



Summer 2021

The American Guild of Organists San Francisco Chapter Quarterly Newsletter

Dean's Message

by Susanne Rommel

With this last newsletter of the season, we will conclude our SFAGO 2020/2021 Season. This season will be remembered like no other and leading an AGO chapter through this pandemic was new for all of us. I want to start by sharing my great appreciation and gratitude for our strong community. Together we made it through these past fifteen months. I will summarize and share in this end-of-season article many areas I am deeply grateful for.

Early in May, I filled out an extensive National AGO survey about the state of our chapter. Previously, I had learned that some AGO chapters had closed shop during the pandemic, and my reaction to the survey was that National for good reason would want to get a clear picture of what is going on around the US; which chapters are healthy, and which chapters would need further support or reactivating energy. I can assure you that filling out the survey for our chapter was a breeze:



National Headquarters and The American Organist Magazine
475 Riverside Drive, Suite 1260, New York, NY 10115-0055
212.870.2310 | info@agohq.org | agohq.org

April 26, 2021

To: All AGO Chapter Deans
cc: Chapter Sub-Deans, Treasurers, Registrars, and
Membership Coordinators



Chapter Insights Survey

Filling out the survey made it very clear that throughout the last fifteen months we not only showed excellent financial, membership, and programming stability, but we also used the time of the pandemic to further strengthen our community, our virtual presence and our existing programs. Realizing that in the storm of the last season we came out healthy and strengthened made me very proud of our entire chapter. It is in these times of change, insecurity, stress and threat, that a community shows its return on character. Our chapter's character based on integrity, responsibility, forgiveness and compassion is what got us

Notice to Concert-Goers

from Brian Swager

We are thrilled that live performances are opening to the public once again. Given the changing nature of local laws and the rules of individual institutions, we suggest that you check each venue's website for up-to-date information before attending.

As we go to press with the summer issue, Grace Cathedral's organ recitals are slated to be open to the public, but for the time being, reservations must be made online (gracecathedral.org). The performances will also be broadcast online.

Performances at St Mary's Cathedral will be livestreamed through June (youtube.com/cathedral-ofstmaryoftheassumption) and will be open to the public beginning in July.

The recital series at Mission Dolores Basilica will resume in September with performances both open to the public and livestreamed.



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**BROTHER MARTIN YRIBARREN, FSC,
COLLEGE ORGANIST, INTEGRAL PROGRAM**

1947–2021

Brother Martin was passionate about music, sports and teaching. In fact, Martin Yribarren was an athlete long before God called him to be a Christian Brother at Saint Mary's College. Tall and slender, he played basketball and baseball as a boy in Fresno and dreamed about being a hoops star. But at the age of 10, music began to strike a chord.



A known stress reliever was sneaking into the Chapel to eavesdrop as he practiced on the 3,649-pipe organ. He received his M.A. in Music, Organ Performance at CSU Los Angeles in 1984, and a Ph.D. in Music Theory at University of Southern California, Los Angeles, in 1994. Brother Martin died March 8, 2021.

Schoenstein to Waco

from Jack Bethards

A new three-manual, 27-voice, 32-rank organ under construction at the Schoenstein & Co. factory is to be installed at St. Alban's Episcopal Church in Waco, Texas, as part of a major campus-wide expansion and renovation of this rapidly growing parish.

The main organ is in a north chancel chamber. Unenclosed stops for congregational support and children's choir accompaniment along with the Pedal Open Wood are in the west gallery.

Acoustical consultation is by Paul Scarbrough of Akustiks LLC, Norwalk, CT. The tonal design is focused on support of the Anglican service. The organist and director of music is Eugene Lavery. ▼

Welcome New Members

from William Vaughan

Troy Killorn
Canon Dr. Fr Shane Scott-Hamblen
Corvin Tingstrom

The Summer issue covers June, July and August.

The next scheduled newsletter is the Autumn issue in September.

See notices throughout for deadline dates – bottom of front page, Calendar heading and Classifieds heading.

San Francisco Chapter Newsletter is published monthly, August thru May, with a Summer issue for June/July, by the San Francisco Chapter, American Guild of Organists. Opinions stated herein are those of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect official policies of this Chapter.

Dean: Susanne Rommel
Sub Dean: James Smith
Sub Dean Elect: Christopher Keady
Secretary: Daniel Gonzalez
Treasurer: William Vaughan
Registrar: Christoph Tietze, 415.924.1377
Chapter Website: www.sfago.org

All members have access to the online directory and can find email addresses there if they wish to contact fellow members.

Newsletter Departments: *Send your entries to the appropriate editor; all submissions are subject to editing, e.g., for length; all submissions are due by the 20th of the month preceding publication. No exceptions allowed.*

Events Calendar Listings: Brian Swager, 415.551.7866 — See Calendar page for email contact
Job Placement & For Sale Listings: David Howitt, 510-437-0254 — See Placements page for email contact
Obituary Listings: William Vaughan
Newsletter Articles & Paid Ads: George Morten, 209.565.6660, george.morten744@gmail.com

Advertising rates for a single issue are based on size of ad placed. Full Page: \$120; Half Page: \$60; Quarter Page: \$30; Business Card: \$15; Third Page (by special arrangement only): \$45. Details on request.

2020-2021
Last updated 08/25/2020

My Two Reed Organs

by Michael Hendron

I was pleased to participate in the members' virtual recital in March, and share videos of my two reed organs. Susanne Rommel invited me to contribute an article about them. I have played reed organs since my father and I restored a Mason & Hamlin parlor organ when I was 16. Since then, I have restored several of these instruments, but my interest is centered on the repertoire composed for these instruments.

With roots in ancient China and medieval Europe, reed organs as we know them were developed on both sides of the Atlantic in the early 19th century. The **American organ** (regardless of actual origin) generally had suction bellows, a five-octave F-F keyboard, with an interior action divided at middle B/C—but not always. In 1840, the Frenchman Alexandre Debain produced the **harmonium** (a name he patented), which became the standard for most European builders. The harmonium had pressure bellows, a five-octave C-C keyboard with the “break” at alto E/F, and four standard ranks of reeds (16', 8', 8' and 4'). The *raison d'être* for all reed organs was to have the wind supply (and therefore musical expression) under the complete control of the player, by means of the foot-pumped treadles. (Rather than relying on remote assistants who physically powered pipe organ bellows until the advent of electricity.) Reed organs became very popular for domestic entertainment and for religious use; they were also used in theatres and pit orchestras. From 1840 to 1940, hundreds of companies produced thousands of these instruments across Europe and North America.

My harmonium was built by Victor Mustel, one of the top Paris manufacturers, in 1887. In addition to the standard four complete ranks, this instrument also has a two-rank, 2' celeste (*Harpe Eolienne*) in the bass, plus three additional stops in the treble: a 16' *Musette*, a 16' *Celeste*, and a 32' *Baryton*. These additional ranks—plus mechanical devices called *Prolongement*, “*Métaphones*” and “Double-expression” winding—officially earned the



► **Reed Organs**, page 5

Steve's Organ Lit Corner

by Steve Repasky

Good Pairing

Like good wine pairing at dinner, often for unity I like to pair the organ prelude with the postlude. This can be done in a number of manners. One way is to choose a piece by the same composer. With prolific composers, one may select a piece from the same era.

Another way is to select a slow meditative movement from an organ sonata for the prelude and a louder more aggressive movement for the postlude. Yet another way is to select your prelude and postlude pieces from the same time period or geographic location.

Here is an example of good pairing:

Prelude: *Adagio in Free Style*, op. 35 by Gustav Merkel

Postlude: *Allegro moderato* from the *First Organ Sonata*, op. 74 by Rudolf Bibl.

Both scores may be found on IMSLP

Merkel's *Adagio* is a 7-page piece in three sections: *Adagio*, *Allegro*, *Adagio*. Since this is a multi-movement piece and each movement stands on its own, it may be broken up into sections during a service.

The Mendelssohn-like *Organ Sonata* in D minor by Bibl is in four movements: *Allegro moderato*, *Andante con moto*, *Adagio con energico*, *Moderato-Fuga*. It may also be broken up into sections.

Or you may select the Merkel final movement as the prelude with the first or fourth movement from the Bible organ sonata as the postlude.

Bon appétit! ▼



Dean's Message, from front page

healthy and strengthened through this time. Thanks to our treasurer Bill Vaughan, our registrar, Chris Tietze, and our membership coordinator Pat During for their proactive and immediate support in getting me all the numbers requested for the survey. In praising our community for its character, I want to also thank all our many members who had reached out with caring, supporting and encouraging words in the last fifteen months. Everyone, who took the baton and moved things forward in the last months, needed this fuel and compassion – thank you! And with that I want to also remind everyone, this community is here to help in times of individual struggle: If there is anything we can do for you under your specific circumstances, please reach out (susanne.rommel@sbcglobal.net) – we are all in this together!

I am also enormously grateful for our board. Everyone on the board volunteered significant time and energy, led with dedication and positivity through this time of uncertainty, and we all pulled (virtually) in the same direction and fulfilled our specific vision for this special season: To successfully lead our chapter through the pandemic! After such achievement together, I am grateful that all our board members who navigated us successfully through this time will continue to serve our community in the next season. It is with great pleasure that I announce the election of Chris Keady as subdean for programming, James Smith as subdean for social management, Daniel Gonzalez as subdean elect. We will additionally strengthen our board with Terry Farrow as secretary – thanks Terry, for stepping up! Congratulations to our new board, may our character of integrity, responsibility, forgiveness and compassion serve us well, and also through the next season. And to everyone who took part in the election and voted, a big thank you for your participation. Thanks also for the three members, who reached out to me to support our board – your engagement and experience will broaden our perspective!

As with last year, so also this year we were not able to conclude this season with a concert together, socializing in person at our annual dinner. Socializing could not be moved into our virtual reality, and therefore I just cannot wait for the first event when we all will be back together meeting as one community, most likely in September. Isn't that a wonderful shining light at the end of the tunnel? Along the same lines, we heard your voice in our quick check-in survey. 81% who took part in our survey are saying the same: We want to attend social events – what a loud and clear voice! We are all for it and want to be ready. In anticipation of high expectations regarding our social events, we wanted to be prepared and strengthen

our social event planning. This is the reason we adjusted our subdean position into two roles for next season: Chris Keady has planned an excellent program for our 2021–2022 season, and James Smith is spending energy specifically on making our social events a great experience for everyone – thanks James and Chris!



Our last SFAGO in person event on March 8th, 2020 in Mission Dolores Basilica, San Francisco.

I invite you to end this season with a few translated lines from my favorite poem, which helps me when encountering transitions in my life. I am very grateful for these lines and they also helped me through this pandemic. German protestant pastor and theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote this poem while he was held in an underground 5-foot by 8-foot solitary confinement cell for a long time and just a few months before he was hanged on April 9, 1945 shortly before the end of World War II.



Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Surrounded by such true and gentle powers. So wondrously consoled and without fear, thus will I spend with you these final hours, and then together enter a new year. ... The worries of the old year still torment us, we're troubled still by long and wicked days. Oh Lord give our frightened souls the healing, for which you've chased us in many ways. ... By gentle powers lovingly surrounded, with patience we'll endure, let come what may. God is with us at night and in the morning, and certainly on every future day.

► **Dean's Message, next page**

Reed Organs, from page 3

instrument the name “Harmonium d’Art.” It was originally sold to a music and instrument dealer in London, England, and was later retailed in Cornwall. In the 1980s, it was partially restored by the Rev. Kieth Jarrett, a priest in Yorkshire. He sold it to Dr. James Bratton, an organist and professor in Denver, Colorado, who completed the restoration, cleaning and re-tuning the 430 reeds to modern concert pitch, while retaining the original voicing. When I met Jim in 2005, he recognized a fellow harmoniumiste; in 2008 he sold me his Mustel. With its generous specification, beautiful voicing, an ebonized cabinet and big brass handles, “Blackie” was all I could desire. I am very lucky to have this fine instrument, restored by two knowledgeable and reverent musicians.

My American organ was built by the Mason & Hamlin firm in Boston. From its founding in 1856, M&H offered instruments for a range of markets: melodeons and parlor organs for the home, chapel



organs and two-manual-and-pedal organs for churches, lodges and schools. The company catered to— and partnered with—serious musicians, and commissioned or invited music composed especially for their instruments. In all, Mason & Hamlin built about 240,000 reed organs, production ceasing around the time of the First World War; they also made very fine pianos in the early 20th century, and a few pipe organs. My “chapel organ” or “artist’s organ,” with more than five ranks in a walnut case, is dated 1915. In the bass, besides a one-octave 16’ SubBass, there is 8’ ContraBasso, 8’ Diapason, 4’ Viola, and a 2-rank 2’ Eolian Harp. In the treble, a 16’ Clarinet, 8’ Corno, 8’ Melodia, 8’ Seraphone (these two latter combine for a Voix Celeste), and 4’ Flute...all at the original A=440 tuning. Thus, it plays 19th-century American reed organ music, and the early 20th-century German repertoire written for the “Normal-Harmonium.” My friend Kenneth Pratt, in West Virginia, does painstaking restorations of American reed organs; he acquired this organ near Charlottesville Virginia, and restored it in 2013. Mason & Hamlin called it their Model No. 93BF; I chuckled at the “BF” and named it “the BoyFriend” even before I bought it in time for its centennial in 2015.

Dean’s Message, from page 4



The poem above from Dietrich Bonhoeffer became a frequently sung hymn, with different melodies, which appears in current German hymnals.

Now that our ‘year’ (season) has ended, let us look forward to our new season feeling lovingly surrounded by gentle powers. Enjoy each ‘future day’ this summer! ▼



I’ve had the pleasure of using both instruments in concert in San Francisco, and collaborating with musical friends in my home. You can hear these, and many other reed organs, on my YouTube channel: Mustel1887. I am always eager to visit and play these instruments, so please contact me if you know of more in the Bay area. ▼

San Francisco AGO Chapter Donors

The SFAGO wishes to thank the following people for their financial support to the Chapter Donation category.

John M. Agraz	Natsuko Murayama
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Father Thomas J. Carroll

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San Francisco AGO Chapter Recital Series Donors

The SFAGO wishes to thank the following people for their support of the Recital Series.

Bombarde (\$1000+)

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Naoko Maeda
Vlada Volkova-Moran

Vox Humana (\$1-\$24)

Merrill Collins
Patricia Harre

Thank you very much for your donations! There is still plenty of time to send in a tax-deductible gift.

These lists were compiled from AGO National remit forms. January 1 thru November 30, 2020

Classified Ads

Collected by David Howitt

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POSITIONS AVAILABLE

SAN FRANCISCO

Pastoral Associate for Liturgy & Music Job Description

Overview

St James Episcopal Church is a pastoral-size congregation located in San Francisco's Inner Richmond Neighborhood. We are a progressive parish that honors tradition while being open to contemporary expressions of faith. Our worship is reverent, participatory, and joyful. Music for all ages is an integral part of our liturgical life.

We are seeking a Pastoral Associate for Liturgy & Music who is well versed in a variety of musical genres to lead our congregation and volunteer choir in singing. The successful candidate will be familiar with the broad tradition of church music and the Episcopal liturgical tradition, a gifted organist and choral director, comfortable working with adults and children, self-motivated and able to work collaboratively under the supervision of the Rector to create beautiful and meaningful worship experiences. Preference is given to those who are proficient organists, however, talented pianists with a capacity to develop as organists also will be considered.

The Pastoral Associate for Liturgy & Music is a part-time, non-exempt position (approximately 15 – 20 hours per week).

St James is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate in hiring practices. We celebrate diversity and are committed to creating an inclusive environment for all employees. Women and people of color are strongly encouraged to apply for the position.

Essential Responsibilities

- In collaboration with the Rector, seek to nurture joy, reverence, and participation in music as part of the congregation's life and worship.
- Participate in weekly staff meetings with the Rector and other staff.
- Participate in liturgical planning with the Rector and lay leaders.
- Provide leadership in integrating live and virtual worship experiences, including working with recording and livestreaming technologies.
- Select music appropriate to the liturgical season for congregational singing, choral anthems, and/or instrumental reflection.

- Recruit, rehearse and direct adult and children's choirs in offering musical leadership for Sunday worship and other feast days, with attention to fostering collegiality and spiritual growth within the choirs, and provide musical accompaniment for worship.
- Recruit and mentor choir members through our choral scholars program for high school and college students (3-4 scholars per year).
- Whenever possible, be available for weddings and funerals (with supplemental compensation). If necessary arrange for a substitute.
- Arrange for substitutes when absent.

Qualifications and skills

- Bachelor's degree or higher in music performance or related field.
- Demonstrated proficiency as an organist and pianist.
- Demonstrated experience and competency directing volunteer choirs, working with adults and children.
- Knowledge and experience in liturgical worship, and familiarity with Episcopal liturgy and theology preferred.
- Broad knowledge of historical and contemporary church music in its varied forms and genres.
- Demonstrated competence in virtual choral performance, recording and livestreaming.
- Ability to pass a comprehensive background check.
- Note that all church staff are required to complete "Whole and Healthy Church" training as a prerequisite to employment and maintain certification as a condition of continued employment.
- Physical demands: high level of skill as an organist and pianist; moving furniture; lifting up to 50 pounds.

Working conditions

The Pastoral Associate for Liturgy & Music works approximately 15 -20 hours a week, including choir rehearsals and Sunday morning 10 a.m. worship. There will be times during the church year that additional hours will be necessary for the mission and ministry of the parish. These include, but are not limited to:

- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- Ash Wednesday
- Maundy Thursday
- Good Friday
- Easter Vigil
- All Saints Day

Applications

Interested candidates should email a cover letter, resume, three professional references, and online links to recordings of performances to the Rev. John Kirkley at john@stjames-sf.org. ▼

Bay Area Concert Calendar

Collected by Brian Swager

Summer ²⁰²¹

Events, dates, times, and locations are subject to change without notice. Compiled from flyers, press releases, and listings submitted by members and organizations. SFAGO is not responsible for errors, although every effort is made to be accurate. **Submission deadline for the Autumn issue is August 20.** Send event listings to sfagocal@gmail.com. Please include admission charge, as events are free of charge unless otherwise indicated. For the most up-to-date calendar, visit www.sfago.org, click on "Resources" and select "Calendar"

JUNE

6 Sunday

4pm. David Hatt, Organ. GC

4pm. Ensemble 1828 (Piano Trio). Music of Piazzolla, Ang, and Ravel. CSMA

13 Sunday

4pm. Raymond Hawkins, Organ. CSMA

20 Sunday

4pm. Hyunju Hwang, Organ. CSMA

27 Sunday

4pm. Etienne Walhain, Organ. CSMA

JULY

4 Sunday

4pm. Michal Kopycinski, Organ. Freewill offering. Free parking. CSMA

11 Sunday

4pm. Joy-Leilani Garbutt, Organ. GC

4pm. Kevin Navarro, Piano; Cheryl Cain, Soprano. Music of Mendelssohn, Bach, and Otello. Freewill offering. Free parking. CSMA

18 Sunday

4pm. Michael Bower, Organ. Freewill offering. Free parking. CSMA

25 Sunday

4pm. Justin Brueggeman and Rodney Ward, Organ. Freewill offering. Free parking. CSMA

AUGUST

1 Sunday

4pm. John Karl Hirten, Organ. GC

4pm. Michal Szostak, Organ. Freewill offering. Free parking. CSMA

8 Sunday

4pm. Kevin Navarro, Piano; Joshua Hughes, Baritone. Music of

Mendelssohn and Bach. Freewill offering. Free parking. CSMA

15 Sunday

4pm. Roland Voit, Organ. Freewill offering. Free parking. CSMA

22 Sunday

4pm. Christoph Tietze, Organ. Freewill offering. Free parking. CSMA

29 Sunday

4pm. Angela Kraft Cross, Organ. Freewill offering. Free parking. CSMA

SEPTEMBER

12 Sunday

4pm. Jordan Prescott, Organ. GC

OCTOBER

3 Sunday

4pm. Matthew Michael Brown, Organ. GC

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FREE

Hammond with built-in Leslie speaker. This organ has the Leslie built in speaker, full pedal, and bench. Owner asks only that recipient coordinates the transportation as owner is unfamiliar how to properly transport without damaging it. Located in Redwood City (Emerald Hills). Contact Felicia Foo at msfeliciafoo@gmail.com for particulars.

