



Utah Valley Chapter of the American Guild of Organists
Newsletter • March 2021

Engage, Support, and Uplift Every Organist!

uvago.org

In this issue:

- Sub-Dean's Message
- March Challenge: Bach & Baroque virtual recital on YouTube - Upload deadline is March 15
- Looking ahead to April: Virtual Mini Super Saturday
- Enhance your organ skills with Jennifer Morgan in an Online Study Group
- Diversify Our Repertoire by Miranda Wilcox, featuring Elizabeth Stirling (1819-1895)

- Andrew Fellows to perform senior recital
 - Free Organ Needs a Home
 - BYU Organ Online Training Sessions
 - Piping Up! - Organ Concerts at Temple Square
 - We value your membership
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Sub-Dean's Message

Heidi Rodeback, CAGO

Hello Friends,

On March 31, 1685, Johann Sebastian Bach was born in Eisenach, Germany—the same city where, 200 years earlier, Martin Luther translated the Bible into the German vernacular. The ability to read the Bible in one's own language was central to Luther's belief. Equally important was the ability for believers to sing God's praises in their own tongue.

Thus Luther's Reformation ushered in a new literature of hymns, or chorales, written in German for Germans, and the art of dressing these chorales in chorale preludes came soon after.

Luther understood music to be, after theology, God's greatest gift to mankind. To him it was "the art of the prophets that can calm the agitations of the soul" and "one of the most magnificent and delightful presents God has given us." Bach absorbed this belief so thoroughly that he signed all of his music to the glory of God—not just his sacred works, but also his purely musical forms. He matched his faith with his work ethic and called on his students to follow his lead: "I was obliged to work hard; whoever is equally industrious, will succeed just as well." Between his faith and his industry, Bach composed more than 200 chorale preludes.

Each March, the UVAGO pays tribute to the master in its annual Bach recital. This March, we are calling it "Bach and Baroque" and welcoming videos from anybody who answered November's challenge to

learn a Baroque chorale prelude, whether by Bach or by any of the Baroque masters. Other works by Bach are also welcome.

Please share by uploading a video to the chapter's Google Drive by March 15 (see instructions below). A recital playlist will be made public on the chapter's YouTube channel on Bach's birthday, March 31.

Whether you plan to perform or just to watch, we invite you to prepare by taking another look at Dr. Neil Harmon's excellent YouTube lecture on the chorale prelude, available at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ctznn2vdgf8>.

We're excited to see what you have to offer! Keep practicing, my friends, and remember Bach's words of encouragement: "I was obliged to work hard; whoever is equally industrious, will succeed just as well."

Yours,
Heidi Rodeback

We are making 2020-2021 a year of achieving challenges for organists. Each month, we'll suggest something that you can do to improve your efforts. We'll help you by sharing handouts or worksheets and hosting online forums. Some months these will take the form of a Zoom presentation; other months we'll invite you to record and post your performance online, or join us for a premier on our YouTube channel.

Click on the button below and take a minute to look at the overview for the year. You'll find there's something for everyone.

[**Organ Challenges Overview**](#)

What was the challenge last month?

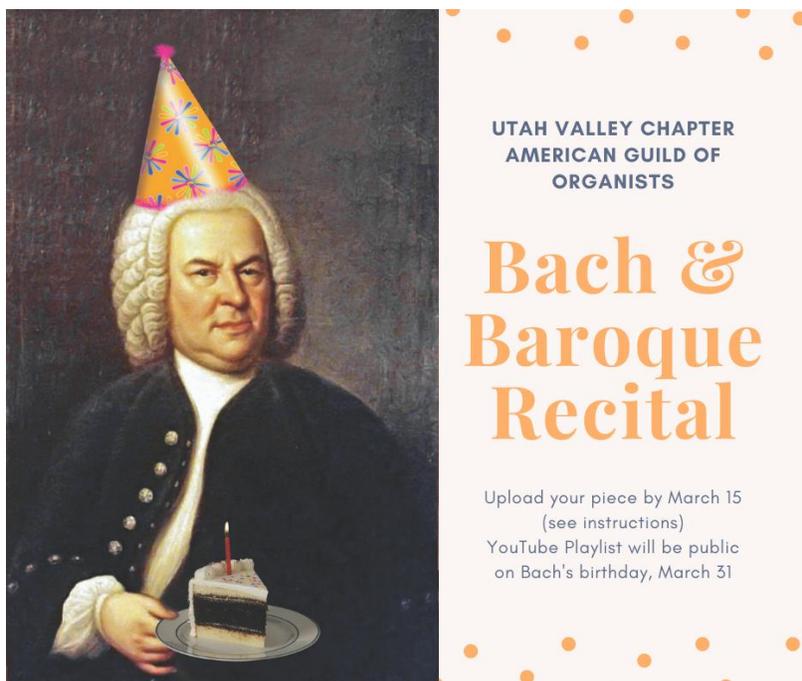
February's Challenge: Embellishing Hymns

February's challenge was to learn to use a last-verse harmonization, solo out a melody, and embellish a sacrament hymn. A Zoom meeting was held on February 26 with Jack Stoneman, Heidi Rodeback, and Mike Carson. The handout and PowerPoint are available on the homepage of the chapter's website:

uvago.org

March's Challenge:

Upload a performance of a Bach or Baroque piece by March 15



The UVAGO will hold its annual Bach recital virtually in March 2021. We hope you will share a recording of your performance of [a piece by Bach](#) or any chorale prelude or other piece by another Baroque composer. **Please upload your piece onto the chapter's Google Drive following the instructions below by March 15.** A recital playlist will be made public on the chapter's YouTube channel on

Bach's birthday, March 31.

- Make a video recording of you playing the piece by Bach or another Baroque composer that you would like to share with the chapter. It would be great if you would give some musical and/or personal context about the piece you are playing.
- Here are [some tips about recording on mobile devices](#) from an AGO webinar.
- If you would like help recording your piece, please contact UVAGO board member Margo Wilcox (mcw.cohs@gmail.com).
- If you would like to record your piece on the [Bigelow Opus 16 tracker organ](#) at the Provo Central Stake Center, please contact Laura Pettersson (llbpett@yahoo.com) to make arrangements.
- Please record in one of the following video formats: MOV, MPEG4, MP4, AVI, WMV, FLV, 3GPP.
- After the video is ready, you will **upload the recorded video to the chapter's Google Drive account by March 15**. Once you've uploaded your video to the chapter's Google Drive account, DeeAnn Stone will upload it to the chapter's YouTube channel.

How to upload the recorded video from a computer or smartphone to your personal Google Drive account.

1. Access your Google Drive account and go to “My Drive” or “Recent.”
2. Find and select the uploaded video file. **Before you share the file to the chapter's Google Drive account, be sure to rename the file how you want it to appear at YouTube.** Find and click “Share.”
3. When the box comes up that says “Share with people and groups,” type (or copy and paste) utahvalleychapterago@gmail.com in the area that says “Add people and groups.”
4. In the description caption, please include your name, the composer, the title of the piece you recorded, and the BWV number (if you are playing a piece by Bach, and if you know it). Then click the post button.

We look forward to hearing your piece on YouTube!

Looking ahead to April...



Utah Valley Chapter, American Guild of Organists

**VIRTUAL
MINI SUPER
SATURDAY**

**SAVE THE DATE!
APRIL 24, 9-11 AM**

Enhance your organ skills with Jennifer Morgan in a UVAGO Online Study Group



Our chapter has started organ study groups for those who wish to study for the certification exams, and also for those who wish to improve their personal skills in order to play for worship. We had a great first virtual meeting last month and we invite you to join us! We have three groups at this time:

- Pianists to Organists
- CAGO exam study group
- AAGO exam study group

Unlike our monthly activities, these groups are self-guided with U Participants work together to take responsibility for their own learning and developing wonderful friendships. If more help is ever desired, a member can be requested to visit the online group.

Our next Pianists to Organists study group is March 9 for those interested in certification at this time, but wish to learn the joining instructions below. Times are forthcoming for the study groups. If you are interested in these, or would like to join the Exam group please reach out to Jennifer Morgan jennifermorgan@byu.edu

Topic: Pianists to Organists UVAGO Study Group

Time: Mar 9, 2021 07:00 PM Mountain Time

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://byu.zoom.us/j/93066023879?pwd=cmw5SG11Rr>

Meeting ID: 930 6602 3879

Passcode: 195053

Diversify Our Repertoire

by Miranda Wilcox

In addition to enriching our organ skills by participating in the monthly organ challenges, chapter members are also invited to accept the challenge to learn a work by a woman or minority composer and perform this piece at the member recital in May 2021.

Sadly, little of the organ music performed or recorded is by women or minority composers. Organists and audiences are missing out on unknown or forgotten gems. Every month I will spotlight an organist and invite the chapter to "diversify our repertoire."

This month's featured musician is...



Elizabeth Stirling (1819-1895)

Elizabeth Stirling was a pioneering composer and organist in Victorian England. She was born in Greenwich on February 26, 1819. In her teens, Stirling studied piano, organ, and harmony from organists in London. In 1856, she submitted work for a music degree at Oxford University as “E. Stirling.” Her composition, Psalm 130 “Out of the Deep” for five-part chorus, solo voices, and full orchestra, was accepted, but Oxford would not grant her a degree when it was discovered that she was a woman. (Oxford did not grant degrees to women until 1920.)

Stirling was [one of the first recitalists to perform](#)

[Bach's pedal fugues in London](#). In 1837 at age seventeen, she played five of Bach's pedal prelude and fugues and three of his pedal trios in Regent's Park. The [Musical World reported](#) on her sensational recital: "This young lady . . . performed for nearly three hours in continuation the most difficult pedal fugues and preludes of Bach, with a degree of precision and mastery, which may almost be said to be unrivalled." Stirling performed virtuosic recitals at many churches, exhibitions, and festivals. [Her friends remembered](#) that she astonished the Belgium priests when "she tried the organ at Antwerp Cathedral, and played the great 'G minor' [pedal fugue] from memory."

Stirling was a church organist throughout her life. At age twenty, she was appointed organist at Green's School and All Saints' in Poplar. In 1858 she competed for the position of organist at St. Andrew Undershaft, a church with a three-manual organ and full pedalboard, and she played there until her retirement in 1880. Stirling was admired for her work ethic and punctuality. The [Musical Herald reported](#), "she frequently went to church for an hour's practice before breakfast, both in

winter and summer, and to this and her perseverance must be attributed her great skill in manipulation.” She met her husband, F. A. Bridge, a choirmaster, organist, and photographer, in her choir, and they married in 1863.

Stirling published many organ compositions and arrangements as well as vocal, choral, and piano works. [Barbara Harbach has edited](#) her *Six Fugues for Organ* and *Romantic Pieces for Organ*. Her fugues on Psalm tunes are preceded by a setting of the Chorale. Harbach concludes, “She had an impressive skill in writing counterpoint, influenced by the works of Bach, whose compositions she played and apparently deeply appreciated. Her skillful pedal technique is evident in her writing.”

One of her most popular pieces was a waltz arrangement of Sir Walter Scott's poem “All among the Barley.” Here is a [recording of Andrew Peters playing Stirling's grand *Maestoso*](#).

Eccles Organ

FESTIVAL

Did you miss a performance? You can replay all of the concerts of the 27th season on our YouTube channel anytime you wish. Would you like to listen again to one favorite work but are intimidated by one-hour videos? Fear not! We have added programs and time-stamps in the description of each video to make them very easy to navigate. Now you can not only relive your favorite recital, but also go directly to your favorite part of the program!

STEP 1 - Open our [YouTube Channel](#), click on "Videos" and click on the concert you want to watch again.

STEP 2 - Click on the **little arrow** to open the Description of the video.

STEP 3 - Click the blue **time-stamp** of the work you want to listen.

Andrew Fellows to Present Senior Organ Recital

It's nearing the end of the school year at BYU, and so we're entering the student organ recital season! Andrew Fellows, a student of Dr. Neil Harmon, will perform his senior recital on Saturday, March 13, at 1:00 p.m., at the Cathedral of the Madeleine, Salt Lake City.

All BYU student recitals are planned to be streamed on the BYU School of Music website. They are open to the public as well, but due to COVID there are restrictions as to how many people can attend (i.e., maximum of 20 in the Madsen Recital Hall).

Free Organ Needs a Home

I have a complete organ which needs a home. it was built by Associated Organ Builders in Auburn, Washington, and was used for several years in a church in Alaska. The organ was state of the art at the time, and used Saville technology. (I believe that the Marriott Center organ was a Saville for quite some time.) I've never even tried to hook up the speakers and turn it on. I'd be happy to give it to someone who was interested in having it, either as a project for someone who enjoyed electronics, or wanted to use it as a basis for a Hauptwerk set up. The organ is

currently stored in Orem. Please contact me, if you are interested.

Dave Hobson
(907) 987-5292

BYU Organ Online Training Sessions



This is a monthly offering of nine different topics of interest to early-level church organists, including those serving in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. All events are **free of charge** and available to pianists and organists in any location.

Each month includes a 2-part series:

- a live presentation on the given topic
- and a live masterclass that follows up on the topic discussed in the presentation.

The live presentations take place on the first Thursday of each month, followed by the mid-monthly masterclasses (reinforcing the same topic) on the third Thursday of the month, both from 7-9 pm Mountain Time. Previous sessions may be viewed online. Contact Sharee Thompson at organ@byu.edu for assistance in finding the recorded sessions.

Learn more by clicking the button below to enroll for the sessions of interest. We hope to see you at many, if not all of the training sessions!

Dr. Don Cook
Sharee Thompson

[Learn More](#)



The five accomplished Tabernacle and Temple Square organists, Richard Elliott, Andrew Unsworth, Brian Mathias, Linda Margetts, and Joseph Peeples, plus occasional guest organists, are featured in a new online concert stream:

- Every Monday, Wednesday, Friday at noon (mountain)
- 30-minute concerts, each featuring a different organist
- Streamed on The Choir's [YouTube channel](#), [Broadcasts.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.Broadcasts.ChurchofJesusChrist.org),
- [TheTabernacleChoir.org](https://www.TheTabernacleChoir.org).

We Value Your Membership

The chapter appreciates your continued support of its mission to "engage, support, and uplift every organist." If you already have a membership, you may receive an email reminder when it is time to renew it. Your contributions enhance the chapter's ability to sponsor monthly organ events each year. Please reflect on how your associations in the guild have supported and uplifted you, and consider joining or renewing today!.

[**Learn How**](#)

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So do we!

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people, events, and
important
information
regarding the Utah
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