

Certification Exams: from Peggy Graff

Do you think you are too busy for AGO certification? Well, think again! In life, we all do what we really WANT to do most often – and we make time for it, despite our busy lives. When we schedule time to do the things we want to do and follow through doing them, the outcome is usually a feeling of accomplishment and fulfillment. You are being encouraged and challenged to dive in and make the plunge towards certification! Make a splash!

In the July issue of *The American Organist* you will find information on pages 43-46 regarding the requirements for AGO professional certification. Please read the information and decide the level for which you will prepare. To empower and assist you with your level, workshops will be offered and taught at First United Methodist Church – Fort Worth (800 West 5th Street). **Please let me know your interest in the certification process NO LATER THAN THURSDAY August 16 by contacting me, Peggy Graff, via email at pgraff@myfumc.org, or by calling me at 817-330-2405 (office). Please indicate your name, your contact information, and please specify the certification level for which you want to apply.** If the workshop dates or times listed below do not work for your schedule, please let me know immediately. I will do whatever it takes to modify the schedule to meet your needs.

The levels of certification and workshop dates/times are as follows, each with a brief description of what will be covered in the workshop. Please keep in mind that these levels are not in the order of succession a person will necessarily take them. For example, some organists may choose to start with the CAGO exam. Others may choose to begin with the SPC, then progress to the CAGO, AAGO, etc. The FAGO exam (the uppermost level - Fellowship) is not addressed here; however, if you are wanting a workshop on the FAGO exam, please let me know.

SPC (Service Playing Certificate)

Saturday, August 20 – 10 am – 12:30 pm

- Introduction to Certification
- Hymn and Psalm playing
- Sight-reading and Transposition
- Repertoire and Accompaniment pieces

AAGO (Associateship) Section 1

Saturday, August 27 – 10 am – 12 noon

- Repertoire
- Keyboard tests
- Sight-reading
- Transposition
- Realize a Figured Bass
- Prepared Hymn
- Improvisation

AAGO, Section 2

Saturday, August 27 – 12:30 – 2:30 pm

- Paperwork
- Ear tests
- Harmonization – Composition
- General music knowledge

CAGO (Colleague) Section 1

Saturday, September 24 – 10 am – 12 noon

- Repertoire
- Accompaniment of choral anthem and solo
- Prepared hymn accompaniments

CAGO, Section 2

Saturday, September 24 – 12:30 – 2:30 pm

- Harmonization of a melody
 - Choice of hymn tune, plain chant, or folk song
- Transposition in 2 stated keys
- Modulation/Improvisation – choose one
 - Improvise own tune
 - Improvise given tune
 - Improvisatory bridge between two hymns of different keys

ChM (Choir Master) Sections 1 and 2 overview

Saturday, October 1 – 10 am – 12 noon

Section 1 – Practical Work

- Rehearse and direct the choir on three works
- Harmonize a melody
- Chord progressions and cadences
- Play a hymn from the *Examination Hymn Booklet, 2013*

Section 2 – Paperwork

- Ear tests
 - Write from dictation a short passage of two-part music
- Error detection
- Analysis
 - Refer to a choral score and answer questions
- Gregorian Chant
 - Transcribe into modern notation
 - Know the modes
 - Transcribe into modern notation with full text underlay
- Hymnody
- Choir Training
- Choral Repertoire
- General Music Knowledge

2016-2017 Examination Dates

Service Playing Certificate Test:

October 1, 2016, through March 31, 2017.

Colleague Examination:

November 14, 2016, and May 12, 2017; November 17, 2017.

Choir Master Examination:

May 24, 2017 (morning and afternoon).

Associateship Examination:

May 25 and 26, 2017 (paperwork section both mornings; organ playing one of the afternoons).

Fellowship Examination:

May 25 and 26, 2017 (paperwork section both mornings; organ playing one of the afternoons).

(Note: May 25 is Ascension Thursday.)

Application Deadlines

Service Playing Test:

February 1 is the final application deadline. (Applications for SPC tests between October and early February should be received at least 3 weeks prior to the scheduled test date.)

Colleague Examination:

September 15 for the November CAGO exam; March 1 for the May CAGO exam.

Fellowship, Associate, and Choir Master:

1 April