

## MUSICIAN IN PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

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# FROM THE COMMITTEE ON MUSICIANS IN PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

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## Part I Confessions of a Sabbath Forgetter

ON ANY TYPICAL Sunday morning in the 20th year of my professional life as a church musician, I would start the day having slept poorly because of anxiety dreams. The snooze alarm would buzz three times, leaving me no time for breakfast. My first refrain of the day was, "I'll have a vente latte with an extra shot of espresso, please," and I'd arrive at church at the last minute. There would be an undercurrent of anxiety in rehearsals, I would be distracted in worship, eat a hurried lunch, and in the early afternoon I'd return to work to prepare for the evening, which would be overscheduled with rehearsals and meetings. I would fall into bed utterly exhausted on Sunday night, leaving a deficit that Monday morning only magnified. Such was the Sabbath of this earnest church musician. "Where have I gone wrong?" I would ask myself. "I used to love this work. I don't know where I am going to get the creativity to make it through another holy season, much less the next 20 years of my ministry."

Realizing that something, or maybe many things, had gotten out of balance in my life, I began to seek guidance to set things right. The first appointment I made was with a physician, the second, with a counselor, the third, with a spiritual director, and the fourth, with a book, *Sabbath, Restoring the Sacred Rhythm of Rest* by Wayne Muller (Bantam Books, 1999). I took seriously the advice of all my guides, but it was reading Wayne Muller's book that changed my life. I was fortunate to work with the author in a short-term mentoring relationship that helped me apply his wise and gentle teaching to my life. I was shocked to realize that I had treated the fourth commandment as a mere suggestion. I simply did not realize that to ignore it was to do violence to my spirit, to literally burn it up.

I broke the cycle of exhaustion with an extended sabbatical rest, during which I enjoyed a week of spiritual retreat. I took long walks and frequent naps, practiced yoga, walked the labyrinth, ate good food, sat in silence, worshiped, wrote in my journal, and, best of all, watched my favorite episodes of the bawdy British comedy *The Vicar of Dibley*.

Upon my return to daily life and work, Flora Wuellner has been my guide. In her book *Feed My Shepherds* (Upper Room Books, 1998) she recommends that "Each hour we need tiny Sabbath moments of inner renewal. . . . Each day we should set aside at least one hour of Sabbath time to be and do what delights us most. . . . We need one day a week for relaxing, joyous, humanizing activities. . . . We need a week each year when we can go off alone or with a few like-minded friends or spouse for a quiet retreat" (pp. 121–22).

Remembering to keep the Sabbath has restored my burnt-out spirit, rebalanced my life, renewed the source of creativity for my professional life, and has become for me, alongside the gentle practice of several spiritual disciplines, an essential source of abundant life. I'm enjoying the rests. I hope you will, too.

LEIGH ANNE TAYLOR

# FROM THE COMMITTEE ON MUSICIANS IN PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

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## Part II

### Confessions of a Sabbath Forgetter (The Secret Is Not in the Work)

WHAT'S YOUR secret?" I asked him. My colleague and I had only recently met at a professional conference, and I knew this man had something to teach me. He was about to retire from a satisfying, lifelong career as a professional church musician, and he was happy, healthy, and looking forward to retirement. There was a sparkle in his eye and no trace of cynicism in his voice, no sign of exhaustion in his face or bitterness in his attitude. He was, as I have said about a few people in my life, "the kind of person I'd like to grow up to be." His answer to my question has stayed with me ever since that summer day, "My secret? I've always had a life outside my work, and I have always taken vacations with my family." He and his wife exchanged happy smiles with each other as he said this, and I could imagine that a string of happy memories was dancing between them.

His counter-intuitive message to me that day was clear: the secret of enjoying a lifelong career as a church musician has nothing to do with work and everything to do with what we do when we are not working. I had always thrown myself headlong into ministry, willingly filling up the spaces between work hours with other volunteer activities that closely resembled work. If having a life outside my work was a measuring stick for a

successful, long-lasting career, I was failing miserably. My new colleague had discovered the life-giving secret of Sabbath keeping, and eventually I would too.

The Rev. Flora Wuellner reminds us in her book *Feed My Shepherds* (Upper Room Books, 1998, pp. 120–21) to take Sabbath moments every hour. What would a Sabbath moment every hour look like in your life? It might mean taking a break from the organ bench to walk around a bit and stretch, to gaze out of the window or simply to breathe deeply and relax. It could mean scheduling enough time between lessons to care for oneself. She recommends that we take one hour each day to do what delights us most. Imagine what that hour might be for you today and promise yourself you will enjoy it. She recommends that we take one day a week to enjoy "relaxing, joyous, humanizing activities." I find that as a church musician, it is simply impossible to observe Sabbath on Sunday, so I rest from Thursday evening to Friday evening instead. It has taken quite a bit of self-discipline to resist diving into the chores that I need to accomplish on the weekend or schedule rehearsals on this day, but I do find that if I am faithful to my Sabbath rest, I am much better able to accomplish the list of chores that await me on Saturday. And interestingly, I am less anxious and more joyful as I do my work on Sunday. Finally, Rev. Wuellner recommends that we take a week each year alone, with a spouse, or with like-minded friends for a quiet retreat. This retreat is not to be scheduled with activities but should be a time for naps, journaling, walking, pondering, or simply enjoying the passage of time. I find that I do what I write down on my calendar. What would it take for you to set aside a week for a Sabbath retreat for yourself in the next calendar year?

I am convinced that I am a better person, a better wife and mother, and certainly a better church musician since I have discovered the secret of Sabbath keeping. I hope you'll discover this life-giving secret too.

LEIGH ANNE TAYLOR

# FROM THE COMMITTEE ON MUSICIANS IN PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

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## The Benefits of Goal-Setting

AS I WRITE THIS, at the close of 2010, I am anticipating New Year's Day, my favorite day of the year. While my January thoughts won't appear until the March issue, they are appropriate all year long: what are my goals?

I really enjoy the idea of a clean slate—whether it's a new year, a new month, or a new week—full of possibilities. I relish the opportunity to review past attempts at self-improvement, and I am grateful for the ability to make plans for what I'd like to accomplish next. I make resolutions regularly, and I also break them with embarrassing regularity (especially the ones involving my weight!). So I make adjustments and set new goals.

Goal-setting is helpful to ensure that I keep growing and changing. I find that if I don't intentionally keep my goals in mind, it's easy to get bogged down in the everyday "stuff" of the various responsibilities of job, family, volunteer positions, performances, and everything else that crowds into the over-busy life I call "normal." Socrates wrote, "The unexamined life is not worth living." If I put off self-examination until I "have time," I will find that my life, as filled with "busy-ness" as it was, wasn't really worth much.

Along those lines, I would encourage all of us as Guild members to set this goal now: *to take full advantage of the benefits of Guild membership.* THE AMERICAN ORGANIST arrives in your mailbox each month, full of information—but if that's your only contact with the AGO, you're missing out on many other benefits! Each of us will find different advantages to our membership, depending on our needs and interests; what I find fascinating may bore you to tears. But I am serious when I say there is something for every organist under the wide-ranging umbrella of the Guild, no matter your age, ability, location, employment situation, or type of instrument. We are a diverse group, and the Guild evolves as its leaders constantly strive to address and embrace those differences with a wide variety of programs and resources. What's in it for you? Make it a goal to find out!

Here are two great ways to begin: access two networks available to you. Visit the AGO Headquarters Web site at [Agohq.org](http://Agohq.org). You may be amazed at the treasures to be found there, many of which are free downloads. Bookmark the site for frequent return visits, since it is constantly growing and changing. Access your people network too: Guild members like you with ideas to share. If you haven't gone to a chapter meeting recently, try one again. Chapters grow and change too, and the collegiality available there can encourage you in reaching your goals.

Once you've discovered something new and wonderful about your Guild, don't keep it a secret! Someone in your personal network of musicians may be waiting for the kind of help the AGO can provide. Give this page—or the entire magazine, if you normally recycle it—to a musician friend, and invite him/her to your next AGO function.

Join me in making the Guild part of your ongoing resolutions for 2011.

JAN KRAYBILL, FAGO

# FROM THE COMMITTEE ON MUSICIANS IN PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

## January Jubilee

"Wonderful!" "One of the friendliest AGO events I've ever attended." "I learned so much. I hope you'll do this every year." "A well-organized event. Thanks for all the great ideas!"

THESE COMMENTS summarize what we heard throughout the day as we presented our first "January Jubilee." The January Jubilee concept came after several meetings of the Committee for Musicians in Part-Time Employment, an original vision of AGO Vice President John Walker. The event was inspired by "January JumpStart," a one-day symposium presented annually by the Philadelphia AGO Chapter and neighboring chapters in Region III.

January Jubilee was created as a pilot program focusing specifically on the essential needs of musicians in part-time employment

and at the same time engaging colleagues who are not AGO members. As a pilot program, we hope ultimately to be able to disseminate this concept throughout the far expanse of the Guild. The committee consists of Dale Krider, director, Jan Kraybill, Sheila Hess, James Yeager, and John Walker. Financial help was received from the Baltimore Chapter and Johannus Organs. This seed money enabled us to have our early committee meetings in Baltimore, where we planned and discussed the many details leading up to our first Jubilee. It is hoped that the great success of this first venture will provide an impetus to organize these events and present them in various areas across the United States.

On January 15, 2011, more than 80 part-time musicians (some from as far away as New York) gathered in the beautiful facilities of Christ Congregational Church in Silver Spring, Md., to attend ten varied workshops. Nae Pearson, director of music, was our host and presented two of the workshops. Following a welcome by AGO President Eileen Guenther, there were some inspirational words from the Rt. Rev. Eugene T. Sutton, Episcopal Bishop of Maryland. Bishop Sutton reminded us that we don't need to have a full-time church position in order to say with confidence, "I have a vocation, and that is to use my God-given talents in music to help make the world a better place!"

The ten workshops were well attended with Service Playing, led by Dale Krider, being the most popular. Other workshops included Organ Literature I (Sheila Hess), Organ Literature II (Samuel Springer), African American Music (Irvin Peterson), Public Relations (Jeffrey Pannebaker), Pastor/Musician Relations (Eileen Guenther, filling in for ailing John Walker, and Pastor Andrew Foster Connors), Choral Music (Nae Pearson), Handbells (Nae Pearson), and Wedding/Funeral Music (Dale Krider).

Evaluation forms filled out at the end of the day gave us ideas for future events and suggested that we should do this sort of thing on a regular basis. The overall evaluation of the day was "excellent."

A music display, provided by The Musical Source from Washington, D.C., featured music, at a discount, discussed in each workshop session.

It was a great day and a kind of first for the AGO. Over 20 registrants were not members of the AGO, and several joined that very day! As the people left at the end of the day, there were smiles of satisfaction, demonstrating once again that this is vital work being done by the AGO for Musicians in Part-Time Employment.

DALE KRIDER, Director  
Committee on Musicians in Part-Time  
Employment

# FROM THE COMMITTEE ON MUSICIANS IN PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

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## What's Wrong With This Picture?

WANTED: Organist and Choir Director, Perpetual Responsibility Church, 123 Rightdownmainstreet, Pleasant Town, Anystate, USA. Friendly midsized congregation seeks a well-qualified church musician to play for two services each Sunday (approximately three hours) and conduct a small choir of 14+ enthusiastic singers with a rehearsal each Wednesday night (two hours). Musician should plan to meet once a month with the Music and Worship Committee and should embrace a wide range of traditional and contemporary worship music styles. The church has both an organ and a baby grand piano. There is potential for growth of choir, and it is hoped that the musician would work at choir recruitment. Compensation for this 6-8 hours per week position will be in line with AGO guidelines.

## Some Thoughts on a Job Description

Recently in a phone conversation with our chapter dean, I mentioned that I have an annual review with my immediate supervisor, a truly supportive pastor. When asked to offer three celebrations or concerns in an e-mail exchange prior to our meeting, I quickly jotted down two celebrations, but my third notation was a concern. That concern, I reported, was that because of the musical workload, I barely have time to practice. At our meeting, I shared with my pastor everything I do behind the scenes that would probably not be evident to the worshiper in the pew each week. My job is classified as half-time, which equates to 20 hours per week. It's an excellent position; I have a wonderful pipe organ, a sizable choir, and a very complimentary congregation. I play for two church services, have an adult choir rehearsal on Tuesday night, and rehearse the bell choir each Wednesday night. In and of itself, that would mean maybe a workload of eight to ten hours. However, I also work diligently with individual instrumental and vocal soloists, serve as a support to the Sunday school music leader, oversee the work of the volunteers for our Choir Chime program, and attend meetings. In fact, upon recording all my efforts for eight successive days in November, the hours I expended totaled 42. While each week would not contain the same activities, the bottom line is that the tasks I perform each week cannot be accomplished in 20 hours.

I share this information here because *only you* can advocate for *you*! Our parishioners may not realize the efforts and preparations needed to bring forth quality music performances for our services or any concerts. Consider some of these things you do each week:

**Calendar**—plan calendar coordination, sermon/seasonal topic integration

**Repertoire**—select appropriate difficulty level, seasonal or topical relevance, availability of choral, organ, and instrumental scores

**Music Libraries**—maintain organ library, bell choir library, choir library, instrumental and solo selections; collect all music after it is sung; date and file music

**Budget**—work within constraints of budget, purchase and/or borrow music, periodically hire instrumentalists

**Rehearsals and Coordination**—regularly recruit and invite new musicians; set out music stands/chairs, time-schedule/budget the rehearsal

**Instrument Tuning**—arrange for tuning/maintenance of pipe organ and piano/harpsichord; deal with organ emergency needs

**Printed Programs**—submit music titles to administrative assistant for weekly bulletin inclusion; proof the bulletin to assure accuracy of titles/composers

**Instrument/Equipment Breakdown**—take down music stands/chairs, put away keyboards/instruments

**Communicate**—send e-mails and make calls to musicians who are absent from rehearsal; write notes of appreciation—you can't thank volunteers often enough!

**Musician Contracting**—solicit instrumental volunteers from the congregation or hire outside musicians for special anthems and services

**Scheduling**—secure date/space on church master calendar for special rehearsals; make sure the sexton adjusts the heat in the sanctuary

**Preparation**—practice, practice, practice!

## A Challenge for Your Consideration

As a musician in part-time employment, it is highly likely that you, too, are doing most of the things that I regularly do. I challenge you to look closely at all the hours you regularly spend to be effective in your particular situation. Consider your investment of time and the compensation you receive per hour. Is it fair and acceptable to you? Are you properly "compensated" with benefits, a continuing education/conference budget, and a professional membership in the AGO? When you have pondered these questions, please view the AGO's Professional Development area of the AGO's Web site: [www.agohq.org/profession/index.html](http://www.agohq.org/profession/index.html). Click on the "Time Required" worksheet and total your hours. Before you leave the Web site, also click on and consider this year's "Salary Guidelines."

The ball is in your court; if you want change, do something about it!

LOIS TOEPPNER  
Minister of Music  
St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Sudbury, Mass.

# FROM THE COMMITTEE ON MUSICIANS IN PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

*Wendell Obetz is a retired psychiatrist who has served his church as a part-time musician for most of his professional life. He has built a three-manual digital Hauptwerk organ in his home. When I asked him if he would respond to questions for this column, his first answer was that his experience was so typical, he wondered why it would be interesting. However, I have found his remarks quite inspirational—perhaps because they reflect experiences common to all of us. One of the strengths of the AGO is in the network of fellow musicians who face similar challenges and can share ideas with each other. The following are Wendell's remarks from an interview conducted in March 2011.*

JAN KRAYBILL, FAGO  
Member, Committee on Musicians  
in Part-time Employment

I became a volunteer organist and choir director at Rochester Covenant Church after coming to Rochester, Minn., for my medical residency. The other organist, Janet Woods, was a medical resident's wife, and we played an older electronic Allen organ. The church soon got a well-trained choir director, and I continued to share playing the organ.

Twenty years later, plans for a new building were under way, the music program had grown, and I felt this was just the opportunity for a pipe organ. Unfortunately, the estimated costs of the new building had already exceeded the anticipated amount, with no allotment for an organ. But we had a supportive music director and committee, and I discussed the problem with my brother John, who ultimately put us in contact with Michael Quimby, then early in his career as an organbuilder.

Michael gave us a bid for a two-manual pipe organ, which would incorporate a few used pipes from another instrument. Excited by this, I managed to come up with a fundraising scheme separate from the large building pledge drive. It slowly gained some provisional acceptance. We had a \$40,000 head start, largely since Janet and I had both contributed our modest salaries to an organ fund over past years.

For the remaining \$80,000, the financial plan consisted of three components. At that time, interest rates were high, and we asked for eight loans of \$10,000 each from church members, friends, or family members, offering 12% interest. The payback would come from two sources: for the principal, the church would add \$8,000 to its budget each year for ten years to cover the payback of the loans. Each loaner was paid back \$1,000 yearly, in monthly installments. For the interest, eight other individuals were needed, each to pledge to maintain the interest for one loan. This meant \$100 a month for one year, decreasing to \$90 the second year, on down to \$10 the last year.

All of the pledges were obtained. A volunteer fund manager agreed to do the accounting and disbursements for the next ten years. The small addition to the annual church



Wendell Obetz

budget seemed manageable, and the congregation, enthusiasm high, passed the final proposal.

The church had a growing music program, and over the years we were feeling the limitations of the modest Quimby instrument for larger applications. About five years ago, I became acquainted with Robert Walker, who was in town working on another installation. I persuaded him to look over our organ and its acoustics, initially thinking only of a few heavier Pedal digital additions. By the end of a long evening at the church, we were thinking of a new three-manual console, a digital choir division, and substantial Pedal enhancement. We formed a new small organ committee, and many months intervened as enthusiasm slowly grew and resistance waned.

Finally, another pledge drive was undertaken as part of a separate "gifts and memorials" program. A large panoramic chart of around 300 organ pipes was erected across the entire narthex. As pledges came in, the pipes were colored in. A "thermometer" red ribbon was stretched across the length of a large 8' pipe, indicating the status of the fund. Pledges could be made in monthly or yearly amounts. There were a few very generous and committed donors, and finally the pipes were all colored in.

I am still continuing as chief volunteer organist. I had studied piano in my earlier life, and dabbled with the organ, first in high school when my church installed a Hammond organ. My first instruction was with a local roller-rink organist. I started playing at my church, and my brother often joined in on the piano. In my college years at Northwestern University, I studied organ as an elective for several semesters. While playing the Allen in Rochester later on, I began to study and play some of the organ literature. It was after the installation of the Quimby organ that I took my study and practice more seriously—limited, of course, by the free time available after my medical practice and family life. Now retired, with my family grown, there is more time to enjoy the enlarged Quimby/Walker organ.

This all contributed to my decision to attend the 2008 AGO National Convention in Minneapolis. It was nearby, and brother John was going to be there, so he could give me some registration guidance, and I could shepherd him around the city. While the performances were outstanding, I found the workshops a great source of concentrated education on a variety of topics.

In our daily routine, we are left to our own resources most of the time, perhaps at times

fortunate enough to work with some stimulating colleagues. To attend a convention with exposure to world-class experts and be surrounded with many others working in your field is a rare experience. One can feel immersed and overwhelmed with the array of opportunities, limited only by one's own time and stamina.

This was equally true of the District of Columbia National Convention last summer. I recall a workshop on the use of the psalms in worship, with inspiring group participation and fantastic musical ideas. Another workshop led by the trumpeter of a professional brass group focused on the use of the organ with brass. There were workshops on improvisation, registration, and new literature. An inner-city church with a gospel music staff gave a sample worship service, with audience participation. There was an entire recital with organ and harp. One is exposed to a wide range of instruments of many vintages and builders, with many different worship spaces, including great cathedrals.

While my primarily lifelong instrument has been the piano, I have found that later in life the organ has been a limitless and exciting area to explore. The free downloads of thousands of public-domain organ music on IMSLP (International Music Score Library Project: <http://imslp.org>) is an endless resource.

The AGO has been a unique resource for the continuation of so many aspects of my musical life. Not only a bridge for the organ into the greater culture, it is a rich experience to be in the company of deeply felt and committed musicians, with whom to share our experiences and our ideas.

WENDELL OBETZ



# FROM THE COMMITTEE ON MUSICIANS IN PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

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**T**HIS YEAR as I gathered my documents to prepare my taxes, I was aware of the many hats we organists often wear. A pile of 1099 forms attested to the fact that this “part-time” musician made her living by combining many different jobs. You might say I’m a “full-time part-timer,” and I suspect that many of you are also. Even full-time people often add another part-time position to their already full schedules. For all of us, finding the right mixture of part-time employment opportunities can mean the difference between a fulfilling work life and a hectic, exhausting nightmare. At the 2010 AGO National Convention in Washington, D.C., John Walker, Justin Bischof, and I presented a workshop that, among other things, outlined part-time job ideas for organists. This article is a recap of that part of the workshop—with full credit to my colleagues—and with the goal of providing more ways to gain extra income to fill that nasty black hole in your budget.

It goes without saying that the most common jobs for organists are church and teaching jobs; many of us conduct the church choir as well. However, often there are jobs out there in accompanying that we may not think about. They include accompanying dance classes, civic chorales, musical theater, dinner theater, students at the local college music department, and instrumentalists at the local high school preparing for competitions. If you have a local opera company, coaching singers on their parts can be rewarding. If you’re qualified, conducting positions in opera as well as orchestras are hard to get, but are very fulfilling. If you have a talent for composition, arranging for local music groups or churches is a good way to make a few extra dollars. A full-fledged composer? You might also find work as an editor for a publishing house, or transcribing music with music notation software. Local recording studios sometimes need arrangers and studio musicians as well as producers. Then let’s not forget retail music sales or instrumental sales, or serving as an organ consultant. If you’re into mechanical things, try hooking up with an organbuilder or a tuning and repair shop. With a short amount of training, you can also learn to tune pianos. Artist management can be an interesting job, as is work as a museum music curator; museums often have concert series to either play in or manage. Clerical work in music is as varied as your imagination. Opportunities exist in everything from music education to retail to publishing. If you are a good teacher, you may not have thought of teaming up with the local private school to provide piano lessons for its students, to serve as a general music teacher (private schools often don’t require a teaching certificate), to be a “Kindercare” practitioner, or teach at a community music academy. Or start your own academy or summer music camp at your church. Even your local YMCA and city recreation departments have music classes that need teachers. If you love to perform and have a talent for improvisation, try your hand at theater organ play-

ing, or playing piano in restaurants or department stores. It's not everyone's cup of tea, but for some it's an easy way to make a little extra money. Finally, if you want to go back to school for two years, you can become a music therapist, which is a growing and rewarding field.

So fear not, if your budget has been fighting you and you need a little more income to breathe easier—try some of these ideas on for size, and see what fits you best. Some of the best and most famous organists in history wore multiple hats; why not you too?

MARY BETH BENNETT

# MUSICIANS IN PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

Janet Anuta Dalquist

## One Novice's Journey

A PART-TIME CHURCH musician can accomplish a great deal if the position is approached as a professional one. I am fortunate to have had an education to heighten my ability, but I maintain that any church musician can accomplish much without a formal education if he or she takes advantage of the many available resources.

My education includes a BA degree (1950) from Macalester College, St. Paul, Minn., with only a minor in organ, and an MRE from McCormick Seminary in Chicago (1953). My husband was a pastor (I was widowed in 1977), so although I taught Christian Education courses and led curriculum "previews," I was never commissioned as a "Christian Educator" because I was not officially employed (that means, "for money"). I did, however, substitute as organist in various churches from 1955 to 1989. In 1964, I earned an AMLS from the University of Michigan and took full-time employment as an academic librarian, but I continued substituting as an organist, sometimes for months at a time. My library jobs were as a library director in a junior college from 1968 to 1984, and as a collection manager in a university from 1984 to 1994, at which time I retired from li-

brarianship. In 1989, I was hired as a church organist, playing weekly at Portage Lake United Church (PCUSA/UCC) in Houghton, Mich., a small town at the base of the Keweenaw Peninsula in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

Two people, without their knowledge, served as my mentors. The Presbyterian church my husband had pastored had an astonishing musician who served as choir director-organist. And I read Paul Westermeyer's *The Church Musician*. I took their direction to heart and treated my job professionally: educator as well as organist. Two small but major educational tasks I learned were to include in the Sunday service bulletin the writing out of the names of the hymns and hymn tunes (capped), and to ensure that my music was selected and practiced in time to include the titles, prelude, offertory, and postlude in the service bulletin. I am astonished at the churches that do not do this. If we select carefully, and practice diligently, it makes sense to include our efforts in the bulletin to show that our music is, indeed, part of the liturgy.

I joined the AGO as a single member, along with the Hymn Society, the Organ Historical Society, the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians (ALCM), and the Presbyterian Association of Musicians (PAM). Articles from their journals became my guidelines and support. After I was hired as organist, the choir director and I joined with the pastor and a church officer to form a "worship committee." Among other tasks, we selected hymns for a month to six weeks ahead of time. This allowed us to choose appropriate organ music as well as read over the text of

each hymn as we practiced, making our leading of "the peoples' song" more meaningful. A major help was my denominational musician's journal, *A Call to Worship*, which has suggestions and resources for all music (choral, organ, piano, ethnic, world, handbell, hymns) for each day of the liturgical year. Other denominations may have similar resources available.

I purchased hymnal companions and, using them as sources, began writing short "musician's notes" about hymns to be included in the Sunday service bulletins. From my library of materials on hymns and ethnic music, I shared what I had read with the congregation in a series of essays published in our church newsletter. From 1996 to 2007, I completed 100 essays. These were collected in a three-ring binder and added to the church library (which I had cataloged). Because the newsletters were circulated to other churches in the Presbytery, I was asked to present a workshop for one of the Presbytery meetings. This meant compiling bibliographies and lists of other resources, which I was able to share with the local organists.

Attending the St. Olaf Conference of Music and Theology was inspirational as well as educational. I bought organ music, which ultimately amounted to a collection worth more than \$5,000. Putting my librarian skills to work, I used the library Cutter Table to designate an alphanumeric "call number" for each piece of music and filed it in order. As I bought music, I indexed settings of hymns by hymn-tune name, using the Cutter numbers as access. If done when each piece or collection is purchased, this does not take up a huge amount of time. As a result, I have

been able to access quickly any setting of a hymn by the name of its tune.

In PAM's journal I read about grants for church music programs. I submitted a proposal to my Presbytery, the ELCA Synod, PAM, and ALCM. With the money received from each of these organizations, I worked with a committee of church musicians and clergy in Marquette, Mich., to bring Paul Westermeyer to Marquette for a workshop. I contacted publishers, so that we would have a large display of resources. More than 100 church musicians from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and Eastern Wisconsin attended that workshop. My report about the workshop was sent to PAM, and I received a congratulatory note about the quality of the report. Several months later, I was asked to run for a national position. I lost the election, but it did get my name and the name of my church into the national arena.

During this time, I also served as one of the 75 "inputters" to the *Dictionary of North American Hymnology*. I set aside an hour a day to work on that project of 12,000 records. In the process, I learned a lot about computer use, about disciplining my time, and, especially, how hymnals were compiled and how the selection of the hymns to be included was impacted by world events. Volunteering for this activity proved to be a very satisfying endeavor.

In 1995, the western Upper Peninsula Pine Mountain Music Festival (PMMF) included an organ recital and workshop in its concert series. Following the workshop, the local organists decided we needed each other. We have met since as the "Organists of Keweenaw" (OK) with no officers, no dues, and no regular meeting time. We meet two or three times a year, give programs for each other (ranging from pedaling helps to book reviews), and share food, joys, and concerns. One of our members, David Short, organist at the large Catholic church in Lake Linden, Mich., had investigated the local historic organs. He introduced the OK to these instruments, including four trackers. We had crawls, played, and began to give recitals. Most of us were working people in jobs other than as organists, so we had little time to learn major recital literature. We played what we had used for preludes, offertories, and postludes. We gave "Cabin Fever" (we live in snow country), "Christmas in July," and gospel-tune recitals. It took a long time for us to feel comfortable playing in front of audiences, but that recital activity has fostered and excited us as organists. A special time for us was when one of the tracker organs was restored, and Marilyn Mason traveled north to play the instrument. She led a crawl with our group and taught a masterclass, spending half an hour or more with each of us. Some of us helped in the rebuilding and restoring of a local 1899 Barckhoff, which was recently awarded a citation by the Organ Historical Society.

As a result of David Short's organ crawls, I began collecting stoplists and taking pictures of the organs. At one time, David had connected with Jerome Butera of *The Diapason*. Jerry served twice as the organist for the Pine Mountain Music Festival and participated in one of our crawls. His visit resulted in encouraging me to write an article for his publication. The piece on the historic organs of the Keweenaw was published in the February 2007 issue of *The Diapason*. My little bio at the end of the article again gave national

publicity to my local church. The article resulted in a few e-mail exchanges with Michael Barone of Minnesota Public Radio's *Pipedreams*.

Workshops and conferences are important learning tools for part-time church musicians. After attending the St. Olaf program, and while I served on my church's worship committee, I recommended that we try liturgical dance (it was done once) and make banners (initially considered "too liturgical," but now we have some). I bought percussion instruments to use with Latino hymns and music, and bought alternative song books for use in our congregation.

All of this was done while I was working full-time as an academic librarian, a time-consuming, stress-filled (though gratifying) position. Part-time church musicians can be "professionals" by approaching their job with that view. "Not enough time" is truly not an excuse. To be sure, my children were grown and on their own; however, I was widowed at an early age, taking care of all my household duties and working full-time. I gardened—both vegetable and flower—and did my own yard work, mowing (more than an acre) and snow-blowing (200 inches a year) until I moved into town in 2008. I was able to buy a small two-manual practice instrument, which eased my part-time work. I received enormous help from my memberships and the articles in TAO, ALCM's *Crossroads*, and PAM's *Call to Worship*. Tying theology into music is the hallmark of a church musician. It should be a priority! Reading these journals makes that easy and, with the available books, can almost be the equivalent of a college degree. Attending organ and music workshops and networking with other church musicians is invaluable! Conferences such as St. Olaf's are inspiring and educational. The workshops sponsored by the Pine Mountain Music Festival gave our local organists exposure to artists such as Craig Cramer, Anita Werling, and Steve Eggert. Although we live in a remote area, we have been fortunate to have that experience. Yet some local musicians have not taken advantage of such opportunities. Print materials abound. Exceptional helps are hymnal companions (get several, one for your own church hymnal as well as other denominations; the best is the *Companion to the United Methodist Hymnal* by Carlton Young because of his long essay on hymn history). Organizing my music and indexing the hymn tunes has been a major time-saver.

I have two major regrets. A major mistake was not asking my church to fund my endeavors: attendance at the St. Olaf conferences, the many workshops I attended, some of the print resources I have used, and my professional memberships. Even though the congregation of my church is small, and my weekly pay never approached a "professional" level, I believe they would have had more of a stake in what I was doing, and would have recognized my "professional" contributions more if I had lobbied for that help. My second regret is that I have been unable to persuade our local group to affiliate with the AGO or individuals to join as I did. Many small church part-time musicians feel the organization is professionally "beyond them." Many are struggling in full-time as well as their part-time jobs and yet feel strong financial pressures. I hope this article can inspire "part-timers" to use the many available resources and to join both the AGO

and their denominational musicians' organizations. To approach their part-time job as a professional is key.

I have amassed a library of books on hymnody, including many on African-American music. Of all, in addition to Carlton Young's Methodist companion, I have found the following resources to be exceptional in improving my knowledge and ability as a church musician:

Cherwien, David. *Let the People Sing!* A keyboardist's creative and practical guide to engaging God's people in meaningful song. St. Louis, Mo.: CPH, c. 1997.

*Leading the Church's Song*. Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg Fortress, c. 1998 (introduction to a variety of styles and instrumental accompaniments; includes a CD).

Westermeyer, Paul. *Let Justice Sing: hymnody and justice* (American essays in liturgy). Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, c. 1998.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Te Deum: the church and music: a textbook, a reference, a history, an essay*. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, c. 1998.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Church Musician*. rev. ed. Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg Fortress, 1997.

**Janet Anuta Dalquist** served as organist at Portage Lake United Church from 1989. She retired May 31, 2011, and spends her time learning new repertoire. Her goal is to play recitals on a few of the historic organs of Upper Michigan's Keweenaw.

# MUSICIANS IN PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

Sarita Zaffini

## Inspire Me

**I**SUPPOSE there are the usual reasons for joining the American Guild of Organists. For those of us who are part-time, the usual rationales about “resources” and “time-saving techniques” are compelling in their own way. We do feel stretched a bit too thin, and often woefully inadequate to the task.

Additional arguments could be extended along the lines of Alexis de Tocqueville’s “voluntary associations,” in warm praise of formal support groups, aggregated of those who are similarly interested. Or perhaps the Guild provides an opportunity for friendly fellowship, for social refreshment, and newsy (ahem, gossipy?) exchange. Nothing pleases us more than the concept of “belonging,” of the security enjoyed in company of those who accept and need us, contrasted with, and sometimes leveled against, those who are not so privileged.

The problem with these reasons is that they are inadequate. My organizational approach may leave a lot to be desired, I may consistently perform my job with a disgraceful air of hurried panic, and frequently present a product that could have been quite good if I had taken the proper time and given the appropriate care. In most cases, these errors are not indicative of unsuitability, incompetence, or a dearth of time resources, but betray only a poor management of those said resources. I find that most organists don’t need anyone to clarify this point for them. They know it all too well. In the end, there is enough personal guilt, public shame, and a strong streak of American independence to militate against any desire for group therapy.

As for alleged fellowship, the vulgarities of subjectivity and individualism undermine the power of this arrangement. The problem with “belonging” is that *you* have to feel like *you* “belong,” and no one else can force you to feel this way or argue against you if you don’t. Like good economists, we are constantly thinking on the margin and subjecting all our decisions to a rigorous cost-benefit analysis: “Are these people cool or not? Are they smarter than I am or not? Do they make me feel good or bad? Are they always this irritating? Or is this a bad outing? Do I really want to forego home and hearth, and *Law and Order SVU* in order to associate with *them* tonight? Are they like me? Do they like me?”

We are a moody, volatile, self-absorbed species, and associations based upon nothing more than an optimistic appeal to subjective feelings are doomed. The American Guild of Organists is perhaps even more foolish than other groups to rely on such rationales. I’m no historian, nor am I an expert on the shifting demographics of this group, but I would bet that the Guild has become less heterogeneous over the years, not more. As

in most “classical music” clubs, the median age has crept up (often perceptibly), and the “exclusivity” factor has also increased dramatically.

There are two major culprits for this scenario, and I don’t know which comes first, or if they’re both simply an expression of the same problem. Perhaps we should start with the church, because the church generally insists upon being first. The specters of crass individualism and subjectivity made inroads within Protestantism and began affecting everything else soon after (full disclosure here: it takes one to know one). This has spawned a worship style that is more self-consciously oriented to personal “experience” than to traditional forms and rites.

The litmus test for satisfying (appropriate) worship has been reduced to highly individual opinion, and religious expressions that reflect our own comfort levels, preferences, and desires have supplanted older structures that demand more of us. Vaulted ceilings, high pulpits, and sonorous organs with massive casework have been jettisoned in favor of strumming music “teams,” portable lecture stands, and multipurpose facilities with basketball hoops efficiently strung up toward the ceiling. These modern cathedrals have driven organists out of employment, and ancient old buildings have no use.

The second related trend is cultural. I am amazed (in a horrified way) at how little conversant my generation is with excellent music. Wasn’t there a time when everyone knew that the *Wedding March* was written by Mendelssohn and *Ode to Joy* by Beethoven? Was this not simply an expression of cultural literacy, regardless of what music you enjoyed on a regular basis? No longer so. Hoards of young people (and older people too) can mindlessly rattle off the Top 40 for the week, but stare dumbfounded and silent when asked to relate, or perhaps simply recognize, a few classic works that surely will stand the test of time (no thanks to them).

And the American Guild of Organists stands in the gap as the mad new world passes on its way—in defense of an old instrument, an old discipline, and an old way. Its members, those who have clung on, have aged and become more “die-hard,” more likely to be those committed (and privileged) few who enjoy the organ full-time, who have studied and trained hard, who have made it their life. They are by turns understandably defensive, touchy, anxious, proud, and pessimistic. Asking the young, or perhaps even those who play part-time, to “belong” in such a group is extremely difficult. They will probably not belong.

No one thinks to offer any other rationale. But isn’t there one? It is inside of us, a part of us, if we will only recall. Was it efficiency or “resources” that quietly convinced us to play the organ? Was it the promise of wealth or the allure of success? Was it because of other organists, or was it the comforting assurance of satisfying fellowship? (If you nodded your head at any of these, you need to rethink your profession—these are not the best reasons.)

I remember when I was a teenager, dragging my friend, very much against her will, into the church to hear me play one short piece. She rolled her eyes as I fired up the instrument, and groaned as I selected stops. I ignored her and quickly lost myself in the music. Some people you just can’t change,

and I considered it a success to have simply got her physically in the building. I finished the piece and immediately began to close the instrument, careful not to try my friend's patience. But nothing prepared me for her reaction when I happened to glance at her: rapt gaze, still, speechless, awed, maybe even a touch of fear. She had even ceased her texting device.

My friend was silent for some time before she could awkwardly confess that it was "amazing." I carefully changed the subject to minimize her embarrassment and conceal how much I was aware of the experience's impact on her. But I never forgot that moment. In our haste to relate to youth and cater to those who enjoy different music or worship according to contrasting philosophies, we have perhaps forgotten the power of the organ. It really needs no elaborate defense, because it is its own defense. No other instrument has that range, that depth, that versatility, that great hulking formidability. Christianity chose the organ for its rite because there is really no other instrument that better communicates such power, grace, precision, beauty, endurance, and strength.

It can be enjoyed in isolation, but it is not meant to be. The problem about excessive subjectivity and individualism is that everything becomes an extension of oneself. And frankly, that is dissatisfying and tedious. No surprises. And no growth. The organ does not incline itself well to isolation. It is not a small intimate chamber instrument that can be carried off and enjoyed privately. It is huge and grand—it forces the eyes up, and typically makes its home in the public space. It takes us out of ourselves, which can be initially disorienting and disconcerting but ultimately exciting and fulfilling.

The American Guild of Organists likewise exists to help musicians transcend their preoccupations with self. The aim is neither to increase the perception of identity roles—part-time versus full-time or young versus old—nor to minimize them. The goal is inspiration; for amateur musicians to revel in the accomplishments and abilities of those who have given their lives over to the task, and for professionals to admire the significant commitments of those who allow their art to touch down seamlessly into their otherwise full lives, to marvel at their resourcefulness, their energy, and their determination.

The Guild exists for the young, for their encouragement and training, as an example and an inspiration impelling them to greater excellence. And in the shining eyes of young novices, the Guild also gives back to those who have already attained, by heartening their hopes and reminding them again of that euphoric delight that once gripped them and carried them away. Ultimately, the King of Instruments levels everyone in a pleasingly egalitarian manner. As Martin Luther once put it, "We are all beggars." The piercing beauty of the organ plays upon all of us, regardless of ability. What greater rationale can we give? Let it inspire.

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**Sarita Zaffini** has been a part-time organist since she was 16, and a church musician for even longer. She is currently the organist at St. Peter Catholic Church in Columbus, Ohio, as well as a student of political science at Ohio State University. She blogs about music at [apollobyzaffini.wordpress.com](http://apollobyzaffini.wordpress.com).

# MUSICIANS IN PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

*The following is an interview with organist Dorothy Young Riess. Her varied background and enthusiasm for music will be an inspiration to all part-time musicians.*

DALE KRIDER, Director  
Committee on Musicians in  
Part-Time Employment

## When did you begin organ study?

Organ studies started at age 16, after my high-school choir director suggested I take a few lessons to become school organist in my senior year. We had a Hammond in the school auditorium, and the school organist played for all the assemblies each week.

## Who were your organ teachers?

I first studied in Oklahoma City with Du-bert Dennis, who insisted on correct technique from lesson one! Then at the University of Oklahoma with Mildred Andrews, followed by Marcel Dupré in France. My teacher and good friend at Yale was Frank Bozyan.

## Did you have a part-time organ job when you won the 1952 AGO competition?

I was a junior at the University of Oklahoma when I won the competition at age 20. However, prior to that, as a freshman, I was organist at the First Baptist Church in Oklahoma City, commuting Wednesdays and Sundays for the job. When I started competing in my sophomore year, Miss Andrews insisted I resign.

## Did you ever want a full-time organ job?

I worked full-time as organist-choirmaster at the American Church in Rome, Italy, (St. Paul's Within the Walls) for two years (1956–58).

## When and what made you decide to pursue medicine?

My father died from severe complications of diabetes in 1959, and I could no longer play the organ—he had been my mentor, and when he died, my music died also. I continued part-time as organist at the First Christian Church in Oklahoma City, and, after learning machine shorthand, I resigned to work as a stenographer in a law office. I then went to New York City, got a job in a Wall Street law firm, made new friends, took ballet lessons, ice skated in Central Park, and had a wonderful time—no music at all. Two doctor friends accompanied me to theater, etc., and one night they told me I was wasting my time in a law firm, and why didn't I think about medicine. That had never occurred to me, and I asked if I would ever be bored. They said, Absolutely not.

So in spring of 1961 I took an afternoon off (without pay!), rode the subway up to Columbia University, and went to see the premed adviser. After looking at my music transcripts, he said, "You want to be a doctor? You'll never make it, sweetie." That made me so mad, it carried me through two years of night school at Columbia and nine long difficult years of medical training! I entered the University of Oklahoma medical school at age 33, received an MD five years later (1969); I spent one year as a grad student

in anatomy), and did my internship and a residency for another four years. And I was never bored for 40 years!

I should add here that, after two years in New York City, working on Wall Street during the day and attending Columbia premed at night, and no acceptances to medical schools in the East, I returned to Oklahoma and was hired immediately as organist at Nichols Hills Methodist Church. I played the dedication recital for their new organ in 1963, and so returned to music after an absence of about three years.

## Were you able to keep up your organ skills while practicing medicine?

I continued playing the organ part-time at Nichols Hills Methodist Church during my freshman medical year, but rehearsal schedules cut into school work, so I dropped back a year to repeat a couple of graduate courses and rejoined the next class. I did not play at all from then on, except rare requests to fill in. Besides, my mind was completely absorbed with medicine.

I practiced internal medicine in Pasadena from the completion of my residency in 1973 to the sale of the practice in 1999. I saw my last patient at the end of January 2000. I bought a nice Conn Artiste organ for our home in 1973 and was able to practice off and on. I made some good recordings in 1978.

## After retiring from your medical practice, what prompted you to return to music?

I think we go through cycles in our lives, and my experience with medicine was actually coming to a close in 1998 when we made a trip to Germany and my husband's relatives insisted I play the organ for them. I had practiced for a couple of months prior to the trip, bought a good tape recorder (recorded on a wonderful Rieger at St. Johannes in Tubingen), and actually resumed playing then.

The following year, I placed an ad to sell my medical practice. Then I attended a reunion of Miss Andrews's organ students for the dedication of the new Fisk at the University of Oklahoma in October 1999, and practiced again for a couple of months prior. I was able to play for my friends and record there one morning from 5:00 to 7:00! Upon returning, I had an answer to my ad and a serious buyer. We drew up the papers on New Years Eve 1999.

By June of 2001, I had wound up my business affairs, sold my condo in Pasadena, and joined my husband in Las Vegas (he had retired several years before). I decided to have some fun and resumed ice skating (I was quite good at one time). One day at practice (October 2002) I hit a rough spot, fell on my right knee and broke it! After surgery, six weeks of immobilization, and eight months of rehab, I regained all function. During that time, the organist at the First Presbyterian Church in Las Vegas called and asked me to sub. I attended an AGO meeting, met all the local organists, located an organ to buy (had sold the one in Pasadena to a friend), and by June 2004, played the Liszt *Fantasy and Fugue on B-A-C-H* for an AGO spring concert. One thing followed another, and I never looked back.



Dorothy Young Riess, MD

It has taken several years to find my musical way again—to reconnect all those synapses unused for so long. I performed a special concert in 2009 to honor my father on the 50th anniversary of his death, including the world premiere of one of his compositions that I had transcribed for organ.

## Being an organist often involves other skills, such as conducting or composing. Did you ever develop any of those related skills?

My father was a composer, and I have composed music since I was a child. I studied with Harrison Kerr and Spencer Norton at the University of Oklahoma and with Mel Powell at Yale. During the medical years, all the manuscripts were stored, and I am just now getting them out to revise, copy, and play again.

I never studied conducting, but I accompanied many choirs and had full duties of choir director and organist in Rome. My singers were from the Rome Opera Company (many paid), and all rehearsals were in Italian, which I learned very quickly. After all, pianissimo is the same in any language!

## Do you have any advice for the many part-time organists of today?

Part-time organists should consider their work as seriously as if they were full-time. They should do their very best at the job they are paid to do. They should use the job as an incentive to practice, learn new repertoire, and work on improvisation and accompanying. It's also a good opportunity to plan recitals and be an active part of the musical community. It's important to maintain a professional attitude and cooperate with music directors whose ideas may differ. Good personal appearance, punctuality, responsibility (organ and building keys, etc.), care of the organ—all are part of the job whether part- or full-time.

Part-time organists should also be aware of the limits of their jobs. If the organist is expected to direct the choir from time to time, that should be factored into the payment schedule. If the organist is also expected to do organ maintenance—that definitely is another job and should be paid as such. Sometimes part-time organists complain that they are expected to do more than they should, such as extra rehearsals for special programs and soloists. Frank discussions about limitations of duties are a must and can avoid resentments later on.

The American Guild of Organists  
Committee on Musicians in Part-Time Employment (COMTE) Presents

# January Jubilee Albuquerque!

January 28, 2012  
8:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

A day for the part-time church musician offering varied workshops,  
an inspiring keynote speaker, and a catered lunch

## Workshops

ORGAN LITERATURE I: Practical Organ Music with or without pedals  
ORGAN LITERATURE II: Be Inspired! Music with a little challenge in it  
MUSIC FOR A BLIZZARD: Instant Choral Music (how to create it)  
ORGAN MUSIC IN THE SPANISH TRADITION: Old and New World Gems  
SERVICE PLAYING: Keyboard Magic or How to Pull the Rabbit Out of the Organ!  
PASTOR/MUSICIAN RELATIONSHIPS: Feeling Marginalized?—Let's Talk About It  
KEYBOARD PEDAGOGY: Transition Piano Techniques to the Organ  
CHORAL ISSUES: Clever ways to make any choir improve  
BASIC VOCAL TECHNIQUES: How to help people sing better

## Presenters

Edmund Connolly, Carol Snell-Cyr,  
Frederick Frahm, Sheila Hess,  
Paul Hesselink, David Solem,  
Maxine Thévenot, John Walker,  
Arlene Ward, James Yeager

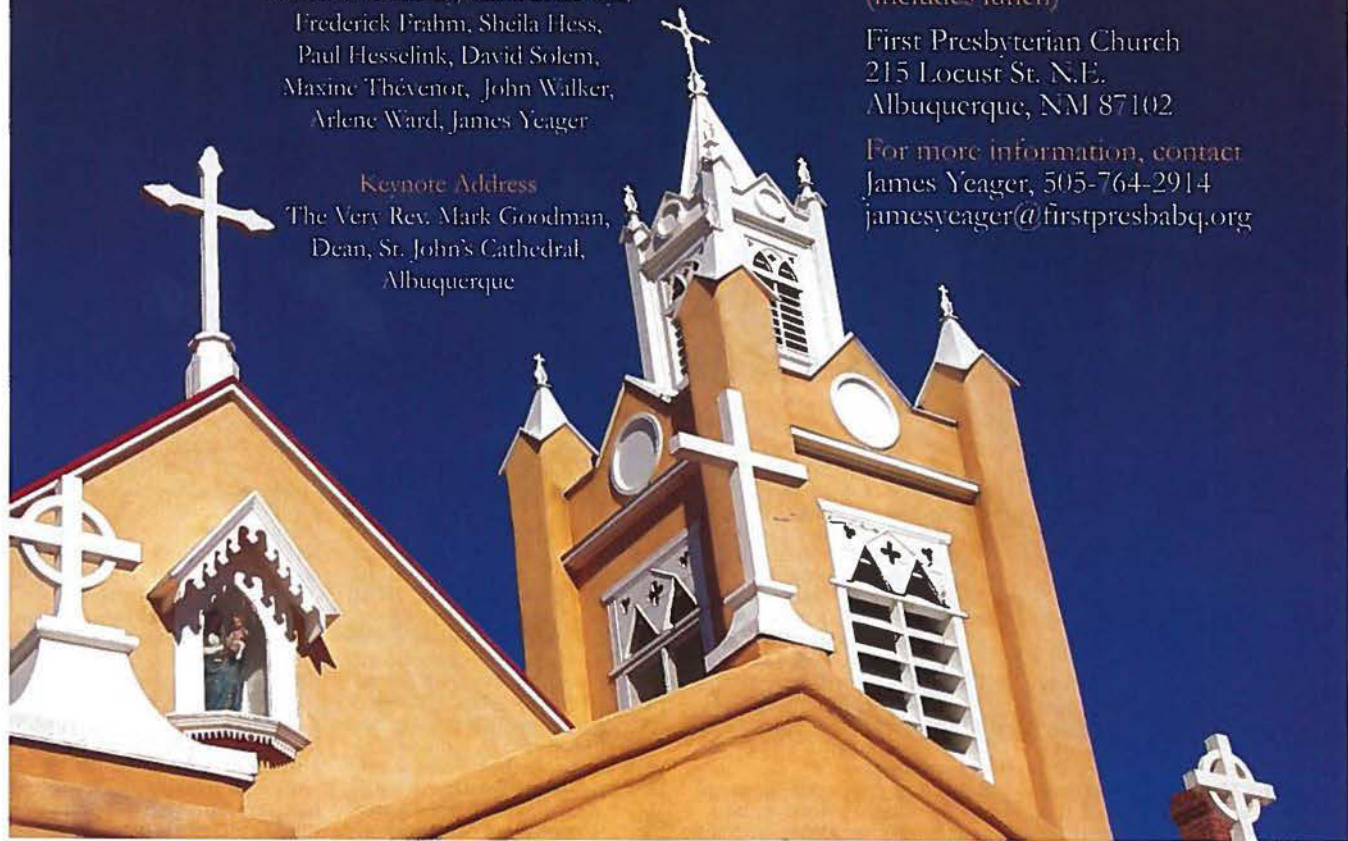
## Keynote Address

The Very Rev. Mark Goodman,  
Dean, St. John's Cathedral,  
Albuquerque

Total Cost: \$15.00  
(includes lunch)

First Presbyterian Church  
215 Locust St. N.E.  
Albuquerque, NM 87102

For more information, contact  
James Yeager, 505-764-2914  
[jamesyeager@firstpresbabq.org](mailto:jamesyeager@firstpresbabq.org)





# MUSICIANS IN PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

Is the practice of hospitality evident in your chapter? Are you welcoming?

**N**ORM!" This name from pop culture reminds us of how one man walks through a door and immediately knows that he is among friends. *One word.* Little effort by the patrons of the establishment welcomes this man into the group.

One word, a friendly smile, or perhaps a handshake? Very little effort on our part ensures that someone feels welcome in our organization. No judgment about one's educational background, denomination, style of worship, type of instrument available for use, or family status . . . just a welcome as they walk through the door.

I've had the experience of walking into a reception at a new venue and having no one approach me with a word of welcome. I made my way to the refreshment table, so that I might look busy and cover up the fact that I knew no one in the room. This has probably happened to all of us. Does this happen to members or newcomers attending your chapter events?

**Hospitality** (noun): "The friendly and generous reception and entertainment of guests, visitors, or strangers." This definition (found in the Oxford American Dictionary on my laptop) is simple and straightforward, but do we actively practice hospitality? How does your local chapter show hospitality?

None of our chapters needs to form another committee—we are all busy enough! However, with a bit of planning, I am sure that our chapters can improve hospitality at events. Is there a person in your chapter who has a natural gift for reaching out to people with a smile? Is there a person in your church or choir who has this gift?

Organists (myself included) are often solitary individuals who struggle to break through their reserve. Why not enlist the talents of others? I encourage each chapter to identify and assign a hospitality contact for every official AGO-sponsored event (recital, workshop, masterclass, etc.). Hospitality, of course, will need to be tailored to the type of event, but here are a few suggestions:

**At Recitals** In addition to programs, greeters can hand out AGO brochures and a schedule of upcoming chapter events. At this time, personally invite each attendee to the reception. At the reception, greet all attendees, thank them for attending, and invite them to future events. For a large recital, you'll need a few people to accomplish this act of hospitality. What a wonderful opportunity to involve members of the host church in your chapter events: choir members, youth, handbell choir members, etc., could be effective at promoting hospitality.

**At Workshops/Masterclasses** Assign a person to be at the venue early to greet everyone when they arrive. Be sure there is signage for restrooms. Have coffee or a light snack available (we tend to interact better around food!). If it is appropriate for your chapter, utilize name tags. Too often we *assume* that everyone knows each other. This is often the case

with large chapters. Remember, it takes a number of meetings for most of us to remember names and faces. Using name tags can sometimes avoid awkward moments. At the conclusion of the event, have a designated person posted at the exit to thank people for attending.

While these ideas are not new or innovative, we all must be intentional in practicing hospitality. When hospitality is taken for granted, it will not happen. Plan hospitality for each scheduled chapter event.

The definition of hospitality specifically targets "guests, visitors, or strangers." What about our own membership? Once again, I consulted the dictionary on my laptop and found this definition of **welcome** (verb): "greet (someone arriving) in a glad, polite, or friendly way." Welcome extends to *all* who are in attendance at our events: nonmembers and members. Do we politely greet each of our members, or are there people we avoid? Yes, welcome the long-standing member who comes to each meeting with a scowl on their face. Yes, welcome the full-time organist and the part-time organist. Yes, welcome the musician at the church who uses an orchestra during worship. Yes, welcome the member who is hypercritical of each and every composition performed at each and every concert. Yes, welcome the person who just moved to town. Yes, welcome the 13-year-old who recently discovered the organ. Yes, welcome the person who has never been to an organ concert before. Welcome everyone.

I see a slight difference between the practice of hospitality and being welcoming. There are similarities in the actions required; however, hospitality can be effectively displayed at the chapter level where the indi-

vidual (me) doesn't have to participate. The "reception and entertainment of strangers" can happen without my personal effort. Being welcoming, in contrast, is a task for each and every one of us. Do you greet all of your fellow AGO members in a "glad, polite, and friendly" way? Can you lay aside your preferences and be welcoming to all?

An excerpt from the Mission Statement of the AGO states that we are to "provide a forum for mutual support (and) inspiration . . . of Guild members." Embrace the diversity of our membership. We all bring to the organization different backgrounds and preferences. Can each of us be nonjudgmental and provide mutual support and inspiration for our colleagues? For the health of our organization, we must accept this challenge.

I don't think any of us would want our name shouted out when we enter the room, but isn't it true that

*Sometimes you want to go  
Where everybody knows your name,  
And they're always glad you came.  
You wanna be where you can see,  
Our troubles are all the same;  
You wanna be where everybody knows  
Your name.<sup>1</sup>*

Perhaps this place can be your local AGO chapter?

LAURA ELLIS  
Associate Professor of Organ and Carillon  
University of Florida  
Councillor for Region IV

## NOTES

1. Judy Hart Angelo and Gary Portnoy, "Where Everybody Knows Your Name," 1982; *Keeper*, 2004, Argentum Records.