Visit the NYCAGO Chapter's website.

Help us grow our local audience. Explore events presented by your friends and colleagues and include your own on the member-curated Concert Calendar of our Chapter.

Please submit all material for the newsletter by the 24th of the preceding month.

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Dean's Message

Celebrating and Remembering

Continuing Response to Covid-19
With all the devastating effects of the Covid-19 virus, it is hard to imagine any sort of good coming from so much disruption, separation, and distress. But, like many of you, I have done my best to make the most of the silver lining that forced isolation can offer: composting and transcribing works I never thought would make their way onto my schedule, opening books I always meant to read but never had the time to, finally filing all of those stray emails into neat and tidy folders (that last one is very much a task in progress!).

“Social distancing” is a misleading term that implies we should all be isolated in hermit holes and interacting with no one. While physical distancing is essential to reduce the spread of disease, we should do everything we can to remain socially connected. Thank goodness that the internet offers us that possibility, if you can bear staring at a screen for hours on end. There is nothing quite like falling down an online rabbit hole (the NYCAGO Organ Project is a starting point for many) and following a string of suggested links to discover new instruments or performances that you would otherwise never have found. The National AGO website also has some useful resources relating to the quarantine.

In an effort to best serve our membership, our Sub Dean organized a survey, the results of which are below. If there is more we can be doing for you at this time, please email us and let us know. We want to be as helpful a resource as possible during these difficult days.

AGO Elections
Spring elections are upon us. The National AGO elections are underway—be sure to cast your vote by clicking [here](#). Our own Chapter elections will take place next month—watch for further communications in the coming weeks.

**Distinguished Career Award**

The Chapter is delighted to announce the recipient of the 2020 Distinguished Career Award: **Lawrence Trupiano**. Larry is one of the great organ technicians and curators of our time. His decades of service to instruments all over the city—the Met Museum, Saint Thomas Church, Saint Mary the Virgin, Trinity Wall Street, to name just a few—have ensured that the King of Instruments has been able to sing out over the din of NYC for concerts, recordings, Christmas services, and everything in between.

**In pace**

We also remember Steve Lawson, recipient of the 2018 Distinguished Career Award who died in 2018, and the brilliant McNeil Robinson, who died five years ago this month. The international organ community was also sad to learn of the passing of English organist and Messiaen expert Jennifer Bate on March 25 of this year. Now is indeed the time for celebrating and remembering the great women and men who have done so much to enhance the organ and its music.

With my very best wishes, as ever,

James Kennerley, *Dean*

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**From the Registrar**
Membership Directory 2020-2021

New Publication Timing
You may have noticed that you never received a 2019-2020 NYCAGO Chapter Membership Directory. This was by design. As mentioned briefly in last month's newsletter, the Board decided to alter the publication date henceforward to late summer so as to include the coming year’s program information and be more appealing to those wishing to advertise their own events. Because of this, the Board further decided not to have two printings six months apart, so no 2019-2020 edition was created.

Updating Personal Information
The 2020-2021 Directory will be prepared and printed this summer. Therefore, please update your information in the National AGO membership database by June 1. Member data will be downloaded from the website and formatted for the Directory shortly after that date.

All membership information is maintained by the National AGO office. To update your information for inclusion:

1. Go to agohq.org
2. In the “Membership” option, click “Renew Membership/Update Personal Information”
3. Sign-in to the ONCARD membership system following the instructions on the screen
4. Review your information and make desired changes
5. To access Substitute List information, click “View/Edit Chapter-specific Data”
6. Click “Post Changes” at the bottom of the screen; otherwise your changes will not be saved
7. Click “Logout”
Please [email me](mailto:) if you have any problem with the above steps.

**Advertising in the Directory**
If you wish to place an ad in the Directory, please [click here](http://) for information and rates, or email James Kennerley.

**Substitute List Information**
The Substitute List is updated in the middle of every month using member data extracted from the National Membership Database. If you make a change, it will appear online after the next update.

As long as churches are closed during the pandemic, no one will be removed from the substitute list. If you wish to be taken off the sub list, please [email me](mailto:) directly.

Respectfully submitted,
Larry J. Long, *Registrar*

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**Program News**

**See You Next Year**
All further anticipated events for the remainder of this season have been canceled. The Program Committee is preparing a slate of events for the 2020-2021 season, and we hope to be able to announce at least some of those planned events in the June newsletter. Ideas and suggestions are always welcomed by the Committee and may be submitted [here](http://).
Quote of the Month

*If there is anyone here whom I have not insulted, I beg his pardon.*

~Johannes Brahms

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**From the Editor**

**Respond and Acclaim**

**Just the Facts**

The survey that lately circulated to our Chapter concluded at the end of April. We had a tremendous response of 214 participants. Thank you very much to those who replied. (As noted in the survey's announcement, this May edition of the Newsletter is coming to you a few days later than usual so that the survey's results could be included.)

The survey results may be viewed via [this link](#). The Board will now take this data to inform our ongoing response, but hopefully the raw data is valuable and useful to you.

**Dear Abbey**

I am exceptionally grateful for the notes of support and encouragement that were left in the survey's comments box. They were heartwarming to read. Some of the topics (e.g. help with unemployment insurance, using Zoom, relief services) have been addressed through resources compiled by National headquarters [here](#). Other questions will be considered in forthcoming emails, but here are a few preliminaries:
Could the AGO advise churches as to musicians' compensation during the quarantine?

While AGO National used to post salary charts, model contracts, etc., we are no longer able to provide such information in accordance with a settlement with the Federal Trade Commission.

What about AGO dues?

National is still assessing dues at this point.

Can you offer some insight on setting up a Hauptwerk system?

Our Chapter Secretary, Raymond Nagem, the Associate at the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine, recently installed one in his apartment. He would be happy to field any questions emailed to him.

Can you share some local musical offerings that are online?

Our Chapter's Facebook page has not been particularly active as of late, but I do promise that we will recommence sharing content uploaded by members and friends. But of course not everyone is on Facebook (the wise and sensible), so:

**A Whole New Meaning of 'Close to Home'**

Many musicians have been industrious, generous, and creative in their online postings. Below is just a smattering of those I have encountered. Note that most live events, including any cited below, remain available for later viewing.

**Neal Campbell**, former editor of this Newsletter, regularly offers fascinating content about local organ history on his [website](#) and his Facebook page.

Immediate past Dean **David Enlow** is teaching a series of webcast [workshops](#) on Saturdays at 2:00 PM, with questions and comments welcome.

**Robert McCormick** of Saint Mark's, Locust Street in Philadelphia and formerly of Saint Mary the Virgin in Times Square, is hosting a [Q&A session](#) on Anglican Church Music on Saturday, May 9th at 5:00 PM.
Concert organist and Director of Music of Saint Peter's, Morristown, **Joshua Stafford** is playing a **weekly recital** on Wednesdays at 12:00 Noon on his church's famous Skinner, Opus 836.

For my own part, I have been uploading performances of outlying organ repertoire by English composers (my wheelhouse, so to speak), as well as recordings by the Schola Cantorum of Saint Vincent Ferrer, the Dominican church I serve, available via Facebook and my [Soundcloud](https://soundcloud.com) profile.

Finally, since I know that a number of you are devotees of Herbert Howells, the London Bach Choir, BBC Concert Orchestra, and conductor David Hill recently released a great new recording of Howells' *Missa Sabrinensis*, a stunning work of mammoth promotion that is virtually unknown stateside. It is available on the [Hyperion label](https://hyperion-records.co.uk).

If you have something you would like the Chapter to share with your colleagues, please email us [here](mailto:) for consideration.

Submitted for our mutual enrichment in these days, may I remain,

Sincerely,

James D. Wetzel, **Sub Dean and Chair of the Program Committee**
Getting to Know You

Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church
7 West 55th Street at Fifth Avenue
Ryan Jackson, Director of Music and Fine Arts Ministries
Patrick Kreeger, Associate Organist

Editor's note: Presidents' Day Conference 2019 was held just south of FAPC at Saint Thomas and Saint Patrick's, and Presidents' Day 2020 was just north of it at Temple Emanu-El. I was sorry that neither year's schedule permitted us to visit this landmark building nor benefit from hearing of the wonderful things Ryan and his colleagues are doing there.

General Information
The congregation now known as Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church (FAPC) began on November 6, 1808, as The Presbyterian Church in Cedar Street on the north side of Cedar Street between Nassau and William Streets in lower Manhattan. Over the next six decades, the congregation moved three times,
eventually settling on Fifth Avenue at 55th Street in 1875. The handsome Victorian Gothic building was designed by Carl Pfeiffer and constructed of New Jersey red sandstone. With a seating capacity of roughly 2,000 and a steeple rising 286 feet, FAPC was the tallest building in Manhattan upon completion of the tower in 1876. The clock tower still employs the original clockworks, which are wound once a week by hand.

The first century of the church’s ministry was remarkably successful—by the early 1900s, it was not uncommon for the church to have to turn away as many as 1,000 would-be worshipers on Sunday morning. The church has called 17 senior pastors since its founding, including the Rev. Drs. John Bonnell, Bryant Kirkland, and Scott Black Johnston, the church’s current senior pastor.

Just as important as the services taking place inside the building, however, has been the congregation’s ministry beyond: in 1815, members of the congregation established the city’s first free schools, later expanded into the New York Public School System. A Woman’s Employment Society in the 1860s organized a sewing business that generated income for poor and immigrant women. Donations from the congregation helped 19th century Presbyterian missionaries to found hospitals, chapels, and schools in the Far East, Latin America, and the Middle East. Over the course of its 212-year history, FAPC has been instrumental in the founding of Princeton Theological Seminary, the American Bible Society, New York Presbyterian Hospital, and numerous mission boards.

Today, FAPC continues to serve New York City as a vibrant and diverse community of more than 2,200 members.

**History of the Music Program**
FAPC’s music program began with the formation of the congregation’s first choir in 1830. Lowell Mason was appointed music director in 1853, and the
church became famous for robust congregational singing under his leadership. In the 1890s, the church hired its first professional singers (a septet) to raise the standard of music in worship—the size of this group increased to 12 by the fall of 1926, and to 24 by the early 1940s, where it has stayed, more or less, to this day.

A number of significant musical events and pieces have been closely associated with the church over the years, including Duke Ellington’s *A Concert of Sacred Music*, which was recorded live in the sanctuary on December 26, 1965; Krzysztof Penderecki’s *The Passion and Death of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to St. Luke*, performed March 19, 1969; and Dave Brubeck’s *La Fiesta de la Posada*, premiered at FAPC in 1975. Celebrated church musicians Robert Baker, William Whitehead, and Richard Westenberg each served notable tenures as music director in the latter part of the 20th century.

**Current Music Program**

Today, the music program features three adult choirs: the FAPC Choir, the Chamber Choir, and the Community Choir. The FAPC Choir, comprising 20 professional singers and several highly skilled volunteers, offers musical leadership for all of the church’s choral services. The Chamber Choir is an all-professional ensemble of 16-24 singers that performs seven or eight concerts per season as the flagship ensemble of the church’s popular concert series. The Community Choir meets once a week for an evening rehearsal and is made up of 30-40 volunteer members of the congregation who love to sing. The Community Choir offers musical leadership in worship alongside the FAPC Choir two or three times a month.
The Sanctuary Organ

The original organ was built in 1855 by George Jardine and Son of New York City. When the present church was built, Jardine was asked to move and rebuild the organ, adding the 32' Double Diapason which is still in use today. In 1893, a new three-manual, 44-stop organ was built by John Odell of New York City. Both the Jardine and Odell organs were powered by a hydraulic motor; a steam engine pumped water into a tank in the tower above the clock, then the water flowed by gravity to a basement cistern, operating the feeders of the bellows. A gradual conversion to electric power followed.

In 1913, the Ernest M. Skinner Company was awarded a contract to build that firm’s Opus 206, a new four-manual organ and virtual twin sister to Opus 205, two blocks away at Saint Thomas Church. With the new organ came the present magnificent façade, loosely modeled upon that of Saint Bartholomew’s, Armley, Leeds. Skinner altered the organ in 1945 and again in 1955.

In 1961, Austin Organs installed their Opus 2347, a new four-manual, 120-rank instrument incorporating a number of orchestral stops from the Skinner. The company returned in 1998 to oversee the rebuilding and releathering of the organ’s mechanisms, and further tonal revisions were undertaken by Daniel Angerstein in 1999. In 2017, a new movable four-manual console was built and installed by Goulding and Wood of Indianapolis. The entire instrument is in excellent working order and is maintained by Larry Trupiano of Mann and Trupiano Organbuilders.(This information graciously compiled by Dr. Jackson.)

Chapter Members at the Church

Acclaimed organist and choral director Ryan Jackson was appointed William S. Perper Director of Music and Fine Arts Ministries at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in 2012, following an international search. Ryan is the founding director of the church’s professional Chamber Choir, as well as the
Community Choir, a teaching ensemble open to all members of the church community. In 2013, Ryan established Fifth Avenue’s annual concert series, which features a diverse program of choral concerts and organ recitals each season.

Prior to his appointment at Fifth Avenue, Ryan served in the music programs at Christ Church United Methodist on Park Avenue; the University Church at Yale; Christ Church Episcopal in New Haven; and Metropolitan United Church in Toronto. In addition to his work at Fifth Avenue, Ryan maintains an active recital schedule throughout the United States and his native Canada where his performances have been praised for their “mature musicality, technical poise, and registrational sensitivity” (RCCO Bulletin). Ryan is also on faculty at the Juilliard School where he teaches a course in sacred music skills to organ majors.

The winner of numerous prestigious competitions, including the Royal Canadian College of Organists’ National Organ Playing Competition, he has studied with several of the most prominent organists of the day, including Patricia Wright, Thomas Murray, and Paul Jacobs. Ryan is a graduate of the University of Toronto (Mus.Bac.Perf.), Yale University (M.M.), and The Juilliard School (D.M.A.).

Patrick Kreeger, FAPC Associate Organist, has established himself as one of the leading musicians of his generation. Praised by The Philadelphia Inquirer for his “elegantly detailed phrasing,” he maintains a versatile career as a pianist, organist, and choral conductor. He gave his symphonic debut in April 2008, performing Sergei Rachmaninoff’s first piano concerto with the North Carolina
Symphony, and has also been guest soloist with the Musica Sacra Chamber Orchestra, Virginia Beach Symphony, Chilliwack Symphony Orchestra, Barton College/Wilson Symphony Orchestra, and the SUNY-Purchase Conservatory Orchestra.

A native of Jacksonville, Florida, Patrick was awarded a full-tuition scholarship to attend The Curtis Institute of Music where he studied organ with Alan Morrison and piano with Susan Starr. He later attended Yale University as a recipient of the Robert Baker Scholarship, where he earned his master’s degree and sacred music certificate under Martin Jean. He is currently a C.V. Starr Doctoral Fellow at The Juilliard School, studying with Paul Jacobs. Patrick has served as the Associate Organist at FAPC since 2015. Additionally, he is on the music theory faculty at The Juilliard School and serves on the conducting faculty at The Curtis Institute of Music’s Young Artist Summer Program.

**Visiting Online (and eventually) in Person**

- [Church Website](#)
- [FAPC Choir Youtube Channel](#)

Under usual circumstances, the choir sings at the 11:00 AM service on Sundays, September through Pentecost. The church is currently offering a webcast service at 9:30 AM.

**Joke of the Month**

*How can you tell if a soprano is at the door?*

They can't find the key and don't know when to come in.

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Visit our amazing website!