



EN CHAMADE



Winchester Chapter American Guild of Organists

November 2020 Newsletter

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THE DEAN'S MUSINGS

SATISFACTION QUALIFIED

A Blessed All Saints Day to you and your congregation. I need to be reminded that the church's liturgical year is at a point of richness beginning in November. All Saints is a major feast day when we particularly celebrate the lives of those who have moved on to heavenly realms, particularly in the past year. Then, on its heels comes Thanksgiving, Christ the King, all four Sundays in Advent, Christmas, New Years and Epiphany. I hope you will come to the November meeting with some ideas about how you can help your congregations get rich meaning out of these celebrations. To my mind one can be no greater saint than to facilitate knowing Christ through music. Ye are truly Saints of God!

Our October meeting featuring **Dr. Wayne Wold**, our Mid-Atlantic Councillor and recently appointed Adjunct Professor of Organ at Shenandoah Conservatory, was outstanding (contact him at wwold@su.edu). We had 14 in attendance and such a lively, interesting program was given that several of us continued more than 30 minutes after adjournment. We shared many ideas and responses to the program. A performance by member **Beverly Clark** and readings by members **Mark Lindgren** and **James Laster** gave examples of his compositions and hymn texts. This synergy between members has prompted us to host a **NOVEMBER SOIREE' on Friday, November 13, at 7:00 PM with refreshments and a mini program**. Most of the meeting time will be open to sharing whatever relates to our professional or collegial friendships.

The November meeting will also feature two unique offerings: First, there will be a taped performance by **Chuck Seipp** and **Randall Sheets** on a trumpet and organ, featuring a work titled "Entrance for Laurie". This piece was commissioned by member **Judy Connelly** honoring the marriage of her daughter Laurie in the summer

of 2019. The commission was given to our chapter member, **Dr. James Laster**. Judy will expand on the story elsewhere in the newsletter.

Because it will be a social gathering after the dinner hour, you will be treated to dessert with **a bag full of baked goods by our own Pastry Chef Carol Westervelt and some specialty teas.** Be assured that her kitchen is Covid-protected with best practices in place. Members of WAGO will hand deliver these packages by Friday before the program. It is important that you reserve your goodie bag by e-mailing Marilyn Shenenberger at handbelle@comcast.net . Deadline is Sunday, November 8.

Why did I title my essay *SATISFACTION QUALIFIED*? Because following our wonderful program, two areas of concern came up.

1. It was noted that most of us in attendance at the meeting were near or already retired. We need to make an effort to introduce young musicians to the organ and, in particular, our chapter.
2. The need to reassure our members that we will support any assistance they need to address technology problems be it internet issues, zoom issues or just plain fear of technology.

I will be addressing this in the next month. In particular, please let a member know if you are daunted or having problems with our ZOOM format. I feel strongly that no one should be excluded because of this type of issue.

The Lessons and Carols for Advent, Christmas and Epiphany is going to be spectacular. We have 15 members representing 15 churches who will perform a seasonal piece and 15 clergy who will read a scripture passage. The pieces include works for piano, organ, instrument, harpsichord, choir and voice. The audio tapes will be overlaid with pictures of a particular church. The taped program is divided into two parts, each approximately 45 minutes in length: Advent to the Annunciation and The Birth of Jesus to Epiphany. The program will be on our web page (winchesterago.com) from December 1 through January 6. In this newsletter is a copy of a flier that we wish you would give to your church administrator for publication (November and certainly December) in the church's newsletter. We will again be requesting donations to the Winchester Rescue Mission and the WATTS shelter program. There will be links on the program page directing donations to either or both of these worthy programs.

Performers must send their audio tape with their piece and an audio recording of their clergy reading the scripture to Marilyn Shenenberger, handbelle@comcast.net. Also, send a picture of your clergy and yourself no later than mid-November. Member **Jim Moon** will be constructing the final tape.

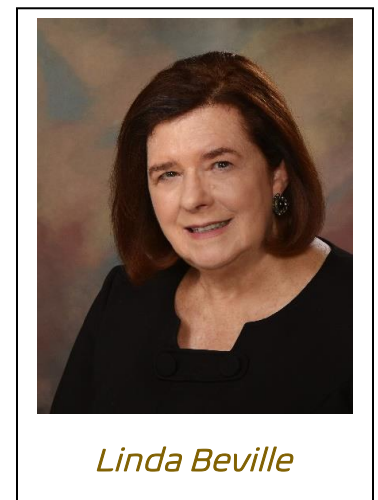
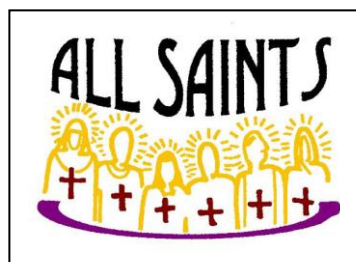
Finally, the program committee (**Dr. Steven Cooksey, chair, Marilyn Shenenberger, Beverly Clark, Mark Lindgren and Linda Beville**) will be starting to work on the second half of the year programs. Please pass along to a committee member any ideas you may have.

My gratitude for the incredible hard work that has been done.

If you have missed these two programs, please plan to ZOOM with us.

Blessings,

Linda



Linda Beville



OUR NOVEMBER PROGRAM



“Sharing Treats, Teas and Trumpet Tunes”

A Zoom Rendezvous

November 13 at 7:00 PM

- Hosting **Judy Connelly** and **Jim Laster** featuring *Entrada for Laurie*
- Time to catch up with our members
- **** PLEASE RSVP TO MARILYN (handbelle@comcast.net) for your Treats and Teas Goodie Bag by Sunday, November 8.
Treats to be hand delivered or mailed ☺
- Thank you Pastry Chef **Carol Westervelt!!!!**
- Bring a guest or a spouse
- Discussion: How are you handling the Holiday Services at your church?





A December Lessons and Carols

*Featuring 15 Local Churches**

Due to Covid restrictions, in lieu of our after-Christmas Progressive concert to raise money for WATTS and the Winchester Rescue Mission, WAGO will be offering a

**Virtual Lessons and Carols program on our website, winchesterago.com
from Dec. 1 through January 6.**

Since we aren't limited by travelling from one church to another, we will be able to highlight

15 local churches in our Advent-Epiphany Lessons and Carols.

- The scripture lesson will be read by one of the clergy,
- The music performed by the organist, harpsichordist, pianist, or virtual choir, and
- The background pictures will show the church in a variety of Seasons, including Christmas, as we remember it from last year and before.

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED!!

Following is a list of the 15 churches which will be featured. **We need pictures** of these churches from outside, inside, special events. If you have any to contribute, please send them as JPEG files, if possible, to Marilyn Shenenberger at handbelle@comcast.net.

***Churches featured in our December Lessons and Carols**

Winchester Churches:

First Baptist, Sacred Heart Catholic, Christ Episcopal, Bethel Lutheran, Grace Evangelical Lutheran, Our Savior Lutheran, Braddock Street United Methodist, and First Presbyterian

Near Winchester:

Emmanuel Episcopal in Delaplane, Front Royal Presbyterian, Leesburg Presbyterian, St. James Episcopal in Leesburg, Emmanuel Episcopal in Middleburg, Trinity Lutheran in Stephens City, and Trinity Episcopal in Upperville

Please use the flyer on the next page to advertise in your church:



Sponsored by the Winchester Chapter of the American Guild of Organists

A December Lessons & Carols

featuring 15 Local Churches

Featured Churches

First Baptist

Sacred Heart Catholic

Christ Episcopal

Bethel Lutheran

**Grace Evangelical
Lutheran**

Our Savior Lutheran

**Braddock Street United
Methodist**

First Presbyterian

**Emmanuel Episcopal
Middleburg & Delaplane**

**St. James Episcopal
Leesburg**

Trinity Episcopal Upperville

**Trinity Lutheran in
Stephens City**

Front Royal Presbyterian

Leesburg Presbyterian

**Celebrate the Christmas Season in
Word, Music and Pictures**



**Enjoy this program between
December 1—January 6**

Free of Charge at our website:

winchesterago.com

**Donations may be made to WATTS or
The Winchester Rescue Mission
via the Link on the Program.**



Practical Matters – Part 2

Time-saving rehearsal tips

by chapter member Terry Sisk

When I started my most recent church job, I inherited a weeknight 90-minute choir rehearsal schedule. About two months in, it was obvious that system was not working for us. Nearly all the men had busy job-related travel schedules, and many of the women were so active in the community that they had once-a-month conflicts with our choir night. Absenteeism was working against us. Many times, only 8 or 9 (out of 18) were present on a given Thursday night – sometimes no men at all. We tried switching to Wednesday – same result. This became a huge problem, and some of the steps we took to solve it might be of use in your own circumstances.

Our regular Sunday schedule was an early service at 8:30, a Sunday School at 9:45, and a second service at 11:00. I asked the pastor's permission to hold a Sunday morning choir rehearsal during the Sunday School time slot, and she readily agreed. Two choir members regularly attended Sunday School, but I figured having 16 people (of 18 total) at a choir rehearsal instead of 8 or 9 was a no brainer. After the switch those two choristers agreed to attend two rehearsals a month if I would allow them to remain in the choir. Permission granted, but after a couple of months they dropped Sunday School altogether, since their kind teacher started providing a printed take-home summary to cover their absence. During the following week they discussed the class particulars with friends who had attended, thus avoiding a tug of war between Sunday School and choir (always a lose-lose situation).

As you all know, having more people at rehearsal makes the choir sing with more confidence, especially for those voices we call “leaners”. There was no choir at our 8:30 service, so as soon as I could make my way to the choir room after the postlude our rehearsal started, generally about 9:30. If a service ran long, I skipped the postlude at the first service or made drastic cuts (I had informed our pastor that this was a possibility). Our second service started at 11:00, and we needed to run that morning's anthem with organ accompaniment, so we had to leave the choir room for the sanctuary right at 10:45, just an hour and 15 minutes after we started. That meant we were losing about 15 minutes of rehearsal time compared to our weeknight 90-minute rehearsals, and that was also a problem. How could we make up for this lost time?

I had tracked the non-musical activity that took place during rehearsals. Each choir member had to crowd around a table to pick up new music, and this caused a distraction when late-comers drew the attention of those already rehearsing. I moved the music table to the back of the room and positioned the chairs so that choristers sat with their backs to the door, but some things still needed tweaking. After trying a few things, the change that worked best was having assigned seating. During the week I placed all new music directly on each choir chair – hole punched and ready to place into their binders. The time-killing bottleneck around the new music table was

thus avoided. As I mentioned last time, those scores already had breath marks, final consonant placement and other markings indicated on them (don't get me started on marking diphthongs). In time I learned to include a sheet with announcements, prayer concerns, future rehearsal orders, etc. – anything to avoid having to take up valuable rehearsal time with anything other than singing. I communicated prayer concerns that had best not wait until Sunday via e-mail, and I often included a printed prayer for home use on the Sunday morning announcement sheet. Not ideal, but it saved precious rehearsal time. By asking choir members to arrive before 9:30 to prepare their folders, we were able to start the instant I walked into the choir room. Forgot to mention that I encouraged the singers to arrive at the church already warmed up – by humming vocal exercises in their car. At first their family members laughed, but I encouraged them to include everyone in the car, and most of them began to think of it as fun. I am told that more astute passengers showed off by improvising harmony.

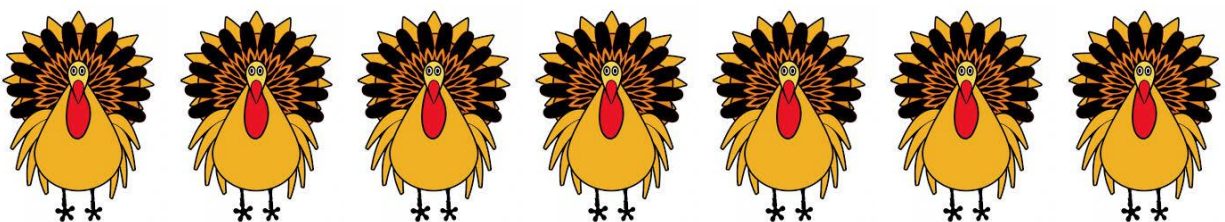
These changes resulted in a well-attended, streamlined rehearsal, but that mid-December concert with chamber orchestra still loomed in my mind. By tradition, our choir's summer break followed the public-school calendar (the early worship service was dropped until school started up again) – so no choir rehearsals for 10 weeks. Major bummer. A glance at the calendar indicated just 14 Sunday rehearsals from September until concert time. I contemplated asking the choir to come for a rehearsal once a month during the summer to introduce new music for the fall, but I knew that would go over like a lead balloon. Yikes.

With permission from our pastor, I took some drastic measures. One Sunday a month during the fall schedule, the choir would not sing an anthem, allowing us extra time to focus on our concert music (and one less anthem to prepare per month). Instead, a soloist would fill the anthem slot, with the choir singing only a simple introit that could be performed with just one run-through, such as Schubert's SANCTUS from his "Deutsche Messe" (in English, of course – we were Presbyterians, not Lutherans). The deal I made with the soloists was that they had to participate in BOTH morning services, giving that music-starved collection of early worshippers more than the occasional crumb. Win-win.

But once rehearsals started up in September and we took a look at the three choruses in our Baroque Christmas cantata – the choir laughed at me, muttering, "No way!" They ASSURED me this was not possible. I took this as a challenge and told them so. I knew their abilities, I had performed the Kuhnau cantata before, and all three choruses *combined* lasted only 5 minutes (2:10, 1:20 and 1:30 respectively); the chamber orchestra and soloists did the heavy lifting. So I made a bet with them. I told them I promised they would perform this work better than anything they had sung in recent memory, or I would give them the entire month of January off, filling the month's calendar with guest soloists hired at my own expense. Risky, but ultimately I won the bet. In fact, just before performance, the choir told me they wished there were *more* for them to sing, so I ended up placing a repeat at the end of the second chorus. Why hadn't Kuhnau thought of that?

But I had one more thought. In October I created a blog (at no cost) on which I posted YouTube performance videos and MP3 files of all the pieces on our Christmas program, not just the cantata. That meant my choristers could access all rehearsal aids from home at their convenience. I insisted choir binders not be left at church, and that at least a minimal time be spent learning our concert music from home (in retrospect I think they were too scared not to). But the choir blog is a subject for a future installment. It took on a life far beyond our December concert and continued to be our most valuable time saver and rehearsal aid.

Please send any suggestions/comments to terrysisk@aol.com



WAGO and RCYO Competition

All **Regional Competitions for Young Organists** (RCYO) will be virtual next year. We recently received the new guidelines and a request for possible host chapters from the coordinator of the Mid-Atlantic Region competition, Clarice Snyder. Chapter responsibilities are a little less than in the past due to the competition not being "onsite".

After consultation with our dean, regional councilor and education chair, the Winchester Chapter will join the Potomac and NOVA chapters as hosts for our region. At this point, there are possibly 2 other sites in the region. Please note the following competition requirements:

- Open to students born after December 31, 1998.
- Applications must be submitted online no later than January 15, 2021.
- Online applications are available at AGOhq.org.
- Recordings monitored by a proctor will be uploaded.
- The chapter pays \$25 to each proctor, decides on their own expenses for judges and the prizes
- Competition will be Sat., April 17.

The purpose of these competitions is to encourage younger organists to pursue excellence, to gain performance experience, to develop service playing skills, and to receive recognition for their achievements. These competitions begin at the chapter level and conclude at the seven Regional Competitions. The winner of each Regional Competition will be invited to perform as a Rising Star at the 2022 National Convention in Seattle, Wash. The AGO/Quimby Regional Competitions are made possible by a generous grant from Michael Quimby, president, Quimby Pipe Organs Inc.

If you know of a young organist who might be interested, go to the AGOhq.org website for the list of required repertoire and other competition details. We will continue to provide updates as we move through this new process.

Submitted by **Judy Connelly**, Education Chair, Mid-Atlantic Region



♪ IN SEARCH OF A CHOIR DIRECTOR ♪

OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH
2800 MILLWOOD PIKE
WINCHESTER, VA 22602

Ph. 540-398-7265 www.oursavior-lcms.org

Our Savior Lutheran Church of Winchester is searching for a part-time choir director who will be ready to begin music ministry after the first of the year 2021. The following items apply for the position of choir director:

1. **To direct and maintain a choir** for church services as required by the Elder Board and Pastor of Our Savior Lutheran Church; the choir director reports directly to the Pastor;
2. **To hold weekly choir practices** based upon agreed day and time with the choir members, organist (when needed), and the Pastor;
3. **To have the choir offer an anthem** as part of 10:00 a.m. Sunday worship at least once per month from September thru May, again based on Elder Board, Pastor, and Organist agreement. Note that the months of June, July, and August are free months unless otherwise agreed to for specific purposes;
4. **To coordinate music and message** in consultation with Pastor and Organist;
5. **To maintain music library**, and **to recommend and obtain new music** from LCMS and similar sources via budget line provided.

Salary to be discussed at interview, and to be commensurate with experience and duties agreed upon.

Interested personnel should contact **Pastor Greg Cumbee**, 540-398-7265
pastor.cumbee@gmail.com

♪ SEEKING ORGANIST ♪

St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Point of Rocks, Maryland, is in need of an interim organist through the end of this year. Two-manual Allen organ. One Sunday service at 10 a.m. Contact Toni Lake at tonicramerlake@gmail.com.



A WAGO FAMILY STORY *by Judy Connelly*

In the mid to late 70's, Chip Connelly began singing for Dr. James Laster as his tenor section leader, Trinity Episcopal Church, Upperville. His relationship with the Laster family included many memorable events, including being asked to babysit young Travis Laster. He showed up at the door with a copy of "The Hobbit", by J.R.R. Tolkien, to read to this gifted young man, and their relationship began. (Watching the formation of a future Federal Judge can be extremely rewarding, including Travis earning honors as Valedictorian of each school he attended: John Handley High School, Princeton University, and the University of Virginia Law School).

Fast forward several years to Travis and Becky's wedding day. Chip was asked to be the soloist for the wedding celebration. It was truly an honor, so Chip and I arranged for a weekend babysitter for our four children and traveled to New Jersey for the blessed event.

As I sat looking over the wedding bulletin, the "Intrada for Rebecca," written by the father of the groom, Dr. James Laster caught my eye. What a great idea! An original piece of music written just for the bride, making her day unique and very memorable. "Intrada for Rebecca" was instantly a hit and the talk of all the guests. As I went through the receiving line, I boldly said to Dr. Laster, "We have three daughters. You need to have three more intradas in you." I don't think he took me seriously, but he would find out just how serious we really were.

In 2004, Jessica (our oldest) married – we asked for an intrada for organ and 2 trumpets. In 2013, Scott, our son, asked for a piece to be written for his bride Ashley. We again asked Jim and his response was "One trumpet or two?" "Wedding Fanfare and Entrance for Ashley" were written for organ and one trumpet. The bride's family was so impressed, the work was laminated and displayed at the reception.

In 2019, Laurie, our youngest daughter was married – "Entrance for Laurie" was written for organ and one trumpet. This time, the composer was in attendance. You will hear a 25-measure Fanfare, which is both an announcement and a bridge from the attendant processional. Imagine the excitement as the doors of the church open to reveal the bride and her father preparing for the majestic entrance. Following the fanfare, a march indicates where the bride slowly begins her walk down the aisle. Optional cuts are available, depending on length of aisle.

The first page of each of the compositions, which includes a dedication for each celebration, has been framed and displayed in each home – from Chicago to Amsterdam.

In 2020, our Kelley graduated from Union Seminary and her request was that a Laster piece be written for her ordination service. (Date TBA at this point). Dr. Laster has completed the work and we are anxiously awaiting a premiere.

We hope you will enjoy "Entrance for Laurie", as recorded by Chuck Seipp, trumpet, and Randall Sheets, organ, during our Zoom November Tea.



Membership Directory Updates



Please add the following primary information for member **Wayne Wold:**

Phone: c. 301-696-3782; website: www.waynelwold.com

For member **Scott Hubli:** please note that his e mail address is all lower case: scotthubli@gmail.com

Please send any additional changes and corrections to: misterdan51@gmail.com Thanks!



You are invited to tune in:

Music at Saint John's Parish

Due to the pandemic, all events will only be pre-recorded and broadcast on the dates listed below until further notice. Plans may shift as the season progresses. The broadcasts can be viewed at facebook.com/stjohnshagerstown or after the broadcast on the church's website (www.stjohnshagerstown.org) under the FB & Worship tab (click on the Vimeo page link).

Sunday, November 1, 2020 – 5:00 p.m.

Choral Evensong for All Saints' Day

Sunday, December 20, 2020 – 9:30 a.m.

Festival of Advent Lessons and Carols

Sunday, February 21, 2021 – 4:00 p.m.

Candice Mowbray and Danny Webber, classical guitar

Sunday, March 7, 2021 – 5:00 p.m.

Choral Evensong for the Third Sunday in Lent

Sunday, April 25, 2021 – 4:00 p.m.

Yuhsuan Liao, piano

Friday, June 4, 2021 – 7:00 p.m.

Mark King, organ





SMILE

I miss the 90's when bread was good for you and no one knew what kale was.

If you see me talking to myself, I'm having a staff meeting.

Do you ever get up in the morning, look at yourself in the mirror, and say, "That can't be accurate"?

Never hike alone in bear country. Always hike with someone you can trip and outrun.

I want to be 14 again and ruin my life differently. I have new ideas.

Most people don't think I'm as old as I am until they hear me stand up.

I don't always go the extra mile, but when I do, it's because I missed my exit.

I really don't mind getting older, but my body is taking it badly.

Getting older is just one body part after another saying, "HA HA! You think that's bad? watch this!"

I've been working on losing 10 pounds. Only 14 more to go.



(Old, but needed now more than ever:)

An Obituary printed in the London Times

Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, **Common Sense**, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape. He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as:

- Knowing when to come in out of the rain;
- Why the early bird gets the worm;
- Life isn't always fair; and
- Maybe it was my fault.

Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you can earn) and reliable strategies (adults, not children, are in charge).

His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a 6-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens

suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch; and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition.

Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job that they themselves had failed to do in disciplining their unruly children. It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer sun lotion or an aspirin to a student; but could not inform parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

Common Sense lost the will to live as the churches became businesses; and criminals received better treatment than their victims.

Common Sense took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in your own home and the burglar could sue you for assault.

Common Sense finally gave up the will to live, after a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap, and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death

- by his parents, Truth and Trust,
- by his wife, Discretion,
- by his daughter, Responsibility,
- and by his son, Reason.

He is survived by his 5 stepbrothers;

- I Know My Rights
- I Want It Now
- Someone Else Is To Blame
- I'm A Victim
- Pay me for Doing Nothing

Not many attended his funeral because so few realized he was gone.

View the Autumn Colors and **SMILE!** God Made Them All!

