



### **Benjamin Phillips AGO Member Spotlight**

Benjamin was born and raised near Winston-Salem, NC. Fairly early in his childhood, his mother encouraged him to teach himself how to read music by playing hymns on piano. Since his home church had multiple pianists, he was unable to hone his piano skills in church services. However, the church had an organ but no organist, so Benjamin started accompanying hymns on the electronic organ when he was 14. After winning a scholarship in 2015 through the Greensboro (NC) AGO, he began organ lessons with Wayne Leupold in Greensboro. During that time, he also began working as a key-holder and shop assistant for John Farmer Pipe Organs in Winston-Salem. While working there, he had the opportunity to hear and play dozens of pipe organs throughout North Carolina.

In 2016, Benjamin's family moved to Greenville, and he began college at Bob Jones University. He studied for three years with Mr. Ed Rea and Dr. Ed Dunbar. Mr. Rea introduced him to J.S. Bach's *Orgelbüchlein*, thereby kindling a love for Bach's organ music. Under Dr. Dunbar's tutelage, Benjamin was able to perform in a benefit concert for Miracle Hill Boys Home. Benjamin graduated from BJU in May 2020 with a degree in Business Administration.

Benjamin served as organist at White Oak Baptist Church from August 2019 to March 2021. In addition to his service-playing duties, he was active in maintaining the organ and educating the congregation about the King of Instruments. In collaboration with the Greenville AGO, he was privileged to host Dr. Jack Mitchener from Mercer University for a lecture-recital on the chorale preludes of J.S. Bach in October 2020. The S.C. Bach Choir joined Dr. Mitchener for this

program. The highlight of Benjamin's time at White Oak was a concert in November celebrating the 100th anniversary of the church's 1920 Pilcher pipe organ.

Benjamin enjoys substituting at local churches. He appreciates the opportunity to assist local congregations in worship by sharing the joy of music.

He enjoys visiting Falls Park and occasionally trying downtown restaurants. Benjamin has worked with Steve Moore at Foothills Pipe Organ since March 2020. His favorite part of his job is the privilege of traveling every day to maintain different pipe organs.

Benjamin joined the Greenville AGO in early 2020. He enjoys opportunities to network with local organists and organ enthusiasts. Some highpoints of his time in the Guild include playing a prelude for the Chapter's "Pedals, Pipes, and Pizza" at First Presbyterian Church in September 2020, as well as the opportunity to play in the AGO Members' Recital at Christ Church, Episcopal, in February.