



THE BIRMINGHAM CHIFF ...off the old blockflute

The Birmingham Chapter of the American Guild of Organists

March 1, 2018

A Word from the Dean

Dear friends,

I hope you are doing well and are having some time to reflect during this season of Lent. It is hard to believe that it has been almost two months since we had our Epiphany party. We want to thank **Stephen Schaeffer** for his gracious hospitality and **Nathan Smock** for arranging another wonderful dinner. We missed those of you who could not be a part. If you were not there, you may not have had a chance to say goodbye to our friend, Nathan Smock, who has moved to the Enterprise area so that he may be close to take care of his parents. We will miss Nathan greatly.

We want to thank our nominating committee **Pat Fitzsimmons (chair), Christopher Henley and Karen Krekelberg** for preparing a great slate of candidates for officers as well as Executive Committee candidates. Their slate is published in this newsletter along with information on how you can nominate folks to add to the slate. It has been my pleasure to work with the Executive Committee and officers.

We hope to see you at the March meeting which will feature a workshop in conducting. Since we communicate with our hands and body language, it is important that we be clear with our gestures, so you can never practice or study conducting too much. **Melinda Doyle**, from the University of Montevallo, will be our guest clinician on March 12th at Avondale UMC. . We will have dinner followed by a short business meeting. Additional information is provided in this newsletter and on the website.

Have a great week,
Dan

MARCH 12TH: CONDUCTING WORKSHOP

PRESENTER: DR. MELINDA DOYLE

Dear colleagues,

I hope that Lenten discipline has already borne fruit for all of us professionally and spiritually. I am certain that our meeting on Monday, March 12th at Avondale United Methodist Church will likewise be a fruitful (and not at all penitential!) experience. We look forward to welcoming **Dr. Melinda Doyle**, Director of Choral Activities at the University of Montevallo, to address us on relevant topics regarding singing, choirs, and choral music. I have known Dr. Doyle personally for quite some time, and can attest that she (like her counterparts at our other area university choral foundations) is a great asset to our musical community. She has a gift for reaching singers and drawing the best out of them as musicians and people.

I hope you'll plan to attend and enjoy hearing her tips on getting the most out of your choirs, visioning for the future of your choral work, and dealing with the various "afflictions" (whether they be "warble," a lack of support, or anything else!) that we all deal with! We look forward, too, to this venue, especially as we miss Nathan Smock, Avondale's most recent director of music/organist and someone who has done so much to help our Birmingham Chapter on a month-to-month basis.

Should you have any questions, or things that you'd like Dr. Doyle to address at the meeting, please let me know (ludwick@stpaulsbhm.org) by Monday, March 5th.

I look forward to seeing you on the 12th!
Bruce Ludwick, Sub-Dean

From the Nominating Committee: Slate of Nominees for 2018 Election

These members have accepted nomination to the officer and Executive Committee positions.

Dean: Sherelyn Breland
Sub-Dean: open
Secretary: Charles Kennedy
Treasurer: Mike Burt

Executive Committee Class of 2016-2019
(One-year term to replace Nathan Smock)
Choose one: **Firmon Hardenburgh**
Mary K. (Mimi) Jackson

Executive Committee Class of 2018-21
Choose up to three : **Dan Lawhon**
Jamie McLemore
Russell Nelson
Brent Nolte
Fred Teardo

2018 Election Process

The chapter is invited to submit nominations for officers and Executive Committee class members to the secretary **by March 31st**. Nominations from the chapter will be combined with the slate proposed by the Nominating Committee into a single ballot.

Guidelines for nominations and the election process are listed in "Section 4. CHAPTER GOVERNANCE" and "Section 8. ELECTION PROCEDURES" of the Chapter Operating Procedures at <http://www.birminghamago.org/AboutUs.html>.

Online voting will begin Sunday, April 15th. In-person voting will conclude the election at the May 14th chapter meeting.

The schedule and more complete details of the election process will be posted on the chapter website in late March.

Please contact the secretary, Sherelyn Breland, at secretary@birminghamago.org if you have any questions.

APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN: CHAPTER SCHOLARSHIP COMPETITIONS

All three Birmingham chapter scholarships are available this year. The **Minnie McNeil Carr Scholarship Competition** is for high school students currently studying the organ. The **Myrtle Jones Steele Scholarship Competition** is for organists under 24 years of age as of August 1, 2018, and who are a permanent resident of the Southeast Region of the American Guild of Organists or a student at a school in this region.

The competition for both scholarships will be held *on Saturday, April 28, 2017, at 1 PM* at Independent Presbyterian Church in Birmingham.

Deadline for applications is April 10th, 2018, for both scholarships. Competition guidelines, requirements, and application forms may be downloaded from <http://www.birminghamago.org/Scholarships.html>.

The **Warren Hutton POE Scholarship** applicants must be ages 13-18, residents of one of the states comprising the AGO Southeast region, and have the support of an AGO Chapter in the Southeast region. Hutton POE Scholarship applicants must apply to and be accepted by any POE or POEA sponsored by the AGO. There is no performance competition for the Hutton scholarship. **Deadline for application is April 25th, 2018.**

The Minnie McNeil Carr scholarship is \$500; the Myrtle Jones Steele scholarship is \$1000; the Hutton POE scholarship covers the cost of POE tuition. AGO membership is not required for any of these scholarships.

For details and applications for these scholarships, please consult the above website or contact **Dr. Charles Kennedy** at kennedy@cathedraladvent.com or (205) 226-3505.

The next issue of *The Birmingham Chiff...off the old blockflute* will be published April 1st. Please send items to be included by March 20th to newsletter@birminghamago.org.

Comings and Goings

As you've read in Dan's and Bruce's articles, **Nathan Smock** is no longer with us in Birmingham. He moved at the end of January to care for his parents, leaving his much-loved job as organist and director of music at Avondale UMC and his long-held position as an RN in UAB's kidney transplant unit.

Nathan served this chapter in so many ways: Executive Committee member, newsletter editor, POEA Steering Committee member and staff, and hospitality chairman for several years. He arranged a wonderful West Alabama Organ Crawl for us last May. We will miss his positive "Sure-I-can-do-that!" attitude and willingness to help whatever the need. We looked forward to and enjoyed many wonderful dinners arranged by Nathan!

We wish Nathan well in his new critical care nursing position and feel sure he'll be maintaining his organ skills substituting in Auburn-Opelika-Montgomery area churches.

2018 Summer POE Schedule Announced

The **American Guild of Organists (AGO)** is proud to announce five **PIPE ORGAN ENCOUNTERS (POEs)** for students aged 13–18 and one **POE+** for adults in 2018. Complete contact information for each weeklong Pipe Organ Encounter can be found in *The American Organist Magazine* and online at www.agohq.org/education/poe.

POE (for ages 13–18)

- June 17–22 Phoenix, Ariz.
- June 24–29 Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minn.
- July 8–13 Philadelphia, Penn.
- July 16–21 Los Angeles, Calif.
- July 22–27 Deland, Fla.

POE+ (for adults)

- June 17–22 Rockford, Ill.

Share Your Thoughts, Please!

Planning for next year's programs is underway and your input is needed! Do you have a program topic to recommend (or one you'd like to present!)? Would you like to host a meeting, recommend a caterer, suggest a menu? Do you have ideas to increase membership? Do you know of potential members who may be interested in the benefits and opportunities AGO membership provides? What type programs would *not* be of interest to you?

Please let Dan (dean@birminghamago.org) know your thoughts so that we can plan and budget next year's activities. The Executive Committee will be submitting the tentative 2018-19 Calendar of Events to the chapter for discussion and approval by the May meeting.

We look forward to hearing from you ASAP!



2018 National AGO Convention July 2 – 6 in Kansas City, Missouri

The theme is "Bach, Blues, and Barbecue: Feast Your Ears in Kansas City." More than 70 workshops, 18 recitalists, and 13 composers will be presented in venues located in seven area cities.

Online registration is open and reduced rates end March 31. To register or check out the schedule, workshops, performers, or other fine points of the week, visit <http://www.agokc2018.com/>.

Parish Music Associate Opening St. James Episcopal, Fairhope, AL

We received this message from Helen Rodgers, Director of Music and Organist at St. James Episcopal in beautiful Fairhope. Please contact her directly to apply or get further information on this opportunity.

Dear Musician Friends,

I am looking for a Parish Music Associate with skills similar to mine. This person could be retired or approaching retirement, someone who would enjoy relocating to the beautiful Gulf Coast, working 10 - 20 hours a week. The music atmosphere at St. James is good. Our rector invites creativity. Last fall we added an 11 AM service. Singers for this alternate weekly between the Canterbury Choir (grades 2-5) and Coventry Choir (grades 6-12), resulting in new members and increased Sunday attendance.

Last November we celebrated All Saints with the Rutter *Requiem Mass* for the 9 AM and 11 AM services with instrumental ensemble. Our choir has sung the Duruflé and Fauré *Requiems* as evening programs. Professional brass and timpani are hired for Christmas Eve and Easter. We sing Advent Lessons and Carols the beginning of Advent and celebrate Epiphany Feast of Lights.

Taizé services occur on a regular basis and I hope to inaugurate a Compline service using St. Mark's Seattle as a guide in the fall of 2018.

May, June, July and August are at a different pace so the associate could take up to two months off. With a break from children and youth choirs, we have services at 8 AM and 10 AM instead of 7:30 AM, 9 AM and 11 AM. The Adult choir sings throughout the summer with a 6-8 week break from rehearsals.

In addition to two wonderful pipe organs, St. James has a successful concert series. Information about these is on our website:
<http://www.stjamesfairhope.org>.

I am excited about the creativity, energy and new repertoire an associate can bring. I look forward to refining the sounds of these wonderful choirs and sharing the joy of playing our versatile organ.

Applicants for this position should prepare:
An anthem to conduct the Adult Choir
A Bach fugue for organ voluntary
A meditative organ voluntary
The organ part for the Sanctus from the Duruflé *Requiem*
A congregational hymn

Interested persons can contact me by email:
hvar@bellsouth.net

Helen VanAbbema Rodgers
Director of Music
St. James Episcopal Church
Fairhope, Alabama

A LOOK AHEAD... REMAINING CHAPTER EVENTS 2018

April

Student Recital

Monday, April 9th, 2018
Baptist Church of the Covenant
Dinner 6:00 PM; Business meeting 6:30 PM; Program 7:00 PM

May

Chapter Retrospective: Pat Fitzsimmons and Jim Cook

Monday, May 14th, 2018
South Highland Presbyterian Church
Dinner 6:00 PM; Business meeting 6:30 PM; Program 7:00 PM