



THE ROYAL CANADIAN
COLLEGE OF ORGANISTS
LE COLLÈGE ROYAL

KINGSTON CENTRE NEWSLETTER

Opus 112 -- September, 2018

Inspiration. Education. Community.

Website <http://www.rcco-kingston.org>

The Nave and West
Door of
St. George's Cathedral
with fresh paint and new
lighting installed this summer.

Photo by the Dean of the
Cathedral, the Very Rev. Don
Davidson



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Co-President's Message – September 2018

Brad Mills

I read an article recently that suggested that Labour Day is the new New Year's Day. As a retired high school music teacher, I can entirely agree with that way of thinking. September brings us a whole new, clean slate of possibilities. Yesterday, I attended our Centre Executive start-up meeting at St. George's Cathedral in my new role as Co-President, beside long-serving President Michael Capon. One of the main items on the agenda was to fill in our "clean slate of possibilities", and make plans to have them become realities. I think we have a great program lined up for you. My church, St. Paul's United in Perth, is just completing a major renovation that has kept us out of the sanctuary for five months. Our first service in the renovated space takes place this coming Sunday – so many possibilities, so many new ways to think about how to conduct worship. It's very energizing. I hope you all might see Labour Day as the new New Year's Day too – a time to make plans and resolutions – a time to become energized with all the musical possibilities awaiting us. Wishing you all a successful fall season!



From the Editors

Sir Hubert Parry: Religious ambiguity and devoted craftsmanship

David Cameron

This summer I have given a good deal of attention to Sir Hubert Parry. Some people immediately discount him as a leftover echo from the disintegration of the British Empire, but as with that other imperial icon Rudyard Kipling, there's very much more to Parry than the stereotype would suggest.



The young
C. H. H. Parry

A lifelong admirer of German music, and one of the important biographers of J. S. Bach, Parry viewed the outbreak of war between Great Britain and Germany in 1914 as a calamity. Quoting the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Wikipedia tells us that "During the war he watched a life's work of progress and education being wiped away as the male population, particularly the new fertile generation of composing talent . . . dwindled." This makes it doubly sad that on

October 7, 1918, Sir Hubert fell victim to the Spanish influenza pandemic, a mere thirty-five days before the November 11th Armistice brought the war to a close.

In the seventy years of his life, Parry's work affected the musical community in many ways. Stanford called him one of the most important English composers since Purcell, but he was also a serious scholar, the author of books like *The Evolution of the Art of Music* and *The Music of the Seventeenth Century*. His magnum opus as a musicologist is undoubtedly *Johann Sebastian Bach: the Story of the Development of a Great Personality* (1909). More recent scholars, and especially those in the original instruments movement, have deepened our understanding of Bach in ways unavailable to Parry, but his insights as a musician and as a deeply thoughtful person are still really valuable. As an educator, Parry began in his early twenties by contributing 123 articles to the first edition of *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*; then he succeeded George Grove as Director of the Royal College of Music. Eventually he followed Stainer as Professor of Music at Oxford (where he had been, while a secondary student at Eton, the university's youngest ever B.Mus.).

Parry's choral music, like the Milton setting *Blest Pair of Sirens* or the Coronation anthem *I was glad*, has always been admired and performed. But he wasn't immune from criticism, like the vitriol dispensed by the young George Bernard Shaw:

(the oratorio *Job* is) "the most utter failure ever achieved by a thoroughly respectable musician. There is not one bar in it that comes within fifty thousand miles of the tamest line in the poem."

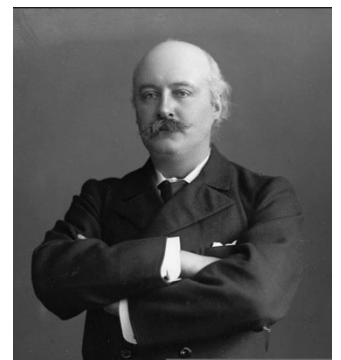
Shaw goes on to write that Parry should burn *Job*, and when he gets the blaze well started he should throw in his companion oratorio *Judith* too.



George Bernard Shaw
An 1890's "selfie"

Nowadays Parry's work is viewed differently. About *Job*, savaged by Shaw, Durham University's Jeremy Dibble writes that "there is a sense of symphonic continuum in *Job* (in fact one might easily see the work as a kind of four-movement symphony) which simply had not been attempted in earlier oratorios. . . the work is one of bold experimentation . . ." This re-evaluation is now reaching past Parry's organ and choral music to include his songs, his chamber music and his symphonies.

Why do I take space to write about this man, whose name is already so familiar? Partly because, with Michael Capon and his forces at St. George's Cathedral, I'm involved in a public memorial celebration of Parry (see page 10. Since the actual centennial falls on October 7, Thanksgiving Sunday, we have deferred the memorial for a week, until October 14.) But primarily I write because of what I've learned, or relearned this summer from and about Parry.



Sir Hubert Parry in

To begin with, he is another of the composers who couldn't conscientiously accept the teachings of the Church, but whose work nevertheless has real spiritual depth and draws broadly upon Judaeo-Christian scripture and liturgy (others like him would include Brahms, Vaughan Williams, Delius, Holst – a list only growing in our time). Somehow Parry managed to reconcile his humanist beliefs with explicitly Christian music of great power: of his 23 larger choral works with orchestra, 13 have texts from Christian sources, and this doesn't include *Blest pair of Sirens*, or the Songs of Farewell, the source of the well-known *My soul, there is a country far*. He wrote at least 15 vital and expressive hymn tunes, and several settings of the Anglican liturgy.



Sir Hubert Parry in 1916, aged 68

Robert Schumann wrote that "To send light into the darkness of men's hearts - such is the duty of the artist". And that light travels across the boundaries of creeds and theologies. Working with Parry's music has reminded me that to discern and to share such light is something we musicians can embrace as our "duty and delight" – the justification of all our training and our work.

The other thing I have relearned from Parry comes from adapting some of his music for our performance in October.

An English Suite for strings was written for the rich resources of Edwardian London: a large orchestra (16 first and 16 second violins was usual), projecting tone into a vast space like the Royal Albert Hall. The richness of the resulting sound provides a foundation of tone able to support his first violins when they soar into the stratosphere; so his first-class professional players, even high in their third octave, ride securely upon rich support from the lower parts.

Performing with our much more modest resources, Parry's tonal lavishness needed to be reined in, so I have spent some of the summer wrestling with his scores. What strikes one immediately is his utter professionalism and superb technique. Every note is exactly placed in the texture, dynamically directed, and scrupulously marked for bowing and articulation.

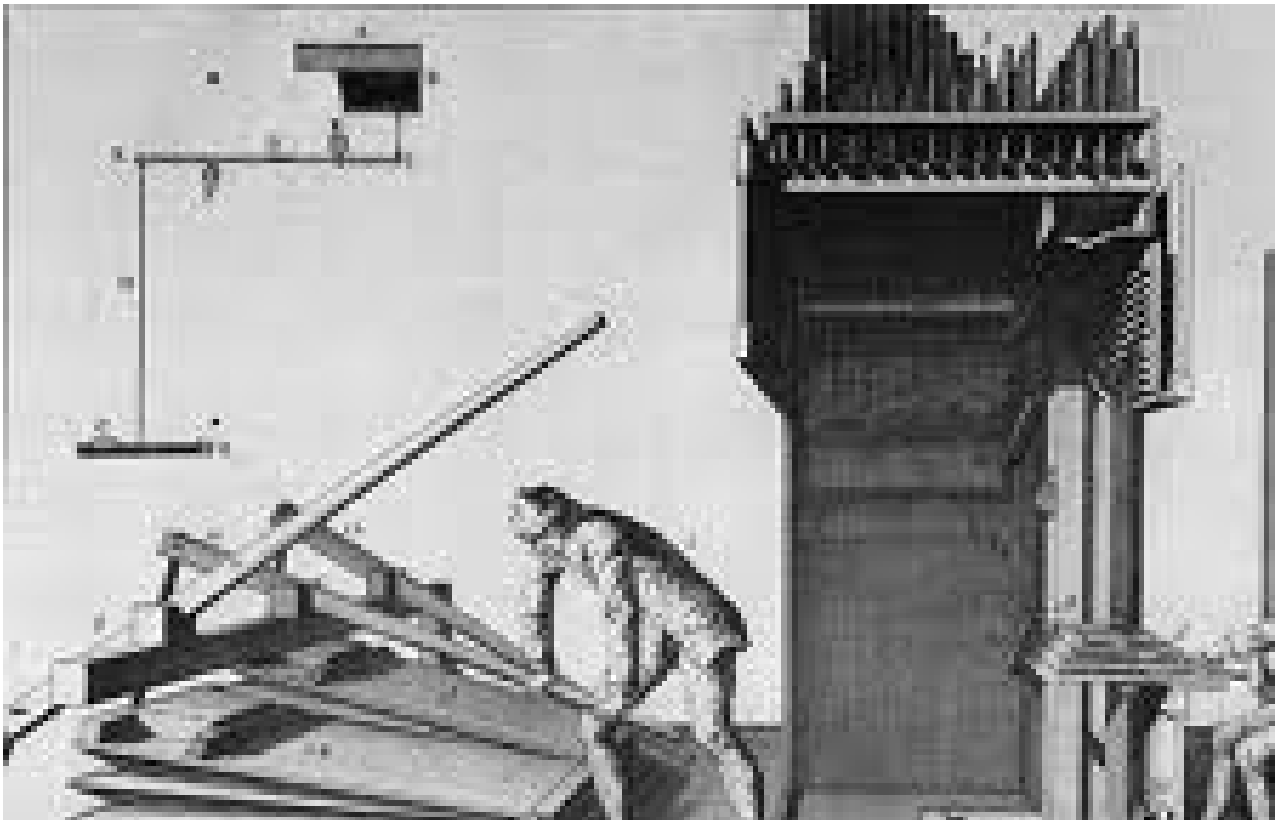
Various people have been credited with the remark that composing is "one tenth inspiration and nine-tenths perspiration" – certainly Willan repeated it if he didn't coin it. But working with Parry's scores has shown me how that formula isn't quite enough.

The composer needs inspiration, undoubtedly. And hard work is essential. But beyond that, the work of great musicians – and Parry was certainly that, though hardly a "great composer" – shows what must have been a tremendous drive towards perfection. If genius is an infinite capacity for taking pains, we must allow Parry's genius. And though we may not ourselves aspire to that exalted level, yet it can inspire us. Control of detail, a real effort to make an elegant whole unmarred by casual or sloppy elements – that's the challenge the Parrys of our musical world pose for us, and *laudate Dominum!* their devoted work helps to show us how to meet it.

And these things are germane to our College, whose core values include artistic excellence, and whose examinations seek to encourage the kind of technical mastery so evident in Parry's work.

Come and join us as we celebrate Hubert Parry at St. George's on the afternoon of October 14. Better still, come to the Cathedral Saturday morning, Oct. 13, and join us in singing *I was glad* and *Dear Lord and Father*, and some of his great hymns, with Michael at the organ and the augmented Cathedral Chamber Orchestra.

And reflect on the tension between Parry's theological beliefs, and the unfailing devotion evident in his work – and whether, or how, his music reconciles those differences. Whatever you decide, the music's a gift to us, not just artistically, but also through the renewal and affirmation it brings to our spirits.



A Summer in Israel

Damien Macedo



Dormition Abbey, the exterior

The Lauds bells of Dormition Abbey ring at 6.45 am every morning, calling the Benedictine monks to their first of five daily services. Soon will follow Eucharist, then at noon the Mittagsgebet (mid-day prayer), and in the evening, Vespers and Compline, all sung in a mixture of German propers and Latin ordinaries, and all entirely in Gregorian chant, except Sunday morning Eucharist. In

of between these services, the monks tend to the needs of the Abbey and the community, whatever these may be. It would be a mistake to say that their lives are simple – far from it; nothing in this part of the world is simple.

Dormition Abbey, the traditional site of the Assumption of Mary, sits atop Mount Zion in the Old City of Jerusalem. The current church has been there since 1910, built by Kaiser Wilhelm, though the foundation of the first church dates to the 4th Century AD. For the past four years, the Abbey Organist and Cantor has been Brother Simeon, though his workload was recently reduced by the arrival of Gregorian chant specialist Brother Joseph, returning from an extended education leave in Germany. However, for nearly three months this summer, neither of these men was in the country to provide music for the liturgy, and so the task fell to yours truly.



Abbey Chapel: the sanctuary

How I became involved in the music ministry at Dormition Abbey and how I wound up in Jerusalem in the first place is a story much too long and complicated to tell in full. Suffice to say that I accepted an internship in the legal department of a human rights group in the Holy Land, and stumbled onto the monks when looking for a place to practice the organ. They were more than willing to oblige, and went a few steps further: room and board in exchange for chanting with them and playing every Sunday and whenever I was not at work. Little did they realize that I was getting the better end of that bargain.



Damien at the Dormition Abbey console

The organ in Dormition Abbey is a three-manual 1980 Oberlinger (mechanical action; specifications below) and is one of the finest instruments in the Middle East. It was featured in Diane Bish's programme "The Joy of Music" some years ago, and is frequently used for recitals and concerts. It is one of the largest instruments in the area and an excellent example of German Neo-Baroque building. Brother Simeon, however, has grown weary of the heavy action, the perpetual tuning issues, sticky notes, and a regular string of ciphers. In about 2 months, the organ will be replaced

when the entire Abbey undergoes significant renovations, meaning that I am the last visiting organist to play it.

The chanting at Dormition Abbey is some of the best I have ever heard. The inflection and phrasing match the text perfectly; the melismas achieve a fluidity that is not orchestrated or contrived, but felt intuitively and understood profoundly; and the acoustics of the both the church and crypt are stunning, amplifying and caressing the sounds while not overwhelming the ear. On occasion I had the chance to teach notes and help with singing technique, phrasing, and musicality; but I learnt much more than I taught.

In early July, the Old City of Jerusalem hosts the Festival of Lights, where various major sites serve as the backdrop for luminous art installations. Landmarks like the Tower of David, Old City Walls, and Damascus Gate were decorated with light in imaginative and captivating ways.

Among this year's pieces of art was a multi-coloured projection onto the front of the Abbey, which received a

live organ soundtrack accompanying the thousands of visitors while the monks sold bratwurst and pilsner in the courtyard on the final night of the festival. As the young Canadian organist was being paid for his services with beer, the later it got, the more adventurous the music-making became. There was, of course, a great deal of Bach and Buxtehude as well as some Böhm and Mendelssohn, plenty of German chorales, a bit of Willan and Bales, and I may even have slipped in Denis Bédard's *Fantasia sur Ô Canada* to end the evening on a patriotic note.



Jerusalem: the Festival of Lights

There is something quite special about singing the text “O pray for the peace of Jerusalem” in a church within the walls of Old Jerusalem, and being able to see things which I have heard, played, and sung about countless times. I had experiences like this everywhere in Israel, from standing in front of Absalom’s Tomb while listening to Tomkins’s *When David Heard*, to playing *Forest Green* on the gorgeous Reger organ in St. Catherine’s Church in Nativity Square, Bethlehem, to the confusion of Italian tourists who followed with their rendition of *Silent Night*, perhaps not completely understanding the musical point.

On my last day at Dormition, the monks presented me with a CD of organ music and a book, “For Zion’s Sake”, which details the history and life of the Abbey. It has only confirmed what I already knew: the monks are grateful for music, and they love it. Beyond chanting in services and practicing their notes, I often heard the echoes of the Prior humming in the hallways of the cloister, and on the many occasions when I dined with the monks, we listened to cello concerti, Mozart symphonies, and, of course, Bach’s organ music.

I do not know if I will return to Jerusalem or Dormition Abbey, though I have been invited to play at the Feast of The Holy Cross on September 14, 2019, when the new organ will already be fully-functional and Brother Simeon will celebrate his first Mass as a priest. It is certainly a special place, full of wonders musical, religious, and historical, and I am grateful for my time there. This trip did not start with a musical intention, and I am sure I would still have enjoyed it immensely even without all the organ and singing; but music made it so much richer, and I cannot overstate how good it felt to indulge myself, playing (or, rather, blasting through) Parry’s *Jerusalem* as the postlude to my last service at Dormition Abbey.



Left: The Abbey
of the Dormition,
Jerusalem

West end and
organ case

Oberlinger Concert Organ (1980; increase in pistons 1992)
III man/38 stops

First Manual Ruckpositiv (56 notes)

Holzgedeckt 8'
Krommhorn 8'
Blockflöte 4'
Principal 4'
Octave 2'
Sifflote 1 1/3
Cymbel IV
Glockenspiel
Tremulant

Second manual Hauptwerk

Gedecktpommer 16' Principal 8'
Rohrflöte 8'
Trompet 8'
Octave 4'
Kleingedackt 4'
Superoctave 2'
Quinte 2 2/3
Mixtur V
Cymbel III
Cymbelstern

Third manual Oberwerk enclosed

Dulcian 16'
Hohlpfeife 8'
Salicional 8'
Voix Céleste 8'
Hautbois 8'
Principal 4'
Kuppelflöte 4'
Clairon 4'
Waldflöte 2'
Octavlein 1'
Sesquialter II
Fourniture V
Tremulant

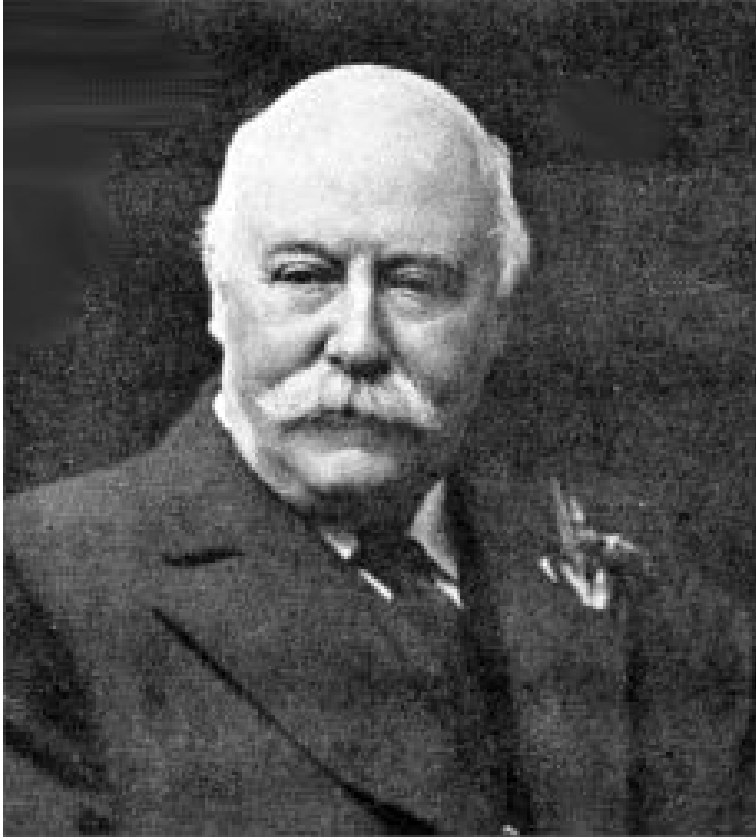
Pedal (30 notes)

Principal bass 16'
Pommer 8'
Subbass 16'
Choralbass 4'
Posaune 16'
Hintersatz III
Octavbass 8'

Couplers III-I III-II II-I III/P, II/P, I/P

Mechanic manual action Electric stop action 64 pistons x 10 levels





*Charles
Hubert
Hastings
Parry*

*(27 February
1848 – 7 October
1918)*

*A Time of Memorial and Celebration
St. George's Cathedral,
Sunday, October 14, at 4:00 pm*

*St. George's Cathedral Choir and Concert Singers
St. George's Cathedral Chamber Orchestra (augmented)
Directed by Michael Capon and David Cameron
Michael Capon, organist*

*Choirs rehearsing Saturday, October 13, at 11:00 am
Come and sing –or join us to listen!*

Practice Organ needing a new home!

Brian Jackson is hoping to find a good home for his practice organ, a two-manual Conn in excellent condition. It's free to someone who will come and collect it in Bath, and who will play and enjoy it.



Left: Swell tabs

Below: Great tabs



Left: the console and speakers



Email Brian at
maestrobj@hotmail.com
 Or drop in after the Napanee
 trip, October 22

“MUSIC AT ST. THOMAS’”: THE FIFTH EDITION

AT ST. THOMAS’ ANGLICAN CHURCH
201 CHURCH STREET, BELLEVILLE, ON K8N 5P2

August 19th, 2018

Belleville, ON – St. Thomas’ Anglican Church in Belleville is launching the 2018-2019 edition of its concert series, “Music at Saint Thomas’.” 2018 also marks the bicentennial of St. Thomas’ Anglican Church. Two jewels of the Anglican choral tradition will be featured in the music series: Choral Evensong and the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols for Christmas. The season will open with the Choral Evensong, on October 21st, featuring the Senior Choir and some Junior Choristers from St. Thomas’ Choral Academy. This is a rare opportunity in the Quinte area to attend a Choral Evensong service as sung in Anglican cathedrals for over 400 years. The Evensong service is known as “Vespers” in other denominations.

On November 18th, trumpeter Travis Mendel from Ottawa and organist Denis Gagné from Montreal will offer a “valves and pipes” concert, featuring several Canadian works.

Travis Mandel is Principal Trumpet of the Ottawa Symphony Orchestra, the Cathedral Brass, and a member of the Central Band of the Canadian Armed Forces. Over his young career, Mendel has appeared in concert with many orchestras in Eastern Canada,

including the National Arts Centre Orchestra ar

career highlights include playing for His Royal Highness Prince William and the Duchess of Cambridge, and appearing on stage with jazz artist Diana Krall. From Montreal, Quebec, organist Denis Gagné completed his studies at the Montreal Conservatory of Music. His passion for ensemble music and the lyrical arts brought him to collaborate with several choirs and singers from Quebec and France. Gagné takes pride in making Canadian music known abroad.



Denis Gagné

Travis Mendel



St. Thomas’ Choral Academy

On December 16th, St. Thomas’ Choral Academy will present Carols by Candlelight, the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols in the style of King's College, Cambridge, with Christmas choral works and traditional carols.

On January 20th, Matthieu Latreille will present a solo organ recital. The programme will feature works by Mendelssohn, Reger, Merkel and Bach, including the famous chorale prelude “An

Wasserflüssen Babylon” employing the double pedal technique. Latreille studied at the Gatineau and Montreal Conservatories of Music. He has performed in Canada, U.S.A and France, at venues including Notre Dame Basilica in Montreal, the Church of St. Germain des Prés in Paris, and Knox United Church for the Calgary Organ Festival. The pipe organ of St. Thomas’ Anglican Church is one of the finest in the Quinte area. The instrument was built by Gabriel Kney in 1977. A live projection on a screen will allow the audience to see the organist performing.

On February 17th, the Canadian Guitar Quartet will present an original programme showcasing the versatility of the classical guitar. Since its debut in 1999, the Canadian Guitar Quartet has toured extensively in North and South America. Concerts in some of Canada’s most prestigious concert halls, such as the Winspear Center, the Palais Montcalm, the Glenn Gould Studio, and



The Canadian Guitar Quartet

National Gallery of Canada, as well as their performances in seminal events such as the Guitar Foundation of America’s annual convention, Yale’s Guitar Extravaganza, the Norfolk and Ottawa chamber music festivals, have allowed the Canadian Guitar Quartet to develop an international reputation. The CGQ has appeared with orchestra across Canada, and has recorded three critically acclaimed CDs.

On March 17th, an all-female vocal ensemble will present an hour of choral music. The tradition was started in the 2016-2017 concert series, when Matthieu Latreille and Francine Nguyen-Savaria decided to put together the “Mystery Project” and bring together singers from Montreal, Belleville and Toronto to perform sacred works. The experience was so enjoyable that they decided to renew it yearly. The programme will take the listener on a journey through the history of choral music, starting with plainchant and ending with a contemporary work.

On Easter Sunday, April 21st, violinist Sofia-Marie Bergeron, classical dancer Paola Bergeron and organist Francine Nguyen-Savaria will present “the Neighbours,” a collaboration between the three childhood friends... and neighbours. Upon Sofia-Marie's return from several years of studies and performances in Switzerland, Austria and Italy, and as Paola recently joined Eddy Toussain's ballet company, the old friends joined again in this special project. The programme will feature works by Bach, Corelli, Veracini, and Vitali.

Each event is on the third Sunday of the month, and starts at 4:30 PM. A reception follows during which light refreshments are served. Admission is by donation.

DON'T MISS
our first Kingston Centre meeting

Road trip to NAPANEE
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22
Meeting at Grace United Church
Bridge and Robert Sts., 10:15 am



**Grace United, St. Mary Magdalene Anglican, lunch at The River Pub,
The Canadian Piano Museum, visit to Brian Jackson's house & organ**

More information John Hall 613-354-5066

Or David Cameron 613-549-7125

SUPPLY ORGANISTS

Murray Baer, formerly of St. Mary's Anglican Church, Richmond Hill, is available for supply or occasional work in Prince Edward County, Belleville or Quinte West. He can be reached by email at murray_baer@hotmail.com or by telephone at 416-520-5702.

The Newsletter

The *Kingston Centre Newsletter* is edited by Fran Harkness and David Cameron, 34-100 Medley Court, Kingston, Ontario, K7K 6X2. They may be reached by telephone: 613-549-7125, or by e-mail at either address: charles.david.cameron@gmail.com or harknessfran@gmail.com. The Newsletter is published four times a year, in September, December, March and June, and the digital version is sent free of charge to all members of the Kingston Centre of the RCCO and to current scholarship holders. Black-and-white hard copy will be sent on request to others on payment of an annual subscription of \$10.00, sent to the Centre Treasurer, Fran Harkness, 34-100 Medley Court, Kingston, ON K7K 6X2. Cheques should be made payable to *RCCO Kingston Centre*.

Deadline for all submissions to the December, 2018 *Newsletter*: November 30, 2018.

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Advertisements

Commercial advertisements will be accepted as follows: the normal size will be business card (one eighth of a page) at \$15 for a single issue and \$50 for a year (four issues). If space allows, we will accept an occasional half-page advertisement at \$30 for one issue. Please send your requests to the Editor, enclosing a cheque for the appropriate amount made payable to *RCCO Kingston Centre*. *Positions Vacant, Jobs Wanted* and *Supply Organists* notices will continue to be published free of charge.

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