



# BOSTON PIPINGS

news and notes for members of Boston Chapter AGO

## **February 2021 Pippings - The Newsletter of the Boston Chapter AGO**

[Click here to go to the Calendar on our website.](#)

### **Meet the Executive Committee**

Greetings!

Welcome to a new feature of our newsletter. We are asking members of our Executive Committee and of our Chapter to introduce themselves in our newsletter. This month we feature Daryl Bichel, our Treasurer.

As a youngster I lived on a farm and later moved to the small farming community of Salem, South Dakota. My family was Lutheran and we had fantastic pastors, Sunday school lessons and confirmation classes. Starting in grade school I took weekly piano lessons and as a high school student became interested in the organ. One year of private instruction in Sioux Falls was followed by lessons at Augustana University (also in Sioux Falls), where I eventually enrolled as a music major. As a college student I worked as music assistant in the large choral program at First Lutheran and became organist and choirmaster at the Episcopal cathedral. It was there that I found a profound spiritual home and was confirmed by my friend The Rt.



Rev. Walter H. Jones. While at Augustana I joined the local AGO chapter and enjoyed the programs and camaraderie. Some of the friendships I made in that chapter endure to this day

After serving in the US Army during the Vietnam war, I enrolled in the masters program in early music at New England Conservatory in 1975. Later I was admitted to the masters program in organ performance as well. Those years were very formative, thanks to Yuko Hayashi and especially Bob Schuneman. At the time I was deeply inspired by worship at All Saints Ashmont and The Church of the Advent. Along with a few friends from NEC I also attended Evensong any time it was offered at Episcopal churches in Boston and Cambridge, sometimes racing from one to the next.

Following graduation dual careers emerged. I worked at the Harvard School of Public Health for many years, holding administrative and programmatic positions in the Dean's office and several academic departments. I worked at the Lutheran church in Newton Centre, and later extensively at the Episcopal Parish of the Messiah in Auburndale and the Society of St. John the Evangelist in Cambridge. Following that I sang in the choir of men and boys at All Saints Ashmont for many years. I also became a business owner along the way, opening an 11 room bed and breakfast in Jamaica Plain in 1996 and a catering

company just a few years ago.

My work in Auburndale and at the monastery, along with my friendship with Sister Carolyn Darr and the sisters at St. Margaret's Convent in Roxbury, fostered interests in compline, singing, Gregorian chant, Renaissance polyphony, and writing music for my own use and for a few friends who asked. Night Song, my weekly compline liturgy, began in 2008 at St. John's Episcopal Church in JP and moved to First Church in Cambridge in 2011. Inspired by compline at St. Mark's Cathedral in Seattle, its nature reflects my Anglo-Catholic background and my interest in early music. Night Song also serves as a music lab of sorts, as a framework for improvisation for myself and other musicians, and as a spiritual experience.

I've been involved in the Boston Chapter of the AGO for well over 30 years in various capacities. Currently I'm treasurer and chair of the finance committee. I enjoy the collegiality and the inspiring programs, and think it's important to participate to support each other and advance our profession for those who will follow us. Over the years I've served on the boards of the Old West Organ Society, Cappella Clausura, Blue Heron, and The Seraphim Singers. As board president for Seraphim I've learned much about the challenges and joys of leading the board of an arts organization.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused significant changes in my life, basically forcing me into semi-retirement. The bed and breakfast failed and the two houses that comprised it had to be sold. There was no business for my catering company, and I may never return to that. What that left is music, and I'm thankful to have that and in fact to be very much immersed in it. There's more time for practicing and learning new pieces for my work at St. Joseph Parish in Needham. I'm devoting more time to composing too, and have just started reading my friend Ben Schwendener's book Organic Music Theory so I can learn more about the Lydian chromatic concept. The other book I've delved into recently is Flavor by Yotam Ottolenghi, my favorite cookbook author.

Yours sincerely,

*Daryl Bichel  
Treasurer*

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### **AGO Membership - Membership Aid still available**

If you have suffered financial hardships and loss of income as a result of the pandemic, AGO has received donations to assist those who cannot afford to renew their memberships. If you do need assistance, or know someone who does, contact me so that I may send the name to AGO HQ. Your request will be held in confidence.

Have you moved lately? Has your address, phone, or email changed? If so you are probably busy with many tasks, and keeping your information current with AGO Headquarters may be lower on your to-do list.

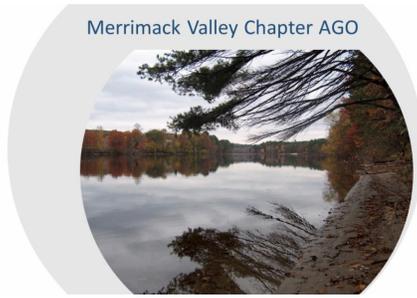
Let us help! You can update ONCARD directly using your login id and password (the account number found on your TAO label). Or you can contact me using contact section of our website. [Click here](#) and address your comments to the Membership Secretary from the drop down box.

Please visit the AGO COVID-19 resource page by [clicking here](#) .

Most importantly, during this particularly challenging time, continuing to be part of our chapter offers you the opportunity to stay connected with a community who is here to engage, uplift and support you.



*Lynn Vermeer*



**AGO Merrimack Valley  
Chapter (MVAGO)  
Invitation to the Virtual Mini-  
Convention  
February 27, 2021 10:30 am – 1:30 pm**

This year, the annual MVAGO Mini-Convention will be virtual and will be reduced in scope

compared to the usual schedule.

However, we will have the pleasure to welcome two very interesting and famous speakers; **Ian Watson** in the morning will talk about the making of the Handel and Haydn Society's virtual "Messiah"; in the afternoon, **Katelyn Emerson** will talk about "The Question of Practice: How do we learn?"

The program and schedule of this virtual mini-convention will begin at 10:30am with Social Time, that will be followed at 11:00 am by Ian Watson's lecture. There will be a virtual on-line lunch break at 12:00 noon (food not provided by MVAGO!!) followed at 12:30 pm by Katelyn Emerson's presentation. The Mini-convention will conclude at 1:30 pm.

The attendance to this mini-convention is free and attendees can freely join one presentations or both.

If you would like to attend this event, please send an email to [Alain Bojarski](#) and the Zoom invitation will be sent to you by email a few days before the event.

To read more about the presenters, [click here](#)

**Producing Organ Music for Virtual Worship  
and Social Media  
How a Private Project Evolved into a Vehicle  
for Ministry**

George A. Sargeant, Associate Organist and  
Choirmaster, Old South Church



Dear Colleagues,

What a long, exhausting year this has been! Our lives have been upended, the way we worship has changed and continues to do so, and we have been forced to learn to learn new skills to adjust our work to a virtual world. The following is an account of my own journey with some brief reflections on what the future might hold.

Prior to the pandemic, my primary means of creating and distributing online content was YouTube. Many of you who know me personally are aware that one of my pastimes is storm chasing, and I originally created my channel in 2010 to share this passion with family and friends. It wasn't until very late in 2017 that it occurred to me I could, and should, use the same platform for my music, not just to indulge a hobby.

I started out by uploading preludes, postludes, hymns, and anthems excerpted from worship recordings. By the fall of 2019, I found myself increasingly frustrated by little mistakes that marred otherwise fine renditions of organ and choral repertoire offered

live. As we all know, we only get one take most of the time!

After spending a few weeks thinking about alternatives, I tried my hand at recording a half-dozen or so pieces of repertoire outside the context of worship utilizing my own camcorders and audio/video editing software such as Wondershare Filmora and Sound Forge. This afforded me the opportunity for multiple takes. Given my lack of experience at the time, the results were reasonably good.

Fast forward to March of last year, when COVID-19 arrived and tore across Massachusetts and the nation with a vengeance, our houses of worship shut down, and we hunkered down in our homes for the better part of six weeks. Thankfully employees of religious institutions were considered essential workers and were allowed to come in to work even though our buildings had to remain closed to the public. Suddenly the skills I had been developing for a private project became a necessity for my job.

The music I was producing for worship was doing double-duty, as I continued to upload much of it to YouTube as well and slowly began to develop a larger following there. An unanticipated surprise was hearing from several living composers who had discovered my recordings of their music. Their feedback was humbling and led to an unexpected realization: that my social media presence had become a ministry, an extension of my calling.

How have you, fellow musicians, adapted your ministries to the needs of the pandemic? In what way might what we have learned inform the future? Now that there is light at the end of the tunnel, vaccines are on the way, and our lives may slowly begin returning to some semblance of normal come fall, are quarantine experiences such as mine some indication of what our profession might be like post-pandemic? I suspect they are.

In all likelihood people who are part of vulnerable populations will be slower to return, and online ministry to them will need to continue. Many of us whose churches and synagogues had the ability to produce virtual worship found our content being viewed by people from around the world, including members of faith communities who lacked such resources and which may not survive the prolonged shutdown. It is entirely possible that some of us may find ourselves creating dedicated online content separate and distinct from our live music-making for an indefinite period of time. We should welcome the opportunity.

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### **With Appreciation to Mary Jodice**

Mary Jodice has resigned her position as Member-at-Large on the Executive Committee. Mary also served as Placement Coordinator for our Chapter. Mary gave her time and commitment to the Chapter and did excellent work as Placement Coordinator.



Mary, Thank you for your efforts on behalf of the Boston Chapter. We look forward to seeing you at future events.



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### **Congratulations to Ross Wood**

Ross has been named Interim Director of Music at Church of the Redeemer Chestnut Hill. "Ross is delighted to be serving as interim director before Nigel Potts' arrival, and looking forward to making music in worship with Redeemer's talented choir."

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**From the Program Committee**



Even as vaccines bring the prospect of resuming in-person activities more near, BAGO programming will mostly remain online this Spring. Upcoming events include:

**Merrimack Valley Chapter Virtual Mini-Convention:** *On February 27th, the annual MVAGO Mini-Convention will be held online. This year's virtual presentation will be reduced in scope to accommodate the pandemic. See the event notice in this edition of Pippings for more details.*

#### **Celebrating the Cantor of Leipzig:**

*On March 20th, BAGO will once again partner with First Lutheran Church of Boston for our annual **Bach Birthday Bash**. This year's event is a return to the roots of the BBB, with a series of livestreamed organ recitals by performers including Jonathan Wessler, Wesley Hall, Jeremy Bruns, and Erica Johnson. Those who wish to attend in person must reserve ahead online, and seating will be limited to no more than is recommended by municipal and state authorities for in-person gatherings. We'll share livestream information in next month's issue of Pippings.*

*Also during March, BAGO will begin gathering video submissions for our own **Virtual Orgelbüchlein**. Chapter members are encouraged to sign-up to record a chorale or two from the collection. These individual performances will then be edited into a full-length recital and simultaneously premiered on our Chapter Facebook and YouTube pages later in the semester. Look for more details in the days ahead!*

**WIMFest 2021:** *For our annual celebration of Women Composers, BAGO will provide those who register a copy of *Multitude of Voyces, Vol. I* (edited by Louise Stewart and published by Stainer & Bell). When conditions permit, we look forward to facilitating a reading session to explore material from this wonderful collection.*

**Spring Annual Meeting:** *Our annual meeting will be held via Zoom. This is an opportunity to interact with other BAGO members, to hear about the year in retrospect, and discuss the exciting things to come. More details and Zoom invitation to follow.*

### **Special Projects Advisory Committee (SPAC) News**



The next deadline for project submissions is **March 15, 2021**. To read more about SPAC, or to view submission guidelines, please [click here](#).

Special Project Advisory Committee



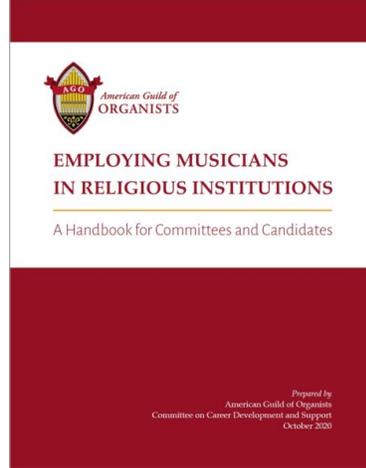
### **Boston Bach Birthday 336**

The Boston Bach Birthday is back, albeit in fashion for the times. Mark your calendar for the celebration of Bach's 336th birthday on **March 20**. **First Lutheran Church of Boston** will host, with a limited in-person audience and with proceedings livestreamed so all can enjoy. Details will appear soon [here](#). Watch this space!

### **New Guide Available from AGO HQ**

The new guide, ***EMPLOYING MUSICIANS IN RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS: A Handbook for Committees and Candidates***, is available for download from AGO HQ [here](#).

Vincent Carr, Councillor for Education, moderated a panel discussion regarding Know Your Value: Introducing the AGO's New Employment Guide for Musicians on February 1st. If you would like to hear the recording of this webinar, [click here.](#)



## Chapter Job Placement Listing Service

Do you know of a church, synagogue, or other institution looking for an organist? Please mention our Chapter's Job Placement Listing service to them! We will list the details of the position for up to 6 months (or until the job is filled). The placement details are then available to Chapter Members

only in the Members Area of our website. For more information, contact [Christine Hogan](#), placement coordinator, or visit our [placement page](#)



## Wayne Dirksen Centenary and Virtual Concert Feb 26, 2021

February 8, 2021 marks the Centenary of Wayne Dirksen's birth. BAGO member Mark Dirksen has worked on a project to honor his father and preserve Wayne's work:

Greetings friends!

Today (February 8, 2021) is Wayne's 100th birthday, and I wanted to let you know that <https://rwdirksen.com/> is up. If your favorite piece / anecdote / picture is missing let me know and I will add it if I can.

The Washington National Cathedral will be hosting an online celebration of RWD's life and work **FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26** at <https://cathedral.org/sacredmusic/> There will be live conversations and presentations plus an intriguing assortment of his works, and please do stick around for the LIVE ZOOM reception at the end.

Wayne's catalog is full of good stuff but I did pick two (2) must-hear works.

From the Operettas (which contain his best tunes): The stuff of life

[https://rwdirksen.com/musical\\_work/the-stuff-of-life/](https://rwdirksen.com/musical_work/the-stuff-of-life/)

And from the general catalog: the final Hymn from his oratorio Jonah

[https://rwdirksen.com/musical\\_work/802-7-jonah-final-hymn/](https://rwdirksen.com/musical_work/802-7-jonah-final-hymn/)

Lots more to see and hear – note that for most pieces you can open the score and follow along while you listen to the audio (which mostly archival - never heard before.)

Happy birthday, Wayne!

And best to you from

Mark Dirksen

Did you see the article in the November edition of "The American Organist"? It contains an article about researching the biographies of past Chapter Deans using genealogy methods. The article, written by Claire DeCusati, has generated interest in Chapters across the country about researching their own histories. You can access the TAO issue [here](#). You will need your AGO login id and password.

### Would you like to submit an article to Pippings? (*"all the news that fits, we print"*)

Articles of general interest to our Chapter members are always welcome. To submit an article, please [click here](#)



### Child Safety Committee Created

The Executive Committee has approved the creation of a Committee on Child Safety at the February 8th EC meeting. The duties and responsibilities of this Committee are outlined in our Operating Procedures [here](#).

The Chapter is looking for 2 people to serve on this Committee. Candidates must be willing to undergo Massachusetts CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) and SORI (Sex Offender Registry Information) Screening (at Chapter expense), sign a confidentiality agreement, and be approved by the Executive Committee.

If you are interested in serving our Chapter in this manner, please contact [Louise Munding](#)

### Know your Chapter's History Quiz:

What seems to be the most important factor (?) in generating attendance at a concert or other Chapter event?

- A well known recitalist
- An excellent instrument/venue
- The day of the week and time of the concert
- Food



[Click here for the answer!](#)



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website

Boston Chapter, American Guild of Organists | [bostonago@verizon.net](mailto:bostonago@verizon.net)

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