



THE ROYAL CANADIAN
COLLEGE OF ORGANISTS

**Vancouver Centre
Newsletter**



*Spring Edition
May, 2020*



★ President's Message

Dear organists and organ enthusiasts,

What an extraordinary year 2020 has been so far. With the global pandemic of COVID-19 a constant worry for all of us, RCCO centres across the country have had to cancel or postpone events, including this year's national organ festival in Victoria, and our own centre's masterclass and recital. It's remarkable to witness churches closing their doors, along with stores, restaurants and concert halls. But I am encouraged to see musicians continue to perform despite their isolation, posting their music online as a reassurance to others in our community. Churches continue to reach out to their congregation by holding services online, and concert organizations are making past performances available online. It is a reminder that there is a place for music even in the darkest of times. As life must go on, so must music.

I'm sure things will improve, even though it may be a while until we are all back to normal again. In the meantime, I encourage you to continue listening to music, writing and phoning each other, teaching online, or taking lessons online. Help those arts organizations and artists who are struggling financially, or ask for help if you need it. Take the time to read that book you've always wanted to read, or learn that piece you've always wanted to play. Watch a concert online! Above all, stay healthy both in mind and body.

With thanks,

Angelique Po
President, RCCO Vancouver Centre

Table of Contents

- 2** President's Message
- 3** Time to renew your RCCO membership, or to consider becoming a member!
- 4** How churches are coping with COVID
- 10** Organs I have played – Coventry and Worcester
- 15** Useful Information

★ It's that time of year, time to renew your RCCO membership, or to consider becoming a member!

A special message to our readers who are not members of the RCCO:

Membership with the RCCO not only entitles you to a wide range of benefits, it supports the important work we do to provide more opportunities and engage more people with the organ and its music.

RCCO members are eligible for many benefits, including:

- discounted registration fees at the national organ festival
- our quarterly journal, *Organ Canada*
- special health insurance rates for arts workers
- access to valuable resources available only to members
- discounted membership in the American Guild of Organists and the Fédération Québécoise des Amis de l'Orgue
- discounted subscriptions to several international organ publications
- voting privileges to determine RCCO organizational leadership
- and of course, full participation in your local centre events

RCCO membership helps to support existing flagship programs such as the National Organ Festival, the National Organ Playing Competition, Honorary Awards, the Travelling Clinician programme, the expanded Summer Organ Academy, and our exciting new OrgelkidsCAN project!

Here in Vancouver we have benefited several times from the Travelling Clinician programme, and will again next year.

RCCO membership also helps to support the programmes we offer here – including organ crawls, members' recitals, and our very successful annual Halloween Concert.

For more information: <https://www.rcco.ca/benefits-of-membership>

To find out how to join: <https://www.rcco.ca/join-us>

There are various membership categories, including 35 and under or full-time student, senior, and joint (two or more at the same address).

Please do consider joining us!

* Credits to National Office and Rachel Alflatt

★ How Churches Are Coping with COVID

With the sudden arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic, church congregations have had to stop holding traditional services. However, many have used this difficult time to find new and creative ways to worship together while staying apart. This article offers a glimpse of some of those ways, with tips and techniques learned on the go, all provided by the organists involved in the worship.

The link to our website's list of churches online can be found at <http://www.rcco.bc.ca/wp/online-church-services/>

Live-streaming:

Canadian Reformed Church, Langley, by Frank Ezinga.

<https://langleycanrc.org/live-video>

To give the congregation a feeling of “Sunday worship” at home, we continued the services at the same time in the same format. This has proven to be successful to everyone, as these days it seems to be easier to forget which day it is. The number of people attending is reduced from 600 to just one or two dozen.

We always had live broadcasting for our local seniors/care home and homebound members. Now almost the whole congregation (plus many guests) watch on Facebook, Livestream, and our church website. We stream publicly with one camera, connected to one computer, connected to the Internet. Since COVID-19, we display the song texts during the singing (which is a bit more work for the person managing the computer.)

When a large group sings on a regular Sunday, it sounds and feels like a rock, but I found that a small group requires more support and direction. After some experimenting, I did not reduce the volume much; I found that a more robust accompaniment gives more support.

Having the congregation online made me change two aspects of accompaniment:

1. We sing in unison. Imagine a family with children all singing at home together. To make it easier for all voices and ages, I transpose most songs down.
2. A smaller group tends to sing a bit faster. Therefore, I make an effort to increase the tempo slightly.

Both changes were noted, seeing the positive feedback. After the restrictions are lifted, we will continue the live broadcasts, with the inclusion of the song texts.

Holy Rosary Cathedral, by Denis Bedard.

<https://www.holyrosarycathedral.org/>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCIX1oCA9Bi6MBdWEX6FfbzA/videos>

At Holy Rosary Cathedral we have had live streamed services since March 22. Several of the weekend masses have been cancelled, and I play regularly at the 11am mass on Sunday, which is the principal mass celebrated by the Archbishop. Only the professional vocal quartet sings at this mass (no choir) and there is no congregation. I also play from time to time for special services, with only one soloist.

I have to select shorter organ pieces for the Prelude and the Communion, and I miss the full choir and the presence of the congregation. The church pews are nice but not very inspiring!

Saints Joachim and Ann Cathoic Church, Aldergrove, by Alex McClune.

aldergrovecatholic.com

The parish is livestreaming daily masses with no music at 9am and Sunday masses with music at 10am. The situation is giving us a chance to get full use out of our lovely antique Casavant organ near the front, rebuilt by Koppejan many years ago. Now, if only the pedal coupler were working...

St. Mary's Kerrisdale, by Susan Ohannesian.

<https://www.stmaryskerrisdale.ca/worship>

At St. Mary's Kerrisdale, when the bishop closed the churches and said that only staff could enter, we decided to worship with Zoom so it could be participatory.

At 9:15am the youth coordinator leads the children in a Sunday School lesson, usually with a challenge for the week. This week's challenge is to make a card for the essential workers in our congregation. At 9:15am I zoom off to the church on my bicycle, rain or shine, grateful that we have had so much sunshine.

At 10am the rest of the congregation joins the Zoom worship which is led by the clergy from their homes. Members of the congregation read the lessons and lead the prayers from their homes. The choir director is at the piano and leads the psalm and maybe one contemporary hymn with me 2 metres behind, singing and sometimes ringing handbells. I play the prelude, postlude and hymns from the organ with the choir director standing 2 metres away and joining me in singing. Everyone else is on mute, singing from home. Sometimes one of the paid section leaders comes in and sings a solo with organ accompaniment. We are keeping the music simple and I use very little organ because Zoom is not very conducive to music, especially voice and organ together. Fortunately the verger

is very tech savvy, and he has fiddled with the settings on Zoom so we have the best possible sound.

From 11am to noon on Saturdays I play organ preludes and hymns for people to listen to and sing along with. I have promised the regulars that when we can gather again I'll do a session of organ music and hymns, pulling out all the stops.



Pre-recorded services:

Knox United Church, by Madelene Klassen.

<https://www.knoxunitedvancouver.org/>

At Knox, personnel has been restricted to 5 people, with no more than 3 in the sanctuary at once. Organ practice is Tuesday and Wednesday, organ music recorded late Wednesday morning. Choir director practices Thursday. Sermon, responses, piano by choir director with vocal soloists recorded Friday, editing on Saturday, uploaded to YouTube Sunday morning. So many people viewed the first Sunday that Zoom crashed and the webmaster uploaded us to YouTube immediately. The quality is much better and almost no limit

viewers on YouTube. Recordings are done by a videographer with a good video cam, or our very techy minister uses his latest iPhone. The production has become more “slick” over time, with hymn texts superimposed on beautiful scenery and fade-outs that seem natural. We are covered by our copyright licensing program OneLicense, which also offers an Online Live Streaming option. This license covers almost any hymn or response, piano and organ solos with only a few publishers not participating. The license is easy to use, and a specific code number for each church that needs to be quoted when crediting composers and arrangers. OneLicense is not the same as the CCL coverage.

Sunday after church we do Zoom coffee hour which is lots of fun. You can see who needs a haircut or hasn't cleaned up the room.

Richmond Presbyterian Church, by Jannie Lo Burdeti.

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChqAX2ogt9cgJ-04uSI_P7g

Richmond Presbyterian Church has been doing online worship since mid-March and I started as music director the day after Easter. As a result, I have yet to meet most of the congregation! While we are constantly striving to improve our online worship, I am impressed by our desire to “do less things, but to do them well.”

We have been pre-recording our services on Saturday morning and uploading it onto Facebook and Youtube at 10am on Sunday. It is followed by a fellowship time at 11am on Zoom. While there are benefits to doing the entire service on Zoom, this prevents the panic and stress that can occur if technical difficulties arise while doing a ‘live’ service. We are also very blessed that our assistant minister is a filmmaker. Moreover, he has asked his friend who is a lighting designer to help occasionally with special shots. In fact, his friend was a lighting designer in the movie, *Okja*, directed by Bong Joon-ho (who also directed *Parasite*). These special shots included conversations our minister did with other theologians, which we found very well-suited for the online worship format.

At first, our equipment was quite lacking but we have been grateful for the fund from the Presbytery for purchasing equipment and thus are upgrading our tripod, gimble, mic's, and camera.

Music-wise, while I miss hearing other voices while I sing, I think it is going well. As a musician, the best part is the possibility of multiple takes!

St. David's United Church, North Vancouver, by Sam Balden.

I am occasionally substituting at St. David's United in West Van. I played the Palm Sunday, Good Friday and Easter services, where the recording experience was new to both me and

everyone from the church. [The videotaping was handled by a person associated with another church, which was using St. David's chancel to record their sermons.]

We taped the whole Palm Sunday service in one go, on the preceding Saturday morning, from opening prelude to closing postlude. We had the minister, a power point operator, a lector, the video guy, and me. I had chosen Palm Sunday specific music and was anxious to hear how that, the hymns and service music sounded on the church's pipe organ. We all felt pleased with our combined efforts and departed for our homes to await an assessment of the recording.

By midnight that same day we were advised that a gremlin had crept into the video guy's editing software (never happened before) and the entire service was lost. Thus the church's first broadcast of a no-congregation church service didn't happen!

Fortunately, when we taped both the Good Friday and Easter services the next week, one after the other and both in one go, they were not lost and were made available via Vimeo to the church members. It became apparent that some improvements would be required for future tapings, and I am currently assisting with the musical side of those improvements.

Other ways of doing online worship:

Queens Avenue United Church, by Rachel Alflatt.

<https://queensavenue.org/>

We are between ministers and our substitute minister is semi-retired and lives on one of the Gulf Islands, which has made it somewhat impractical to live-stream services from the church for now. So I send out worship resources by email every week and put them on the church website. The office coordinator mails the texts to the half dozen members of the congregation who aren't online.

The worship resources include videos of the sermon (recorded via Skype) and of the scripture (recorded by members of the congregation), YouTube links for relevant hymns, anthems and solos sung by the Queens Avenue choir and recorded during past services, and organ repertoire, also recorded live during past services. In addition, a member of the congregation writes the prayers of the people every week, and this document and the words to the hymns and anthems are also emailed out and available on the website. It's fairly low tech but people seem to like it

Shaughnessy Heights United Church, by Roy Campbell.

<http://www.shuc.ca/online-worship/>

We debated about live streaming, having a few participants recorded in the sanctuary, or doing everything online. SHUC is basically filled every week with user groups. We couldn't ask them to stay away and allow even a few people in the building so the premises are off limits for everyone. Our option for worship was then limited to strictly online, and this is what we've been doing. Some of our older congregants don't have computers and some find the words for hymns too small, but other than that, the feedback has been positive. We have a zoom coffee time from 11:10-noon every Sunday for those who wish to sign up. We also have the same for choir members on Thursday evenings beginning at 8pm. Positive feedback from this too as some folks really miss 'seeing' their friends/family and being a part of the community.

Reflections on live-streaming, by Michael Molnar.

Weddings and funerals have had public attendance restricted to little more than immediate family. The last wedding I did at St. Anthony's in West Vancouver had live streaming, which amusingly involved a tech guy carefully carrying the camera out behind the recessing wedding party, with another helper holding the cable behind, just like the train of a bridal dress (making for a unique sight as the final part of the wedding party exit).

At St. Helen's Burnaby, an inspector was sent to investigate a wedding in late April, and the parish was given full approval (no safety violations or health concerns). So: don't be afraid. As long as the place is clean and people keep distance, all should be well.

Live stream certainly poses a unique challenge for organists, who will either blow up the microphones and obliterate all voices, or find there's no way to compete when the organ microphone is fifty feet away from the pipes (or speakers), while the singer's...or rather, the singer's microphone is one inch from their mouth.

Overall, keeping it simple seems to work best. Find a good spot for the camera and don't move it much, then focus efforts on trying to get the sound clear and balanced.

Great audio and average visuals make for a much better virtual church experience than having 4K video with lousy sound.

Lastly, for social distancing, remember to keep all your fugue voice entries at least two bars apart from each other!

★ Organs I have Played - Coventry and Worcester

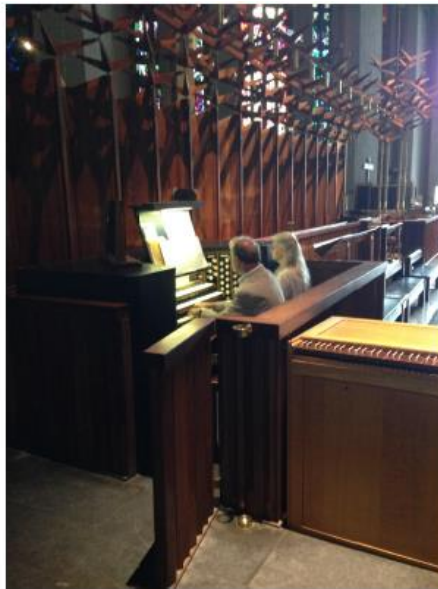
by Susan Ohannesian

Last fall I wrote about the organs I had played in Cambridge while on a trip to England with the Cathedral Singers of Ontario in the summer of 2015. We had a few days of rehearsal at Christ Church College in Cambridge and then headed by coach to Worcester where we were to be the choir in residence for a week.

On our way from Cambridge to Worcester we stopped in Coventry at the Cathedral of St. Michael for a lunchtime recital given by our director, Ian Sadler. After the recital we were free to wander around the new cathedral and the preserved ruins of the old cathedral. Those of us who wanted were allowed to try out the organ. The original cathedral had been bombed in 1940 during WWII. In that air raid the Father Willis organ of 1886 was totally destroyed. As the cathedral was being rebuilt with Canadian cedar for the ceiling, funds from Canadian organists went towards a new Harrison and Harrison organ. After the war Healey Willan went across Canada playing concerts to raise money for British organs that had been destroyed in the war and in the end all of it went to Coventry and that amount almost paid for the new organ.



Coventry Cathedral



Ian and Catherine Sadler



Susan trying out the organ



Coventry Cathedral	Harrison & Harrison / 1962
Electro-pneumatic action	74 speaking stops, 4 manuals

<i>Pedal</i>	<i>Choir</i>	<i>Great</i>
Sub Bourdon 32 [Gt]	Claribel Flute 16	Double Diapason 16
Open Wood 16	Open Diapason 8	Open Diapason I 8
Open Metal 16	Harmonic Flute 8	Open Diapason II 8
Diapason 16 [Gt]	Gedackt 8	Spitzflute 8
Sub Bass 16	Dulciana 8	Stopped Diapason 8
Dulciana 16	Principal 4	Octave 4
Principal 8	Rohr Flute 4	Gemshorn 4
Spitzflute 8	Nazard 223	Octave Quint 223
Twelfth 513	Fifteenth 2	Super Octave 2
Fifteenth 4	Block Flute 2	Mixture III
Rohr Flute 4	Tierce 135	Cornet II-V
Open Flute 2	Larigot 113	Double Trumpet 16
Mixture IV	Mixture V	Trumpet 8
Bombardon 32	Cromhorne 8	Clarion 4
Ophicleide 16		
Fagotto 16 [Sw]		
Posaune 8		
Bassoon 8		
Schalmei 4		
Kornett 2		

<i>Swell</i>	<i>Solo</i>	<i>Other Couplers</i>
Quintadena 16	Diapason 8	Choir to Great
Hohl Flute 8	Rohr Flute 8	
Viola 8	Viole 8	Swell to Great
Celeste 8	Viole Celeste 8	Solo to Great
Principal 4	Octave 4	Solo to Swell
Spitzflute 4	Open Flute 4	Swell to Choir
Fifteenth 2	Wald Flute 2	Solo to Choir
Sesquialtera II	Sifflöte 1	
Mixture IV	Mixture IV	Choir to Pedal
Oboe 8	Corno di Bassetto 16	Great to Pedal
<i>Tremulant</i>	<i>Tremulant</i>	Swell to Pedal
Contra Fagotto 16	Orchestral Trumpet 8	Solo to Pedal
Trumpet 8	Orchestral Clarion 4	
Clarion 4		Gt & Pd pistons combined
Swell Octave	Solo Octave	Sw on Pd pistons
Swell Suboctave	Solo Suboctave	
Swell unison off	Solo unison off	
	Corno 8 (extra octave of pipes)	

After the recital and trying out the Coventry organ, we all boarded the bus and headed to Worcester where we would spend the next week as choir in residence. There are three organs in the cathedral; the Quire Organ by Kenneth Tickell and Company Ltd. completed in 2008, the Transept Organ by Gilbert Scott, now silent and which was used for the first performance of Elgar's Organ Sonata in 1895, and the Chamber Organ also by Kenneth Tickell, 2006.

When I had sung with the Cathedral Singers of Ontario the previous winter at Southwark Cathedral I had tried out all the organs I could and I guess I had impressed Ian Sadler because he asked me if I would like to play the prelude and postlude for Evensong one day in the week we were at Worcester. Of course I said I would be delighted and he gave me a key to the organ loft and said I could practice in the morning before the tourists were allowed in. I played pieces written for me by my husband Paul; the Interlude on Down Ampney for the prelude and the Toccata on Sine Nomine for the postlude. While I was practising one of the guides who was getting ready to let the tourists in came up to me and said "you're hired" and after Evensong I got lots of kudos for my playing and someone said he thought it was Ian Sadler. I took it as a compliment. I still get a thrill when I remember playing that beautiful organ in the huge, ancient cathedral.



Tickell organ case

Tickell organ keyboards



Tickell organ left stop jamb

Gilbert Scott organ case

Susan and Paul ready to sing

Tickell organ specification

<p>PEDAL</p> <p>Double Open Wood 32 Double Open Diapason 32 Open Wood 16 Open Diapason 16 Sub Bass 16 Violone 16 [Gt] Principal 8 Flute 8 Choral Bass 4 Mixture IV Sackbut 32 Trombone 16 Fagotto 16 [Sw] Trumpet 8</p>	<p>CHOIR (enclosed)</p> <p>Stopped Diapason 8 Viola 8 Viola Celeste 8 Principal 4 Nason Flute 4 Fifteenth 2 Sesquialtera II Mixture III Trumpet 8 <i>tremulant</i></p>	<p>GREAT</p> <p>Violone 16 Open Diapason 8 Open Flute 8 Gamba 8 Principal 4 Chimney Flute 4 Twelfth 2 2/3 Nazard 2 2/3 Fifteenth 2 Open Flute 2 Tierce 1 3/5 Mixture IV Trumpet 8 Clarion 4 <i>tremulant</i></p>
<p>SWELL</p> <p>Bourdon 16 Open Diapason 8 Gedeckt 8 Salicional 8 Voix Celeste 8 Principal 4 Spitz Flute 4 Gemshorn 2 Mixture IV Contra Fagotto 16 Vox Humana 8 Oboe 8 Trumpet 8 Clarion 4 <i>tremulant</i></p>	<p>SOLO (enclosed)</p> <p>Harmonic Flute 8 Viole d'Orchestre 8 Cor Anglais 16 Clarinet 8 Hautbois 8 <i>tremulant</i> Tuba 8 (unenclosed)</p>	

★ Useful Information

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Vancouver Centre Executive 2019-2020

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