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Dean’s Message

Now Is the Month of Maying

Spring is very much with us, replete with the fine weather and (for some) the familiar seasonal allergies that accompany the inevitable omnipresence of pollen. Members enjoyed an informative and enlightening tour of three prominent Harlem churches with our expert guide and board member, Nathaniel Gumbs. Thank you to James Wetzel and Nathaniel for organizing and executing such an ingenious event. It is a joy to be moving into spring in a way that, unlike the past few years seems to indicate (with fingers firmly crossed) a return to “normal”. While that is clearly far from the case, May is time for celebrating our past and looking ahead to our future, particularly during this election year.

We are proud to have played a small part in recognizing two veteran leaders in the organ world. On April 29th the AGO honored the extraordinary life and career of Karen McFarlane at the annual Gala at the Riverside Church. Karen has nurtured and managed the careers of many dozens of artists, and her impact on the organ scene has been immeasurably powerful. It was also fitting
that Dr. Wilma Jensen was announced last month as winner of the 2022 Distinguished Career Award. Wilma’s performing and teaching careers have been, like Karen’s, prolific and visionary in equal measure, and we are particularly excited to welcome Wilma to New York during next year’s season of events.

Celebrating the achievements of these two remarkable women is a comforting reminder of the many brilliant people who have enriched the organ world and made the AGO the institution it is today. Our future is indeed bright – and there is much to be excited about. Thank you to Wilma and Karen for being models of excellence, and thank you to all those who have put their names forward to continue to serve the AGO’s mission of fostering a thriving community of musicians who share their knowledge and inspire passion for the organ.

With my best wishes, as ever,

James Kennerley, Dean

Program News

Chapter Events

Paul Jacobs’s Second Recital for Franck Anniversary

Tuesday, June 7th – 7:30 PM

Church of Saint Mary the Virgin
145 West 46th Street

In March, Paul Jacobs offered the first of two recitals in celebration of the bicentenary of César Franck to a full house at Saint Mary the Virgin. The second program, on Tuesday, June 7th, will present of Franck’s Six Pieces.

The Aeolian-Skinner Organ, Op. 891-A, at Saint Mary’s (on which Paul made his Grammy Award-winning recording of Messiaen’s Livre du Saint-Sacrément) and the church’s lively acoustic are perfectly suited to Franck’s music.

The recital is free to NYCAGO Chapter members and is open seating. The recital
will be in-person only; it will not be live-streamed.

**Events around Town**

**Peter Richard Conte in Recital**

**Friday, May 13 – 7:30 PM**

**Saint Agnes Cathedral**
29 Quealy Place
Rockville Centre, New York 11570

*Peter Richard Conte*, Grand Court Organist of the Wanamaker Organ in Philadelphia, will perform a recital at Saint Agnes Cathedral in Rockville Centre on Long Island. This recital is co-sponsored by the *Nassau Chapter* and Saint Agnes Cathedral, and is a special event to recognize the 90th anniversary of the Nassau Chapter. A reception will follow the performance.

For those coming from New York City: the Cathedral is only one block away from the Rockville Centre station of the Long Island Railroad.

**Holy Cross Dedication Recital**

**Sunday, May 15 – 3 PM**

**Holy Cross Church**
329 West 42nd Street, between 8th and 9th Avenues

*Michael Hey*, concert organist and Associate Director of Music of Saint Patrick’s Cathedral, will play a recital dedicating the recently restored 1933 *Aeolian-Skinner*, Op. 908. The work was completed by Foley Baker, Inc, of Tolland, Connecticut, and was featured in *The Diapason* in June, 2020 and *The American Organist* in February, 2021. Music of Bach, Bingham, Dupré, Jongen, Roberts, Sowerby, Vierne, and Widor. A light reception will follow. For more information, click [here](#).

**Gala Organ Concert with the Philadelphia Orchestra**

**Tuesday, May 24th – 7 PM**

**Saint Bartholomew’s Church**
325 Park Avenue, at 51st Street

Saint Bartholomew’s Conservancy will present the Philadelphia Orchestra,
conducted by David Robertson, with Paolo Bordignon, organ, and Anthony Roth Costanzo, countertenor. Works for organ and orchestra on the program will include Gigout’s Grand Choeur Dialogué, Jongen’s Toccata (from Symphonie Concertante), Bach’s Sinfonia (from Canata 29), Bach-Stokowski’s Fugue in G minor, Saint-Saens’s Finale (from Organ Symphony No. 3 in C minor, Op. 78), and Amy Beach’s Prelude on an Old Folk Tune (in a newly-commissioned orchestration). Mr. Costanzo will appear courtesy of the Metropolitan Opera and will sing music of Fauré and Handel.

In anticipation of the Gala, the Conservancy also commissioned a series of six videos about Saint Bartholomew’s, the first of which describes the relationship between the Parish and Leopold Stokowski, the legendary conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra who began his American career in 1905 as organist of Saint Bart’s.

For tickets and further information, click here.

Consider adding your events to the Concert Calendar for the season. Email submissions to Sam Bartlett here.

Email suggestions and comments for the Program Committee here.

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From the Secretary

2022 Chapter Elections Update

Nominations Committee

The Nominations Committee (J. David Williams (chair), Christopher Babcock, and Eva Sze) has produced a slate of officers and board members for
the Class of 2026 for the biennial elections, with the new term to begin on July 1, 2022. The slate, revised (as of April 5th) to include the two positions of Auditor, has been approved by the Chapter Board. No write-in nominations were received. A ballot will be sent to all NYCAGO Members in Good Standing shortly.

**Proposed Slate of Officers**

**Dean:** James D. Wetzel  
**Sub Dean:** David Shuler  
**Secretary:** Raymond Nagem *(Incumbent)*  
**Treasurer:** Patrick Kreeger *(Incumbent)*  
**Registrar:** Larry Long *(Incumbent)*  
**Auditor:** Paolo Bordignon *(Incumbent)*  
**Auditor:** Andrew Henderson *(Incumbent)*

**Members-at-large, Class of 2026** (for six positions)  
Daniel Beckwith  
Caitlin Dowling  
Rebecca Ehren  
James Hopkins  
Maria Rayzvasser  
Michael Shake  
Sandor Szabo

**Election Procedures and Duties of the Board Members**

A full description of the various Board positions and the nominating/voting process may be found in Section V of the Chapter’s [Operating Procedures](#). Biographies and photos of the candidates will be circulated hereafter.

Respectfully submitted,  
Raymond Nagem, *Secretary*

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**From the Registrar**

**Substitute List**

As part of our response to Covid, for over two years the NYCAGO Chapter suspended its requirement that everyone on the [substitute list](#) must be a current member of the Chapter. We have not removed anyone from the list since March 1, 2020.
Effective June 1, 2022, the Chapter is reinstating its requirement that everyone on the NYCAGO substitute list must be a current member of the Chapter.

If your membership in the Chapter has expired and is not renewed by June 1, 2022, your name and contact information will be removed from the substitute list at the mid-July update.

If it is financially difficult for you to renew at this time due to the Covid pandemic, please email the Chapter Registrar and the Chapter will work with you confidentially to help get your membership renewed.

Respectfully submitted,
Larry Long, Registrar
Substitute List Coordinator

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**Bulletin Board**

**Hartford POE**

**June 26–July 1, 2022**

The Greater Hartford Chapter of the AGO is hosting a Pipe Organ Encounter this summer, based at Trinity College. Several spots are still available. For more information, click [here](#) or email Vaughn Mauren, POE Director.

**AGO Year of the Young Organist**

**Investing in the Future**

The AGO National Council is committed to membership recruitment, retention, and growth within our organization. During the Year of the Young Organist, July 1, 2021–June 30, 2022, any individual under the age of 30 can become a member or renew her/his membership for free as part of this program.

The Year of the Young Organist will provide opportunities for both personal and professional development. Programs will include master classes and webinars on a wide variety of topics. Click [here](#) for more information.

If you know of a young organist in New York City who is not a member of the Guild, please reach out or let us know.

*Send Bulletin Board submissions to the editor for publication.*

Submit news items (professional appointments, retirements, marriages,
births, obituaries, etc.) to the editor for publication in Member News.

Getting to Know You

Saint Bartholomew’s Church

Editor’s note: This column first ran in February, 2020 and most recently ran in July, 2021. Thanks to Paolo Bordignon for compiling the information below.

General Information

Early Years

Founded in lower New York in 1835, Saint Bartholomew’s moved to midtown Manhattan in 1872, attracting great preachers and a large and influential congregation. From a parish house on 42nd Street, immigrant communities were provided human services and spiritual nurture. The Parish began to assume a leading musical presence in the growing city, capped by bringing Leopold Stokowski from Europe for his first American musical post. He directed the choir and played the 100-rank Hutchings organ. It was on this instrument that Edwin H. Lemare made his American debut in 1901.

Park Avenue

The present Romanesque building designed by Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue opened at Park Avenue and 51st Street in 1918. Organist and Choirmaster Arthur Hyde presided over a new 122-rank organ, commissioned from the Ernest M. Skinner Organ Company. It was in this period that composer Amy
Beach first came to the Parish, where she would become *de facto* composer in residence for many years, writing most of her sacred choral music for Saint Bartholomew’s Choir.

**History of the Music Program**

**Spheres of Influence**

The music program at Saint Bartholomew’s Church has been led by several distinguished leaders in American church music, including Leopold Stokowski, David McK. Williams, Harold Friedell, Jack Ossewaarde, James Litton, and William K. Trafka. Stokowski went on to become one of the most influential orchestral conductors of the twentieth century. McK. Williams was one of the leading organists and composers of his generation and a guiding force in the creation of *The Hymnal 1940*. Friedell is best known for “Draw us in the Spirit’s tether,” one of the most popular anthems written by an American. Ossewaarde continued the famed weekly Sunday afternoon oratorio series, drawing large crowds to hear a choir with as many as 75 professional members. Litton was longtime director of the American Boychoir and, in his role on the editorial committee for *The Hymnal 1982*, hosted the final year of that committee’s work in the choir room at Saint Bartholomew’s. Under Trafka’s directorship, Saint Bart’s became the place where one could hear major sacred choral works with orchestra presented within a liturgical context. The Organ Historical Society began with a 1956 meeting in the choir room. The Saint Wilfrid Club, a social club to further the interests of organists, began with a 1908 dinner at the Waldorf-Astoria hosted by Rector Leighton Parks to introduce Arthur Hyde to New York City organists upon his arrival from Boston.

**Organs**

The church’s two Aeolian-Skinner organs are central to the liturgical and concert life of the church. The two manual, 18-rank chapel organ is a remarkably versatile instrument that includes two enclosed Swell divisions. The five manual, 225-rank organ in the church is the largest in New York City and one of the quintessential examples of the American Classic organ.

**A Flourishing Community**

As Park Avenue changed from a residential neighborhood to a crowded corporate canyon, Saint Bart’s has stood as an oasis of spiritual refreshment. The Community House (1925) contains the preschool, a host of classes and meetings, as well as Inside Park, which offers food and hospitality year-round, including out on the Great Terrace. Crossroads Community Ministries operated a homeless shelter and offers many thousands of meals. Worship Sunday
includes liturgies in a range of styles: at 8 AM, a spoken Rite I Eucharist; at 9 AM, Eucharist in the round with Saint Bart’s Singers in an eclectic blend of contemporary and traditional prayer and music; and 11 AM, a Choral Eucharist with Saint Bartholomew’s Choir, a 20-voice professional ensemble. Our young people gather from across the city to sing as Saint Bartholomew’s Choristers.

Concerts

The Great Music concert series, produced by the Mid-Manhattan Performing Arts Foundation, presents concerts in the church and chapel. In addition to performances by house musicians, past concerts have included performances by the Tallis Scholars; the choirs of Canterbury Cathedral, Saint John’s College, Cambridge; Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford; and Saint Paul’s Cathedral, London. The church recently served as the venue for several concerts recorded by the New York Philharmonic.

Organists

Paolo Bordignon was appointed Organist and Choirmaster in 2018, having previously served as Associate Director of Music from 2005-2014. He is also harpsichordist of the New York Philharmonic and has recently performed with Camerata Pacifica, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, Boston Symphony Chamber Players, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, the All-Star Orchestra, and Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, among others. He has collaborated with Sir James Galway, Itzhak Perlman, Reinhard Goebel, Paul Hillier, Bobby McFerrin, Midori, Renée Fleming, and Wynton Marsalis. He has performed organ recitals at venues such as Saint Thomas Church Fifth Avenue and Saint Eustache (Paris), and he has been a frequent recitalist at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, including a 10-recital residency. Born in Toronto of Italian heritage, Paolo attended Saint Michael’s Cathedral Choir School before attending the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. He is an Associate of the Royal Conservatory of Music, a Fellow of the Royal Canadian College of Organists, and he earned Master’s and Doctoral degrees from the Juilliard School.

Alexander Pattavina is Associate Organist and Choirmaster and director of Saint Bartholomew’s Choristers. Alex earned Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees from the Juilliard School, studying with Paul Jacobs. A native of Stoughton, Massachusetts, he was first drawn to his vocation as a chorister at Saint Paul’s Choir School, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the only Catholic choir school boys in the country. After graduating, Alex became their first ever Organ Scholar.
Before coming to Saint Bart’s, Alex served as Director of Music at the Church of Saint Agnes in Midtown. Alex received First Prize in the 2014 L. Cameron Johnson Competition (sponsored by the Northeastern Connecticut AGO Chapter), and was awarded the 2014 Ruth and Paul Manz Scholarship from Chicago’s Lutheran Seminary. Alex’s choral work, *All in a Stable Cold and Bare*, was published in 2016 by Hal Leonard. He has performed with the Juilliard Orchestra and is a frequent organ recitalist throughout the United States.

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**From the Editor**

**Telos**

**Back to Basics**

The great Covid Reset is a fascinating experiment, in that it is providing an opportunity for an institution to reassess its purpose, its mission, its way of doing things – its “telos”. How will groups embrace, ignore, or misuse this moment in time? I have asked a similar question of the individual in editorials past. Now, we turn to our corporate mission.

Our Chapter’s [Operating Procedures](#) state that the fundamental purpose of the American Guild of Organists, both an educational and service organization, is to promote the organ in its historic and evolving roles, to encourage excellence in the performance of organ and choral music, and to provide a forum for mutual support, inspiration, education, and certification of Guild members. The same is expressed, albeit in a recently simplified form, as Article II of our [National Bylaws](#), as well as in the enumerated purposes of the Guild found on its website. In typical legalese, a subordinate clause instructs that none of the Guild’s activities pursuant to these Bylaws/Procedures shall be undertaken or executed in a manner inconsistent with this mission statement. (We will return to this proviso over the summer.)

Even if you have never been so bored as to have time to read both the National and the Chapter rules of governance, the description in the preceding paragraph is probably not revelatory. We are the American Guild of Organists after all, not the local steamfitter’s union or the Ancient Order of Hibernians, so a mission having something to do with the organ is obvious. We even say so in our name. But sometimes, it is useful to restate the obvious; to go back to the
first questions of the Catechism, as it were.

**Leading by Example**

Groups, by definition, are comprised of individuals, each with a unique set of skills, ambitions, and vision. Thus mission statements tend to be generalized sentiments, aimed at supporting a number of individuated interests under a grand umbrella. And so long as all roads lead to Rome, such multivalence gives strength to the whole. Consider a Franciscan’s devotion to the poor, a Dominican’s charism for preaching, or a Jesuit’s love of education (well, at least college basketball – what is a Hoya anyway?). All are in accord with the telos of the Church to worship God, but in many various ways, as W.S. Gilbert would put it.

That notion is as true of the Guild as anything else. Take a few of our very own Chapter members as prime examples. Rollin Smith’s superb articles in TAO are scholastic models of their kind. (He is also quoted extensively in Leon Bostein’s episode of the Saint Bart’s Conservancy series; see Event around Town above.) Vince Carr is a tireless advocate for professional standards in his role as National Councillor for Education. Caitlin Dowling has been on the National Board of the AGO Young Organists, ensuring that the Guild continues to engage with the next generation. The Reverend Dr. Vicki Sirota devotedly served as National Chaplain. Each, in their own way and according to the duties of their office, advance the aims of our organization.

Despite the diversity of interest and areas of expertise, these individuals do not work at cross purposes, but rather all row together, whether they know it or not, propelling the Guild in the same direction. This balancing of united purpose and individual expression is how large, national organizations such as ours continue to grow.

We will continue this topic in the months to follow.

Sincerely,

James D. Wetzel, *Sub Dean*
Quote of the Month

The happy birds Te Deum sing,
"Tis Mary's month of May;
Her smile turns winter into spring,
And darkness into day;
And there's a fragrance in the air,
The bells their music make,
And O the world is bright and fair,
And all for Mary's sake.

~The Reverend Alfred Gurney (1843-1898)

NYCAGO Chapter Information

General Inquiries

Chapter Contacts Page
Chapter Committees and Appointments

Newsletter

James D. Wetzel, editor
The newsletter is published at the beginning of every month. Please submit all material to the editor by the 24th of the preceding month. To advertise in the Newsletter, please email ad coordinator Lena Tharp.

Executive Board

Dean: James Kennerley
Sub Dean: James D. Wetzel
Secretary: Raymond Nagem
Treasurer: Patrick Kreeger
Registrar: Larry Long
Auditors: Paolo Bordignon and Andrew Henderson

At-large (Class of 2022): Sam Bartlett, Gregory D'Agostino, Angelina Oh, Jason Roberts, J. David Williams, and Janet Yieh

At-large (Class of 2024): Diane Meredith Belcher, Loraine Enlow, Nathaniel Gumbs, Bernadette Hoke, Jared Lamenzo, and Lena Tharp

The biographies of the board members are provided here.