

## Dean's Column

David Jenkins

### TCAGO Survey

Thank you to all who took the survey of chapter members. We had excellent participation, with 125 respondents. I am grateful to Carolyn Diamond who helped me draft the survey and analyze the results; to Laura Edman, Nils Halker, Jennifer Anderson and others who provided input on the questions; and to Jeremy Haug who helped with all the technical and communication matters. We also consulted with AGO National Director of Member Engagement Elizabeth George, and with James Wetzel, the sub dean of the New York City AGO chapter, who conducted a survey of NYAGO members at the beginning of the pandemic shut down. The survey was to some extent based on an RCCO national members survey conducted last summer.



### Summary Findings

The largest group of respondents were paid (77) and volunteer (5) musicians in places of worship. Smaller groups of others responded: employees of educational institutions, organ or piano technicians, private music instructors, and members with additional jobs outside of music.

The majority of the respondents (72) answered that they kept their jobs with full pay, and they retained their same level of financial security as before the pandemic (70).

Overwhelmingly, our colleagues are taking on new responsibilities connected with technology, and they are adjusting with relative ease to the challenges of learning new skills. Their places of worship have pivoted to the world of web-cast services (77), with live streaming (48), pre-recorded (51), or a combination (51) as the mode of delivery. Those who teach private music lessons transitioned totally or partially to online lessons (20), although teachers also report losing students. Most employees feel that their health has been safeguarded at their places of employment (105).

Concerning the use of Zoom and other online platforms: about half of the respondents have used online platforms for meetings with colleagues (76), to view concerts or workshops (88), and for social gatherings with colleagues (71). However, only a minority are taking advantage of AGO website resources: 85 respondents (60%) have not used AGO web resources. Ninety respondents would be interested in periodic Zoom chapter meetings, with 60 respondents preferring quarterly or monthly meetings.

Question 18 asked what members are most concerned about. The majority of answers focused on the challenge of maintaining musical and professional skills, a concern for maintaining relationships with clergy and colleagues, and worries for the future of churches and the future of our profession.

## Chapter Events 2020-2021

Saturday, April 17  
Student Competition (Virtual)

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Only 32 responded to question 19: what can the AGO do for you right now? There were mostly positive comments on chapter actions – the survey, dues forgiveness, members relief fund, keeping in touch. There were good suggestions for future actions: classes in technology, streaming recitals, keeping members informed, increasing communication through emails, holding Zoom meetings providing professional or educational topics.

#### Chapter Membership

The 125 responses represent 41% of our total membership of 303, including:

- 133 regular
- 113 special (over 65)
- 34 young organists
- 20 chapter friends
- 6 dual
- 2 lifetime

We did not ask respondents to indicate their membership type. 284 members have an email address registered on Oncard.

#### Employment Concerns

The 77 respondents who work in a place of worship were split in half between employees and stipendiary musicians. Because of the way we worded the questions, we can't tell, without going through individual responses, how many people do more than one kind of work – say teach and work at a church, or do private music lessons and are stipendiary musicians, etc. We also did not ask about denominations served.

Most working respondents kept their jobs, with regular pay, but it's still distressing to learn that 16 were laid off without pay, or lost their jobs. A large number depend on their organist or related work for their economic stability, and 41 respondents have suffered a decline in financial security. We recently sent out one more relief grant for a member in financial need. We still have funds available. Please contact me with any questions.

#### Technology

The survey showed that the adoption of new technology by places of worship was widespread, and musicians have adapted more or less gracefully. People are getting accustomed to using Zoom or other video conferencing technologies. I expect that streaming and Zoom will be the new normal for many places of worship and their ministers, just as it will be for arts organizations and employees in all businesses. I believe that places of worship have found that online opportunities or resources can increase participation and engagement for members, and they can give greater flexibility for employees.

#### Covid-19 and Places of Worship

A large number of places are closed to worshippers and the public, and are offering only online worship. I'm sure practices vary by denomination, with the denominations following the directives of their authorities. Most Catholic churches are open, with limited live attendance, but I think



DAVID ENGEN  
*President*

DAVID GRANDALL  
*Vice President*

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most Episcopal churches are still mostly closed, at the direction of their bishop. I understand that most ELCA churches are also closed, including the very large ones, or they are open with only very limited opportunities. I think the attention to safety is a facet of Minnesota culture, and especially of the Twin Cities. While I have heard anecdotes of some unsafe incidents in local churches, most of our respondents seem to feel that their health has been safeguarded. Also 44 respondents said that they were able to plan for future worship or concerts, despite the current restrictions.

#### AGO National Resources

The AGO resources are hard to access for some because the web site is vast and difficult to navigate. On the other hand, AGOHq is always sending out email blasts about webinars on educational and professional topics. I urge all members to take advantage of these opportunities. Some notices may have landed in your spam/junk folder – check there! There have been several opportunities to learn about technology, webcasting, copyright, and yet the survey indicated demand for more in those areas. Maybe members prefer to hear about the experiences of local members, or perhaps are intimidated by the prospect of a presentation that might be too complicated for them.

#### Upcoming Meeting on Professional Concerns

A significant number of members indicated some level of interest for more Zoom meetings. In response, we will be hosting a Professional Concerns meeting later in February. The tentative plan for the meeting is to discuss the survey results in more detail, and to introduce the new *AGO Employment Guide for Church Musicians*. Please watch your email for details. The great response to the survey, and the concerns that were raised, certainly reminded me how important the Guild community is to us members, and that we need to find ways to continue to connect, especially in these difficult times.

#### AGO Webinars

Survey respondents asked for information on various topics. The National AGO is a great source of information, particularly at this time. Two webinars offered in September and November presented topics of interest:

#### [Streaming Music Legally in Churches and Recitals](#)

Presented by Brenna C. Cronin, *One License*, David Schaap, Selah Publishing

Moderator: Dr. Eileen Hunt, AAGO

One License: [Copyright Check-up & Compliance Video](#)

Email questions to [One License](#)

Selah Publishing: [Licensing](#)

#### [Creating and Verifying a YouTube Account](#)

[Harold Stuart AGO Handout](#)

[Greg Rettew Recording and Editing Handout](#)

Additional information about Webinars is available on the AGO [website](#).

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### DAVID J GESLIN CPA

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5775 WAYZATA BLVD SUITE 700  
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55416  
DAVID@DAVIDGCPA.COM

PHONE: 952-582-2927  
CELL: 612-868-7827  
FAX: 763-201-7816

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## Streaming Recital Series: *Organs of the Twin Cities*

Westminster Presbyterian Church in Minneapolis presents *Organs of the Twin Cities* – a monthly series of mini organ recitals streaming from January through May. Each performer will play on their own instrument in their own church, offering a closer look at five of the great organs in the Twin Cities metro area. Each recital will consist of a 20-minute program and a short interview, streamed on Westminster’s [streaming site](#). All programs will be available after the original time listed below.

January featured Westminster’s organist Kenneth Vigne; a recording can be found on Westminster’s [website](#).

The series continues on February 28 with Associate Director of Music Isaac Drewes at Central Lutheran Church in Minneapolis. The recital will feature Central Lutheran Church’s 107-rank organ built by Casavant Frères Opus 2722, and include works by Paul Hindemith, Johann Sebastian Bach, and Charles Marie Widor.

### Upcoming Performances (all held at 2:00 p.m.)

February 28

Isaac Drewes, Central Lutheran Church, Minneapolis

March 21

David Cherwien, Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Minneapolis

April 25

Catherine Rodland, Colonial Church, Edina

May 23

Christopher Ganza, Cathedral of Saint Paul, Saint Paul

## St. Olaf Organ Series Update

Due to the current circumstances of the pandemic, it is possible that the recital by John Varona, originally scheduled for December, may be re-scheduled to a date later in 2021.

Currently, the remainder of the recital series will continue as scheduled. (See *Calendar of Events* on page 6.)

[St. Olaf Catholic Church](#)

215 South Eighth Street, Minneapolis

## Saint John’s Organ Concerts Postponed

Information received from Saint John’s Abbey and University indicates that, due to the pandemic, all planned programming is postponed till further notice. The policy on the number of attendees at Abbey Church events for the first months of 2021 are too restrictive to warrant the programs in the series.

The recital by Kim Kasling will be presented in the fall, with a date to be announced.

[Saint John’s Abbey and University Church](#)

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## We Need Your Help!

### Recruiting Players for Upcoming TCAGO Program Events

*Michael Barone*

A New Year has begun, and with it both a sense of fresh-start and a renewal of purpose. I'm looking ahead at the possibilities for the annual *Before Bach's Birthday Bash* (BBBB) and another *Members Recital* (MR).

At the moment, it still is not clear whether it is practical to consider these as in-person gatherings, though the typically 'limited audience' of organ recitals would suggest that it might be possible to imagine an actual 'live' event. Access to venues and following pandemic protocols regarding safe use of organ consoles does leave things very much up in the air at the moment.

As a result, we're considering an alternative vision to create some online-streams, both for the BBBB event leading up to Saturday, March 20, and the *Members Recital* in late May.

These may not necessarily be on-the-day event streams – possibly a sequence of individual modules, accessible online for a set time-period. All of this is still 'in the planning stage.'

These online 'recitals' could be possible if those who are willing and able to provide (or provide access to) high-quality video with stereo audio of performances would 'step up to the plate.' I know that quite a number of you have been involved with recording audio/video for your weekly church services, so perhaps this is not a 'pipe dream' on my part. Even if you do not wish to perform, but have a good instrument and good technology, you could volunteer your space.

As in the past, I will function as curator, attempting to assemble a variety of repertoire (and venues). When you email me with your 'application,' please provide

- (1) several repertoire options (with timings for each);
- (2) the instrument on which you would record; and also
- (3) link to a sample of your audio/video production technique.

Varied textures and tempos are encouraged. We don't need to have all 'big pieces.' Even a suite of modest meditations or chaste chorale-preludes can find a place in these programs.

If you are a TCAGO member, but off studying on a campus elsewhere...geographic location is not an issue. Whether you record in Indiana or India, it's fine with me.

Also, if you are particularly adept at video production and wish to be involved in helping create these streams and/or weave them into a concise totality, please raise your hand. Let me know if you have either or both of the following qualifications:

1. I am musically and technically equipped and would like to participate in BBBB or MR.
2. I would be willing to provide an instrument and/or technology to some other player.

Send replies to [Michael Barone](#) or call 651-485-1094 with questions. I would appreciate your responses no later than Friday, February 26.

I look forward to hearing from you!!

## New Research and Information on our Chapter's Organ List

David Engen, with the help of other chapter members, has been updating the Organ List database that TCAGO maintains on our website.

Please check out new additions (many residences, theaters/auditoriums, and unusual venues have been added).

Please check out instruments/venues you know about to see if you can add more information, photographs, etc.

The database includes five states (Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, South Dakota, North Dakota) and is dependent upon members submitting information about these places/instruments.

This is the [link](#) for the Organ List. This chapter resource is an enormous undertaking and labor of love. Originally begun by chapter member, Dick Greene, it is now coordinated by [David Engen](#).

### *In Memoriam*

#### **Charles Hendrickson**

The death of TCAGO member Charles Hendrickson on December 17 was recently announced. He was 85. Charles founded the St. Peter-based Hendrickson Organ Company in 1964 and served as its president until his retirement in 2015. Among the company's 100+ instruments are those in Minnesota at Wayzata Community Church and at the Church of St. Peter. His son Eric reported the day prior to Charles' death: "Yesterday afternoon Charles pulled out the *Engelstimme* and joined the Heavenly Choir for a very peaceful Postlude." We share the sadness of Charles' passing, and give thanks for his contribution to life's beauty and joys.

The obituary may be found [here](#).

## Calendar of Events

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### February

- Sunday, February 7, 3:00 p.m. [livestream](#)  
 Joel Anderson, organist  
 Chapel of St. Thomas Aquinas  
 University of St. Thomas
- Wednesday, February 24, 12:30 p.m.  
 St. Olaf Organ Series  
 Kris Rizzotto, Lake of the Isles Lutheran Church,  
 Minneapolis  
 St. Olaf Catholic Church  
 215 South Eighth Street, Minneapolis
- Sunday, February 28, 2:00 p.m.  
 Westminster Streaming Recital Series  
 Isaac Drewes, organist  
 Central Lutheran Church, Minneapolis

### March

- Sunday, March 7, 3:00 p.m. [livestream](#)  
 Richard Gray, organist  
 Chapel of St. Thomas Aquinas  
 University of St. Thomas
- Sunday, March 21, 2:00 p.m.  
 Westminster Streaming Recital Series  
 David Cherwien, organist  
 Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
- Wednesday, March 24, 12:30 p.m.  
 St. Olaf Organ Series  
 Richard Gray, St. John the Evangelist  
 Episcopal Church, Saint Paul  
 St. Olaf Catholic Church  
 215 South Eighth Street, Minneapolis

### April

- Tuesday, April 13, 7:30 p.m.  
*Symphonic Bach*  
 Paul Jacobs, organist  
 Northrop Auditorium, University of Minnesota  
 84 Church Street SE, Minneapolis
- Saturday, April 17 (TCAGO Event)**  
 Student Virtual Organ Competition  
 online
- Saturday, April 17, 7:30 p.m. [livestream](#)  
 Jessica Park, organist  
 Chapel of St. Thomas Aquinas  
 University of St. Thomas
- Wednesday, April 21, 12:30 p.m.  
 St. Olaf Organ Series  
 Dean Billmeyer, University Organist and  
 Professor of Music, University of Minnesota  
 St. Olaf Catholic Church  
 215 South Eighth Street, Minneapolis
- Sunday, April 25, 2:00 p.m.  
 Westminster Streaming Recital Series  
 Catherine Rodland, organist  
 Colonial Church, Edina

### May

- Wednesday, May 19, 12:30 p.m.  
 St. Olaf Organ Series  
 Jessica Park, Chapel of St. Thomas Aquinas,  
 University of St. Thomas  
 St. Olaf Catholic Church  
 215 South Eighth Street, Minneapolis
- Sunday, May 23, 2:00 p.m.  
 Westminster Streaming Recital Series  
 Christopher Ganza, organist  
 Cathedral of Saint Paul, Saint Paul

## TCAGO Elected Board

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 (w) 651-290-1539, (h) 651-228-9885  
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**Chapter Website** - [www.tcago.org](http://www.tcago.org)

Website Administrators: [David Engen](#) (c) 612-801-8662;  
[Kirsten Uhlenberg](#) 651-646-8120

**Facebook** - [facebook.com/twincitiesAGO](https://facebook.com/twincitiesAGO)

## Pipenotes

*Pipenotes* is the official publication of the Twin Cities Chapter, American Guild of Organists, and is published nine times a year, September through June. December and January is a combined issue.

### Deadline date

Information for *Pipenotes* should be received no later than the fifteenth of the month preceding publication.

Materials may be sent to [Merritt Nequette](#), editor.

### Letters to the Editor

Signed Letters to the Editor are always welcome.

Mail letters to [Merritt Nequette](#).

2748 Lexington Avenue N., Saint Paul MN 55113

## TCAGO Event Promotion via Pipedreams

A comprehensive listing of organ events statewide is available online via the *Pipedreams Organ Calendar*. Information there is only as good as the information provided to it, so you are encouraged to send event listings for inclusion at the earliest possible time.

For both on-air and website listings of organ-related activities, *please send information to Pipedreams* host (and longtime TCAGO member) [Michael Barone](#), or by mail to: *Pipedreams* Calendar, 480 Cedar St., Saint Paul, MN 55101. In a pinch, you may call 651-290-1539.

You are also encouraged to regularly request organ selections on the *Friday Favorites* show with [Steven Staruch](#). Help promote the inclusion of more organ music in MPR's programming.

NOTE: It is requested that you include this text in printed programs for any local organ concerts you play or present:

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The [Organ Calendar](#) is accessible online and is read in week-appropriate summaries beginning at 7:00 a.m. during each Sunday morning *Pipedreams* broadcast.

Additional note from Michael:

In these Covid-complicated days, mail is better sent to me at my home address: 456 Cherokee Avenue, Saint Paul MN 55107. The office phone still works, and I get emails of messages left there.