

Northern New Jersey Chapter

American Guild of Organists

Reverberations

The Newsletter of the Northern NJ Chapter American Guild of Organists

March 2020

northernnjago.org

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Two items to note as you read this month's Reverberations:

1) *We are honored to host Michael Caraher, this year's John F. Rodland Memorial Scholar joining us for the entire weekend of March 27 - 30, 2020, from St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN. We are proud to welcome and support Michael, the next generation of FINE organists and church musicians. Let's outdo ourselves with generosity of spirit. Could you lend a hand at one of the points in Michael's itinerary for his Recital Weekend in New Jersey? Contact Stewart Holmes, Recital Coordinator*

2) *Meet the Nominating Team for the 2020 - 2022 NNJ AGO Chapter Slate of Officers, and start thinking about celebrating our 75th anniversary as a chapter in 2023. Our Dean calls together a nominating team and they contact all present officers and in turn make nominations to determine the slate that we'll vote on in May. Working together as a team this year are Thomas Charsky, Peggy Hsiao and Richard Tegtmeyer. I thank our membership in advance, for taking the time to be of service to your Chapter. Being of service has surprising and wonderful benefits.*

Not the least of benefits is that we are nearing our 75th anniversary! Our first year as a chapter was back in 1948 - with the Northern Valley Chapter starting in 1951, who joined the Northern NJ Chapter in 1991.

Cathie Ruppi, Dean

NNJ CHAPTER MEETINGS

A list of all our chapter's upcoming programs is found on the last page of this edition of Reverberations

Our March Meeting

Michael Caraher, Organist
Winner of St Olaf's Rodland Scholarship
SUNDAY • MARCH 29, 2020 • 3PM
WEST SIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
6 SOUTH MONROE STREET, RIDGEWOOD, NJ

One of the most important events of the year for our chapter is upon us! **Michael Caraher, this year's John F. Rodland Memorial Scholar** will be coming to Ridgewood to perform a recital at West Side Presbyterian Church.

Help promote the future generations of organists! **A flyer of this event** will be sent to members in an email. Send it to your neighboring churches, too!

We need to have help from a number of members for the following tasks:

- Pick up at Newark Airport on Friday
- Provide lodging on Friday, Saturday and perhaps Sunday night
- Provide transportation to and from various venues on Saturday and Sunday
- Join us for dinners on either Friday or Saturday, and post-recital pizza on Sunday

If you are willing to take over one of the easy tasks above, let Stewart Holmes stewholmes2018@gmail.com or Gary Grimes garynnj@mac.com know. More hands make easier work!

Plan to join us for pizza and after Michael Caraher's recital!

A Recital Afterglow

WHEN: After Michael Caraher's Recital

WHERE: Circolo's Neopolitan Pizzeria, 53 Franklin Turnpike, Waldwick (2 blocks north of Nellies)

RSVP: In advance preferred. Last minute is ok because we're flexible! Call or email Cathie Rупpi OR Gloria Norton

COST: Split tab.

BYOB! We will arrange for beer and wine to be purchased and refrigerated at Circolo's in advance, if requested by Friday 3/27. (Non-Alcoholic drinks available at the restaurant)

THE HYMN FESTIVAL IS BACK! A group of 5 people gathered to set the wheels in motion for the October 25th, 2020 Hymn Festival. A small group of hymns, anthems and related scripture were selected.

- We kept in mind that it would be best if we selected music that had been used in prior hymn festivals.
- We also have extended an invitation to Ridgewood native Ben Kerswell, now in his final year of a Master's program at Rice (studying with Ken Cowan) to be a featured guest.
- We struggled with the "name" of this event, i.e. should we change the name from "Hymn Festival" to something along the lines of "Singing our Faith" or "Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs"?

HYMN FESTIVAL
Update

Our goal is to attract leaders and choir members from area churches to experience the thrill of coming together to sing some of the great songs of our faith. Save the date on your long range calendar, and let NNJ leadership group know your thoughts and ideas!

MEMBER'S NEWS

We have received the following letter from Susan Gad:

"I am writing to formally let you know that as I am returning to my native England to be with my family I regretfully need to step down as Secretary and Executive Board member. Being allowed to participate in the AGO during my time in America has been a huge privilege for which I am most grateful."

We wish Susan well as she makes this huge decision to return home.

Address correction for your roster:

Eunkyung "Grace" Woo, 179 Chestnut St. Demarest, NJ 07627

Cell: 973-632-0034 ekwoo2013@gmail.com

A Book Recommendation

I've reminded myself dozens of times to read **IMPERFECT HARMONY** by Stacy Horn. When a colleague mentioned it was in our BCCLS library system, I finally got the book out. **Imperfect Harmony, finding happiness while singing with others**, is part personal saga of someone who says she's not particularly religious and has sung in the the Choral Society of Grace Church, NYC for decades. Horn also happens to be a researcher and reporter whose pieces have been aired on National Public Radio's All Things Considered. Often witty, she also weaves in scientific information about the benefits of making music that help immune function and the benefits to people's emotional, physical and cognitive well-being. What she writes about specific to the choir loft, easily translates to any place one happens to sit or stand in the sanctuary. Let me know what you think! Dean Cathie Rупpi

**Important News
about a NNJ AGO
Survey!**

You will be receiving a survey created by your leadership team asking for your honest input about NNJ AGO programs. This will help your program committee meet the needs of our chapter members in the future. Your input and quick response is appreciated.

CONCERTS and PROGRAMS COMING UP

Sunday, March 8th at 2:00 p.m. Chatham United Methodist: The Suburban Music Study Club of NJ will host its annual Grace Gimbel Scholarship Competition. For this yearly event, soloists from middle to high school are chosen from a round of video applications. Seven finalists have been chosen this year to each perform for 20 minutes at the competition on March 8th. All are welcome to this free event. Come and hear some of the finest up and coming classical artists from Northern New Jersey! For more information go to www.suburbanmusicstudyclub.com.

Sunday, March 8, 2020, 3:00 p.m. Glen Ridge Community Concerts presents the Harp/Violin Duo, Merynda Adams and Christopher Collins Lee. Christopher Lee has long been a favorite at the Marlboro, Aspen, Mozarteum, Maggio Musicale and other celebrated music festivals around the world. *The New York Times* termed Christopher Lee "an impressive, stylish violinist with something special to say." *Musical America* twice listed him on their annual "Ten Young Musicians to Watch." Described by the *Newark Star Ledger* as having "played the harp with color and great facility," Merynda Adams is in great demand as a soloist and chamber musician throughout the United States, Belgium, France, the Netherlands, and Canada. She has performed with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra and many others. Their ensemble performance is stellar. Glen Ridge Congregational Church, 195 Ridgewood Ave., Glen Ridge, NJ 07028.
www.glenridgeconcerts.org. 973-743-5596 x26. Admission: \$20 Adults; \$15 Seniors; \$10 Students

Sunday, March 22, 3pm: Paul Jacobs in Concert: Parlance Chamber Concert Series, West Side Presbyterian Church, 6 S. Monroe Street, Ridgewood. Paul Jacobs, head of the organ department at Julliard, will celebrate Bach's 335th birthday with a recital of towering masterpieces for The King of Instruments. The Grammy Award-winning organist will perform the famous Toccata and Fugue in D minor, a set of intimate chorale preludes, a sparkling Trio Sonata in E minor, the C-minor Passacaglia and Fugue, and other Bachian favorite. Adults (40 – 64): \$40; Seniors (65+): \$30; Young Adults (21 – 39): \$20 Students (Under 21): \$10. Tickets available at the door in advance at: www.parlancechamberconcerts.org

Sunday, March 22, 4pm; Tenet Vocal Artists: All Saints' Episcopal Church, 40 Central Ave., Glen Rock; Preeminent NY City based early music ensemble presenting 17th Century Requiem and Lenten Motets for voices, brass and continuo. Suggested donation \$10

Saturday, March 28 at 3pm Bach Festival at First Presbyterian Church of Rutherford, 1 E Passaic Street, Rutherford; Featuring First Presbyterian's Festival Choir and over 15 guest performers.

Sunday, March 29 at 3pm Michael Caraher, Bach Festival at First Presbyterian Church of Rutherford, 1 E Passaic Street, Rutherford; Featuring First Presbyterian's Festival Choir and over 15 guest performers.

Friday April 17 at 7:30pm. Phantom of the Opera: Zion Lutheran Church, 96 East Allendale Rd, SADDLE RIVER NJ 07458. We will be performing the musical, accompanied by organ, along with images on a screen managed by John Hedlund, a local film director. Freewill offering. Reception to follow. Additionally if anyone would like to sing in the Chorus 'Masquerade' please e-mail Susan at susangadd@hotmail.com for sheet music - chorus rehearsal is Thursday April 16 at 7:30pm in the sanctuary.

Sunday, April 19 at 3pm; Organ Recital Organist Shannon Murphy, First Presbyterian Church, 1 E. Passaic Street, Rutherford. Program to include works by Bach, Alain, Dupre, and more.

Sunday, April 26, 2020, 3:00 p.m. Glen Ridge Choral Society & Chamber Orchestra: Happy Birthday, Beethoven Glen Ridge Community Concerts presents Happy Birthday, Beethoven. Join us to celebrate Beethoven's 250th birthday! Be there to blow out the candles in honor of this magnificent creative genius who was influential, innovative and inspirational. Featured will be the glorious *Mass in C*, as well as some of his most beautiful melodies performed by voices and instruments. Enjoy post-concert birthday cake! Glen Ridge Congregational Church, 195 Ridgewood Ave., Glen Ridge, NJ 07028.
www.glenridgeconcerts.org. 973-743-5596 x26. Admission: \$20 Adults; \$15 Seniors; \$10 Students



We have a number of members who will attend this year's National Convention in Atlanta! This is a chance to hear some great music AND see historic Atlanta! Here are SOME of the artists featured:

- Christopher Jacobson (Rodland Scholar!)
- Benton Blasingame (Rodland Scholar!)
- Amanda Mole (Rodland Scholar!)
- Catherine Rodland (A Rodland!)
- Isabelle Demers
- Alan Morrison
- Thomas Ospital
- Thomas Heywood
- Monica Czausz
- Katelyn Emerson
- Martin Jean
- Peter Marshall

Colleagues, Associates, Fellows, lend me your ears...

The following is excerpted from NYC AGO Chapter **James Kennerley's** February 2020 Dean's Message. Many of our NNJ AGO members may have at least one college degree and some AGO diploma qualifications. Others may utilize membership in the Guild to gain valuable hands-on-learning through attendance at monthly meetings, mini-conventions and attendance at our **National Convention, this year being held in Atlanta, GA, July 6-10.** It is always affirming "to assess and develop our craft."

"Diploma examinations have been at the very core of the AGO's mission since its founding in 1896... The AGO diplomas are a brilliant way of bringing your service playing to the next level. The Service Playing Certificate and Colleague (CAGO) diplomas are entirely practical - that is to say that all the assessments are taken at the organ console. The Associate and Fellow (AAGO and FAGO respectively) are the distinct markers of the organist's professional skills and should be aspired to by all."

For further information on AGO examinations, please contact Paul Wolfe, Certification Program Administrator:
exams@agohq.org



RIVERSIDE CHURCH'S BELL TOWER REOPENS!

The gorgeous gothic tower looking over Riverside Church had been closed to the public for two decades.

The tower is the tallest steeple in North America, looming 392 feet over Morningside Heights, the Hudson River and Grant's Tomb, with a bird's-eye view of Columbia University and an uptown survey of Manhattan skyscrapers. About two years ago, the current church administration started to wonder what it would take to reopen the tower.

The problem? No one could figure out why it closed in the first place. The story within the stained-

glass-adorned walls and arched, brick halls of the church went that it shuttered after Sept. 11 over security fears. But no church records existed that explained why it closed; the Department of Buildings and other city agencies had no record of stepping in to close it, either.

"A lot of that remains a mystery," says Brian Simpson, the church's director of communications. "Once we went down that path, there weren't a lot of roadblocks." So, after its unexplained hibernation, the tower finally opened for tours again in December. It didn't even need any repairs, Simpson says.