

Wesley Hall is known as “Westpiper” to tens of thousands of followers on TikTok. His videos have received millions of views, and he looks forward to bringing organ music to even more people who haven’t yet experienced it. Recognized in 2016 by the Diapason magazine as a “20 under 30” leader in Organ, Harpsichord, and Sacred Music in the USA, Wesley studied music and liturgy at the Yale School of Music and Institute of Sacred Music, and then went on to receive an Artist Diploma in Organ Performance from Oberlin Conservatory. His passion for early music took him to Lübeck in 2020 where he spent the year as a Gasthörer with Arvid Gast, learning from the exquisite instruments of northern Germany. At present Wesley serves as the Minister of Music and the Arts at the First Baptist Church of Worcester, Massachusetts.

Erica Johnson, DMA, is a Boston based organist and church musician. She is the College Organist and Instructor of Organ and Harpsichord at Wellesley College and Director of Liturgy and Music at Sacred Heart Parish in Newton Center, Massachusetts. Erica is a graduate of the Oberlin Conservatory, Oberlin College, New England Conservatory, and the Eastman School of Music, studying with Haskell Thomson, William Porter and Hans Davidsson. As a grant recipient of the Beebe Fund for Musicians, she studied an additional two years at the Hochschule für Künste in Bremen, Germany, with Harald Vogel. Her years in Germany yielded two honors: the 2004 International Arp Schnitger Prize awarded by the Arp Schnitger Gesellschaft, and the 2002 NDR Musikpreis. More recently she has presented programs for the Westfield Center for Historical Keyboard Studies and the Göteborg International Organ Academy in Gothenburg, Sweden. Additionally, she has performed programs exclusively by female composers for the instrument and enjoys championing new works by contemporary women composers.

Cheryl Ryder is co-founder of Blue Heron, managing director of Canto Armonico, and creator of the Boston Bach International Organ Competition which began in 2018. With the singers of Canto Armonico, she has participated in two concert trips to Germany. Formative influences include participating in the Wellesley Collegium Musicum when she was a student there in the early 1970s, singing in the Choir of the Church of the Advent in Boston for over 30 years, and serving as interim director of music at Boston’s First Lutheran Church in 2015-2016. She has studied several instruments including organ and voice, and most recently has been learning the rudiments of viola da gamba technique. From 1977 onward she took part in many tours to central European historic organs with Joan Lippincott, Harald Vogel and Klaas Bolt and the Westfield Center’s summer seminar series with Harald Vogel held at Wellesley College. She visited all the Gröningen organ-related important sites in October 2019, including the grounds of the former castle and the poster exhibition of preliminary studies toward restoration of the David Beck “Praetorius Organ” in the Martinikirche in Halberstadt.

Ulf Wellner holds degrees in church music from the Hochschule für Musik und Theater in Leipzig, and in historical musicology for his doctoral dissertation on the title prints of Michael Praetorius’ publications. Since 2013 he is Kantor of St. Martini in Minden, and teaches historical musicology at the Musikhochschule in Herford. He is particularly interested in the entire North German organ school, both as a musicologist and as an organist. In 2013 he began an association with Canto Armonico, directing concerts of vesper music as fringe events during the Boston Early Music Festival and the 2014 biennial convention of the American Guild of Organists. With the same group in

Germany, he has also recorded music by Michael Praetorius, Samuel Scheidt, and Hieronymus Praetorius. He directs the programming of the annual Michael-Praetorius-Tage in Creuzburg.

Jonathan Wessler has served since 2016 as the Kantor at First Lutheran Church of Boston, where he oversees a thriving music program specializing in the finest liturgical music of the Lutheran tradition. Under his direction, the FLC choir and chamber ensembles present music of Bach, Praetorius, Schütz, Handl, Hassler, Isaac, Senfl, and others, as well as liturgical chant as retained in the Lutheran missals. Wessler received the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in organ performance from the Eastman School of Music, studying with William Porter. He previously earned the Bachelor of Music degree in organ performance from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, studying with David Boe, and the Master of Sacred Music degree from the University of Notre Dame, studying with Craig Cramer. He additionally mentored under Sherry Seckler and Christiaan Teeuwssen. Wessler lives in suburban Boston with his wife, Joy, and their children, Julia, Matthew, and Benjamin.