMI, the goal is to equip clergy, musicians, and congregants for the glory of transcendent and transformational worship.

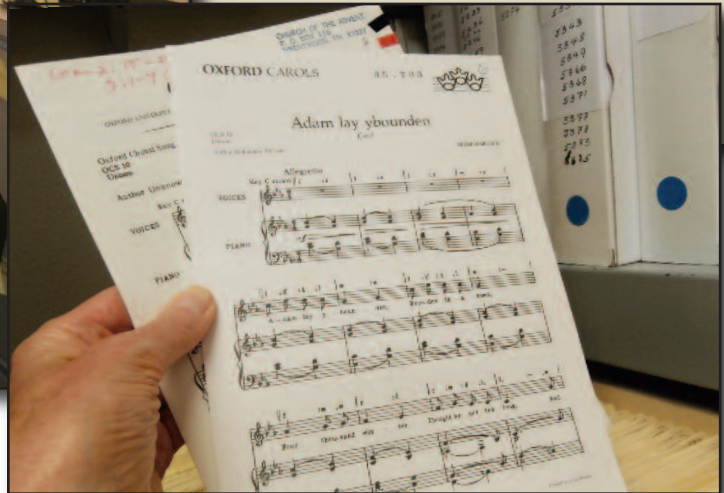
CMI is supported by donors who understand the importance of music to religious faith and want to invest in its future, along with modest fees for events and access to libraries. CMI is incorporated in the State of Texas and operates under IRS 501(c)(3) nonprofit status.

## About the Church Music Institute Sacred Music Libraries

The Church Music Institute houses extensive, unique reference libraries of sacred choral and organ music for evaluation and study for educational purposes. Through electronic resources, members will find appropriate anthems, service music, and organ music to use in worship from the convenience of their home or office. The choral



In the CMI Library, Michelle Grimm (seated) is a part-time employee and Sylvia Taylor is a volunteer (a piano teacher and church musician professionally)



collection includes an archive of thousands of catalogued sacred octavo anthems for adults and children, with additional compositions added daily. Each anthem has been chosen for quality of text, music, and function in worship by the professional staff of CMI. Anthems from every stylistic period from the Renaissance through those most recently published are placed in permanent, acid-free folders for preservation, so that present and future generations may identify, study, and utilize them in worship. Additional choral music contained in the collection includes cantatas and oratorios, service and liturgical music, and sacred anthems by classical composers donated by universities, seminaries, and church music scholars. Each entry has a sample PDF attached.

The organ collection, the newer of the two libraries, includes music based on previously existing tunes, including hymn tunes and chants. Many works are chorale preludes, and others are reharmonizations, interludes, and arrangements with other instruments. Sample pages (PDFs) are being added. The collection is built from libraries of scholarly church organists donated to CMI, on-line collections in the public domain, and newly published music provided by publishers.

### Why an AGO and CMI Partnership?

Our president, Michael Bedford, describes in his column for this issue of TAO how a partnership works successfully and why partnerships often accomplish more than one of the partners can achieve alone. But why *this* partnership, and why *this* time for an AGO/CMI partnership?

First, the AGO and CMI have much in common. Both embrace a goal of realizing excellence in music, be it in performance or literature. Both esteem professionalism in preparation, credentialing, and support to the fields of organbuilding, maintenance, and performance. Both organizations embrace and respect a choral and keyboard repertoire that began hundreds of years ago and continues to be enlarged by creative musicians who are our colleagues. We share a common place for the majority (but not all) of our music-making, the church or temple where religious worship sustains the use of the organ. Both organizations share commitments to education and service.

Second, the AGO and CMI have complementary missions. The AGO is a secular organization that advocates for the organ and organists better than any other organization. CMI, on the other hand, provides a home for the music of the church, where organs are housed and where many organists make their livelihood. CMI connects theology and music, deals regularly with worship planning, takes seriously how to find the best musical resources that work for congregations and worship, engages clergy and congregations in the "work of the people," and promotes liturgy that is both accessible and transcendent. It is this point of intersection where the professionalism of the AGO and CMI's goal for transformative worship coincide. Synergy emerges from this partnership: the skills and professionalism of AGO organists with the resources and knowledge of CMI empower congregations at worship!

Third, now is a good time for both the AGO and CMI. The AGO has a new strategic plan calling for collaboration with like-minded organizations. The AGO, an organization in existence since 1896, is interested in new member benefits; CMI, established 110 years later and committed to the principles of the AGO, is interested in making libraries created in and for the 21st century available to AGO members. The people responsible for the libraries, Robert C. Mann, director of the CMI Resource Libraries and creator of the Choral Library, and Margaret Evans, director of the Organ Library and its creator, are both holders of the DMA degree in organ performance from their respective institutions and are lifelong members of the AGO. Both have committed time and expertise necessary to create these resources from motivation arising from long careers of serving the church. They were nurtured by the Guild to create these resources for CMI; now CMI can nurture Guild members in return.

### What Makes the CMI Libraries Unique?

The online CMI libraries are unlike other resources because of CMI's comprehensive, vetted holdings and the search capability that uses multiple criteria. For example, IMSLP (International Music Score Library Project) and CPDL (Choral Public Domain Library) contain sacred music in the public domain and are cited in entries in the CMI libraries, but they do not own a comprehensive selection of the repertoire, are sometimes hard to search, and are not searchable on many criteria useful to church musicians. Commercial music publishers offer search criteria according to liturgical season or day, but include music published by them, and may exclude older (and useful) music that is out of print or print-on-demand and not readily available for purchase. Denominational planning guides may include suggestions for music according to specific days supplied by one contributor, but the suggestions are limited to the knowledge of that contributor and space available for print. A web search will yield only uncurated options.

CMI libraries, in contrast, have been built specifically as reference libraries for church musicians, spanning music of quality from the earliest extant sacred music scores to selected scores published most recently. Care is taken to include music of varying styles and levels of difficulty to meet the needs of all serious church musicians who want to find the best music possible to serve their congregations. The libraries provide the best of browsing a music store or a college/university library without leaving one's computer or mobile device, and offer tools for planning worship that places music in worship as a principal, functioning element.

### What about Copyright?

A frequent question arising during talks about partnership was, "What about copyright issues for an online

library?" Any nonprofit institution, and certainly religious and educational ones, have been made aware over the past few years of the hazards of noncompliance with copyright law, not to mention moral imperatives of protecting intellectual property rights of composers and text writers. Here are ways CMI respects copyright:

- a. When the libraries were first designed, the music librarians from the University of North Texas and Westminster Choir College were both consulted on protocols so that accepted, professional criteria for cataloging and design were followed.
- b. Licensing agencies such as OneLicense.net were contacted about procedures to post music online. Consensus was that as long as no piece of music is presented in entirety, copyright is respected, and up to a few pages of samples can be posted on a website without copyright infringement.
- c. Another line of inquiry was to work with publishers of works for inclusion in the library. The result is that samples of music are posted as the publishers post them online, using PDF and audio samples from publisher websites and reposting on the CMI library pages. CMI retains these ongoing and positive relationships with the publishers who provide new music on an annual basis for placement in the CMI libraries.
- d. CMI operates on a membership basis with access by username and password. Users are given access to a reference library, not a performance library, and users assume responsibility for maintaining copyright compliance rather than CMI, just as any other hard-copy reference library. CMI does not sell or distribute music, nor does CMI determine whether a piece of music is in print or in the public domain.

### What Is Contained in the CMI Libraries?

A new library built since 2006? How could it contain music of value? Good question! Because nothing like this library has ever existed, it had to be built from somewhere. The conundrum was that university libraries were interested in larger works (e.g., Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's *Mass in B Minor*), but no library wanted to catalog octavos or chorale-based organ music comprehensively, especially with search criteria helpful to church musicians. Even performance libraries for major university and church choirs were specific to their group rather than for broader church choir use. Populating the CMI libraries has come from music of the best church musicians, scholars, and church music libraries. The gift of a library here and there, single copies of church, university and seminary libraries built by respected church musicians and scholars, personal libraries of retiring church musicians, carefully chosen titles from recently published music—these are all sources of music for the choral library. (See

Churchmusicinstitute.org, Sacred Music Library, Library Sources for a complete listing of sources.) The organ library consists of the music of organ performers and scholars, music recently published from publishers, and selected pieces in the public domain.

Perhaps one of the most helpful aspects of the holdings is their comprehensive span of music history, including music from earliest time to the present. Pieces no longer in print that may have been long forgotten otherwise can be preserved and carried into the future.

For those interested in statistics, here they are (as of July 2019):

### Choral Library

18,707 titles of compositions  
5,467 composers, authors, arrangers  
108 different voicings  
97 different topical search possibilities  
136 text sources  
40 soloist possibilities  
393 publishers represented  
946 music sources  
Lectionaries organized according to years A, B, C  
with 196 entries  
94 instruments searchable in a pull-down list  
1,314 hymn tunes searchable  
212 titles for children's and adult choir  
1,342 titles for congregation and choir

### Organ Library

13,318 titles of compositions  
883 composers  
147 editors  
1,206 collections  
269 titles for organ and instruments  
230 publishers represented

### How Can the CMI Libraries Be Used?

The libraries are versatile enough for the modestly skilled musician working in a small church to the most highly trained musician wanting to challenge a professional choir for a musically demanding congregation. All the entries are searchable by scripture, liturgical reference, or hymn tune, so they can be used in Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish worship settings.

#### • An Index for a Church or Personal Library

Many users consider the CMI library as an index for their own library, arranging their holdings by composer or title, and using the CMI search index as a tool to find music already in their library appropriate for a particular worship service. The CMI indexing of composer, title, voicing, difficulty, instrumentation, scripture, topical allusion, hymn tune, or liturgical day, for example,

often helps users to identify their own music in new ways they had not thought of, creating more use of existing repertoire without purchasing new music. The IMSLP search option for users of the organ library allows searching by tune and public domain scores, making music immediately available for download of a hymn tune.

#### • A Source of New Music

Other users consider the CMI library a source for new music rather than searching through commercial packets or going to reading sessions, as the culling process is done by professional staff who sort to the best texts, the best music, and the most successful combination of text and music. CMI publications (and TAO) often feature new composers or new music of known composers, highlighting new music added to the libraries. Browsing is always available too, as using search criteria of interest (e.g., Advent I, A) with level of difficulty and voicing will yield multiple results that can be scrolled, and when one deserves exploring, a PDF sample is always there. For organ music, a favorite composer might be entered to see what new music might be available by that composer, and when something of interest is found, a click will reveal all the information necessary to locate the publisher and website to pursue it further. (Sample pages of organ music are currently being added to mirror the choral library.)

#### • A Valuable Planning Tool

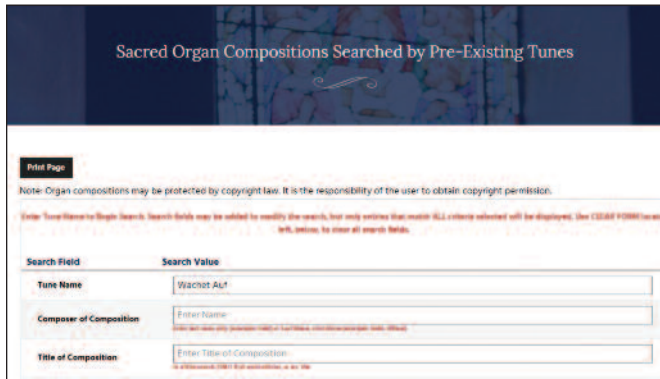
Perhaps the most helpful aspect of the online libraries is the capability for planning. If one knows the scriptures for the day, a basis for planning coherent spoken and sung word is begun, and the musical possibilities are endless. The Choral Library can be searched on seventeen individual criteria and in combination as well. Examples of combinations of searches are Introit/Day of Easter/Handbells (Search fields of Topical Reference, Lectionary Reference, Instrument); Ash Wednesday/Flute (Topical or Lectionary Reference, Instrument); John 3/SAB (Scripture and Voicing—this will yield the Stainer “God So Loved the World.”); Benediction/Unison Mixed (Title or Topical Reference and Voicing). These few examples yield an array of choices from which users can go to their own libraries, search public domain sites, or order for purchase from the detailed information given for each piece.

### How Do the CMI Libraries Work?

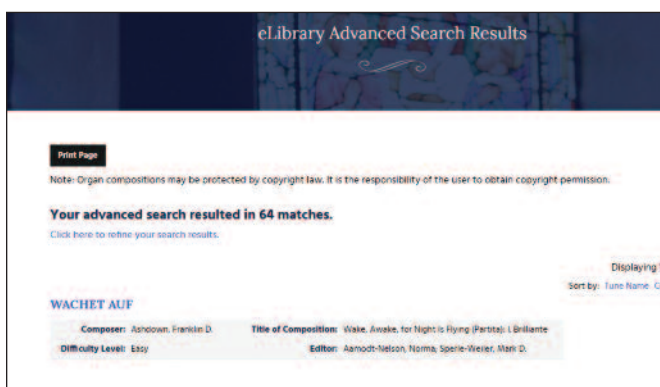
#### • An Organ Search

Let's explore how the libraries work by starting with the Organ Library search. The organ titles are organized by tune name. For example, in planning for Advent, a search for settings of WACHET AUF could be helpful.

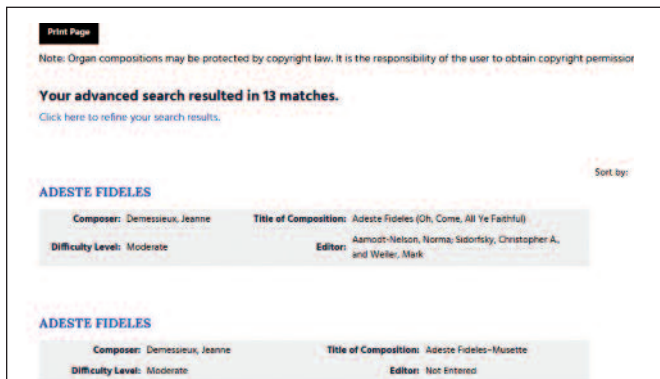
A search would look like this:



The results would look like this:



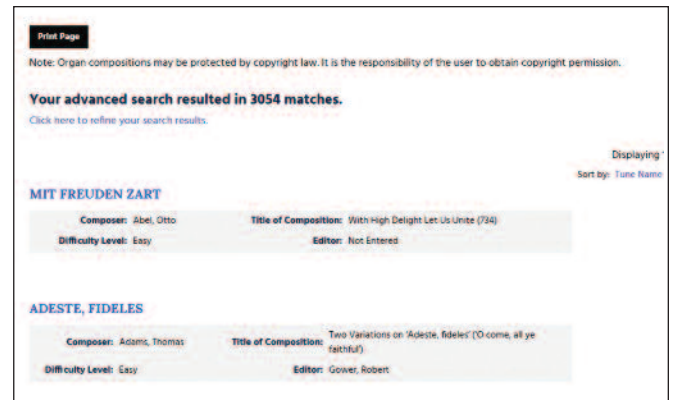
A search for compositions by composer Jeanne Demessieux results in 13 entries:



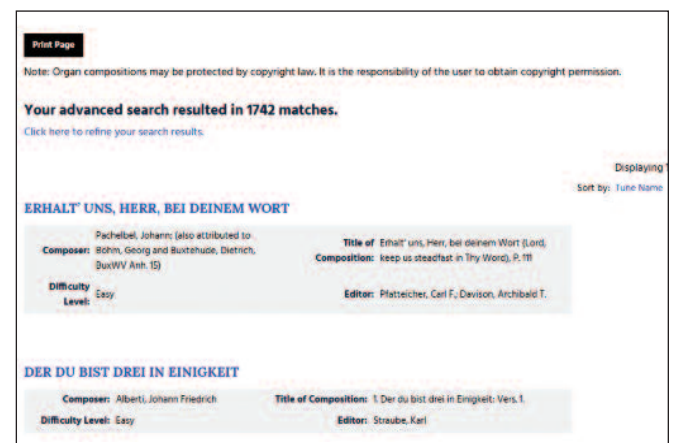
A search by collection name, Alte Meister, results in 109 entries:



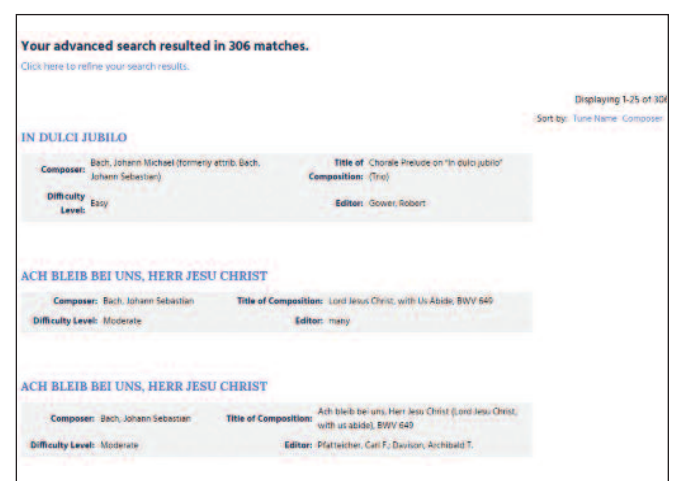
A search of manuals-only titles yields 3,054 titles:



A search of public domain music in IMSLP results in 1,742 matches:



A search of public domain music for Johann S. Bach yields 306 results.



As you can see, the Organ Library can be used in combination with one's own library, a search on publisher websites, and public domain music available on IMSLP. The most helpful search mechanism for church organists wanting to support their congregation's singing, however, may be using the tune search to locate music based on hymns sung for any one service.

### • Using the Choral Library to Choose Music and Plan a Service

The Choral Library, with its robust number of 17 search criteria and capacity to combine text and tune, has unique features not only to locate music appropriate for a particular group of musicians in any church, but also to plan a coherent service around the themes and scriptures for the day. To illustrate how it works, we will use an upcoming liturgical day, Advent 3A, to demonstrate the ways a musician can use the Choral (and Organ) Library to plan a service by choosing music matched with scriptures for the day. The first step would be to consult the lectionary or planning guide associated with the denomination of the church, or go to [Churchmusicinstitute.org](http://Churchmusicinstitute.org) and click on “Helpful Links” to scroll to a lectionary of choice. An ecumenical source is Vanderbilt Divinity Library Revised Common Lectionary ([Tinyurl.com/Advent3A](http://Tinyurl.com/Advent3A)), where we learn the readings for the day are

Isaiah 35:1–10

Psalms 146:5–10 or Luke 1:46b–55

James 5:7–10

Matthew 11:2–11

Hymns can be chosen from denominational planners, of which CMI has enjoyed including Lutheran Indexes to *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, with its recommendations for hymns associated with specific scripture. The *Glory to God* hymnal also has a Lectionary Index with scriptures for the day and associated, suggested hymns. Other denominations will have guides as well.

Now we will identify the possible places for music in the service to fill in musical possibilities from the libraries, such as

**Prelude**—based on tune of first hymn, hymn of the day, or hymn appropriate for the day; search CMI Organ Library for settings by tune name.

**Introit**—Search Choral Library using **Lectionary Reference**: *Advent 3A*; **Topical Reference**: *Introit*. Results: 6 entries.

**Opening Hymn**—according to denominational index.

**Psalms/Magnificat**—Using Choral Library **Scripture Search** of Psalm 146 yields 127 results and if *Congregation* in **Additional Choir** is added 15 results are returned. Using Psalm 146 in the **Scripture Search** with *Advent 3A* in **Lectionary Reference** yields 37 results. *Magnificat* in **Title Search** yields 255 results. *Magnificat* in **Title Search** in combination with *Congregation* in **Additional Choir** Search yields 13 options.

**Gospel Hymn**—based on Matthew 11:2–11, chosen using denominational or scriptural index.

**Hymn/Anthem after Sermon**—Using Matthew 11 in the **Scripture Search** yields 200 anthems, assuming

the sermon is primarily on the gospel reading. If using Isaiah 35, the result is 111 titles. James 5 yields 70 anthems. Note: Searching a chapter will yield more results than specific verses. Or, choose a hymn using denominational/scriptural index.

**Offertory**—as above. Note: Numbers of anthems can be reduced by adding additional search criteria such as voicing, difficulty level, instrument, composer, additional choir (such as children or congregation), hymn tune.

**Communion**—as above.

**Closing Hymn**—according to denominational index.

**Benediction**—In the Choral Library using the **Lectionary Reference**: *Advent 3A* in combination with **Topical Reference**: *Benediction*, the results are 5 entries.

**Postlude**—seasonal or based on tune of congregational hymn or anthem using organ search library.

The liturgy outline may vary according to denomination and congregation, and resources will vary widely. The CMI libraries are designed to search so resources of any congregation can be maximized for their worship.

### How Have Individuals Used the Library?

Peter Bates, director of the AGO Committee on Sharing Skills and Resources, has been a CMI member since July 2016. He has watched the libraries change and grow, and been part of the expansion to include the organ library. As minister of music at Covenant Presbyterian Church in Long Beach, Calif., he is resident organist and conducts the choir for a church that values its music highly but does not always subscribe to a lectionary-based worship service. Here is what his planning process looks like:

I receive a preaching schedule from the senior pastor's office quarterly. Not only does this tell me who is preaching at a given service, it gives me the scripture text on which the sermon will be based, a sermon title, and (in the case of the senior pastor) a one-paragraph synopsis of the proposed sermon. In much of the year the message is based on one or more of the lectionary texts, but not necessarily the gospel lesson. However, it is not uncommon for there to be a sermon series on a specific theme (such as prayer), or an in-depth several-week study of one of the epistles or minor prophets.

While the e-library is most helpful in listing titles associated with the lectionary, it is an invaluable resource when searching scriptural or theme references. (Denominational online materials deal mainly with allusions to the lectionary readings and most particularly the gospel and psalm settings, which is not helpful when the direction your service is going is not the direction outlined by the lectionary.)

In Peter's situation, the **Topical Searches** and **Scripture** options in the CMI library help to find music specific to

Charlotte Kroeker, executive director of CMI, and Robert Mann, director of the CMI Resource Libraries and creator of the Choral Library, in CMI's courtyard

the texts the senior pastor is using, creating coherence between spoken and sung word. In reflecting on what he has found in the library, Peter goes on to say,

There are a great number of titles in the e-library that are permanently out of print and/or in public domain. In these instances one can acquire a complete score that would not otherwise be available. For out-of-print materials, it is an easy process to get clearance and/or pay a small royalty fee to the publisher in order to gain permission to use the music, thereby expanding the library.

Peter has found “new” music (that is old!) in the CMI library that would otherwise be unavailable and learned that it is easy to procure copyright permission to use the music, extending the scope of the holdings of his church’s choral library. This fulfills one of the goals of the CMI library, that of bringing forward the best music of the past so it will not be forgotten.

Another recent user was working with his pastor to reestablish the “traditional” service with more depth, after focus and energy had gone to the contemporary service for a year. The choir and those who had attended for years were missing their familiar hymnody and worship practices established over time. An inventory of resources was taken and a sample service based on John 3:16 was created. The inventory resulted in the discovery that bells could be used liturgically even if a formal bell choir was not functioning (*Handbells* are an **Instrumental** search criterion, and introits requiring a few handbell players were located), the children could be used in combination with the adult choir, and searching for “Congregation” as a second choir with hymn tunes familiar to the congregation yielded concertato settings to enrich congregational singing. Settings using a flute and violin, both available in the congregation, were found for Communion. A benediction was created from a portion of Stainer’s “God So Loved the World,” a beloved anthem of the choir and congregation, selected for John 3:16. Much of the music chosen was already in the church music library, and the rest is in the public domain, or can be repurposed for instrument and accompaniment whether or not the choir is used. A new organist will have access to the organ library to locate settings of hymn tunes. The CMI libraries were a catalyst for creative planning and thinking to energize a service appropriate to this congregation’s needs at this time. And it was a relief to the musician to have the support. As he said, “One of the best things that has happened in working this way is that I no longer feel alone.”

Perhaps being a part of the greater whole is one of the best benefits of Michael Bedford’s definition of “partnership,” that of not being alone. The AGO and CMI join resources of like-minded organizations, and neither has to function alone. At the intersection of two organizations are colleagues with shared commitments to excellence in church music for inspiration, new ideas, and a place to go when creativity runs dry. Isn’t this the Guild at its best?

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**Charlotte Kroeker** is executive director of the Church Music Institute, overseeing program development and strategic planning. She is the author of *The Sounds of Our Offerings: Achieving Excellence in Church Music* (Alban Press, 2011) and editor of *Music in Christian Worship* (Liturgical Press, 2005), and has published numerous articles on church music. Her recent joy is a return to the bench of the Létourneau in the St. Michael and All Angels Chapel, Dallas, Tex., for the 7:30 A.M. Rite I liturgy every Sunday morning.



## Spotlight on AGOYO Member Joshua Lang

Josh is not yet 30 years old, with a passion for the organ, two organ degrees in hand, and pursuing two careers: a full-time non-musical job with benefits and a part-time, freelance job as organist. Gifted, energetic, and nurtured by the Fort Worth AGO Chapter, Josh finds himself in the small town of Palestine, Tex., the grateful beneficiary of an organ music collection from a former FWAGO member. He uses the CMI online Organ Library regularly, starting with the hymns for the day for any particular service, and searches by Tune Name, then going to his own music for matches. He also enjoys searching by Composer of Composition, as it expands his options to more possibilities, and reminds him of music he has in his collection. What surprised Josh most when he first used the online libraries was how easy they were to use in planning a service, and how many criteria could be used to locate what he needed. He said one of the best things about the libraries is that “you don’t have to catalog your music yourself. Just put it in a cabinet in alphabetical order. It saves time.” A full-time job means Josh spends any available time on the organ and uses the Organ Library most. When he directed a choir he used the Choral Library to find SAB or two-part music easy enough for his choir of 8–10 members, searching by Lectionary Reference. In comparing the CMI Libraries with other online resources, Josh says, “The CMI Choral and Organ Libraries are a larger catalog of professionally vetted sources than other online resources.”