

# THE COUPLER

## THE DEAN'S MESSAGE



### 'Pomp and Circumstance'

Dear DC AGO members,

I hope that you all survived the intensity of Holy Week and were able to find moments of joy and beauty as you led your congregations through the annual ritual of the Lenten/Easter season. We can often push ourselves to the brink during these high-intensity moments, so I also hope that you have found time to relax and refresh your minds and bodies in the aftermath.

Many of us now turn toward graduation season, a time filled with ambition, hope and limitless possibility, not to mention a handful of *Pomp and Circumstance* renditions.

The tune by Edward Elgar, which has become ubiquitous with graduation ceremonies of all stripes, is from the first of a set of five marches written by  
*Continued on Page 2*

## MAY 2023 IN THIS ISSUE



The Member Spotlight shines on Russell Weismann, coordinator of Music at the Monastery. 3



Chuyoung Suter plays a recital May 14 as part of Music at the Monastery series. 5



Check out the wide variety of recitals scheduled at area churches this month. 5



Need a change? Job listings now take up more than a newsletter page! 6-7

**Mark Your Calendar**  
**Our second annual Juneteenth event is schedule June 19.**  
**See Page 2**

## CHAPTER NEWS

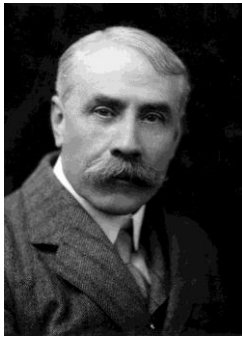
### Save the date for Juneteenth event

Our chapter's second annual Juneteenth event on June 19 at the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land will feature various workshops and a closing recital by Marvin Mills.

### THE DEAN'S MESSAGE

*From Page 1*

the composer between 1901 and 1930. The publisher, Boosey, had commissioned the British composer to write a set of six, but the final march remained unpublished at his death. Sketches were later found and eventually completed by Anthony Payne in 2006.



Elgar took the title, *Pomp and Circumstance*, from Shakespeare's *Othello*, Act 3 Scene 3, in which Othello bids farewell to his soldier's profession.

The work was first heard at an American graduation in 1905 when Elgar received an honorary doctor of music degree at Yale University. It clearly left an indelible impression as it was gradually adopted by other universities -- Princeton in 1907, Columbia in 1913, Rutgers in 1918 and many others by the mid-1920s.

If you or an AGO member that you know is graduating, our chapter would love to honor you. Please contact us at [dcagochapter@gmail.com](mailto:dcagochapter@gmail.com) and share any details regarding your school and degree so that we can celebrate with you!

I played my first bacalaureate service of the season this past weekend. The class scripture resonated with me and is a good reminder for each of us, particularly for our graduates. It was taken from Deuteronomy 31:6 -- "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you."

Grace & Peace,  
Paul Byssainthe, Jr.



American Guild of Organists  
District of Columbia Chapter

DC AGO  
Board of Directors  
2022-2023

#### Dean

Paul Byssainthe Jr.

#### Secretary

Armand Peterson

#### Treasurer

Rob Church

#### Membership liaison

John Nothafft

#### Web manager/Coupler editor

Pat Henry

#### Members-at-large

Samantha Scheff  
Ronald (Trey) Walton  
Rebecca Yoder

### THE COUPLER

A monthly newsletter  
published by the DC chapter  
of the American Guild of  
Organists.

Send submissions to  
[dcagochapter@gmail.com](mailto:dcagochapter@gmail.com).

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

### Russell Joseph Weismann

If you would like to be spotlighted or to nominate someone else, send an email to [dcchapterago@gmail.org](mailto:dcchapterago@gmail.org).

*How did you become interested in the organ?* Growing up, my older brother was good at sports and we were very competitive. I knew that I'd never surpass his athletic ability. Lucky for me, he was a terrible trumpeter in the elementary school band, and this gave me an opportunity to beat him at something. I took up piano and practiced hard all through elementary school.



When I was in high school, our parish church needed an organist and I naively thought that transitioning from piano to organ would be simple. I accepted the challenge, began organ lessons and became involved in the Pittsburgh AGO chapter. I also attended several Pipe Organ Encounters during college, which was a great experience for me. I decided to major in music in college, and here I am now.

*What is your educational and professional background?* I earned my bachelor of music degree from Duquesne University and my master's in music from the Yale School of Music. I then moved to DC in 2007 to work at Georgetown University.

After a while I went to the National Shrine to work for a bit and then transferred to St. Jane Frances de Chantal Parish in Bethesda while working on my doctorate at George Mason University (studying organ with John Walker in Baltimore). After I graduated, Georgetown asked me to return in 2018 and I've been there since, happily leading the chapel music programs and teaching in the Department of Performing Arts.

*What are the organ's biggest challenges and joys for you?* As a former dean of the DC AGO chapter (2013-17), I tried to make our chapter more inclusive. We made great strides, but there is  
*Continued on Page 4*



*From Page 3*

still a lot of work to do, both locally and nationally. We need to stop thinking in terms of hierarchical musical ability and accept each other's musical ability with compassion and respect.

One of my happiest successes as dean was to create our [Music at the Monastery series](#). This allows members of all abilities to perform a recital at the Franciscan Monastery in Northeast DC and to share their music with others. The organ is an incredibly versatile instrument and I enjoy creating opportunities where it can be celebrated in creative and unique ways, transforming the standard formal recital paradigm and engaging better with local communities.

At Georgetown, we offer a monthly late-night "Pipedreams" program where my students invite their friends to come and we hold interactive organ events. The crowd is usually pretty large and we end up staying into the early hours of the morning for "open console" time.

*Why are you an AGO member?* I enjoy the services offered by the AGO, including networking and education. The AGO's journal, *The American Organist*, offers us the most up-to-date information on new works, new scholarship, professional news and the like. It's a way of staying better connected with my profession.

*What do you like to do when you are not on the organ bench?* I'm a fan of all things German. I enjoy learning the language and hopping on a flight to Germany whenever I can. I also enjoy learning French and hopefully getting close to my goal of being fully trilingual in the near future.

*What else would you like members to know about you?* Because of my research for my Ph.D., people see my name as synonymous with the German organ builder Rudolf von Beckerath. However, beyond that, a highlight of my career was being your dean for three years. We accomplished so much and brought life to our chapter. Service in the AGO, whether on the local or national level, is really important and I encourage everyone to consider it. Leadership enacts progress and change and we need to take ownership of our Guild to continually work toward inclusivity and collegiality in our profession.

*What is your most memorable (or funniest) moment on the organ bench?* I once needed to make an emergency repair to the organ at the monastery before a recording session and accidentally changed the direction of the swell pedal controls so that when the pedal was pushed open, the shades closed and when the pedal was pushed closed, the shades opened. It was like riding a bike where when you turn left, the bike would actually turn right. A total mind-numbing experience, but somehow I got through it! (We've since corrected the problem!)

Russell J. Weismann, DMA, AAGO

[russell.weismann@aya.yale.edu](mailto:russell.weismann@aya.yale.edu)

[www.russellweismann.com](http://www.russellweismann.com)

## ORGAN EVENTS

**Wednesday, May 3, 12:40 pm:** Daniel Carroll plays a recital at the Cathedral of St. Matthew, 1725 Rhode Island Ave. NW. Carroll, a high school senior, plans to attend Curtis Institute this fall.

**Tuesday, May 9, 12:10 pm:** Syncopated Neo-Baroque and the “Well-Tampered” Clavier. Sam Post and Ralitzia Patcheva perform Sam’s syncopated arrangements of J.S. Bach’s Well-Tempered Clavier along with other new works inspired by Bach. Church of the Epiphany, 1317 G St. NW

**Sunday, May 14, 4 pm:** Noted performer and pedagogue Dr. Kimberly Marshall presents a concert of music from a wide variety of times and places. A festive reception follows. St. Alban's Episcopal Church, 6800 Columbia Pike, Annandale, VA.

**Sunday, May 14, 4 pm:** Chuyoung Suter (Washington, DC) plays a recital at the Franciscan Monastery, 1400 Quincy Ave. NE.

**Tuesday, May 23, 7:30 pm:** Randall Sheets performs a recital at St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic Church in Clifton, VA. New Peragallo organ. A Northern Virginia chapter event.

**Sunday, May 28, 2023, 2 pm:** Guest organist Carson Cooman presents a Memorial Day organ recital at Washington National Cathedral.

**Friday, June 2, 7:30 pm:** Pipe Organ Institute spring student recital at All Saints Church, 3 Chevy Chase Circle, Chevy Chase, MD. Sponsored by the DC, Potomac and Northern Virginia chapters.

## MUSIC AT MIDDAY

National City Christian Church presents Music at Midday on most Fridays from 12:15-1 pm. The church is at 5 Thomas Circle NW in DC. Admission is free; donations are gratefully accepted.

**May 5:** Organist Carol Feather Martin (Arlington, VA) presents a program titled “Celebrating Creations by Women,” including works by Margaret Vardell Sandresky, Angela Kraft Cross, Florence Price and Rachel Laurin.

**May 12:** Grant Wareham (Dallas) performs organ works of Rachel Laurin and Sigfrid Karg-Elert along with his own transcription of the final movement from Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 5 in E minor.

**May 19:** Organist Jeremiah Mead (Indiana University, Bloomington) performs works of J. S. Bach, Daniel Ficarri and Max Reger.

**May 26:** Violinist Sara Su Jones and pianist Tatyana Stepanova perform the Sonata for Violin and Piano by Marguerite Canal along with works of J. S. Bach and Johannes Brahms.

## JOB OPENINGS

### **District of Columbia**

**Director of music:** St. Paul's Parish, K Street. Full-time. \$72,000-80,000 annually. Click [here](#) for details from the agohq.org website.

**Accompanist:** St. Alban's School and National Cathedral School. Part-time. Click [here](#).

**Director of music ministries for 9 am service:** National United Methodist Church. Part-time, \$50,800 annually. Click [here](#).

### **Maryland**

**Music director:** St. Patrick Catholic Church, Rockville. Full-time. \$60,000-63,000 annually. Click [here](#) for details from the agohq.org website.

**Organist/pianist:** Neelsville Presbyterian Church, Germantown. \$20-30 per hour. Click [here](#).

**Music director:** First Baptist Church of Suitland. Part-time. \$18,000-20,000 annually. Click [here](#).

**Director of music ministry:** Glenmont United Methodist Church, Wheaton/Silver Spring. Part-time. \$20,000 to \$22,000 annually. [Click here](#).

**Organist/choir director:** St. Francis Episcopal Church, Potomac. Part-time. \$30,000 annually. Click [here](#).

**Organist/choir director:** Christ Church, Durham Parish, Nanjemoy. 10-rank Moller pipe organ. \$15,000-27,000 annually. Click [here](#).

**Organist/choir director:** Christ Church, Easton. Four-manual Rodgers Infinity Model 484MV organ. Part-time. \$35,000-40,000 annually. Contact Fr. William Ortt at [christchurcheastonmd@gmail.com](mailto:christchurcheastonmd@gmail.com).

**Director of music/organist:** St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Waldorf. \$24,000-26,000. Three-manual Rodgers Trillium 927 organ. Click [here](#).

### **Virginia**

**Director of music ministries/organist:** St. Christopher's Episcopal Church, Springfield. Part-time. \$25,000-28,000 annually. Click [here](#) for details from the agohq.org website.

**Director of music ministry:** Centreville United Methodist Church. Full-time. Click [here](#).

**Music director:** St. John's United Methodist Church, Springfield. Full-time. \$20,000-50,000 annually. Click [here](#).

*Continued on Page 7*

## JOB OPENINGS

*From Page 6*

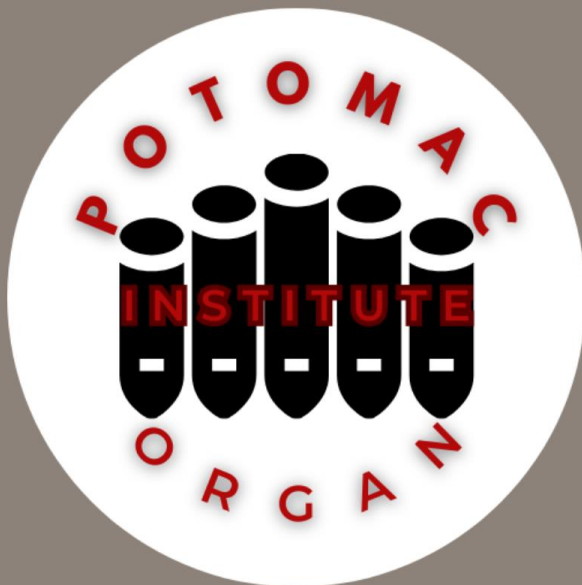
**Music director/organist:** First Presbyterian Church of Annandale. Part-time. \$17,500-23,000 annually. Click [here](#) for details from the agohq.org website.

**Director of music ministries/organist:** St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Springfield. Part-time. \$25,000 annually. Click [here](#) for details from the agohq.org website.

**Director of music ministry:** Franconia United Methodist Church, Alexandria. Part-time. \$18,000-21,000 annually. Click [here](#).

**Music director:** Calvary United Methodist Church, Arlington. Part-time. Click [here](#).

**Organist/accompanist:** Aldersgate United Methodist Church, Alexandria. \$20,000-25,000 annually. Click [here](#) for details from the agohq.org website.



### Annual Student Recital

Friday, June 2, 2023 at 7:30pm



#### All Saints Episcopal Church

3 Chevy Chase Circle, Chevy Chase, MD  
On the newly refurbished  
Lewis & Hitchcock Organ



**Potomac Organ Institute**

[www.PotomacOrganist.com](http://www.PotomacOrganist.com)

## THE COUPLER

*Promote your event, product or cause with an advertisement in The Coupler, the official publication of the District of Columbia Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. Rates: full page (4 issues), \$100; half-page (4 issues), \$50; quarter page (4 issues), \$25. Email advertising requests to [dcagochapter@gmail.com](mailto:dcagochapter@gmail.com) with "The Coupler" in the subject field. Make checks payable to DC Chapter, American Guild of Organists and send them to DC AGO, P.O. Box 39179, Washington, DC 20016.*

## LIFE MEMBERS

Blanche Curfman

Nancy Dodge

Robert Grogan

Eileen Guenther

Irv Lawless

Kenneth Lowenberg

Donald Sutherland

David Hearn (deceased)

Albert Russell (deceased)



Acoustical Design  
Collaborative Ltd

## Acoustic Design Services

**Acoustical Design Collaborative, Ltd** is an independent consulting firm specializing in ecclesiastical spaces where natural acoustics for music and unobtrusive amplified speech are essential for traditional worship celebration. Services provided to building committees, architects, and organ builders include:

- **Acoustic & Audio-Visual Systems Design**
- **Room Reverberation Enhancement**
- **Choir & Organ Space Planning**
- **Speech Intelligibility Assessment**
- **Sound System Tuning & Adjustment**
- **Expert Opinion, Peer Review & Client Advocacy**

We strive to provide professional advice based on prudent design criteria, cost-effective solutions, clear concise recommendations, and open communication, delivered in a timely and economical manner.

A strong personal involvement characterizes our services. After understanding the design issue, we use a systematic technical approach, tempered with practical experience to provide a range of options factoring budget and aesthetic concerns that are concisely summarized to facilitate informed decisions.

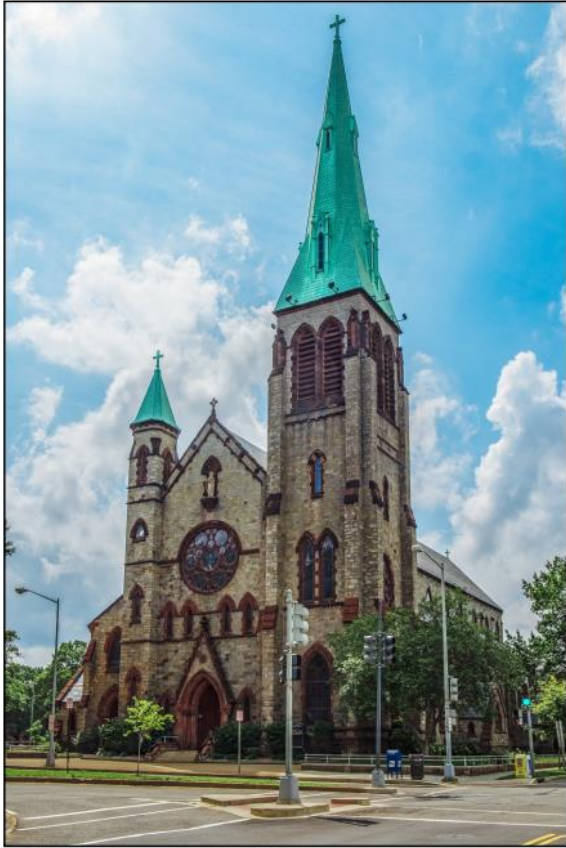
Your acoustic challenge may be one we have already solved. Please contact us to see how our combined 45 years of consulting and university acoustics teaching can improve your house of worship.

Tel: 410.821.5930

Your Sound...Our Passion

[info@akustx.com](mailto:info@akustx.com)





## SAINT DOMINIC CATHOLIC CHURCH WASHINGTON, DC

“The Island”, as it was often called in the nineteenth century, consisted of the area now known as Southwest Washington. Members of the Order of Preachers – the Dominicans – have stood witness in this historic part of the District of Columbia for over 160 years. The present structure, designed by noted New York City-based architect Patrick Keely, was completed in 1875. Just a decade later, in 1885, a fire destroyed the church’s interior, which was quickly restored. At the same time, the church was adorned with a grand new organ.



We at Di Gennaro-Hart are pleased to announce that we have been commissioned by the Archdiocese of Washington to undertake a major restoration of the Hilborne L. Roosevelt instrument. Cousins to Teddy, Hilborne and his brother, Frank Roosevelt, were among the very finest nineteenth century American organ builders.

The project will include the replacement of the 1929 English-style console with an “American terraced” console built according to current AGO standards. The console will offer a strong nod to the Roosevelts, particularly through the use of the engraving font that was commissioned by their firm. The present solid state control systems will be replaced with a 100 channel capture system and a new switching system with performance recorder. The reeds will be restored, numerous repairs will be completed, and the entire instrument will be thoroughly cleaned. A powerful Tuba stop, constructed by a shop that traces its roots to the Roosevelt firm, will be added.

Father Jordan Turano, OP, *Pastor*  
JC Cantrell, *Music Director and Worship Coordinator*

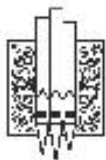


1350 Beverly Road | Suite 115-322  
McLean, Virginia 22101  
301-320-4700 | michael@hartorgan.com

RODGERS  
**IMAGINE**  
S E R I E S



**DISCOVER  
A WORLD  
OF POSSIBILITIES**



**R.A. Daffer Church Organs, INC.**  
ESTABLISHED 1977

Contact Steve McBride for more information: [SMcBride@DafferOrgans.com](mailto:SMcBride@DafferOrgans.com) | 484-886-8215  
*Also representing Johannus, Makin, Copeman-Hart, and Fratelli Ruffatti*